Having just been founded in 2013, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) Party has experienced substantial electoral success in both the 2013 and 2017 German federal elections, and it has accrued a significant support base. Increasingly regarded as a far-right radical party, the AfD began as a Eurosceptic party but transitioned into adopting anti migrant ideology and populist tendencies, capitalizing on widespread anti-immigration sentiments in the wake of the 2015 European migration crisis and Chancellor Merkel’s open-door policy. Although the AfD failed to displace the more popular center parties, it has managed to embed itself in the political fabric of Eastern Germany where it enjoys higher rates of support than in the Western States and continues to gain electoral success in the most recent state elections. But why is the AfD more readily embraced by Eastern Germans? And what factors contribute to populist voter support within the country? In researching possible answers, and to gain a better understanding into the German population’s relationship with immigration, it is necessary to consult literature on Germany’s history post-unification and the scholarship on possible causal factors of right-wing extremism.

The research pieces included in this bibliography investigate sources of radical right-wing support from both an economic angle, and one of social norms. Despite popular beliefs that poor economic conditions push voters to the extreme right, empirical findings by Kim, Boomgaarden, and Vleigenthart quickly dismiss economic factors as the major drivers of right-wing support in Germany. Instead, scholars have isolated immigration attitudes and social norms as the more prominent, if not primary, indicators of voting support towards the AfD. Given the statistical importance of anti-immigration sentiments, a plethora of research has sprouted that examines the relationship between immigration attitudes and the New Right in Germany. A popular topic discussed in the literature is the role of intergroup contact in influencing these attitudes towards migrants. Wagner et al. identifies higher concentrations of ethnic prejudice in regions with less migrant exposure and asserts that a larger foreign presence in a certain region coincide with less votes for the AfD. However other studies reveal that the influence of intergroup contact is not so clear cut and is highly contextual. While most of these studies acknowledge the rural urban divide, they report that the form of interaction between foreigners and natives is important and can produce different results.

Cysmara and Dochow, Vollmer and Karakayali, and Bloomgarden and Vleigenthart make inroads in investigating the role of the news media on changes in immigration attitudes among the public. Their findings suggest that anti-immigration sentiments are not on the rise but instead, the topic of anti-immigration is becoming more salient leading to voters placing more importance on parties that advocate their political views on immigration. The books on German immigration history catalog various instances of this pattern, as time periods exhibiting high salience in immigration issues normally coincided with bolstered anti-immigrant party support. As noted by Lindstam, mainstream voters may switch to a niche party as a method of signaling the salience of an issue they feel their original party is mishandling/neglecting. In the case of Germany, these theories could partly explain the electoral performance of the AfD. Due to the massive influx of refugees in the 2015 migration crisis, the salience of immigration greatly
increased in the mass media and many voters prioritized their attitudes towards immigration. The AfD, running as a single-issue party focused primarily on immigration and was therefore able to attract a substantial number of voters.

Having explored these findings, Eastern Germany presents itself as an interesting case study in examining right wing support due to significant structural and social differences compared to West Germany and a marked difference in voting patterns. Staab’s “National Identity in Eastern Germany” does a great job in discussing the historical roots of the East West divide and how it is grounded in the rapid integration of both parts of the country following the fall of the Berlin Wall. The inefficient nature of the former communist regime that had governed the Eastern bloc over so many years, and the far from seamless integration process with the more modernized West resulted in significant short-term economic upheaval that led to the development of feelings of political and economic disadvantage that persist in Easter German identity today despite improved economic conditions in the long run. Eastern Germany is also predominantly rural and contains a much smaller percentage of immigrant populations than the more urbanized districts of Germany. Accordingly, surveys on voting behavior and political ideology often include a separate category to distinguish East German respondents due to these differences. As a result, applying statistical information provided by the German Federal Statistical Office (as well as the other datasets) and the various insights gleaned from the literature into a comparative study between East and West Germany could help identify which variables and theories can explain the pronounced AfD support in East Germany.

