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Does Naturalization Facilitate Integration? Fördert Einbürgerung die Integration?

A Longitudinal Study on the Consequences of Citizenship Acquisition for Immigrants' Identification with Germany

Eine Längsschnittstudie zu den Folgen des Staatsbürgerschaftserwerbs von Immigrantinnen und Immigranten für die Identifikation mit Deutschland

DOI 10.1515/zfsoz-2015-1006

Abstract: This paper addresses the question of whether naturalization affects identification with the host country on the part of first generation immigrants in Germany. Using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel, this study contributes to the literature on the positive effects of citizenship acquisition for immigrants' integration, which so far, has focused on the impact of citizenship acquisition on labor market integration. Naturalization is discussed as an individual investment and unique event in immigrants' life courses. It is argued that naturalization leads to an increase in national identification both as a means of avoiding dissonance and as a consequence of improved opportunities for identifying with the mainstream society. In summary, this study finds a positive effect of naturalization on national identification regardless of the new citizen's country of origin. Although country of origin and national identification are generally at odds, further analysis reveals that naturalization may increase the compatibility of both identifications, at least in the case of naturalized Turks.

Keywords: Naturalization; Citizenship; Integration; Identification; Identity Compatibility

Zusammenfassung: Der Beitrag geht der Frage nach, ob Einbürgerung die Identifikation mit dem Aufnahmeland beeinflusst. Untersucht wird dies mit den Daten des Sozio-oekonomischen Panels, ausgehend von Evidenzen zu positiven Effekten der Einbürgerung für die strukturelle Integration von Migranten. Einbürgerung wird verstanden als individuelle Investition in die Integration und einmaliges Ereignis im Lebensverlauf von Migranten.

Angenommen wird, dass nach erfolgter Einbürgerung das Ziel der Vermeidung kognitiver Dissonanz sowie gestiegene Opportunities zu einer Zunahme der Identifikation mit dem Aufnahmeland führen. Es zeigt sich, dass die Einbürgerung unabhängig vom Herkunftsland einen positiven Effekt auf die Identifikation hat. Auch wenn die Identifikation mit dem Aufnahme- und dem Herkunftsland bei Migranten partiell unvereinbar ist, lässt sich feststellen, dass zumindest bei Migranten türkischer Herkunft die Einbürgerung mit einer stärkeren Kompatibilität einhergeht.

Schlüsselwörter: Einbürgerung; Staatsbürgerschaft; Integration; Identifikation; SOEP

1 Introduction

There is a long history of research into immigrants' identification (Alba 1990; Gordon 1964; Phinney et al. 2006; Verkuyten & Martinovic 2012a). In particular, national identification, i. e. the extent to which individuals feel attached to in their country of settlement through a sense of belonging, is of vital interest, as "feelings of belonging together are necessary for national solidarity, a unified society and effective democracy" (Martinovic & Verkuyten 2012: 106), and may help to reduce intergroup competition (Gaertner & Dovidio 2000; Reeskens & Wright 2014). Furthermore, the focus on host country identification touches on much discussed concerns – raised by segments of society in basically all immigrant countries – about immigrants' loyalty, potential opposition to "national values," and (non-) involvement in domestic politics (Alba & Foner 2015: 1f.; Fischer-Neumann 2014; Platt 2014).

Hence, determinants of immigrants' national identification are receiving increasing attention in public discourse as well as in academia. This paper focuses on the

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role of host country citizenship acquisition in this process, a previously under-researched factor. Although naturalization rates improved considerably following reforms in the German citizenship law in the 1990s, naturalization is known to be a relatively rare phenomenon in Germany. For instance, only 2.2 percent of eligible foreign nationals received a German passport in 2014 (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015). Consequently, research has focused on determinants that encourage immigrants to choose host country citizenship (Diehl & Blohm 2003; Diehl & Fick 2012; Diehl 2002; Hochman 2011; Weinmann et al. 2012; Witte 2014; Wobbe & Otte 2000; Wunderlich 2005). In addition, in societal and political discourse, naturalization is still often considered the final step in an immigrant's integration process rather than a milestone (Worbs 2008). Studies that adopt the milestone position regarding citizenship acquisition and investigate whether it boosts the various dimensions of an immigrant's continuing integration process are still rare. While we know that immigrants' identification with the receiving society is positively related to their interest in host country citizenship (Diehl & Blohm 2003), we do not know if naturalization itself changes their sense of belonging to the host country. From a preliminary theoretical perspective, it seems plausible to expect that immigrants' national identification increases once they become a formal member of the society they live in. Thus, this paper studies the effect of immigrants' naturalization on their identification with the host country, beginning by providing several theoretical arguments that aim to explain the relationship between naturalization and identification. Moreover, the study attempts to answer the question about the extent to which naturalization affects the compatibility national identification with identificational ties and emotional attachment to the country of origin.

Present studies dealing with a citizenship premium focus on increased socio-economic integration, specifically labor market integration, and demonstrate the importance of naturalization in the process of individual integration. While Chiswick (1978) initially noted that wage inequalities of foreign-born men in the US were due to labor market experience rather than citizenship status, more recent studies report positive effects of naturalization, for instance on labor market access or income (Bevelander & Pendakur 2012; Bratsberg et al. 2002; Picot & Hou 2011). For Germany, Steinhardt (2012) reports, in a longitudinal study, a relative large and positive effect of citizenship acquisition on income for males.

