ıÖZS ̵

Unequally welcome: Austrians' differing attitudes towards Arab/Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. The impact of human values and perceived threat

Martin Ulrich ⓘD

Abstract This article examines whether Austrians hold different attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees compared to Arab/Afghan refugees and explores key mechanisms driving these attitudinal differences. Using data from the third wave of the Austrian Values in Crisis Panel ($N = 1357$), the study confirms that Austrians exhibit more favorable views towards Ukrainian refugees. Negative attitudes towards Arab/Afghan refugees are associated with feelings of realistic threat (particularly crime), while both Arabs/Afghans and Ukrainians are associated with symbolic threat. Basic value orientations further impact attitudes towards refugees. Self-Transcendence values correlate with favorable attitudes towards refugees overall, Self-Enhancement values only correlate with more favorable attitudes towards Ukrainians. Conservation values indirectly impact attitudes towards Arab/Afghan refugees by intensifying the influence of perceived threat. These results suggest that differences in attitudes stem from concerns about realistic threats and the differing impact of value orientations.

✉ Martin Ulrich

Department of European Social Research, Chair of sociology with a focus on Europe, Campus, Saarland University, Building C5 3, Room 0.16, 66123 Saarbrücken, Germany
E-Mail: martin.ulrich@uni-saarland.de

✿ Springer

Ungleich willkommen: Unterschiede in den Einstellungen von Österreicher*innen gegenüber arabischen/afghanischen und ukrainischen Flüchtigen. Der Einfluss von Wertvorstellungen und Bedrohungswahrnehmungen

Zusammenfassung Dieser Artikel untersucht die Einstellungen in der österreichischen Bevölkerung gegenüber ukrainischen und arabischen/afghanischen Flüchtlingen. Die Daten der dritten Welle der österreichischen Version des Values in Crisis Panels (*N* = 1357) zeigen, dass Österreicher*innen positivere Einstellungen gegenüber ukrainischen Flüchtlingen aufweisen als gegenüber arabischen/afghanischen Flüchtlingen. Der Artikel beleuchtet auch wichtige Ursachen für diese Unterschiede. Negative Einstellungen gegenüber arabischen/afghanischen Flüchtlinge korrelieren mit Bedrohungsgefühlen (insb. in Bezug auf Kriminalität), während beide Flüchtlingsgruppen mit symbolischer Bedrohung assoziiert werden. Wertvorstellungen nehmen zusätzlich Einfluss auf diese Einstellungen. Selbsttranszendenzwerte korrelieren mit positiveren Einstellungen zu beiden Flüchtlingsgruppen, Selbstverbesserungswerte korrelieren nur mit positiven Einstellungen zu Ukrainer*innen. Konservative Werte wirken sich indirekt auf Einstellungen gegenüber Flüchtlingen aus, da sie Bedrohungsgefühle verstärken. Diese Ergebnisse implizieren, dass Bedrohungsgefühle und Wertüberzeugungen Unterschiede in Einstellungen über Flüchtlinge erzeugen.

Schlüsselwörter Symbolische Bedrohung · Realistische Bedrohung · Migrationseinstellungen · Werte · Flüchtlinge

1 Introduction

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to the largest movement of refugees in Europe since the 2015 refugee crisis. As of March 2025, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported 6.4 million Ukrainian refugees in Europe.[1] While Germany and Poland are taking in the most refugees in absolute numbers, Austria had the second highest per capita influx of refugees in the EU (after Cyprus) in 2022 and 2023.[2,3] 78,000 Ukrainians were reported to have arrived in 2022,[4] and a further influx of 16,000 people were reported for 2023.[5]

---

[1] UNHCR: Ukraine Refugee Situation. https://data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine, last accessed March 25th, 2025.

[2] BM.I (2023): Asyl-Statistik 2022. https://www.bmi.gv.at/301/Statistiken/files/Jahresstatistiken/Asyl statistik_Jahresstatistik_2022.pdf, last accessed: March 25th, 2025.

[3] BM.I (2024): Asyl-Statistik 2023. https://www.bmi.gv.at/301/Statistiken/files/Jahresstatistiken/Asyl statistik_Jahresstatistik_2023_20240325.pdf, last accessed: March 25th, 2025.

[4] Statistik Austria (June 1st, 2023): 2022 starkes Bevölkerungswachstum durch Zuwanderung aus der Ukraine. Mit rund 10700 Sterbefällen mehr als Geburten war Geburtenbilanz negativ. https://www.statistik.at/fileadmin/announcement/2023/05/20230601Demographie2022.pdf, last accessed March 25th, 2025.

[5] Statistik Austria (May 28th, 2024): Bevölkerungswachstum 2023 deutlich geringer als im Jahr zuvor. Geburtenbilanz negativ, Fertilität auf Tiefstand, Wanderungsbilanz positiv. https://www.statistik.at/fileadmin/announcement/2024/05/20240528Demographie2023.pdf, last accessed March 25th, 2025.

This new humanitarian crisis poses an important challenge for social scientists: How does the Austrian public react to this inflow of refugees? This is not a trivial question, as immigration attitudes can influence voting behavior, immigration policies (see Malloy et al. 2022; Eger and Bohman 2016; Rydgren 2008), lead to negative outcomes for immigrants (e.g. discrimination or impaired well-being) (Cohrs and Kessler 2013, pp. 4ff; McLaren 2003), or increase political polarization (Dochow-Sondershaus and Teney 2024, pp. 1381ff; Mau et al. 2023, pp. 17f.). In extreme cases, negative attitudes can result in physical attacks against minority groups (Allen 2007, p. 158). Moreover, societies can only overcome humanitarian crises of this magnitude with the support of the population. Hence, it is essential to study public attitudes towards the Russia-Ukraine war and displaced Ukrainian citizens.

During the 2015 refugee crisis, Europeans' attitudes about Syrian or Afghan refugees were rather critical (Aschauer 2020, pp. 199ff; Czymara 2020, p. 1317). However, recent studies show that Europeans hold more favorable attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees than towards Afghans or Syrians (Moise et al. 2024, p. 365; Bansak et al. 2023, p. 850; Letki et al. 2024, pp. 15ff; Dražanová and Geddes 2023, pp. 138ff.). This is attributed to the different characteristics of the two refugee groups. The main difference, these studies argue, is the fact that Syrian/Afghan refugees trigger feelings of symbolic threat due to their Islamic background, while Ukrainians do not trigger these feelings (Moise et al. 2024, pp. 358f; De Coninck 2023, pp. 581f.). While these results are important steps in public opinion research, they are often limited to descriptive analysis, meaning that it has not been tested yet if differences in attitudes are in fact related to varying levels of symbolic threat. Other possible mechanisms, such as differing effects of human values, have also not been investigated yet.

This is the main objective of this paper. I will analyze Austrians' differing attitudes towards Ukrainian and Arab/Afghan refugees, the role of human values as well as perceptions of security and symbolic threat in shaping these attitudes. Austria is a relevant case for two reasons. First, Austria had one the highest per capita numbers of refugee influx in the EU in 2022 and 2023 (see above). In 2015, Austria had the third highest per capita intake of refugees (after Hungary and Sweden).[6] These numbers make studying Austrians' opinions regarding refugees highly relevant. Second, Austria is one of the few EU member states that is not a member of NATO. This puts Austria in a special political position that might affect the populations' attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees.

First, I will demonstrate that Austrians do indeed differ in their attitudes towards Arab/Afghan and Ukrainian refugees. Austrians are more likely to agree that the state should be generous in evaluating refugee applications when judging Ukrainians rather than Arabs/Afghans, and Arabs/Afghans are more often evaluated as receiving too much money from the state. Second, using the human values scale by Schwartz et al. (2015), I will show that conservation and self-transcendence values impact

---

[6] Pew Research Center (2016): Number of Refugees to Europe Surges to Record 1.3 Mio. in 2015. https://www.pewresearch.org/global-migration-and-demography/2016/08/02/number-of-refugees-to-europe-surges-to-record-1-3-million-in-2015/, last accessed: March 25th, 2025.

attitudes towards refugees. Using further variables to capture perceptions of security and symbolic threat, I will demonstrate that human values have both direct effects on attitudes about refugees and indirect effects via threat perceptions.