Common Abbreviations

Alternative for Germany (AfD)
German Longitudinal Study (GLES)
German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP)

Scholarly Articles


Consulting GLES data from 2013-2017, the authors investigate the ideology of the AfD and voting patterns and attitudes of its supporters and how they have changed from the onset of the 2013 election to the more recent federal election in 2017 (the authors emphasized the long-term nature of the study and how it sets them apart from similar studies that likewise use GLES surveys but restrict themselves to smaller periods of times). They supplement the GLES data with a smattering of other surveys and research samples. This article also takes into account the use of social media by the AfD and some of its voters by reviewing over 3800 messages posted by the party on Facebook from 2013 to 2017, using keywords to glean the ideological imperatives of the AfD over this time period. This is useful in examining the transition of AfD’s
ideology from that of Euroscepticism, to one where immigration and islamophobia are at the forefront.


This article studies the potential of news media as an explanatory variable for the rise of populism in Europe. The authors control for the unemployment rate, levels of immigration, and leadership in the Netherlands from 1990 to 2002. Data used in this study consisted of over 150,000 articles from the five most read Dutch national newspapers (at the time) with computer assistance, and the use of keywords to assess the visibility of certain topics. In the study the authors find a positive correlation between salience of immigration issues and vote intention for anti-immigrant parties. Furthermore, within an immigration frame, immigration news was a stronger predictor of voter intent than economic news. Albeit still statistically significant, this study supports the notion that economic factors are a poor indicator of radical right-wing support. This case study focuses on the Netherlands but contains important observations for the broader discussion of the role of the news media and the rise of populism.


This study covers the relationship between mass media and its influence on the public perception regarding immigrants, particularly as a driver of anti-immigration sentiments. The authors use data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) from the period of 2001-2015 in which 25,000 respondents were interviewed regarding their attitudes towards topics of migration. They observe that public concerns on the topic of immigration widely vary with the amount of salience the subject has in the media at a given time. Furthermore, they state that the data suggests that the effect of media-induced concerns concerning immigration on the population is significantly less impactful in areas with a higher concentration of foreigners. This is a helpful finding as it provides further insights into how the presence of immigrants in a region can influence the anti-immigrant attitudes there, particularly due to Eastern Germany containing smaller percentages of foreigners in its districts than West Germans. It should be noted that the media that was utilized in this study is print only and does not include other sources such as the TV or internet.


In a municipal level of analysis, this study examines the effects of refugee allocation on voting behavior across 275 Danish municipalities over a 13-year period (1986-98) Data was used from the European Social Survey. The article makes the distinction between economic migrants and refugees, as it states that economic incentives and characteristics of certain regions to migrants can influence their location choice. In contrast the process of refugee allocation was
The data analysis demonstrated higher rates of voter turnout in regions with increased refugee allocation and in contrast to some of the other literature, the authors also found a positive correlation between exposure to immigrants and increased rates of anti-migrant sentiments. The difference in reactions between rural and urban residents to degrees of immigrant exposure could be explained by the context of the exposure. The author notes that city residents were more likely to have friends and work colleagues with an immigrant background, whereas rural residents were more likely to have neighbors with migrant backgrounds. This may suggest that the perceived nature of the interaction as imposed versus voluntary affects the outcome of foreign exposure on general immigration sentiments.


This study addresses the education gap in Europe (in which it is popularly believed that higher levels of education leads to greater rates of liberal ideals and lower levels lead to increases in populism). The data used in the study consists of eight rounds from the European Social Survey from the years 2002-2016 from a sample of 12 Western European countries with similar political systems and immigration attitudes. The authors did not find any noticeable increases in anti-immigration sentiment among the Western countries in question, neither do they find much evidence in their study of a widening education gap or polarization across education levels. This is useful for examining AfD support from an education standpoint as populism has often been said to be bolstered by people with lower degrees of education. Furthermore, their studies inform the discussion regarding increasing populist support as a consequence of rising anti-immigrant attitudes vs increased immigration saliency among the public. This is valuable as a possible explanation for increases in populism despite lack of changes among immigrant preferences.


For this study, the authors examined panel data over nine years (1999-2007) from the GSOEP containing the interviews of “native” Germans over the age of 16. The data intentionally excludes the participation of Eastern Germans and, subsequently, solely investigates Western German attitudes. Respondents were questioned on the topics of social engagement, economic factors, immigration attitudes, and local diversity. The main mode of analysis used to examine the data was a “conditional change” model. As opposed to the more optimistic studies of contact theory, the data indicates that social engagement between natives and foreigners and the presence of immigrants in a certain locale can indeed affect immigration attitudes, but they do not always necessarily lead to a more positive outlook towards foreigners, and in some cases, actually increase concerns over immigration. For example, church attendance as a variable yielded different results regarding shaping immigration attitudes depending on the diversity of the region. The authors noted that church attendance in a homogenous locale could lead to more openness to immigrants, whereas in a higher diversity environment the effect was less pronounced (the inverse of this was true regarding the helping neighbors variable).
http://hdl.handle.net/10419/175453