These results underline that naturalization can be considered a unique event in immigrants' integration processes; naturalization can only be experienced by immigrants, and usually just once in a lifetime. However,

compared with evidence of a citizenship premium within the labor market, other possible effects of citizenship acquisition on other dimensions of the integration process are less well researched. In this paper, it is contended that there are convincing arguments why naturalization affects immigrants' identification. The first set of arguments refers to national identification, which is expected to increase once immigrants have received the passport of the host society. On the one hand, citizenship acquisition is more than just a formal procedure; much more, it is an individual investment in the integration process with monetary and non-monetary costs. The effort spent on becoming a formal member of the host society involves costly choices and can thus lead to *post-decisional dissonance* if it is not followed by identification with the mainstream society. On the other hand, naturalization affects an immigrant's *subjective opportunities for identification*. Becoming a citizen not only increases the possibility of gaining acceptance as an equal member of the citizenry but also entitles the immigrant to feel that he or she is a member of the group. The second argument refers to the relationship between immigrants' identification with their country of origin and national identification. If individuals who exhibit identificational ties and emotional attachment to members of their country of origin also experience naturalization as incorporation into the mainstream society, the result could be increased *compatibility of national and country of origin identification*. In other words, an increase in the opportunity to simultaneously belong to the both instead of feeling the need to choose one side over the other.

The German case offers a suitable context for studying the impact of citizenship acquisition because both the legal framework of naturalization and the social context of integration vary depending on the immigrants' countries of origin. This leads to a group-specific cost/benefit structure that in turn can be expected to lead to differences in the consequences of citizenship acquisition. For instance, unlike non-EU citizens, EU citizens usually do not have to denaturalize and therefore experience lower costs of naturalization, resulting in a lower citizenship premium for national identification.

To analyze whether citizenship acquisition leads to an increase in national identification, the following section summarizes existing findings on the determinants of immigrants' national identification in general and the impact of naturalization in particular. Subsequently, theoretical assumptions as to why naturalization might alter minority members' national identification as well as the compatibility of their country of origin and national identification are presented. Based on these assumptions, theory-driven expectations about the group-specific impact

of naturalization on immigrants' national identification are analyzed using data from the German Socio-Economic Panel (Wagner et al. 2007). A summary and discussion conclude the article.

2 State of the Art: Determinants of National Identification and the Matter of Identity Compatibility

Research on ethnic identification – “the degree to which one has a sense of belonging and attachment to one's group” – has a long tradition, whereas immigrants' national identification – “feelings of belonging to, and attitudes toward, the larger society” (Phinney et al. 2006: 77) – has attracted less attention (Phinney 1990; Portes & Rumbaut 1996). In the following section, general, influencing factors in national identification are discussed, followed by an examination of the role of citizenship in particular.

2.1 Determinants of National Identification

Well-known positive factors for national identification are *generational status*, *duration of stay in the host country*, and *parental attitudes* during childhood (Diehl & Schnell 2006; Hans 2010; Heath & Demireva 2014; Phinney et al. 2006; Rumbaut 1994; Sabatier 2008). Recently, de Vroome et al. (2014) have indicated that achieved *socio-economic status* seems to be positively correlated with host country affiliation (cf. Hans 2010: 160 f.). Ersanilli and Saharso (2011) report a positive impact of *education* on national identification (Verkuyten & Yildiz 2007; for gender differences Zimmermann et al. 2007). Furthermore, Hochman and Davidov (2014) reveal a positive relationship of *language proficiency* and immigrants' national identification in Germany. Social integration – or, more specifically, *interethnic contact* – has been intensively discussed as important for national identification (Esser 2009; Fick et al. 2014; Phinney et al. 2006). In particular, the work of Leszczensky (2013) is essential to understanding the causal direction of social integration and identification. While Leszczensky finds evidence for an effect of interethnic friendship on national identification cross-sectionally, no such effect was revealed in a longitudinal approach based on a three-wave panel of young Turkish immigrants in Germany, indicating that there seems to be no causal

effect of social integration on identification with the host society in the short-term.¹

Another much-debated determinant of identification is *discrimination*. In this regard, Maxwell (2009) found negative effects on national identification in three cross-sectional rounds of the British Home Office Citizenship Survey (cf. Ono 2002). For the Netherlands, de Vroome et al. (2014) report a strong negative relationship between perceived discrimination and national identification (cf. Martinovic & Verkuyten 2012). Furthermore, Heath and Demireva differentiate between perceived individual (egocentric) and group (sociotropic) discrimination, reporting for the latter “some of the strongest effects on negative outcomes” on national identification of ethnic minorities in Britain (2014: 177). Beyond these examples of cross-sectional evidence, Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. (2012) reveal, in a Finnish longitudinal study, that increased experiences of discrimination lead not only to lower national identification but also to more negative attitudes towards the majority.

Finally, while public discourse often treats national identification as being at odds with country of origin identification, Verkuyten and Martinovic state that “there is no strong correlational evidence that ethnic identification is clearly contradictory to national identification” (2012a: 87). However, in reviewing the cross-national research they emphasize that a negative relationship between country of origin and national identification can be found more frequently in European non-settler countries as compared to classical immigrant countries such as the United States (cf. Phinney et al. 2006; Verkuyten & Yildiz 2007). Indeed, Leszczensky (2013) reports such negative correlations of ethnic and national identification for Turkish adolescents in Germany in a cross-sectional examination, whereas studied longitudinally, his evidence shows that ethnic identification does not necessarily affect national identification.