2 Theory: values, threat, and attitudes towards refugees

Austrians' reactions to Syrian or Afghan refugees are mostly negative. In a study by Aschauer (2020, pp. 199ff.), 87% of respondents state that Muslims should adapt to Austrian culture, 72% think that Muslims are no cultural enrichment for the country, and 70% state that they think that Islam does not fit into the western world. Czymara (2020, p. 1317) finds that Austrians' immigration attitudes are quite critical in comparison to respondents from other European countries. When asked whether immigrants make their country a better or worse place to live, Austrians show more negative attitudes on average than respondents from other countries in the 11th round of the European Social Survey (2024) (Fig. 1). The public discourse in light of the 2015 refugee crisis was focused on limiting migration (Rheindorf and Wodak 2018), refugees' supposed unwillingness to integrate ("Integrationsunwilligkeit", see Wodak 2015), or the safety and economy risk of taking in refugees (Kluknavská et al. 2021).

However, the geopolitical situation of the current Ukrainian refugee movements is vastly different from the 2015 refugee crisis. Moreover, Ukrainian and Arab/
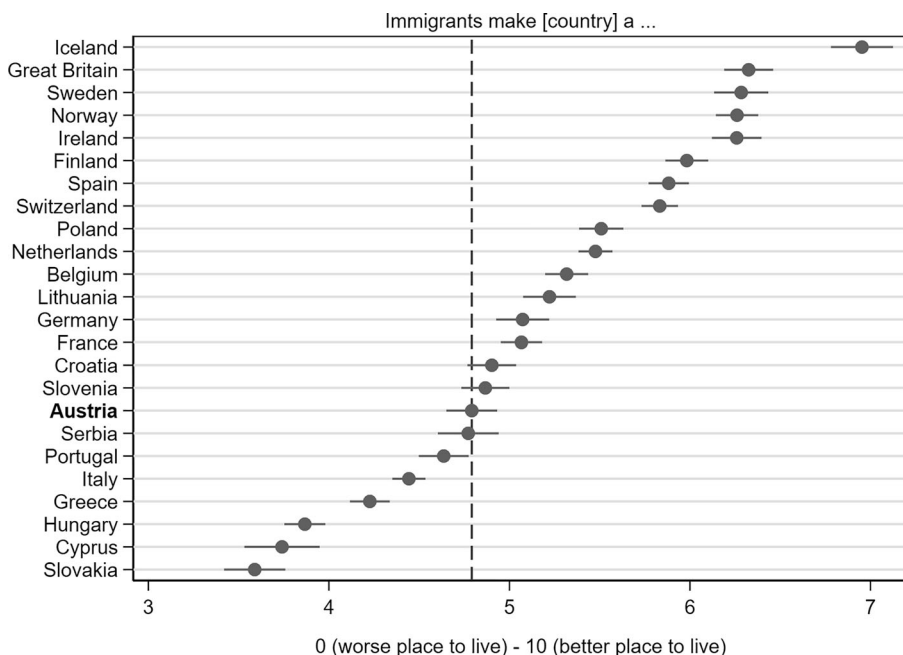
Fig. 1 Mean attitudes towards immigrants in the European Social Survey (2024; *N* = 39,030); weighted data, own illustration

Afghan refugees are different in several ways. While Arab/Afghan refugees were mostly young men (Buber-Ennser et al. 2016), Ukrainian refugees are predominantly younger, educated women (Brücker et al. 2023). Afghan refugees are likely to be Muslims and members of ethnic minorities, while Ukrainian refugees are mostly Caucasian and Christian. Male and Muslim refugees are generally less welcomed by Europeans than females and Christians (Bansak et al. 2023, p. 850). Additionally, the war in Ukraine is geographically and historically closer to Austrian politics than the war in Syria, as Russia's invasion of Ukraine signals a direct threat to other European countries, while Russia's alliance with the Assad regime in Syria did not pose an immediate threat to Austria. This difference might elicit more empathy towards Ukrainian refugees (Moise et al. 2024, pp. 358f.). This coincides with varying attitudes towards the two refugee groups, with Ukrainians being judged more favorably in several studies (Bansak et al. 2023, p. 850; Dražanová and Geddes 2023, pp. 138ff; Letki et al. 2024, pp. 15ff; Moise et al. 2024, p. 365).

The expected mechanism is that Muslim refugees trigger more feelings of threat among natives than Ukrainians. These hypotheses build on Integrated Threat Theory (ITT) (Stephan and Stephan 2000), which focusses on the impact of perceived threat on prejudice. ITT builds on prior theories (especially realistic group conflict theory (c.f. Bobo 1988; Sherif 1967) and theories about symbolic racism (c.f. Sears 1988)) and combines these into a comprehensive theoretical framework.

ITT (Stephan and Stephan 2000; Stephan et al. 2016) differentiates two major types of perceived threat that can lead to prejudice or intergroup hostility.[7] First, realistic threat refers to perceived threats that (members of) an out-group pose to one's ingroup. This can relate to fear of crime or terrorism, or economic competition (Quillian 1995, pp. 590f; Blumer 1958, pp. 3f; c.f. Stephan et al. 2016). Second, symbolic threat is the feeling that a minority group is challenging the values and culture of the native population (Kinder and Sears 1981, p. 416; Stephan and Stephan 2000, pp. 25ff.). This symbolic threat can be a challenge towards natives' social identity, which is "that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel 1974, p. 69). Such threats to one's self-image can emotionally charge or even create new areas of competition and motivate aggression or discrimination against the outgroup (ebd., pp. 79ff; Tajfel and Turner 2004, pp. 283ff.). Consequently, both realistic and symbolic threat have proven to be strong predictors of negative views of immigrants (Stephan et al. 2005; Rios et al. 2018), willingness to discriminate against immigrants (Pereira et al. 2010), and preferences for far-right parties (Lucassen and Lubbers 2012).

Given that previous studies have found that individuals rate refugees differently based on their country of origin (see above), it is expected that Arabs/Afghans and Ukrainians trigger different levels of realistic and symbolic threat. Indeed, Hellwig and Sinno (2017, pp. 345ff.) find evidence that migrants from Eastern Europe are associated with economic rather than symbolic threats, while Muslim migrants are

---

[7] ITT initially lists four types of threat (realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotypes). However, the latter two are now seen as consequences and subtypes of threats (c.f. Stephan et al. 2008). Hence, ITT now only focusses on realistic and symbolic threat.

often equated with terrorism rather than economic competition. Yet, public discourse in Austria refers to both symbolic and realistic threat when discussing Muslim immigrants (Kluknavská et al. 2021; Schmuck and Matthes 2017). Thus, while Ukrainian refugees might be seen as an economic threat, the fact that they are mostly Caucasian and Christian makes it unlikely that they will pose symbolic threat. Arab/ Afghan refugees, on the other hand, are likely to trigger both realistic threat in the form of security concerns and symbolic threat. The literature also shows that symbolic threat might play a stronger role in predicting anti-immigrant attitudes than realistic threat (McLaren and Johnson 2007, pp. 721ff; Kinder and Sears 1981, pp. 421ff; Velasco González et al. 2008, pp. 676ff.). Consequently, I expect Austrians to be more favorable towards Ukrainians than towards Afghans because the latter trigger more feelings of realistic and symbolic threat. This leads to the following hypotheses:[8]

H1 Austrians have more positive attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees than Arab/ Afghan refugees.

H2a Arab/Afghan refugees are associated with realistic threats, whereas Ukrainian refugees are not.

H2b Arab/Afghan refugees are associated with symbolic threats, whereas Ukrainian refugees are not.

Basic value orientations also play a key role in predicting attitudes towards immigrants or refugees. One of the most influential conceptions of values was developed by Shalom H. Schwartz. According to him, values are "transsituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity" (Schwartz 1994, p. 21). As such, they are intrinsically linked to political ideologies (Schwartz et al. 2010, pp. 437ff; Piurko et al. 2011, pp. 542f; Ulrich 2021, p. 16, 2025, pp. 232ff.), and impact many types of political thought and behavior, such as vote choice (Schwartz et al. 2010, p. 427), or attitudes towards immigration (Davidov et al. 2008a, pp. 589f; Davidov et al. 2020, p. 561ff.).

Schwartz and colleagues originally differentiated ten values (Self-Direction, Stimulation, Hedonism, Achievement, Power, Security, Conformity, Tradition, Benevolence, and Universalism). These ten original values can be subsumed into four higher-order value orientations. Individuals adhere to each of these ten values to varying degrees, which create individual value trade-offs that govern their thoughts and actions. Schwartz arranged the ten values in a circular model (the inner white circles in Fig. 2), in which neighboring values are most complementary. Values at opposite ends of the circle are instead mutually exclusive (Schwartz 1992, pp. 14f., 30ff; Schwartz et al. 2010, pp. 424ff.). Schwartz and colleagues have subsequently refined the theory and expanded the set of values up to 19 values (c.f. Schwartz et al.

