

# Security or Humanity: German Identity and Implications in the Refugee Crisis

Olivia Valone | Dr. Laura Field, Olson Scholars | American University | Mentor: Dr. Michelle Egan

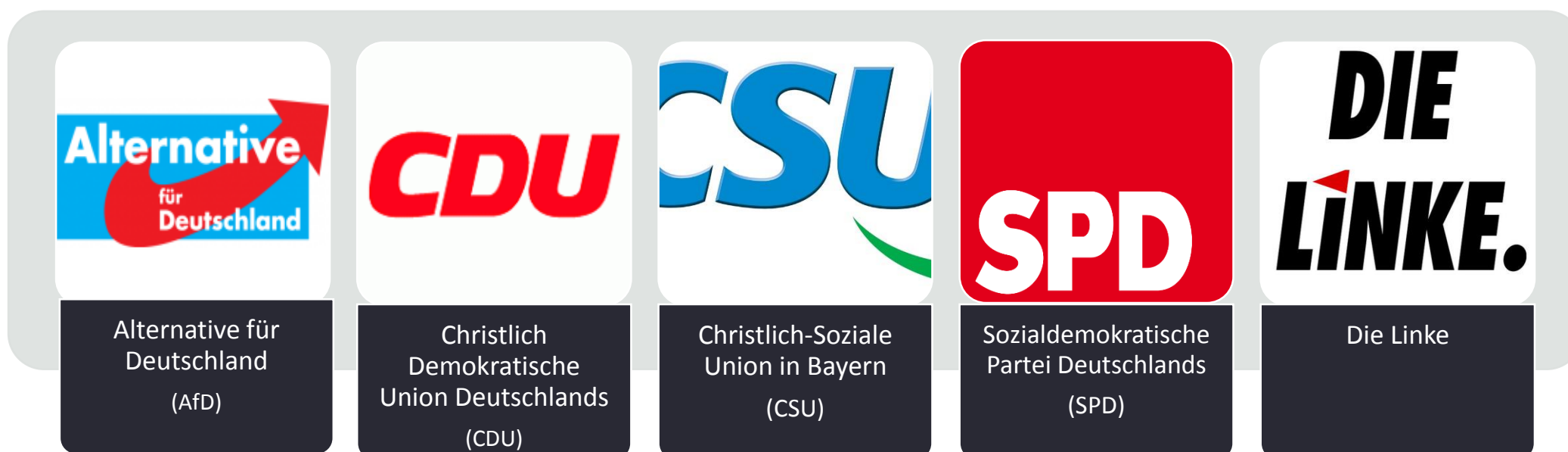
## RESEARCH QUESTION

*How is German identity represented in discourses on refugees and asylum-seekers?*

## CONTEXT

- September 2015: Angela Merkel declares open border policy for refugees and asylum-seekers coming to Germany
- February 2016: Passage of Asylum Packet II – quicker deportation and restricted family migration
- May 2016: Passage of Integration Act – easier access to job market, integration course requirement

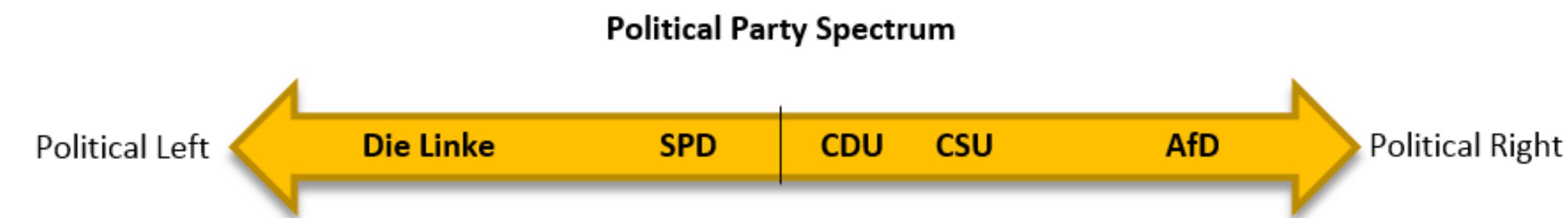
## METHODOLOGY



Discourse analysis to show constructions of German identity and how they relate to discourse on refugees and refugee policy