2.2 Citizenship and National Identification

Compared to the factors discussed above, there has been little research on the relationship of citizenship acquisition to national identification. However, the few existing cross-sectional studies that examine this matter seem to indicate positive consequences: Ersanilli and Koopmans (2010) report higher national identification for natural-

¹ Leszczensky (2013) points out that as he tested rather strictly for causality only within a specific ethnic group and a narrow timeframe, long-term effects may show up for Turks or other ethnic groups.

ized Turks in France and Germany but find no such relationship in the Netherlands (for other studies reporting positive correlations of citizenship and identification cf. Karlsen & Nazroo 2013; Keil 2006; Reeskens & Wright 2014; Rumbaut 1994; Weinmann et al. 2012). Interestingly, the difference runs between countries with rather “thick” (Germany, France) and “thin” (Netherlands) notions of citizenship (cf. Bauböck 2001; de Wit & Koopmans 2005). Although cross-country differences are not examined here, this is an indication that the framing of citizenship acquisition – e. g. higher costs and cultural identity demands in Germany compared to the Netherlands – is of importance not only for the decision to seek naturalization (Vink et al. 2013), but also for the consequences of naturalization. Another interesting finding from Sweden is reported by Bevelander and Pendakur (2011), who highlight that although denizens in Sweden have the right to vote at the local and provincial levels, immigrants who are Swedish citizens demonstrate higher participation in elections compared to foreign nationals (cf. Prokic-Breuer 2013). While this is not necessarily evidence for a change in identification, it clarifies how naturalization can boost immigrants’ (political) integration processes.

A qualitative examination of the matter for Germany yields mixed evidence: Turkish interviewees describe the post-naturalization phase as an experience in which they do not fully feel accepted as “Germans” but feel “different” than before and have increased national identification (Harper 2011; for contradictory findings for young disadvantaged Turkish males in Germany cf. Çelik 2015). In addition, a study in the German state of Baden-Wuerttemberg shows that almost 60 percent of recently naturalized individuals reported a sense of joy and 45 percent reported a feeling of belonging to Germany once they received their official naturalization papers, usually delivered in person by a civil servant (Halisch & Wüst 2013). However, the extent of such a citizenship premium in terms of an individual gain in national identification remains uncertain because individuals with a stronger affiliation towards the host country are more likely to undertake naturalization, possibly leading to a positive selection bias (Diehl & Blohm 2011).

The German study by Maehler (2012) is the only longitudinal examination of the matter. In studying new citizens’ identification shortly after and again one year after naturalization, Maehler does not find a significant increase in national identification. On the contrary, for highly assimilated individuals, she reports a rise in ethnic identification within that first year. Overall, Maehler stresses that identification and acculturation are prerequisites for naturalization rather than naturalization-trig-

gering changes in identification. However, her longitudinal analysis is limited to a very narrow timeframe. More importantly, as the first wave was conducted shortly *after* naturalization to examine the development within one year, there is no measurement *prior* to the transformation from denizen to citizen.

In sum, this state of research raises two main questions. First: Does the acquisition of German citizenship affect immigrants’ national identification, and does this effect vary between groups of origin that differ in their boundary conditions of naturalization? Second: If so, how can we explain these changes? The next section lays the basis for the empirical analysis by describing the link between naturalization and identification more closely.

3 Theoretical Background

The acquisition of host country citizenship is a unique event in an immigrant’s life course and represents an individual change in categorical membership. As a formal shift from outgroup to ingroup membership, it may alter the cognitive context of the identification of immigrants by “providing the evaluative and comparative frame for [their] social position” (Deaux & Martin 2003: 106; cf. Tajfel & Turner 1986). In the following, a first set of arguments discusses two mechanisms behind the increase in national identification in the wake of naturalization: the first mechanism derives from a social-psychological perspective and argues that the new situation of being a citizen can induce a need to avoid *post-decisional dissonance*. The second mechanism is rather sociological in nature and emphasizes that adopting the host country’s citizenship can be considered to be a modification of *individual opportunities* and therefore the motivation for “investments” in national identification. However, naturalization may affect the process of identification more fundamentally through a change in the relationship between national and country of origin identification. For this reason, a second argument is presented regarding the way in which the acquisition of host country citizenship changes the compatibility of both identifications.

3.1 How does Naturalization Affect Identification?

The first mechanism starts by considering naturalization as an individual investment. As such, it creates *monetary* as well as *non-monetary costs*, notably when we consider it as a change in social group membership that “involves effort, hard work, luck, heartbreak etc.” (Tajfel 1976: 293). Particularly in Germany, with its enduring tradition of ethnic nationalism, becoming a citizen can be an onerous process (Brubaker 1992; Joppke 2010). It begins with an inquiry about applying for a German passport, followed, in some cases, by an integration course, passing a citizenship test, handing in forms, paying fees, and visiting a consulate to renounce one’s citizenship in the country of origin, each step of which may be interrupted by waiting periods of up to a few months or even longer, before finally – yet not always – citizenship is officially conferred, more or less solemnly, by the appropriate German official (Diehl & Fick 2012; Jakob 2012; Street 2014; van Oers 2014; Weinmann et al. 2012). Subsequent to this long and burdensome process of becoming a citizen, building up a certain degree of identification with the new nationality can be a means of consistency to avoid the costs of *post-decisional dissonance* (Allport 1943; Festinger 1957; Greenwald & Ronis 1978). Otherwise, the effort spent might be wasted. Thus, the logic presented here follows the dictum that, if someone is in for a penny but not for a pound, he or she necessarily devalues the pound.