---

[8] Based on the literature, another relevant hypothesis would be that Ukrainian refugees pose more economic threat than Arab/Afghan refugees. The VIC3 data set does not offer any variables that would allow to measure perceived economic threats. Thus, I am unable to test this hypothesis in this paper. I will return to this point when discussing the limitations.

Fig. 2 Circular value model (Schwartz and Cieciuch 2022, p. 1006)
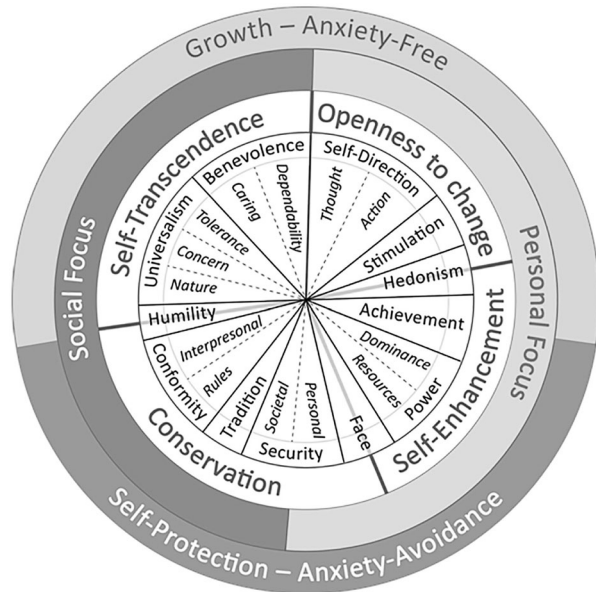
2012; 2017; Schwartz and Cieciuch 2022), but most surveys (including the survey used for this article) still apply the 10-value version.

Previous studies show that universalism, with its focus on tolerance, general well-being, and its commitment to equality (Schwartz 1992, pp. 11f; Schwartz et al. 2012, pp. 667f.) is associated with more willingness to allow immigration. Conservation values (Conformity, Tradition, and Security) have the opposite effect (Davidov et al. 2008a, pp. 589f; Davidov et al. 2014, p. 277; Davidov et al. 2020, pp. 563ff; Vecchione et al. 2012, pp. 367ff.). The main drivers behind this association are likely the values of Conformity with its focus on following expectations (Schwartz 1992, pp. 9f; Schwartz et al. 2012, p. 667), and Tradition, which emphasizes hegemonic values and submitting to one's life circumstances (Schwartz et al. 2012, p. 667; Schwartz 1992, p. 10). Since conservation values are closely tied to the ideology of conservatism (Schwartz et al. 2010, pp. 437ff; Piurko et al. 2011, p. 542f; Ulrich 2021, p. 16, 2025, pp. 232ff.), further mechanisms can be found in conservatism literature. Conservatism correlates with ethnocentrism (Sidanius and Pratto 1999, p. 7; Aschauer 2016, pp. 345ff.), which would generate more negative views towards immigrants or refugees. Conservatives are also resistant to change (White et al. 2020, p. 21; Freeden 2008, pp. 332ff.), which would motivate opposition to refugee inflows that might change the demography of the host country.

Conservation values might also impact attitudes towards refugees indirectly by determining the amount of security and symbolic threat individuals perceive. Prior studies postulate that conservation values predict more negative immigration attitudes as conservatives are more susceptible to feelings of symbolic threat (Davidov et al. 2008a, pp. 589f; Davidov et al. 2014, p. 277; Davidov et al. 2020, pp. 563ff; Vecchione et al. 2012, pp. 367ff.). This would especially relate to the value of Security, which focuses on protecting individual or collective interests (e.g. national

security) (Schwartz 1992, p. 9). Indeed, conservatives experience more anxiety than liberals (Block and Block 2006, p. 746; Jost et al. 2003, p. 351). This proneness to anxiety in conservation values is also implemented in the circular value model by Schwartz et al. (2012) (see the outer ring in Fig. 2). This draws more attention to possible realistic and symbolic threats. Refugees could be seen as a challenge to ethnic or value homogeneity, thereby supposedly undermining societal cohesion. This emphasis on sameness is also deeply imbedded in authoritarianism (Stenner 2009, pp. 143f.), which often correlates with conservatism (Feldman and Johnston 2014, pp. 345f; Ulrich 2025, pp. 227f.). Hence, conservatism might have direct effects on attitudes towards refugees and indirect effects via the perceived threat that refugees might pose.

However, these indirect effects might be different in the case of Ukrainian refugees than in the case of Arab/Afghan refugees. While immigration attitudes and values are generally assumed to be stable over time (Rudnev et al. 2016; Vecchione et al. 2016), others indicate that they adapt to current events to a certain extent (Bansak et al. 2023, pp. 850ff; Eder et al. 2022, pp. 343ff; Ulrich 2024, pp. 459f.). If the above-mentioned differences between the refugee groups indeed lead to significant differences in natives' attitudes, it can be assumed that human values impact attitudes towards Ukrainians in a different way.

Since Self-Transcendence values are based on universalism and benevolence (see Fig. 2), it seems sensible that they might motivate helping refugees out of principle. Hence, I do not expect to find differences in their impact on attitudes towards Arabs/Afghans and Ukrainians.

The value of Power, however, is related to legitimizing status inequalities and dominance over other groups (Schwartz 1992, pp. 8f; Schwartz et al. 2012, pp. 666f.), which could result in individuals favoring Ukrainians over Arabs/Afghans because the latter could be seen as a group distinct from the respondents' in-group. In addition, self-enhancement values are correlated to neoliberalism (Piurko et al. 2011, pp. 542f; Ulrich 2021, p. 16). Since Ukrainian refugees are, on average, better educated than their Arab/Afghan counterparts, they may be seen as more of an asset for the national economy by individuals with high Self-Enhancement values.

Conservation values may also take different effects for Arab/Afghan refugees than for Ukrainians. Davidov et al. (2020, pp. 563ff.) show that conservatives are more prone to feel symbolic threat. High levels of the Security value may be more prone to trigger realistic security threats, especially if a refugee group is associated with crime or terrorism. This is also more likely in the case of a group consisting of mostly young men (Arabs/Afghans) than in the case of a group composed mainly by women (Ukrainians).

H3a Self-Transcendence values are correlated to more positive attitudes towards both Arab/Afghan and Ukrainian refugees.

H3b Self-Enhancement and Conservation values are related towards more negative attitudes towards Arab/Afghan refugees, but not towards Ukrainians.
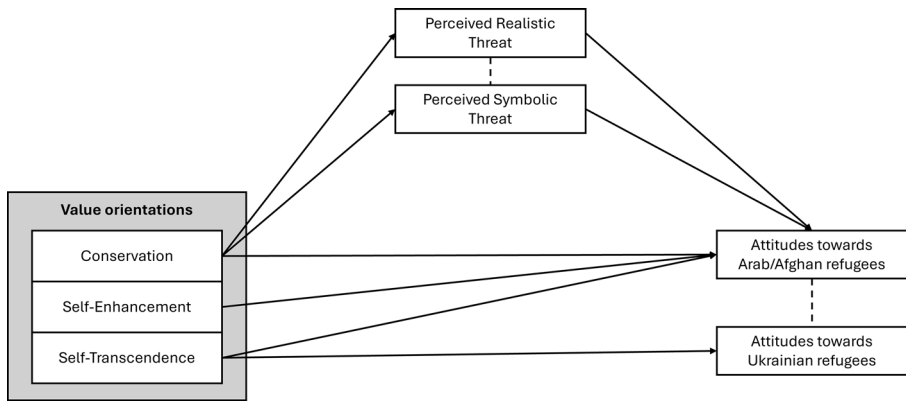
Fig. 3 Theoretical model

Figure 3 summarizes the theoretical model. The remainder of this article will focus on the total effect of human values and perceived threat on attitudes towards refugees.