This report was produced with cooperation with the German institute of economic research and contains an analysis of several socioeconomic factors (a total of 48 structural variables) at the electoral district levels that could have potentially influenced the electoral performance of the AfD in the 2017 federal election. This study is useful as it includes clear comparative discussions regarding economic and demographic differences between East and West Germany. As per the title, the main finding of the authors is that AfD significantly performed in rural districts that contained elements of negative demographic trends. These are valuable observations as Eastern Germany is comprised of more rural districts than its western counterparts, which can be an important explanatory factor as to why the AfD enjoys more popularity in the East. The report is also a good benchmark for where to begin research on the district level in Germany as the authors concisely lay out the voting system in Germany and discuss some limitations and challenges in using district level data. Altogether this report is useful due to its in-depth analysis of possible socioeconomic drivers of AfD support.


The study incorporates five different sources of data consisting of administrative records by the 16 German States regarding refugee allocation among 402 separate counties, migrant information from Germany’s federal registry of foreigners, annual criminal records by the Federal Criminal Police Office, federal election results from the statistical office, and finally county characteristics from the federal statistical offices regional statistics database. Altogether, the authors utilize this pool of data to examine the impact of refugee migrant inflows on a county’s labour market, crime, and voter turnout. The authors do not find significant evidence for crime epidemics arising from higher refugee influxes. Furthermore, in regard to immigrant inflows and election results the authors note that on a county level, exposure to immigrants did not have a significant effect on AfD support. However, on a more micro level, when studying migrant inflows in municipalities exposure to immigrants did lead to lower shares of votes for the AfD.


In this piece, the authors use data from the 2017 post-election German Longitudinal Study (GLES) to study voters for the AfD in the 2017 federal election. There are multiple findings within this article that are useful as the GLES is one of the more extensive datasets relevant to voting in the 2017 election and due to the plethora of variables analyzed in the study such as: age, employment status, education, income, gender, political knowledge, fear of globalization, anti-immigrant sentiment, and prospective economic situation among others. Particularly helpful is the inclusion of an “Eastern Germany” category. Furthermore, voters for the rest of Germany’s
political parties were also analyzed, thereby facilitating comparisons between AfD voters and those of other parties. In examining the data, a multinomial logit regression model was used. In this study the authors conclude that anti-immigrant sentiment was the most impactful driver for voters of the AfD and that voters were drawn from a wide demographic spectrum which runs against the popular perception of its voters as consisting of mainly economically disadvantaged males.


This study focuses on immigration presence in the United States, and how it’s distribution influences negative attitudes towards foreigners. The authors use a series of survey spanning from 1992 to 2009 and consisting of over 15,851 respondents across 1908 counties. The dependent variable measured was the question of whether the respondent wanted more, less, or the same rate of immigration. The variable is listed as 0 for those who want less and as 1 for those who want more and is juxtaposed with the percentage of immigrants in a given county. This study is helpful in determining whether the interaction between immigrant exposure and anti-immigration attitudes is a phenomenon unique to Germany, or whether it is reflected in other countries. The United States status as an immigration country, its large population, and the multiple periods of increased saliency regarding immigration establishes it an important point of examination for research into intergroup contact theory. This article would also be an important frame of reference should I decide to take my research paper into a more comparative direction contrasting Germany with the United States versus a single case study concerning West and East Germany.


This study takes a closer look into the relationship between the AfD and blue-collar workers, as they have been popularly stated as one of its greater groups of support despite policies pursued by the party which the authors argue run contrary to their economic interests. The authors provide some possible explanations for what they view as discrepancies between the blue-collar workers and unemployed supporters of the AfD. Similarly, to several of the studies the authors assess that the impact of unemployment and economic conditions of voters is a small indicator of support for the AfD and found that its supporters came from a wide demographic and included many high-income and educated individuals. Immigration issues are once again stated to be the main selling point of the party. They also argue that the percentage of the party’s voter base comprised of blue-collar workers and unemployed likewise comprises a substantially small portion of its overall base of support, and that their motivations for voting for the radical right wing is grounded more in anti-immigrant sentiments than fiscal policy.