For immigrants, crossing ethnic boundaries and thus identifying with the mainstream can be a valuable exit strategy “to get rid of the immigrant stigma” (Bauböck 1994: 12) and to achieve a higher group status (Alba & Nee 1997; Diehl & Blohm 2003; Tajfel 1978). This is particularly the case in an “ethnic-monist” integration regime such as Germany which strongly emphasizes differences between natives and ethnic minorities compared to other, opener integration regimes (de Wit & Koopmans 2005). Certainly, such an incentive for national identification affects immigrants regardless of whether they are naturalized or not. But, while *identification* with the host country can be useful, it is *not only a process of individual decision but also a result of social interaction* (Esser 1980; Mead 1934; Tajfel & Turner 1986). At this point the second mechanism comes into play. Herein, the receipt of the new passport is grasped as a change of categorical membership and as a shift in context that alters the *subjective opportunities* for national identification – in other words, the chance to reach the expected goal through identification (cf. Deaux & Martin 2003). The receipt of legal belonging entitles minority members to claim full membership and hence

encourages them to deepen identification with the mainstream: the new citizen has been accorded recognition by the nation state by means of its representatives, who accept him or her as an equal part of the citizenry, and, more importantly, increases the probability of gaining acknowledgement as a fellow citizen in everyday interaction. A simple example would be the right to participate in national elections, which increases the chance of discussing politics with fellow citizens at eye level and thereby the opportunity to discover similarities with natives, both of which lead to greater involvement with the host country (cf. Bevelander & Pendakur 2011; Wunderlich 2005). Moreover, holding a passport not only enables participation in elections and may therefore be something to be proud of, but it can also serve as (physical) proof of a successful integration process. Immigrants can refer to their newly gained citizenship status in contact with natives and request treatment as equal and full members of the society. Qualitative studies endorse such reasoning: they describe naturalization as an individual process of quasi-inauguration into the citizenry with the possibility of empowering individuals to go beyond the status of being a mere state subject and discovering their own political power (Harper 2011; Jakob 2012). In conclusion, it is generally expected that *new citizens show an increase in national identification* compared to their level of national identification prior to the acquisition of citizenship (hypothesis H1), first, as a means to avoid post-decisional dissonance and, second, as a result of more beneficial *subjective opportunities* and therefore a higher motivation for national identification.

In addition to the positive effects of naturalization on national identification, citizenship acquisition seems to be a crucial event that may alter the *compatibility of national and country of origin identification*. That does not mean that naturalization is necessarily expected to lead to identity assimilation or integration, but it may at least facilitate the path to such a mode of acculturation (Berry 1997; Esser 1980). It is expected that naturalization leads to higher identity compatibility in such a way that an increase in country of origin identification (which may take place for whatever reason) has no or at least a lower negative effect on national identification for naturalized compared to non-naturalized individuals (hypothesis H2). This reasoning is based on the presupposition that citizenship acquisition can stimulate a change in the relationship of national and country of origin identification through a process described by Roccas and Brewer as an increase in social identity complexity that may “enhance awareness that social categorization based on ethnic heritage and social categorization based on national citizenship do not completely overlap” (2002: 96, cf. Verkuyten & Martinovic

2012b). As a consequence, the individual is spurred to adopt strengthened multiple group membership that “involves understanding what people mean when they say that I am both ‘A’ and ‘B’” (Roccas & Brewer 2002: 93).² Compared to the pre-naturalization situation, which can be experienced as relatively straightforward (as the categories of “foreign national” and “member of a specific ethnic group” can have a strong overlap), the post-naturalization situation is decidedly more complex. Henceforth, the naturalized immigrant is entitled to be a member of the mainstream society, although individual foreign roots certainly continue to exist, represented, for example, by familial and ethnic networks, which remain important (Nauck 2007). By way of illustration, a non-naturalized Muslim in Germany might experience both Muslims and the Non-Muslim German majority as rather orthogonal groups. However, after becoming a German citizen – thus a formal member of the host society – the perceived strict orthogonality of the groups is challenged. As a result, the perceived overlap may to some extent increase identity compatibility as a means of conforming with reality (cf. Verkuyten & Martinovic 2012b). Thus, rather than a plain transition from denizen to citizen, naturalization can be considered to be a transition to citizen with foreign descent or citizen with ethnic roots – which demonstrates that sheer assimilation is something hardly to be expected of first generation immigrants.

Empirically, such a decoupling of national and country of origin identity was found by Verkuyten and Martinovic (2012b) for immigrants whose religious identification had lost importance for social identity. Furthermore, qualitative studies support the reasoning that dealing with two different identities can result in higher compatibility of dual identifications (Hopkins 2011). Harper (2011) for example, shows that some of his Muslim interviewees in Britain are active agents in the production of dual identifications to “achieve harmony” in dealing with the relationship between two different identities. In addition, a meta-study by Nguyen and Benet-Martínez (2012) presents evidence that biculturalism is positively associated with psychological and sociocultural adjustment.

² Roccas and Brewer (2002) clarify that the experience of multiple and overlapping social group membership is nothing exceptional or specific to immigrants. For instance, it is a common experience of individuals in childhood, as they are members of a family and of peer groups at the same time.

3.2 Naturalization and Identification – the Case of Germany

Because the legal framework of naturalization and the social context of integration differ for groups with different countries of origin, the German case is ideal for the study of the effects of citizenship acquisition, as these effects may be expected to vary between specific groups. In the following, three distinct groups are studied which differ in their boundary conditions: Turks, EU immigrants, and other immigrants from non-EU countries, in specifically from former Yugoslavia. In particular, differences in the integration pattern of Turks, the largest immigrant group in Germany, have attracted the attention of researchers interested in naturalization behavior (Diehl & Blohm 2003; Diehl & Fick 2012; Hochman 2011; Weinmann et al. 2012).