3 Data and methods

3.1 Data

For this article, I use data from the third wave of the Austrian version of the Values in Crisis Panel (Aschauer et al. 2023) (VIC3). The Values in Crisis Panel was launched in 2020 to examine the development of values during the Covid-19 Pandemic. In Austria, three waves have been conducted: the first wave in May 2020, the second in March/April of 2021. The data used in this study (VIC3) was collected in July 2022, five months after the Russian invasion of Ukraine started. The data thus represent the respondents' attitudes during the onset of the Ukrainian refugee movements. This marks a crucial point of reference for future developments in public opinion towards Ukrainian refugees.

The respondents for VIC3 were recruited via an Online-Access-Panel. The recruitment followed a quota sampling approach based on age, gender, education, and region to minimize sampling bias. The final VIC3 sample does not represent the general population perfectly, e.g. older females are slightly underrepresented. Still, the quota sampling and the use of weights in the analysis minimize bias due to sampling effects (c.f. Prandner and Seymer 2024, for a detailed assessment of the data quality of the VIC Panel). Table 1 provides descriptives for the VIC3 overall sample ($N=2123$), as well as the final sample used in the analysis after excluding respondents with missing values in the relevant variables ($N=1357$).

As Table 1 shows, the whole VIC3 and the final sample are quite similar. The only notable difference between the two is that the respondents in the valid sample are 10 years older on average than the drop-out, which will need to be kept in mind when interpreting the results. However, the valid sample does not differ significantly from

Table 1 Sample descriptions (distributions in %)

		Weighed data		Unweighted data	
		Whole VIC3 sample (N=2123)	Final sample (N=1357)	Whole VIC3 sample (N=2123)	Final sample (N=1357)
Gender	Male	48.8	51.4	48.9	50.7
	Female	50.9	48.6	50.1	49.3
	Other/Missing	0.3	–	0.3	–
Age	17–19 years	6.7	4.2	5.3	3.0
	20–29 years	14.0	9.5	16.7	11.6
	30–39 years	15.9	14.8	16.2	15.2
	40–49 years	15.2	16.3	17.0	18.7
	50–59 years	17.9	19.9	19.1	21.2
	60–69 years	14.0	17.3	14.2	17.8
	≥70 years	16.3	17.9	11.5	12.5
Education	Compulsory school	24.8	21.6	13.7	11.6
	Completed apprenticeship	34.5	36.3	41.4	42.9
	Vocational middle school	10.4	11.6	10.6	11.8
	General/vocational higher school	15.5	15.8	20.4	20.2
	Academic education	14.9	14.6	14.0	13.5
Getting by with household income	Very hard	9.7	10.9	9.7	11.2
	Rather hard	22.8	25.8	23.1	26.3
	Neither	29.7	28.0	30.0	28.1
	Rather easy	24.3	26.0	24.7	25.6
	Very easy	9.1	9.2	8.8	8.8
	Missing	4.4	–	3.7	–

the rest in average educational level, easiness in getting by with household income, political ideology (self-placement between 1 "left-wing" and 10 "right-wing"), or gender composition, and in turn, the exclusion of respondents will not bias the results substantially.

3.2 Variables

Attitudes towards different groups of refugees are the focus of this study. The VIC3 survey asked the respondents two relevant questions. First, respondents were asked whether they think that the state should be generous when evaluating refugee applications from Arab/Afghan refugees.[9] Second, respondents were asked whether they believe that Arab/Afghan refugees receive too much money from the state.[10] Both questions were also asked about Ukrainian refugees with identical wording, which allows for a comparison of respondents' attitudes towards these two refugee groups. Respondents rated each statement between 1 ("Don't agree at all") and 5 ("Agree completely").

The variables were recoded so that higher values represent more favorable attitudes towards refugees. Since the two variables about Ukrainian refugees correlate with r = 0.48, and the variables about Arab/Afghan refugees correlate with r = 0.60, an average score for each of the refugee groups was calculated. This resulted in two main dependent variables for the regression analysis, one representing attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and one measuring attitudes towards Arab/Afghan refugees.

Human values were operationalized via the Schwartz' Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al. 2015). This scale presents respondents 21 statements about a fictional person. For each item, respondents rated how similar they consider themselves to the fictional person on a scale ranging from 1 "not at all similar" to 6 "very similar to me". The ten Schwartz-values were calculated as mean-centered scores. Following Davidov et al. (2008a, p. 588), the higher-order values were used as the ten individual values load very strongly on the higher-order values in structural equation modelling, meaning that using the ten values would not add further explanatory value (see also Davidov et al. 2008b).

Respondents were also asked which policy goals they find particularly important for Austria by selecting a maximum of three from a list of ten possible goals. Seeing how refugees are often seen as a safety threat (see above), the information whether fighting crime or fighting terrorism were selected by the respondents as one of their top 3 policy concerns was used as a relevant variable. If one of these goals is significantly related to more critical attitudes about refugees, there is a strong indication that these refugees will be associated with crime and terrorism, and therefore pose a supposed realistic threat. Furthermore, if these goals are significant for one refugee group but not the other, the implications about respondents' prejudices become even

---

[9] The original wording of the item in German is: "Bei der Prüfung von Asylanträgen von Geflüchteten aus dem arabischen Raum/Afghanistan sollte der Staat großzügig sein.".

[10] The original wording is: "Flüchtlinge aus dem arabischen Raum/aus Afghanistan bekommen in Österreich zu viel Geld vom Staat.".

Table 2 Descriptive statistics (*N* = 1357, weighted data)

			Mean	Std. Dev.	Skewness	Kurtosis	Proportion (in %)
Attitudes towards refugees	Generous when evaluating refugee applications	Ukraine	2.71	1.25	0.04	1.93	–
		Arab/Afghan	1.87	1.06	1.01	3.17	–
	... get too much money from the state	Ukraine	3.22	1.22	–0.12	2.12	–
		Arab/Afghan	3.76	1.20	–0.69	2.56	–
Human values	Self-Enhancement		–0.71	0.81	–0.19	2.87	–
	Self-Transcendence		0.68	0.62	0.06	3.21	–
	Conservation		0.02	0.70	–0.30	3.36	–
Threat perception	Symbolic threat		6.07	2.68	–0.20	2.16	–
	Goal selected: Fight crime		–	–	–	–	16.4
	Goal selected: Fight terrorism		–	–	–	–	8.0
	Goal selected: Limit migration		–	–	–	–	31.2

stronger. I further include the policy goal of limiting migration in general to separate the association of refugees with safety threats from general immigration skepticism.

To measure symbolic threat, a variable was used that asks respondents to place themselves on a scale from 1 "Ethnic diversity enriches societal life" to 10 "Ethnic diversity threatens social cohesion", as higher values indicate perceived threat to the respondents' in-group by the mere presence of a minority group.

The analysis also controls for the respondents' gender, their age in years, their educational level (1 "compulsory school", 2 "completed apprenticeship", 3 "vocational middle school", 4 "general/vocational higher school", 5 "academic education"), and the easiness to cope with their household income (1 "very hard" to 5 "very easy") in order to separate the effects of human values and perceived threat from demographic factors. For example, while gender differences in immigration attitudes are inconsistent in the literature (Kobayashi and Tanaka 2024), men are more conservative on average than women (Feldman and Johnston 2014, pp. 344f.). Women also have higher levels of empathy (Graham et al. 2011, p. 380). These differences could translate into more openness towards refugees in women than in men. Older cohorts are more critical of migration than younger cohorts (Semyonov et al. 2006, pp. 437ff). Higher education generally correlates with less xenophobia (Hjerm 2007, p. 1267), and financially deprived individuals have been shown to be more negative towards immigrants (Aschauer and Mayerl 2019, pp. 694f; Manstead 2018, pp. 274ff.).

Table 2 lists descriptive statistics for the relevant variables. Descriptives for the demographic variables are shown in Table 1.

4 Results

Before predicting the average scores for attitudes regarding Ukrainian and Arab/Afghan refugees, it makes sense to examine the distribution of the four original attitude variables. Figure 3 shows these distributions. While Austrians are divided in their evaluation of Ukrainian refugees in both questions, they are mostly united in their critical evaluation of Arab/Afghan refugees. While 29.5% (rather) agree with generous evaluations of Ukrainians' refugee applications, that share shrinks down to 8.3% when Arabs/Afghans are evaluated. 73.0% of respondents do not agree (at all) that the country should be generous when judging Arabs'/Afghans' refugee applications.

The same trend can be seen regarding the belief that refugee groups receive too much money. While 40.5% (rather) agree with this negative statement in the case of Ukrainians, that share rises to 61.6% in the case of Arabs/Afghans (Fig. 4).