In this article the authors review the insights from a plethora of literature regarding some of the basic challenges faced by Germany in the realm of immigration and anti-foreigner violence and, more specifically, delve into the demographics of anti-foreigner violent perpetrators, why they participate into violence, and potential political tendencies (right wing for example). Of more pertinence are the observations on offenders with affiliations with the radical right regarding their psychology, and why the radical right ideology is attractive to them. They suggest that in an environment of social anxiety, in this case a byproduct of being a “loser” of modernization, the platform pushed for by right wing groups can offer a modicum of security through various mechanisms (foreigner scapegoating and nativist pride for example) that make them attractive to those who feel disadvantaged or victimized. Of interesting note, is the observation that the aggrieved party may not necessarily be impoverished, but the mere perception that they are being disadvantaged in comparison to other social groups can push people into the radical right and/or adopt a violent disposition against foreigners.


In this article, the authors explore why mainstream party voters may switch to niche parties in second order elections and hypothesize that a portion of said party switching is a result of strategic decisions by voters to switch in order to signal the salience of a particular issue to their mainstream party. To test their hypothesis the authors study panel data from the UK (2014-2017) and from Bavaria, Germany (2013-2014). The authors found that most niche switchers don’t identify to the party they are switching to, and that these niche voters are likely to consist of voters who identify an issue that they believe their party is mishandling. Given descriptions of the AfD as a single-issue party, the argument espoused in this article can partly explain increased radical right-wing performance in regional elections in Germany’s recent history as the salience in immigration issues greatly increased in the wake of the 2015 refugee crisis.


This comparative study examines two opposing groups that the author identified as the main ideological camps that arose from discourse of the 2015 Migration Crisis, namely the portion of German society that welcomed and assisted the influx of refugees and those who viewed refugees as a threat (predominantly right-wing sympathizers also known as the New Right). The author investigates both groups and hypothesizes that the New Right represents people suffering from drag effects or as the author states “an asynchrony of habitual structures of individuals and the power structures they live in”. In this case the author asserts that the drag effect manifests in the form of political insecurity due to evolving power structures that arise from globalization, and that these “losers of globalization” or individuals who believe they stand to lose to interconnectivity. Due to the often-invisible drivers of globalization, these individuals blame more “concrete others” resulting in a general scapegoating effect towards migrants.

The authors of this piece discuss and examine media coverage and the frame of public discourse concerning the Syrian refugee crisis in 2015-16. Relying on newspaper coverage, they explore the initially positive reception of refugees in the early months of the crisis and the subsequently rapid change in tone from one of hospitality to one of caution and hostility, pinpointing a series of sexual harassment cases, purported to have been done by refugees, at a festival in Cologne as the turning point. The authors assess the degree in which the portrayal of refugees and migrants as “deserving” vs “undeserving” in the media influence immigration attitudes in Germany. Included is a brief but interesting comparison of the public discourse pertaining to the refugee crisis in Yugoslavia 20 years prior to the one in Syria which were substantially different. The authors analyzed data from the following outlets which they have identified as leading sources media-wise: Der Focus, Der Spiegel, Der Tagesspiegel, Bild, Die Welt, Die Zeit, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Süddeutsche Zeitung. The data reviewed spans from March 2015 to March 2016.


Using surveys from East and West German respondents, demographic data, and statistics on crime and violence against foreigners, the authors study the differences in levels of ethnic prejudice between East and West Germany and the influence of intergroup contact. The data reveals that Eastern Germans have markedly lower opportunities of contact with foreigners, which the authors assert is a correlate factor of higher ethnic prejudice in East Germany. Three different sets of surveys regarding attitudes towards foreigners were conducted, one of East and West German respondents older than 18, one concerning German youths, and finally one of German students (sample sizes for the study were 2983, 3560, and 769 people respectively). This study is helpful in its exploration of intergroup contact, or rather, the opportunity of intergroup contact as an explanatory variable for discernible differences in attitudes amongst East and West Germans regarding immigrants and refugees. Given the importance of anti-immigrant sentiments to the AfD party, these findings are important in looking into the larger base of support AfD currently held in the Eastern portion of the nation.