First, costs of naturalization, and therefore potential post-decisional dissonance, are distinctly higher for Turks compared to immigrants from EU countries. In contrast to EU citizens, who are eligible for dual citizenship, Turks as well as non-EU citizens applying for the German citizenship are usually asked to give up their previous citizenship, resulting in extra monetary (expatriation fee, travel expenses) as well as non-monetary costs (time to appear at the consulate, psychological burden of expatriation) (cf. Weinmann et al. 2012).

Second, the initial conditions of national identification in terms of *subjective opportunities* varies. Turkish immigrants are a rather stigmatized group in Germany and are confronted with more salient ethnic boundaries (Alba & Nee 1997; Wimmer 2009) and stronger negative feelings on the part of the mainstream than are other ethnic groups (Schaeffer 2013). Thus, the signal for Turks that they are – after naturalization – full members of the majority represents a more substantial change in their opportunities for identification than for EU immigrants, who less frequently perceive signals that they do not belong to the mainstream. Consequently, naturalization may be expected to result in a relatively higher positive effect for national identification for Turks compared to EU or other non-EU immigrants (hypothesis H3).

Finally, given the salient ethnic boundaries experienced by non-naturalized Turks, it should be more difficult for this group to be able to develop a hybrid mode of identification – Turkish-German – as compared, for example, to Spaniards, who face less salient ethnic boundaries. Moreover, as EU citizens, Spaniards can share a common ingroup identity with Germans (Dovidio et al. 2009). As a result, the acquisition of citizenship has greater importance for Turks. On the one hand, the extent to which their affiliation with the mainstream is strengthened is relative-

ly large, while, on the other hand, there is little attraction to loosening the emotional attachment to their own ethnic group. Thus, it is expected that Turkish immigrants who have taken German citizenship will show a higher compatibility of country of origin and national identification than EU immigrants (hypothesis H4).

4 Data and Analytical Strategy

Most notably, naturalization in Germany is a relatively rare phenomenon. For instance, in 2014, only 2.2 percent of eligible foreign nationals received a German passport (Statistisches Bundesamt 2015). Thus, to study the causal effect of citizenship acquisition, a panel dataset with a sufficient number of citizenship transitions is required. The *German Socio-Economic Panel* (SOEP) is one of the rare datasets that allows such an analysis and has also been used to study the determinants of naturalization intentions (Diehl & Blohm 2003; Hochman 2011). In brief, the SOEP-Core study that is used here is a household-based, nationally representative panel (Wagner et al. 2007). As immigrants are over-sampled and a broad set of integration-specific indicators are covered, it is a unique resource for studying Germany's immigrant population. However, SOEP records items at two-year intervals, and, until 1993, some items were recorded for non-naturalized immigrants only, e. g. national identification. As a result, nine waves (1993 to 2014) with gaps in between have been used as an unbalanced panel. A subsample from the SOEP-Core data comprising all adult first generation immigrants that held a foreign passport at the time of the first observation is used (cf. Table A3 in the online appendix). This sample consists of 9,883 person-years of 1,888 individuals (of which 319 individuals with 1,589 person-years, experienced a change in citizenship status and became German citizens). Unweighted results are reported in a manner that has been endorsed and executed in the analysis of the SOEP immigration population in previous research (Diehl & Schnell 2006; Hans 2010: 117 f.).

Another advantage of panel data is that unobserved heterogeneity can be handled by applying a linear fixed-effects (FE) approach (Allison 2009).³ In brief, the logic of FE modeling is to demean constant features. Thus, the cumulated influence of all time-invariant characteristics (e. g. sex, country of origin) is eliminated and not explicitly

specified because they cannot explain changes of national identification within individuals. Furthermore, the FE model used here follows the difference-in-difference approach and controls not only for individual-fixed effects but also for year-fixed-effects by estimating the equation (Angrist & Pischke 2009; Rabe-Hesketh & Akronal 2012):

$$Y_{it} = \alpha_i + \beta_1 X_{it} + \lambda_j + \varepsilon_{it} \quad i = 1, \dots, N; j = 1993, \dots, 2014,$$

where α_i is an individual- and λ_j a year-specific parameter. By including a dummy variable that indicates whether an individual was naturalized between two waves and thereafter has German citizenship, the model allows us to look at the average effect of this event on national identification by comparing the individual mean of identification before and after the acquisition of citizenship. The inclusion of year-fixed-effects (difference-in-difference approach) takes into consideration the “usual” change of national identification over time that we observe for non-naturalized individuals as well and estimates the difference for naturalized individuals in the wake of that event. Because of the inclusion of year-fixed-effects, the duration of residence in the host country is not added to the list of covariates as it is simply another correlational function of time. However, in an additional one-way FE model (without year-FE) that includes only individuals who undertook naturalization, the effect of duration of residence in the host country is estimated and presented below, leading to fairly similar results (cf. Model 3 in Table 1). In addition, the country of origin variable cannot be estimated because it is constant within individuals. However, the interaction of group affiliation and the information as to whether a citizenship transition occurred allows us to look at differences in the effect of citizenship acquisition between these groups.

Dependent and Control Variables

National identification is measured as “sense of belonging to Germany” by using a question regarding the extent to which respondents feel German on a five-point scale, ranging from “not at all” to “completely.” The dummy-variable of most interest, *naturalized*, indicates whether an individual has changed his or her citizenship (coded 0 for foreign citizenship, 1 if German passport is held; cf. Table A1 in the online appendix).