This trend is also reflected in the average scores for both groups.[11] While favorable attitudes towards one group correlate with favorable attitudes towards the other (r= 0.53), cross-tabulating both scores shows that only 28.4% evaluate both refugee groups equivalently. 59.7% of respondents rate Ukrainian refugees more positively than Arabs/Afghans and 11.9% rate Arabs/Afghans more positively. This supports

---

[11] As stated in Sect. 3.2, higher values correspond to more positive attitudes in both scores.
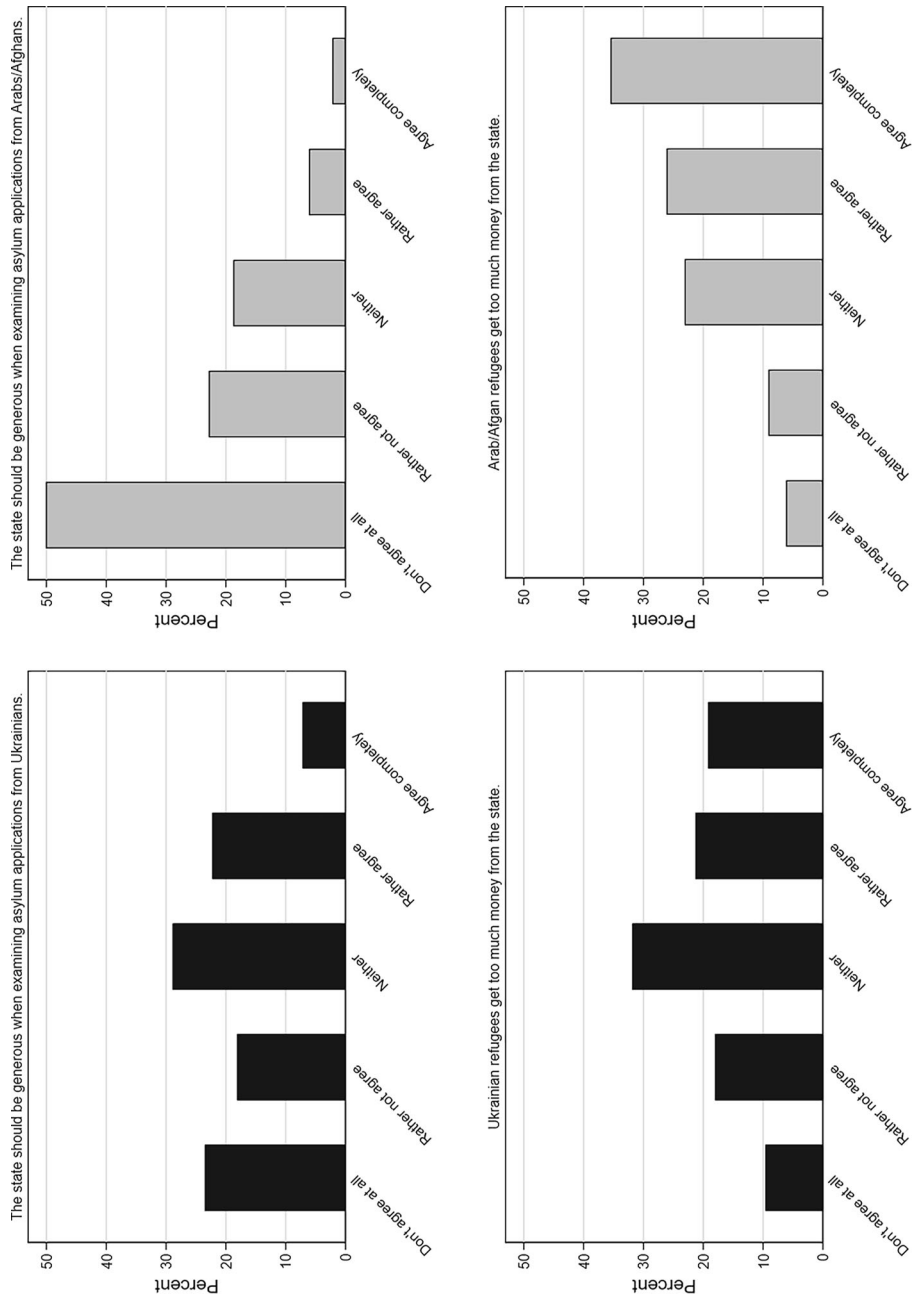
Fig. 4 Attitudes of respondents (*N* = 1357, weighted data) regarding Ukrainian refugees (black bars) and Arab/Afghan refugees (grey bars)

hypothesis H1, as Arab/Afghan refugees are clearly evaluated more negatively than Ukrainian refugees.

To test whether values and perceived threat impact these attitudes differently, OLS regression models with cluster robust standard errors were calculated.[12,13] The two average scores measuring attitudes towards the refugee groups serve as the dependent variables. The results are listed in Table 3. Model 1 only includes the demographic factors (gender, age, education, and easiness to get by with household income), Model 2 adds the higher-order human values, and model 3 further includes the variables for realistic and symbolic threat (Table 3).

The demographic variables alone explain around 10% of variance in favorable attitudes towards either refugee group. As expected from the literature, higher educated respondents show more positive attitudes towards Ukrainian and Arab/Afghan refugees than lower educated respondents, and a better financial situation is associated with more favorable views for both refugee groups. Older respondents are more critical towards Arab/Afghan respondents, while age has no significant effect for Ukrainian refugees. After controlling for human values, women and men do not differ in their evaluation of Arab/Afghan refugees. Against expectations, women are more critical of Ukrainian refugees than men. This effect also does not diminish when controlling for human values and threat variables. I will discuss this in detail in the conclusion section.

Models 2 and 3 test the hypotheses from the theoretical framework. As expected in H3a, Self-Transcendence values are associated with more favorable views towards both refugee groups. This effect remains significant when further controlling for security and symbolic threat, although it almost halves the effect size. This means that there is a direct effect of universalism and benevolence values on more positive attitudes towards refugees, and an indirect effect via less perceived threat. This supports Davidov et al. (2020, p. 563ff.) who argue that Self-Transcendence values might inhibit feelings of symbolic threat because individuals high in universalism will see more advantages of immigration.

H3b is not supported by the data. For one, Self-Enhancement values predict more positive attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees, but not towards Arabs/Afghans. Potentially, Ukrainians are seen as more of an asset to the economy than Arab/Afghans.

Despite expectations that conservatism should be associated with more negative views towards both refugee groups, this is only the case for Arabs/Afghans. Conservatism is not significantly linked to attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees—neither directly nor indirectly. In the case of Arab/Afghan refugees, conservatism is only associated with more negative attitudes if threat perceptions are not controlled. Once threat is controlled for, the effect of conservatism becomes insignificant. This implies that conservatism only has an indirect effect on attitudes towards refugees, as it

---

[12] Multicollinearity is a potential issue. However, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) never reaches the problematic threshold of 10 given by Wooldridge (2009, p. 99). The highest VIF value of 1.79 is measured for the Self-Enhancement values. Hence, the results are not biased by multicollinearity.

[13] The Schwartz Openness Values were not included in the regression because it would have led to perfect collinearity because they are calculated as mean-centered values (Schwartz et al. 2015, pp. 4f.).