Scholarly Books:


This book attempts to catalog the role of immigration to Germany as a driver to political change throughout its history up to the 1990’s. The author begins by asserting that in spite of the reluctance in associating Germany’s with openness to immigration, it has effectively functioned as a country of immigration over the past several decades. The book proceeds to provide a historical outline of Germany’s general immigration history, the salience of foreigners in public discourse at various time periods, and the electoral performance of radical right parties. In relation to anti-immigrant parties, the author finds that the decision to support New Right parties (the radical right parties that preceded the AfD) did not stem from pure xenophobia, but rather,
consisted of more informed decisions by the public. For example, the New Right experienced more popularity in regions with higher rates of immigrant crime and less so in regions with ample opportunities for intergroup contacts between foreigners and natives. This observation is particularly helpful, as it indicates that the increase in support of the AfD and the voting behavior of its supporters are neither the first incidences of such trends in Germany’s history, nor a uniquely recent phenomenon.


This book studies immigration related issues and changes in opinions on immigrants in Germany between 1945 and 2006. The author reviews numerous opinion polls concerning public attitude towards migration. Some of the questions contained in the polls include: Opinions as to Germany’s ability to absorb more foreigners (1998-2001), views on whether too many foreigners live in Germany (1997), views on whether foreigners contribute enough to the integration process (2004-2006) views on whether Germany is a country of immigration (2000), etc. Most of these opinion surveys distinguish between West and East German respondents which serves greatly in facilitating comparative analysis between the two groups. The author details that all the polls generally demonstrate a change in the public perception of Germany as a non-immigration nation to one receptive to large influxes of foreigners. Additionally, although the wider public embraced less restrictive immigration policies and the liberalization of citizenship legislation during the 1990’s, public discourse regarding foreigners shifted from one of immigration to one of integration, and stark differentiations between native Germans and foreigners persisted under this vein, as the public became preoccupied with concerns over failed, or badly managed, processes of foreigner integration.


This book is a sourcebook comprised of an abundant number of historical documents (over 200 texts) pertaining to Germany’s history of immigration, its struggles with integration, and the effects of the collapse of the Berlin Wall. The authors provide historical overviews and context to guide the reader, and the time period reviewed extends from 1955 to 2005. The content of the book is dispersed over eleven themes and include documents such as newspaper editorials, interviews, biographies, manifestos, and legal statutes. More specifically, the book contains a chapter on the history of Turkish immigration and integration in Germany that can prove useful in analyzing past attitudes and public discourse regarding large groups of immigrants and comparing them to today’s reception of the of the refugees from Northern Africa and Syria. As such, this book is an important archive of the changing nature of immigration throughout Germany’s history.

This book presents a comparative study of the history of intolerance within Germany and the United States in what the author details as a “difference of systems approach”. In their decision to compare and contrast Germany and the United States, the author acknowledges that several European nations share more similarities in Germany in terms of demographics, social norms, and political systems. However, the author maintains that the difference cultural norms related to immigration, Germany commonly held as a nation of emigrants and the United States as a nation of immigrants, render the comparison ideal in analyzing the relationship between political identity and heterogeneity. Both Western Europe and the United States are experiencing increased salience in immigration issues, and the author proceeds to discuss the formation of national identity in both countries and its relevance on the immigration debate in recent years. However, large swathes of the book are dedicated to the time period of the late 19th century to the early 20th century somewhat limiting its use for this study.


This book explores the effects following the unification of East Germany with West Germany and the impact of ensuing structural changes on the general East German psyche. In investigating the effects of unification on East German national identity, the author categorizes and delves into several interrelated variables they believe were important to the formation of national identity such as territory, economics, citizenship, mass culture and ethnicity. The author asserts that the swiftness of imposed unity, and the relatively little public input in the unification process, ironically led to difficulties in reconciling the societies of both East and West Germany. Furthermore, many of the inefficient industries under the former GDR became defunct in the process of integrating to the West’s market economy initially resulted in widespread unemployment in the East and the imprint of economic insecurity and feelings of being second class citizens among East Germans that would persist despite improvement in their economic conditions in the following years. Altogether the author provides a detailed comparative account of East German national identity post-unification and identifies several points of friction between East and West Germany which he believes can continue to plague Germany in the future if not properly addressed.