To look at the varying effects of citizenship acquisition, different groups of origin are categorized. The first group consists of Turks (TR), representing more than a third of the sample (cf. Table A3 in the online appendix). Turkish immigrants form Germany's largest ethnic mi-

³ The alternative estimation of random-effects models has not been followed as the necessary requirements by the calculation of the Hausman specification test were not fulfilled (Allison 2009).

nority group; they experience salient ethnic boundaries; and they usually have to give up Turkish citizenship in the naturalization process. In addition to Turks, two residuals were generated. The first comprises immigrants from EU14 countries and Switzerland (EU14+CH) who were eligible for dual citizenship on request when applying for a German passport in throughout the period of time covered by this study. Furthermore, these groups experience lower ethnic boundaries and are less affected by prejudices compared to Turks. The second groups is immigrants from former Yugoslavia and other countries (YUG+Other), who are not usually eligible for dual citizenship but have a higher social status than Turks (Schaeffer 2013). Due to the small number of cases the latter group is unfortunately rather heterogeneous, something which must be considered when interpreting the results.

Another independent variable that is used as a control in the first step and in interaction with naturalization in the second step of the analysis is *country of origin identification* (coded similarly to national identification). Time-varying control variables comprise *years in Germany* (divided by ten), *German language skills*, *life satisfaction*, and *multi-person household* as well as *native in household*. German language skills usually increase over time and may strengthen immigrants' likelihood of becoming involved in the host society, thereby leading to higher national identification. They are measured as the self-reported ability to speak German and range from "not at all" to "very good" on a five-point-scale. Life satisfaction (coded 0 to 10, 10 being highest) is controlled to consider that a shift in national identification in the wake of naturalization might be evoked due to a general increase in satisfaction with life.

Because as many citizenship transitions as possible had to be included in the panel and several items are only included in some of the waves (such as the ethnicity of respondent's close friends), social integration cannot be controlled for.⁴ Another proxy for social integration takes into account whether a native German lives in the household. As a dummy variable, *native in household* indicates a change in the household composition, as having a native in the respondents' household can indicate an increase in bridging social capital. Moreover, a change in household composition, e.g. from a single to a multi-person household is controlled for as well.

⁴ Information on subjective feelings of discrimination is available only for some waves in the SOEP. However, concerns about hostility towards foreigners has been included as a dummy-variable in the models as a crude proxy for fear of xenophobia but did not change the results (estimates not shown here but available upon request).

5 Results

To start analyzing immigrants' national identification, a base model including all time-varying variables discussed in the previous section is estimated (cf. Model 1 in Table 1). In a nutshell – and expectedly – German language skills and life satisfaction have positive effects on identification with Germany. In addition, identification with the country of origin is controlled for, and, in general, we find a partial incompatibility as an increase in country of origin identification leads to a decrease in host country identification (cf. Verkuyten & Martinovic 2012a).

With table A3 in the online appendix it becomes evident that national identification not only rises in the first generation over time but that the average level is higher in the sub-sample of individuals that became citizens compared to the total sample. The question is whether this is only because the better integrated immigrants have a greater tendency to naturalize (Diehl & Blohm 2011) or because naturalized individuals experience an increase in national identification after naturalization, an increase that exceeds the "usual" rate over time that non-naturalized individuals undergo as well. To help disentangle this question Model 2 has been estimated: it takes into account a dummy variable that indicates whether an individual is naturalized or not. Here, and in the following, results are shown as illustrations generated with the Stata module *coefplot* (Jann 2013), while all underlying models are reported in detail in Table 1. The results of Model 2 in Figure 1 read as follows: an increase in identification with the country of origin, for instance, leads to a decrease in national identification (coefficient marker below zero) while the addition of a native person to a household leads to an increase in national identification (coefficient marker above zero).

As expected with H1, we find an additional positive effect of citizenship acquisition on immigrants' national identification. Naturalized individuals experience an increase of .25 points in identification with the host country. Model 3 is estimated without following the difference-in-difference approach (cf. Table 1); therefore, it does not include year-fixed-effects, and the sample includes only those individuals who experience a transition in citizenship status. This model can help to assess the effect size of naturalization, as the years an individual has lived in Germany (divided by ten) is included in order to model a linear trend. As a result, we find that the net effect of German citizenship on national identification (.21) adds

Table 1: National identification of first generation immigrants, estimates of fixed-effects regression models

DV: National Identification	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Naturalized		0.254 (0.052)***	0.211 (0.073)**	0.264 (0.073)**	−0.162 (0.244)
Years in Germany/10			0.255 (0.052)**		
Language Skills	0.114 (0.017)**	0.116 (0.017)***	0.079 (0.034)**	0.116 (0.017)**	0.114 (0.017)**
Life Satisfaction	0.014 (0.007)*	0.015 (0.007)**	0.031 (0.018)*	0.015 (0.007)**	0.014 (0.007)**
Multi-Person Household	−0.076 (0.072)	−0.073 (0.071)	−0.306 (0.175)*	−0.073 (0.071)	−0.069 (0.070)
Native in Household	0.185 (0.093)**	0.183 (0.093)**	0.306 (0.153)**	0.183 (0.093)**	0.176 (0.095)*
CO Identification	−0.343 (0.021)**	−0.342 (0.021)***	−0.266 (0.039)**	−0.342 (0.021)**	−0.360 (0.038)**
Naturalized X CO: EU14+CH				−0.057 (0.156)	0.256 (0.398)
Naturalized X CO: YUG+Other				−0.012 (0.108)	0.409 (0.298)
CO Identification X Citizen (Pre-Naturalization)					0.015 (0.070)
CO Identification X Citizen X Naturalized (Post-Naturalization)					0.174 (0.096)*
CO Identification X CO: EU14+CH					−0.044 (0.049)
CO Identification X CO: YUG+Other					0.058 (0.056)
CO Identification X Citizen X CO: EU14+CH (Pre-Naturalization)					0.138 (0.126)
CO Identification X Citizen X CO: YUG+Other (Pre-Naturalization)					0.051 (0.100)
CO Identification X Citizen X Naturalized X CO: EU14+CH (Post-Naturalization)					−0.125 (0.149)
CO Identification X Citizen X Naturalized X CO: YUG+Other (Post-Naturalization)					−0.166 (0.120)
Constant	1.990 (0.117)**	1.975 (0.117)**	1.796 (0.285)**	1.796 (0.285)**	2.026 (0.119)**
R-squared	0.182	0.185	0.196	0.185	0.188
Person-Years	9,883	9,883	1,589	9,883	9,883
N	1,888	1,888	319	1,888	1,888
Individual-fixed-effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year-fixed-effects	✓	✓	–	✓	✓