Table 3 Results from the OLS Regression Models (unstandardized coefficients, weighted data)

		Favorable attitudes towards ...					
		Ukrainians			Arabs/Afghans		
		Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Education (Ref: Compulsory school)	Completed apprenticeship	–0.04 (0.09)	0.01 (0.09)	–0.00 (0.09)	0.05 (0.08)	0.10 (0.08)	0.08 (0.07)
	Vocational middle school	0.17 (0.12)	0.19 (0.12)	0.15 (0.11)	0.14 (0.11)	0.17[+] (0.11)	0.10 (0.08)
	General or vocational higher school	0.28** (0.11)	0.28** (0.11)	0.15 (0.10)	0.25** (0.10)	0.24* (0.10)	0.03 (0.08)
	Academic education	0.48*** (0.12)	0.43*** (0.11)	0.27* (0.11)	0.48*** (0.12)	0.42*** (0.11)	0.15[+] (0.09)
Easiness of getting by with household income		0.22*** (0.03)	0.21*** (0.03)	0.16*** (0.03)	0.14*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.03)	0.06** (0.02)
Gender: Female		–0.20** (0.06)	–0.30*** (0.06)	–0.33*** (0.06)	0.13* (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	–0.02 (0.04)
Age		–0.00 (0.00)	–0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	–0.01*** (0.00)	–0.01*** (0.00)	–0.01*** (0.00)
Self-Enhancement values		–	0.17*** (0.05)	0.12* (0.05)	–	0.09* (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Self-Transcendence values		–	0.51*** (0.06)	0.29*** (0.06)	–	0.46*** (0.05)	0.12** (0.04)
Conservation values		–	–0.05 (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)	–	–0.18*** (0.05)	–0.02 (0.04)
Symbolic threat		–	–	–0.12*** (0.01)	–	–	–0.19*** (0.01)
Goals: Fight crime		–	–	–0.02 (0.08)	–	–	–0.15** (0.05)
Goals: Fight terrorism		–	–	0.02 (0.11)	–	–	–0.05 (0.08)
Goals: Limit migration		–	–	–0.32*** (0.07)	–	–	–0.46*** (0.05)
Constant		2.18*** (0.15)	2.03*** (0.15)	3.02*** (0.17)	2.08*** (0.14)	1.88*** (0.14)	3.41*** (0.13)
Observations		1357	1357	1357	1357	1357	1357
Adjusted R²		0.104	0.162	0.279	0.100	0.179	0.504

Standard errors in parentheses
[+] $p<0.1$, * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$, *** $p<0.001$

increases the threat perceptions when judging Arab/Afghan refugees, but not when judging Ukrainian refugees.

This leads to hypotheses H2a and H2b. Contrary to H2b, both refugee groups seem to be associated with symbolic threat. The more respondents believe that ethnic diversity weakens social cohesion, the less favorable their attitudes towards both refugee groups. On the other hand, as expected in H2a, selecting the fight against crime as one the most important policy goals for Austria (independent from general migration skepticism) is significantly related to negative attitudes towards

Arab/Afghan refugees, but not towards Ukrainians. This difference in effect implies that respondents associate Arabs/Afghans with crime, but not Ukrainians.

The relevance of threat perceptions is further demonstrated by the proportion of explained variance in the dependent variables. As stated above, demographics explain around 10% of variance on their own. Controlling for values only adds around 6 or 8 percentage points to the adjusted R^2 of model 1 in the case of both refugee groups. The inclusion of threat perception raises the R^2 to 27.9% for Ukrainian refugees, and even to 50.4% for Arab/Afghan refugees. This means that while threat perceptions act as important mediators for the impact of human values on attitudes towards refugees (as postulated in the theoretical model in Fig. 3), they also hold much own explanatory value, most likely because the different make-up of both refugee groups (in gender, country of origin, etc.) caused different threat perceptions for the respondents.

5 Conclusion

This article answers the question whether Austrians have different opinions about Ukrainian refugees than Arab/Afghan refugees. In accordance with descriptive evidence in the literature, the results show that Austrians are more welcoming towards Ukrainian refugees than towards their Arab/Afghan counterparts. This is true both for how generous the state should be when evaluating refugee applications, and for whether respondents believe that refugees receive too much money from the state.

Furthermore, this study shines a light on important mechanisms behind these differences. As expected based on previous literature, Self-Transcendence values are related to more favorable attitudes about refugees overall. However, Conservation values seem to only affect the level of perceived threat associated with Arab/Afghan refugees. Lastly, contrary to what the literature expected, critical attitudes towards both Ukrainian and Arab/Afghan refugees were associated with symbolic threat, while perceived realistic threat due to crime was only relevant for judging Arab/Afghan refugees.

It is important to note that there are several limitations of this paper that warrant discussion. First, bias due to social desirability cannot be completely ruled out. It is difficult to say whether social desirability would only affect attitudes towards one or both refugee groups. Presently, there seems to be no literature showing that attitudes towards one group of refugees are more (or less) affected by social desirability than another group, which would imply that attitudes towards refugee groups would be affected equally. This means that the difference in attitudes between the two groups should be unaffected. Still, when interpreting the results, it is important to keep in mind the possibility that differing effects of social desirability may have led to an underestimation of the true difference in attitudes towards the two refugee groups.

Second, the four items measuring attitudes towards refugees were asked within the same item battery. This could have impacted how respondents interpreted the item "The state should be generous when evaluating refugee applications from [refugee group]." Some might interpret it as general generosity towards one group, while some might relate it to generosity in comparison to other groups.

Third, the operationalization for perceived realistic security threats is more indirect than the measurement for symbolic threat. This further means that there are several possible confounders that could predict the selection of policy goals and attitudes towards refugees (e.g. general racism, personality dimensions, or cognitive predispositions). These could not be controlled in this paper. Future studies should thus try to replicate or reproduce the results of this article with more direct operationalizations.

Finally, I focused on realistic security threats in this paper. However, realistic threats can also be present in economic form (e.g. competition on the job market). Based on the literature in the theory section, it is sensible to expect that economic threats are more associated with Ukrainian refugees than with Arab/Afghans. Perceived economic threats might explain the effect that women are more critical towards Ukrainian refugees than men, as Ukrainian refugees seek job opportunities in predominantly female oriented professions (Dörfler-Bolt and Kaindl 2023, p. 17ff.). This means that controlling for economic threat perception might render this gender effect insignificant. Unfortunately, the VIC3 data does not provide variables that allow to test the effect of perceived economic threats. This is a key factor that needs to be studied in the future.

Nevertheless, the present study is a crucial step in examining varying attitudes towards refugees and the underlying mechanisms. It also provides an essential point of reference to study the long-term development of public opinion about Ukrainian refugees. This is an important question since public opinion might turn with time, as Moise et al. (2024, p. 369) document, or might adapt to future geopolitical events. Thus, continued scholarly attention will be crucial to uncovering the sources of attitudes towards both Ukrainian and Arab/Afghan refugees, which might help to foster solidarity with war refugees and thus help to overcome this new humanitarian crisis.

References

Allen, Chris. 2007. Islamophobia and its concequences. In *European islam. Challenges for public policy and society*, ed. Samir Amghar, Amel Boubekeur, and Michael Emerson, 144–167. Brussels: Centre for European Policy Studies.

Aschauer, Wolfgang. 2016. Societal malaise and ethnocentrism in the European Union: monitoring societal change by focusing on EU citizens' perceptions of crisis. *Historische Sozialforschung* 41(2):307–359. https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.41.2016.2.307-359.

Aschauer, Wolfgang. 2020. The drivers of prejudice with a special focus on religion—insights into anti-Muslim sentiment in Austrian society. *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 45(2):183–212. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11614-020-00414-z.

Aschauer, Wolfgang, and Jochen Mayerl. 2019. The dynamics of ethnocentrism in Europe. A comparison of enduring and emerging determinants of solidarity towards immigrants. *European Societies* 21(5):672–703. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2019.1616791.

Aschauer, Wolfgang, Alexander Seymer, Martin Ulrich, Markus Kreuzberger, Otto Bodi-Fernandez, Franz Höllinger, Anja Eder, Dimitri Prandner, Markus Hadler, and Johann Bacher. 2023. *Values in crisis Austria—wave 1, wave 2 and wave 3 combined (SUF edition)*. AUSSDA. https://doi.org/10.11587/EYJMEZ.

Bansak, Kirk, Jens Hainmueller, and Dominik Hangartner. 2023. Europeans' support for refugees of varying background is stable over time. *Nature* 620(7975):849–854. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-023-06417-6.

Block, Jack, and Jeanne H. Block. 2006. Nursery school personality and political orientation two decades later. *Journal of Research in Personality* 40(5):734–749. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2005.09.005.

Blumer, Herbert. 1958. Race prejudice as a sense of group position. *The Pacific Sociological Review* 1(1):3–7. https://doi.org/10.2307/1388607.

Bobo, Lawrence. 1988. Group conflict, prejudice, and the paradox of contemporary racial attitudes. In *Eliminating racism. Profiles in controversy*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz, A. Taylor Dalmas, 85–116. Plenum.

Brücker, Herbert, Andreas Ette, Markus M. Grabka, Yuliya Kosyakova, Wenke Niehues, Nina Rother, C.K. Spieß, Sabine Zinn, Martin Bujard, Adriana R.Silva Cardozo, Jean P. Décieux, Amrei Maddox, Nadja Milewski, Lenore Sauer, Sophia Schmitz, Silvia Schwanhäuser, Manuel Siegert, Hans Steinhauer, and Kerstin Tanis. 2023. Ukrainian refugees in Germany: evidence from a large representative survey. *Comparative Population Studies* 48:395–424. https://doi.org/10.12765/CPoS-2023-16.