Data Sources

A. Federal Election Results

https://www.bundeswahlleiter.de/bundestagswahlen/2017.html

The Federal Returning Officer provides data on Germany’s 2013 and 2017 parliamentary elections up to the district level. It also includes structural constituency data of Germany’s various states and constituencies compiled from the Regional Database Deutschland and information provided by the Bundesagentur fur Arbeit (the Federal Employment Agency), although the date of the information varies broadly between 2011 and 2017. Said demographic
data covers variables such as education levels, religious affiliation, unemployment rates, and population by migrant backgrounds among others, with some potential overlap with the data in the GENESIS database provided by Federal Statistical Office. This database will be useful in analyzing voting patterns and the electoral performance of the AfD and other political parties during both federal elections. Furthermore, its inclusion of district level information will facilitate more micro levels of analysis.

B. State Elections Results

A note on state elections. State level elections in Germany run on separate electoral calendars and subsequently different states hold their local elections on different years. I plan to review election result data on German states that held elections following post-2017 federal elections in order to analyze more recent AfD performance as the data examined in most of the recent relevant literature stops at the federal 2017 election. Therefore, I will consult election data on the 2018 Bavarian and Hessian state elections, the 2019 state elections in Brandenburg, Bremen, and Saxony, and potentially Thuringia, whose elections are scheduled to take place in late October. Election data is normally released by the respective state’s statistical office and include data on elections on the constituency level as well. The following website provides a comprehensive list of links to the provincial returning officers of all the German States:
https://www.wahlrecht.de/links.htm#by


“2018 Hesse State Election Results.” Hesse Land Returning Officer. https://wahlen.hessen.de/land-hessen/landtagswahl/ergebnisse

“2019 Brandenburg State Election Results.” Brandenburg Land Returning Officer. https://wahlen.brandenburg.de/wahlen/de/start/

“2019 Bremen State Election Results.” Bremen Land Returning Officer. https://www.landeswahlleiter.bremen.de/

“2019 Saxony State Election Results.” Saxony Land Returning Officer. https://wahlen.sachsen.de/

C. Other

GENESIS. Statistisches Bundesamt. https://www.destatis.de/EN/Home/_node.html

The Statistisches Bundesamt, or the German Federal Statistical Office, provides substantial statistical information potentially relevant to my research topic which can be accessed either directly through their website or through the GENESIS online database. The statistical data is grouped into six separate groups: society and environment, economy, economic sectors and enterprises, labour, government, and countries and origins. Each grouping contains multiple
subcategories. The information provided can be very helpful as it will allow me to tackle my research question from multiple angles and lens. Variables I can examine include: benefits to asylum seekers, rural and urban classification of Germany’s districts, at risk of poverty rates, recipients of social security benefits, unemployment rates, education level, foreign population, population with migrant background, and the distribution of asylum seekers. Many of these variables are categorized by state, and in some instances by district level which makes it easy to analyze via Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software.

Benceck, David and Julia Strasheim Anti-Refugee Violence and Social Unrest in Germany Dataset (ARVIG).
https://github.com/davben/arvig

Created by David Benček and Julia Strasheim, the ARVIG dataset is a compilation of georeferenced data on anti-refugee violence in Germany from 2014 to 2015. The data was derived from information provided by the civil society organizations Amadeu Antonio foundation and PRO ASYL. The dataset consists of 1645 events that pertain to the following classifications: demonstrations, assault, arson attacks, and miscellaneous attacks against refugee housing. The authors have also published an article titled “Refugees welcome? A dataset on anti-refugee violence in Germany” that analyzes instances of right-wing violence drawing from ARVIG and includes instructions on how to navigate the dataset. I plan to use the data from ARVIG to map where the incidents take place and discern whether there are higher rates of antiforeigner violence in Eastern Germany as opposed to Western Germany which can be an indicator of larger xenophobic sentiments in the East.


This website provides various data tables compiled by the Federal Criminal Police office spanning from the year 2013 to 2018. As the large wave of criminal offenses that occurred in Cologne in 2015 significantly shifted public discourse on immigrants, I want to investigate whether higher incidents of migrant crimes lead to voting shifts towards the AfD. Furthermore, I plan to review crimes committed against foreigners and compare them to the findings in the ARVIG data set. I plan to focus primarily on the 2017 report due to the national elections occurring that year. I could also investigate other years and cross reference them with the results of local state elections. A limitation of these reports is that it omits certain kinds of crimes, however the omitted categories are not too pertinent to my research question. Also, one cannot surmise if there is bias in the survey as police could possibly more heavily police refugee laden areas.