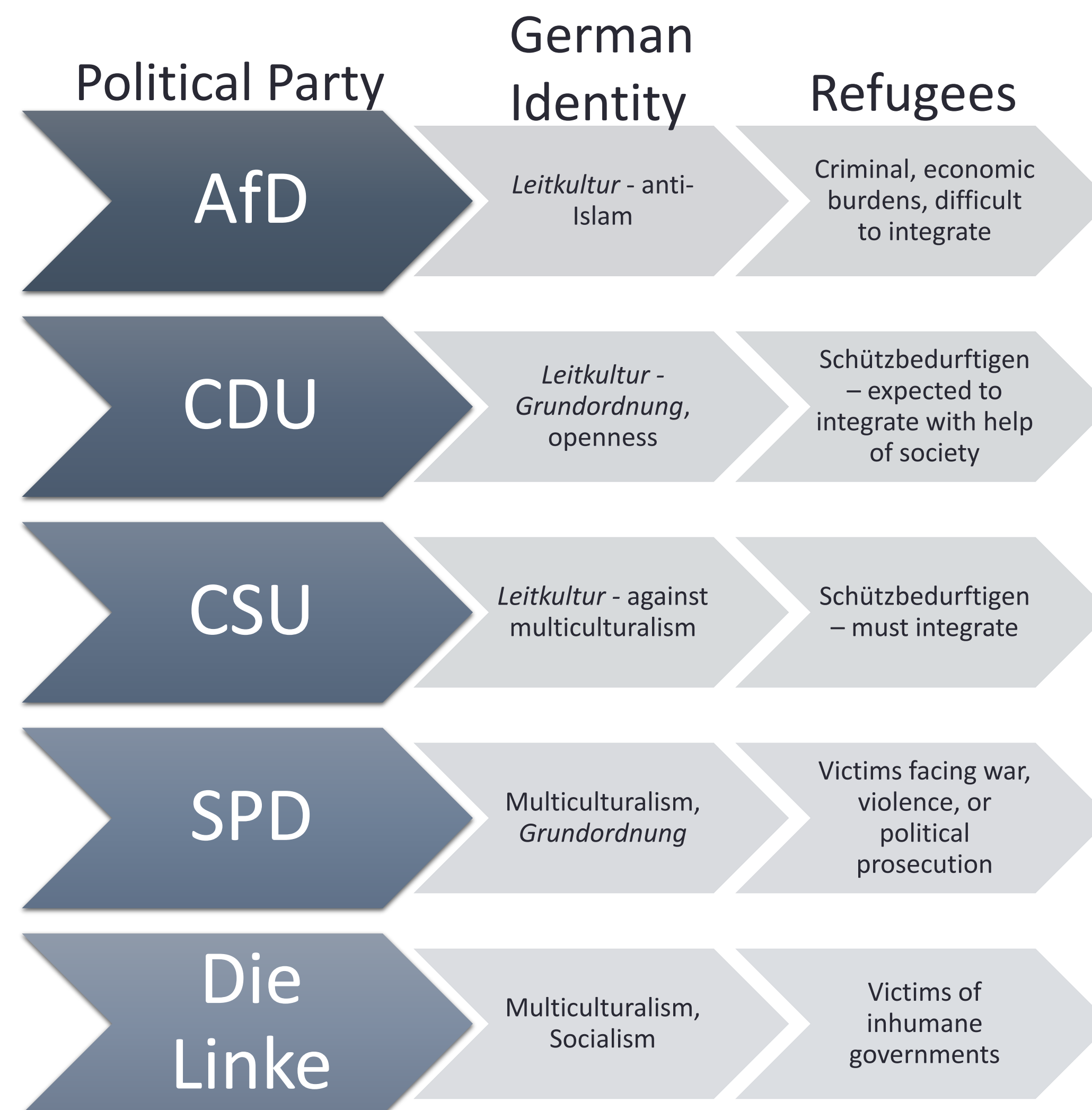
- Party platforms on asylum and integration
- Press releases making an argument about migration
  - 3 months period before state parliament elections in March 2016 September 2016