Buber-Ennser, Isabella, Judith Kohlenberger, Bernhard Rengs, Zakarya Al Zalak, Anne Goujon, Erich Striessnig, Michaela Potančoková, Richard Gisser, Maria R. Testa, and Wolfgang Lutz. 2016. Human capital, values, and attitudes of persons seeking refuge in Austria in 2015. *PLoS one* 11(9):1–29. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0163481.

Cohrs, J.C., and Thomas Kessler. 2013. Negative stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. In *Social psychology of social problems. The intergroup context*, ed. Agnieszka G. de Zavala, Aleksandra Cichocka, 3–29. New York: Palgrave.

Czymara, Christian S. 2020. Attitudes toward refugees in contemporary Europe: a longitudinal perspective on cross-national differences. *Social Forces* 99(3):1306–1333. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/soaa055.

Davidov, Eldad, Bart Meuleman, Jaak Billiet, and Peter Schmidt. 2008a. Values and support for immigration: a cross-country comparison. *European Sociological Review* 24(5):583–599. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcn020.

Davidov, Eldad, Peter Schmidt, and Shalom H. Schwartz. 2008b. Bringing values back in. The adequacy of the European Social Survey to measure values in 20 countries. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 72(3):420–445. https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfn035.

Davidov, Eldad, Bart Meulemann, Shalom H. Schwartz, and Peter Schmidt. 2014. Individual values, cultural embeddedness, and anti-immigration sentiments: Explaining differences in the effect of values on attitudes toward immigration across Europe. *Kölner Zeitschrift für Soziologie und Sozialpsychologie* 66(S1):263–285. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11577-014-0274-5.

Davidov, Eldad, Daniel Seddig, Anastasia Gorodzeisky, Rebeca Raijman, Peter Schmidt, and Moshe Semyonov. 2020. Direct and indirect predictors of opposition to immigration in Europe: individual values, cultural values, and symbolic threat. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 46(3):553–573. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1550152.

De Coninck, David. 2023. The refugee paradox during wartime in europe: how Ukrainian and Afghan refugees are (not) alike. *International Migration Review* 57(2):578–586. https://doi.org/10.1177/01979183221116874.

Dochow-Sondershaus, Stephan, and Céline Teney. 2024. Opinion polarization of immigration and EU attitudes between social classes—the limiting role of working class dissensus. *European Societies* 26(5):1363–1394. https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2024.2312948.

Dörfler-Bolt, Sonja, and Markus Kaindl. 2023. *Ukraine-Vertriebene in Österreich ein Jahr nach Kriegsbeginn. Folgeerhebung zur Situation der Ukrainerinnen im Alter von 18 bis 55 Jahren*. Österreichischer Integrationsfonds. https://uscholar.univie.ac.at/detail/o:1669871. Accessed 8 April 2025.

Dražanová, Lenka, and Andrew Geddes. 2023. Attitudes towards Ukrainian refugees and governmental responses in 8 European countries. In *EU responses to the large-scale refugee displacement from Ukraine: an analysis on the temporary protection directive and its implications for the future EU asylum policy*, ed. Sergio Carrera, Meltem Ineli-Ciger, 135–147. San Domenico di Fiesole: European University Institute.

Eder, Anja, Wolfgang Aschauer, Franz Höllinger, and Martin Ulrich. 2022. Pandemie und Wertewandel? Verschiebungen von Wertprioritäten in der österreichischen Bevölkerung und in einzelnen Wähler*innenschichten als Reaktion auf die COVID-19-Pandemie. *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie* 47(4):333–357. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11614-022-00505-z.

Eger, Maureen A., and Andrea Bohman. 2016. The political consequences of contemporary immigration. *Sociology Compass* 10(10):877–892. https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12409.

European Social Survey. 2024. *ESS11—integrated file, edition 2.0*. https://doi.org/10.21338/ess11e02_0.

Feldman, Stanley, and Christopher Johnston. 2014. Understanding the determinants of political ideology: implications of structural complexity. *Political Psychology* 35(3):337–358. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12055.

Freeden, Michael. 2008. *Ideologies and political theory. A conceptual approach*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Graham, Jesse, Brian A. Nosek, Jonathan Haidt, Ravi Iyer, Spassena Koleva, and Peter H. Ditto. 2011. Mapping the moral domain. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 101(2):366–385. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0021847.

Hellwig, Timothy, and Abdulkader Sinno. 2017. Different groups, different threats: public attitudes towards immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43(3):339–358. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2016.1202749.

Hjerm, Mikael. 2007. Do numbers really count? Group threat theory revisited. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 33(8):1253–1275. https://doi.org/10.1080/13691830701614056.

Jost, John T., Jack Glaser, Arie W. Kruglanski, and Frank J. Sulloway. 2003. Political conservatism as motivated social cognition. *Psychological Bulletin* 129(3):339–375. https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.3.339.

Kinder, Donald R., and David O. Sears. 1981. Prejudice and politics: symbolic racism versus racial threats to the good life. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 40(3):414–431. https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.40.3.414.

Kluknavská, Alena, Jana Bernhard, and Hajo G. Boomgaarden. 2021. Claiming the crisis: mediated public debates about the refugee crisis in Austria, the Czech republic and Slovakia. *Journal of Refugee Studies* 34(1):241–263. https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/fez022.

Kobayashi, Yoshiharu, and Seiki Tanaka. 2024. How gender shapes attitudes and concerns about immigration. *Politics, Groups, and Identities* https://doi.org/10.1080/21565503.2024.2378023.

Letki, Natalia, Dawid Walentek, Peter T. Dinesen, and Ulf Liebe. 2024. Has the war in Ukraine changed Europeans' preferences on refugee policy? Evidence from a panel experiment in Germany, Hungary and Poland. *Journal of European Public Policy* 32(1):1–25. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2024.2304610.

Lucassen, Geertje, and Marcel Lubbers. 2012. Who fears what? Explaining far-right-wing preference in Europe by distinguishing perceived cultural and economic ethnic threats. *Comparative Political Studies* 45(5):547–574. https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414011427851.

Malloy, Brandon, Zeynep Ozkok, and Jonathan Rosborough. 2022. The impact of immigration attitudes on voting preferences: evidence from the European social survey. *Journal of International Migration and Integration* 23(4):1825–1853. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-021-00913-2.

Manstead, Antony S.R. 2018. The psychology of social class: how socioeconomic status impacts thought, feelings, and behaviour. *The British journal of social psychology* 57(2):267–291. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12251.

Mau, Steffen, Thomas Lux, and Linus Westheuser. 2023. *Triggerpunkte. Konsens und Konflikt in der Gegenwartsgesellschaft*. Berlin: Suhrkamp.

McLaren, Lauren M. 2003. Anti-immigrant prejudice in Europe: contact, threat perception, and preferences for the exclusion of migrants. *Social Forces* 81(3):909–936. https://doi.org/10.1353/sof.2003.0038.

McLaren, Lauren, and Mark Johnson. 2007. Resources, group conflict and symbols: explaining anti-immigration hostility in Britain. *Political Studies* 55(4):709–732. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2007.00680.x.

Moise, Alexandru D., James Dennison, and Hanspeter Kriesi. 2024. European attitudes to refugees after the Russian invasion of Ukraine. *West European Politics* 47(2):356–381. https://doi.org/10.1080/01402382.2023.2229688.

Pereira, Cícero, Jorge Vala, and Rui Costa-Lopes. 2010. From prejudice to discrimination: the legitimizing role of perceived threat in discrimination against immigrants. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 40(7):1231–1250. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.718.

Piurko, Yuval, Shalom H. Schwartz, and Davidov Eldad. 2011. Basic personal values and the meaning of left-right political orientations in 20 countries. *Political Psychology* 32(4):537–561. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2011.00828.x.

Prandner, Dimitri, and Alexander Seymer. 2024. Datenqualität und Generalisierbarkeit von Online Access Panels: Reflexionen zur Datenbasis des Buchs. In *Die Auswirkungen der Corona-Pandemie auf die österreichische Gesellschaft. Ergebnisse der Längsschnittstudie „Werte in der Krise 2020–2022"*, ed. Wolfgang Aschauer, Anja Eder, and Dimitri Prandner, 483–502. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Quillian, Lincoln. 1995. Prejudice as a response to perceived group threat: population composition and anti-immigrant and racial prejudice in Europe. *American Sociological Review* 60(4):586–611. https://doi.org/10.2307/2096296.