Note: Cluster-robust standard errors in parentheses; ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$; CO = Country of origin

Data: SOEP-Core (1993–2014)

up to the effect of living in Germany for approximately ten years (.26).⁵

⁵ However, while such a comparison might help to give an impression of the effect size of naturalization for national identification, we have to keep in mind that such integration processes cannot always be described as a linear or quadratic term (cf. Hans 2010).

In sum, national identification is not only influenced by exposure to the host society over time but is also boosted by citizenship acquisition. In addition, controlling for identification with the country of origin only minimally reduces the effect of naturalization on national identification, revealing that the positive effect of naturalization seems not to occur through a decrease in country of origin

Note: based on Model 2 in Table 1; Person-Years=9,883; N=1,888; 95 percent confidence intervals

Fig. 1: Marginal effects predicting national identification

identification.⁶ More importantly, this is a first indication of a change in the degree of compatibility of national and country of origin identification. Because the positive effect of naturalization on national identification remains constant under control for country of origin identification, the increase in national identification is additive and not attributable to country of origin identification: leading to an increase in national identification among immigrants who show either a hybrid mode identification (if their degree of country of origin identification has been high) or follow an assimilation pattern (if their identification has been very low or zero); otherwise, a negative effect of naturalization on country of origin identification would have been observed.

It was reasoned that naturalization boosts identification not only in order to avoid post-decisional dissonance but also because new Germans experience greater opportunities for national identification. For instance, the new passport may entitle the new citizen to feel that he or she is a part of the mainstream, in the sense of: “I might be different (or even: they may not like me) but I am officially German (now) and equipped with equal rights.” Consequently, it was expected that German citizens of Turkish origin – and thus the group facing more salient ethnic boundaries than other groups – would experience the strongest boost in identification with Germany through naturalization (H3).

⁶ Estimations are not shown here but are available upon request. Additional analyses support this reasoning based upon the fact that, conversely, naturalization has no effect on country of origin identification.

By incorporating time-invariant dummy variables for three groups of differing national origins as an interaction with naturalization, we are able to inspect different levels of the effect of naturalization across these groups (cf. Allison 2009). The result illustrated in Figure 2 shows a positive but similar effect of naturalization for all three groups. Consequently, H3 has to be rejected as contrary to expectation, the increase in national identification following acquisition of a German passport triggers a general effect which varies only slightly and insignificantly between groups.

Note: based on Model 2 in Table 1; Person-Years=9,883; N=1,888; 95 percent confidence intervals

Fig. 2: Marginal effects of naturalization predicting national identification by groups of origin

The results presented in Figure 1 revealed that country of origin and national identification are, to a certain extent, at odds. However, it was argued above that citizenship acquisition leads to greater compatibility of the two identifications, especially for Turks. This assumption is examined in Model 5 (cf. Table 1): by comparing non-naturalized and naturalized individuals, we are able to assess differences in the relationship of country of origin identification to national identification as well as the strength of the relationship pre- and post-naturalization for those who have been naturalized. By using non-naturalized individuals as a benchmark, we are able to evaluate what kind of trajectory the naturalized citizens follow: one which shows stronger identity compatibility before becoming citizens, or one in which compatibility rises in the post-naturalization phase.

The essence of Model 5 is shown in Figure 3. For each origin group, the figure shows the relationship between ethnic and national identification for individuals who did not naturalize as well as those who did. For the latter the values were calculated for the periods both before and after citizenship acquisition. In the end, the general assumption of an increased compatibility of national and country of origin identification in the wake of naturaliza-

Note: based on Model 5 in Table 1; Person-Years=9,883; N=1,888; 95 percent confidence intervals

Fig. 3: Marginal effects of country of origin identification for non-citizens, citizens prior to naturalization, and citizens after naturalization predicting national identification by group of origin

tion (H2) has to be rejected.⁷ Yet, there are group-specific differences. First of all, we see again that country of origin identification is generally negatively related to national identification in all three groups. In line with the expectation (H4), Turkish immigrants show some evidence of an increased compatibility of national and country of origin identification after naturalization, whereas no such effect occurs for EU immigrants and other non-EU immigrants. For Turks, we find the same low compatibility in terms of a negative relational pattern of ethnic and national identification for those who never became naturalized and those who did in the period prior to naturalization. A pronounced, yet only significant at the 10 percent level, improvement emerges once members of this group hold a German passport as compared to their situation prior to naturalization. However, there is still a negative effect of country of origin identification on national identification for naturalized Turks, but it decreases from -0.35 before naturalization to -0.17 after naturalization, indicating that the negative relationship is greatly attenuated. In contrast, the results for the two other groups (EU14+CH, YUG+Other) are somewhat different: the citizens-to-be of these groups already show a higher compatibility compared to non-citizens. Naturalization obviously does not change the relationship of national and country of origin identi-

fication at all, but it was never really a problem for these groups anyway. For Turks, the two identifications seem to be more difficult to combine, yet naturalization enables their compatibility. The results shown in Figure 3 show tendencies rather than significant results due to relatively low case numbers (of naturalized individuals) and therefore large standard errors. However, the results for Turks are remarkable and indicate that naturalization seems to change their path to integration more fundamentally by increasing national identification and raising the compatibility of national and country of origin identification.