## DISCOURSES

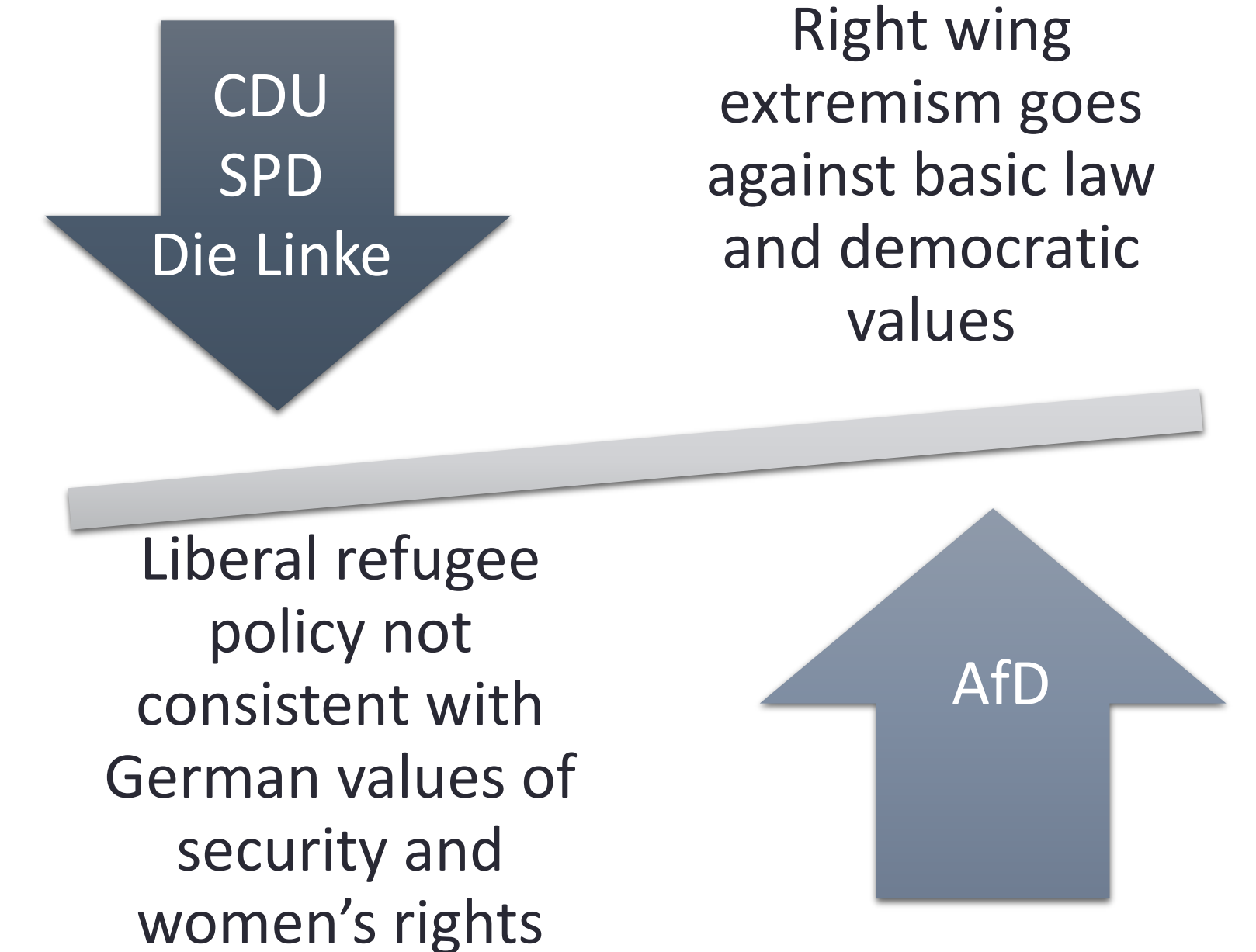


- Refugees:
  - Deserving or undeserving?
  - Criminal, *Schützbedürftigen* (deserving of protection), humanitarian responsibility
- Identity:
  - Inclusive or exclusive?
  - Leitkultur* (Grundordnung – basic law - and cultural identity)
  - Multiculturalism (Grundordnung and tolerance)

## FINDINGS



## ANALYSIS



## CONCLUSIONS

- Discourse on *Leitkultur* (leading culture) was present in more party discourses, and confined to the political right
- *Leitkultur* questions deservingness and promotes stricter integration procedures
- Tension between fear of nationalism and cultural heterogeneity
- Debate between different parties shows a healthy democracy

## WORKS CITED

Die Bundesregierung. "Merkel: Integrationsgesetz ist Meilenstein." 2016. Accessed 19 April 2017. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/Content/DE/Artikel/2016/05/2016-05-25-meseberg-gabriel-merkel-mittwoch.html>

Schuler, Katharina. "Viel Härte, wenig Wirkung." *Zeit Online*, 2016. Accessed 19 April 2017. <http://www.zeit.de/politik/deutschland/2016-02/asylpaket-ii-abschiebungen-familiennachzug>