Rheindorf, Markus, and Ruth Wodak. 2018. Borders, fences, and limits—protecting Austria from refugees: metadiscursive negotiation of meaning in the current refugee crisis. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies* 16(1-2):15–38. https://doi.org/10.1080/15562948.2017.1302032.

Rios, Kimberly, Nicholas Sosa, and Hannah Osborn. 2018. An experimental approach to intergroup threat theory: manipulations, moderators, and consequences of realistic vs. symbolic threat. *European Review of Social Psychology* 29(1):212–255. https://doi.org/10.1080/10463283.2018.1537049.

Rudnev, Maksim, Vladimir Magun, and Peter Schmidt. 2016. Basic human values: stability of value typology in Europe. In *Values, economic crisis and democracy*, ed. Mălina Voicu, Ingvill C. Mochmann, and Hermann Dülmer. London: Routledge.

Rydgren, Jens. 2008. Immigration sceptics, xenophobes or racists? Radical right-wing voting in six West European countries. *European Journal of Political Research* 47(6):737–765. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6765.2008.00784.x.

Schmuck, Desirée, and Jörg Matthes. 2017. Effects of economic and symbolic threat appeals in right-wing populist advertising on anti-immigrant attitudes: the impact of textual and visual appeals. *Political Communication* 34(4):607–626. https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2017.1316807.

Schwartz, Shalom H. 1992. Universals in the content and structure of values: theoretical advances and empirical tests in 20 countries. In *Advances in experimental social psychology*, ed. Mark P. Zanna, 1–65. New York: Academic Press.

Schwartz, Shalom H. 1994. Are there universal aspects in the content and structure of values? *Journal of Social Issues* 50(4):19–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1994.tb01196.x.

Schwartz, Shalom H., and Jan Cieciuch. 2022. Measuring the refined theory of individual values in 49 cultural groups: psychometrics of the revised portrait value questionnaire. *Assessment* 29(5):1005–1019. https://doi.org/10.1177/1073191121998760.

Schwartz, Shalom H., Gian V. Caprara, and Michele Vecchione. 2010. Basic personal values, core political values, and voting: a longitudinal analysis. *Political Psychology* 31(3):421–452. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00764.x.

Schwartz, Shalom H., Jan Cieciuch, Michele Vecchione, Eldad Davidov, Ronald Fischer, Constanze Beierlein, Alice Ramos, Markku Verkasalo, Jan-Erik Lönnqvist, Kursad Demirutku, Ozlem Dirilen-Gumus, and Mark Konty. 2012. Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 103(4):663–688. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029393.

Schwartz, Shalom H., Bianka Breyer, and Daniel Danner. 2015. *Human Values Scale (ESS)*. https://doi.org/10.6102/zis234. Zusammenstellung sozialwissenschaftlicher Items und Skalen (ZIS).

Schwartz, Shalom H., Jan Cieciuch, Michele Vecchione, Claudio Torres, Ozlem Dirilen-Gumus, and Tania Butenko. 2017. Value tradeoffs propel and inhibit behavior: validating the 19 refined values in four countries. *European Journal of Social Psychology* 47(3):241–258. https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.2228.

Sears, David O. 1988. Symbolic racism. In *Eliminating racism. Profiles in controversy*, ed. Phyllis A. Katz, A. Taylor Dalmas, 53–84. Plenum.

Semyonov, Moshe, Rebeca Raijman, and Anastasia Gorodzeisky. 2006. The rise of anti-foreigner sentiment in European societies, 1988–2000. *American Sociological Review* 71(3):426–449. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100304.

Sherif, Muzafer. 1967. *Group conflict and co-operation. Their social psychology*. Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Sidanius, James, and Felicia Pratto. 1999. *Social dominance. An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge: University Press.

Stenner, Karen. 2009. Three kinds of "conservatism". *Psychological Inquiry* 20(2-3):142–159. https://doi.org/10.1080/10478400903028615.

Stephan, Walter G., and W. Stephan Cookie. 2000. An integrated threat theory of prejudice. In *Reducing prejudice and discrimination*, ed. Stuart Oskam, 23–46. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.

Stephan, Walter G., C. Lausanne Renfro, Victoria M. Esses, Stephan Cookie White, and Tim Martin. 2005. The effects of feeling threatened on attitudes toward immigrants. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 29(1):1–19. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2005.04.011.

Stephan, Walter G., G.L. Renfro, and Mark D. Davis. 2008. The role of threat in intergroup relations. In *Improving intergroup relations: building on the legacy of Thomas F. Pettigrew*, ed. Ulrich Wagner, Linda R. Tropp, Gillian Finchilescu, and Colin Tredoux, 55–72. Blackwell.

Stephan, Walter G., Oscar Ybarra, and Kimberly Rios. 2016. Intergroup threat theory. In *Handbook of prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination*, ed. Todd D. Nelson, 255–278. New York, London: Taylor & Francis.

Tajfel, Henri. 1974. Social identity and intergroup behaviour. *Social Science Information* 13(2):65–93. https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847401300204.

Tajfel, Henri, and John C. Turner. 2004. The social identity theory of intergroup behavior. In *Political psychology. Key readings*, ed. John T. Jost, 276–293. New York: Psychology Press.

Ulrich, Martin. 2021. *Politische Ideologien (POLID)*. https://doi.org/10.6102/zis313. Zusammenstellung sozialwissenschaftlicher Items und Skalen (ZIS).

Ulrich, Martin. 2024. Die dynamische Statik von politischen Ideologien während der Covid-19-Pandemie. In *Die Auswirkungen der Corona-Pandemie auf die österreichische Gesellschaft. Ergebnisse der Längsschnittstudie „Werte in der Krise 2020–2022"*, ed. Wolfgang Aschauer, Anja Eder, and Dimitri Prandner, 451–462. Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Ulrich, Martin. 2025. *Wie frei sind Gedanken? Eine soziologische Analyse des Zusammenhangs zwischen sozialer Lage und politischer Ideologien*. Frankfurt am Main: Campus.

Vecchione, Michele, Gianvittorio Caprara, Harald Schoen, Josè L.G. Castro, and Shalom H. Schwartz. 2012. The role of personal values and basic traits in perceptions of the consequences of immigration: a three-nation study. *British Journal of Psychology* 103(3):359–377. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8295.2011.02079.x.

Vecchione, Michele, Shalom H. Schwartz, Guido Alessandri, Anna K. Döring, Valeria Castellani, and Maria G. Caprara. 2016. Stability and change of basic personal values in early adulthood: an 8-year longitudinal study. *Journal of Research in Personality* 63:111–122. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jrp.2016.06.002.

Velasco González, Karina, Maykel Verkuyten, Jeroen Weesie, and Edwin Poppe. 2008. Prejudice towards Muslims in The Netherlands: testing integrated threat theory. *The British journal of social psychology* 47(4):667–685. https://doi.org/10.1348/014466608X284443.

White, Katherine R.G., Dakota Kinney, Rose H. Danek, Brandt Smith, and Charles Harben. 2020. The resistance to change-beliefs scale: validation of a new measure of conservative ideology. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 46(1):20–35. https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167219841624.

Wodak, Ruth. 2015. „Normalisierung nach rechts": Politischer Diskurs im Spannungsfeld von Neoliberalismus, Populismus und kritischer Öffentlichkeit. *Linguistik Online* https://doi.org/10.13092/lo.73.2191.

Wooldridge, Jeffrey M. 2009. *Introductory Econometrics. A modern Approach*. Mason: South-Western Cengage Learning.

Martin Ulrich is a postdoctoral researcher at the chair of sociology with a focus on Europe at Saarland University since 2023. His main research topics are political ideologies, attitudes and identification with Europe and the European Union, and social structure analysis. Publications: Ulrich, Martin. 2025. Wie frei sind Gedanken? Eine soziologische Analyse des Zusammenhangs zwischen sozialer Lage und politischer Ideologien. Frankfurt am Main: Campus. https://doi.org/10.12907/978-3-593-46130-4. / Rehm, Moritz and Martin Ulrich. 2025. The End Justifies the Means? The Impact of the ECB's Unconventional Monetary Policy on Citizens' Trust. Politics and Governance 13: 1–20. https://doi.org/10.17645/pag.8928.