6 Conclusion

Complementary to past research revealing a citizenship premium for immigrants' socio-economic integration (Steinhardt 2012), this paper studies the effect of naturalization on identification. The acquisition of host country citizenship is understood as an individual investment and a unique event in an immigrant's life course, altering the individual situation in which identification takes place. Although the analyses presented are preliminary in nature, as they are based on a small sample of naturalized individuals, thus reflecting the generally low naturalization rates in Germany, it has brought to light evidence for a positive effect of German citizenship acquisition in terms of an increase in national identification and a higher compatibility of national and country of origin identification.

In sum, two mechanisms have been discussed as explanations as to why naturalization might positively affect national identification. First, naturalization necessitates monetary and non-monetary investments, which can lead to post-decisional dissonance if immigrants do not identify with the country to which they have decided to officially belong. Second, following qualitative evidence indicating that being a citizen of the host country entitles immigrants to full membership in the society they now formally belong to, naturalization may promote a change in subjective opportunities for identification. It can be considered as a proof or symbol that increases a new citizen's chances of gaining recognition as a fellow citizen and that entitles him or her to claim full membership in the receiving society. Both mechanisms – which have not been directly observed – have led to the expectation that former Turkish nationals benefit most from naturalization. First of all, their naturalization costs are higher, and, secondly, as a group facing salient ethnic boundaries and exclusion, it can be assumed that naturalization-related changes in subjective opportunities are more substantive

⁷ The results do not change significantly if individuals with dual citizenship are excluded. However, as the information on dual citizenship is not available in all waves, this leads to a significant loss of cases.

for this group. However, the results show that the positive effect of naturalization on national identification is a rather general one as effects are similar for the three differentiated country of origin groups. This may be due to the rather heterogeneous nature of these groups (which had to conflate different source-nationalities due to the low number of cases in the dataset) compared to Turks. Another explanation for the lack of differences between country of origin groups could possibly be that subjective costs of naturalization do not differ as much as anticipated between EU vs. non-EU foreigners. For instance, individual application costs may vary along the lines of the legal stipulations according to which naturalization takes place or may depend on whether dual citizenship is tolerated (with or without the help of an attorney), even if it is not legally allowed.⁸ For instance, the rejection of dual citizenship seems to be so deeply entrenched in Germany that even those who by law are eligible to hold two passports are not aware of their right or avoid its application with an eye toward the significant effort required to do so (Fick et al. 2014). However, to take individual costs of naturalization into account, information on the objective costs and persistence of a second nationality is needed; in this paper it was only possible to differentiate the anticipated costs of naturalization along a general country of origin criterion.

In a second step, it has been argued that naturalization is an even more fundamental shift leading to the experience of a more complex social identity and therefore to an increase in the compatibility of country of origin and national identification. Here, the analyses revealed the importance of distinguishing between different groups of origin: Turks experience a distinct incompatibility of ethnic and national identification, but this incompatibility is considerably reduced once they are naturalized. Although the results should not be over-interpreted, it appears that naturalization makes it easier for Turks in Germany, as a relatively stigmatized group, to build up a certain degree of attachment to the mainstream without needing to abandon their country of origin roots.

In sum, the analyses show that it is challenging yet important to study integration and its determinants as a process over time. Contrary to previous studies, which reported no distinct positive effects of citizenship acquisition but only examined a narrow timeframe and did not include a real measurement of identification prior to naturalization, the present study has gone beyond previous limitations and provides a theoretical perspective that

takes into account the investment required by the decision to naturalize. Overall, as an event that takes place only once in a lifetime, naturalization seems indeed to affect identification with the host country; there is also a substantial effect, approximately equivalent to living ten years in the host country. The results should not be interpreted as proof that unconditional access to citizenship can help to increase immigrants' attachment to the host country. Rather, they underscore the importance of a more open social context for integration to occur within society, particularly for underprivileged groups. In Germany, such societal changes are discussed under the term 'Willkommenskultur' (welcoming culture). Here it has been argued that the subjective opportunities for integration are positively influenced by the inclusion of immigrants as members of the citizenry, provoking what T. H. Marshall described as "a bond of a different kind, a direct sense of community membership" (1950: 92). However, it has been shown in this paper that although naturalization can boost immigrants' identification with the host society, this does not necessarily have to be accompanied by assimilation but can possibly lead instead to a hybrid mode of integration in terms of identification. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that the positive effect of naturalization on national identification studied here is an average effect for varying periods and for immigrants at varying stages of their life course. It remains unanswered whether the effect of naturalization is greater in specific time periods or whether early naturalization is more important to the integration process than is citizenship acquisition at a later stage in the life course. Closely related to this, it remains an open question whether there is a "honeymoon effect" of naturalization and, for instance, whether national identification declines after its first increase, especially if anticipated expectations are disappointed. However, especially for Turkish immigrants, a successful path to integration seems to involve integration into the host society without breaking with their country of origin or ethnic group. Policy changes that are intended to increase immigrants' integration should therefore not decry individual integration strategies that attempt to make two worlds compatible.

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⁸ In the data little evidence can be found that the effect size of naturalization on national identification for Turks has decreased over time.

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