

## Multi-Item Scale for Project:

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2013/2014 (English Version)

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### Question Text:

To what extent do you agree with the statement that strong patriotic feelings in Germany...

*[Inwieweit stimmen Sie der Aussage zu, dass starke patriotische Gefühle in Deutschland...]*

### Findings for Question Text:

It was systematically investigated how the test persons understand the formulation "strong patriotic feelings" in the question. In order to obtain more detailed information on the understanding of this term, the test persons were also asked to explain their answers to item d) in more detail (general probing).

There are basically two different interpretations of the term "patriotic feelings". On the one hand, patriotism is perceived with a positive connotation in the sense of patriotism, national pride, attachment to one's own people or community within a nation. On the other hand, there is a negative perception in the sense of nationalism, i.e. an exaggeration of one's own nation while at the same time belittling other nations or peoples. In this context the test persons can be divided into three groups. Eight test persons (TP 03, TP 06, TP 10, TP 14, TP 17, TP 18, TP 19, TP 20) can be assigned to the group that thought of the positive connotation of the term when answering the item battery. Apart from TP 19, these test persons tend not to agree with item d). Those who feel a "healthy patriotism" (TP 15) do not assume that this feeling leads to a negative attitude towards immigrants in Germany.

Three test persons associate the term "patriotic feelings" with a national socialist attitude or "blindness" (TP 05), therefore they fully agree with question d) or indicate to test person 12 that they could not say this.

Apart from test person 02, who confuses "patriot" with "pacifist" and therefore chooses "Can't say", the remaining eight test persons (TP 01, TP 04, TP 07, TP 08, TP 09, TP 13, TP 15, TP 16) combine the two different connotations of the term. Especially within this third group, five test persons (TP 07, TP 08, TP 13, TP 16, TP 19) ask the question where the borderline between "strong" and "too strong" patriotic feelings, which are initially positive and can then turn into a negative, runs:

- *"Here I have the problem with 'strong' and 'too strong'. [...] That 'strong' turns patriotic feelings into something negative, only patriotic feelings would be something*

*like national pride without any valuation."* (TP 19)

- *"It says 'strong patriotic feelings', so [I] had a little difficulty with that. Strong patriotic feelings are strong patriotic feelings. I'm thinking of [...] national socialist feelings and that's why it hurt me a bit, the 'strong' feelings."*(TP 07)
- *"The fact that you are very strongly committed to your nation and that you carry this to the outside world, be it, for example, through the German flag that you hang in your garden. That one expresses that one feels connected with the country. Difficult because of the past, therefore still rather negatively occupied, you always think the same way, if you carry that too strongly to the outside, you are immediately put into a Nazi corner. That has changed a bit, also because of the World Cup, but I think it is still rather negative. Because they say here, strong patriotic feelings, that the more extreme level is chosen and that you're seen as xenophobic and that leads to a negative attitude towards immigrants."* (TP 08)
- *"Too strong patriotic feelings can lead to a negative attitude."* (TP 13)
- *"I'm a little ambivalent about that. [...] I think a certain amount of patriotism is justified and then you can also be tolerant towards other people who live here. But extreme patriotism, of course, is such that no one else is allowed to live here. I find that a bit difficult to define. When you say 'strong patriotic feelings', it can be quite extreme, but it can also be that you still tolerate others."*

These explanations of the test persons' understanding of the question make it clear that the use of the term "patriotic feelings" in combination with "strong" turns the positive connotation into the opposite.

## Recommendations for Question Text:

Rephrase or delete the term "strong":

"To what extent do you agree with the statement that patriotic feelings in Germany..."  
["Inwieweit stimmen Sie der Aussage zu, dass patriotische Gefühle in Deutschland..."]

## Instruction:

(Please check one box on each line.) [Bitte machen Sie in JEDER Zeile ein Kreuz!]

## Answer Categories:

Strongly agree [Stimme voll und ganz zu]

Agree [Stimme zu]

Neither nor [Weder noch]

Disagree [Stimme nicht zu]

Strongly disagree [*Stimme überhaupt nicht zu*]  
Don't know [*Kann ich nicht sagen*]

## **Cognitive Techniques:**

Comprehension Probing, Specific Probing, General Probing

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## **All Items for Question(Question Text):**

To what extent do you agree with the statement that strong patriotic feelings in Germany...

[*Inwieweit stimmen Sie der Aussage zu, dass starke patriotische Gefühle in Deutschland...*]

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-> **Tested Items:**

## **Item Text:**

a.) strengthen Germany's position in the world? [*die Stellung Deutschlands in der Welt stärken?*]

## **Recommendations:**

No changes recommended.

## **Findings:**

Three test subjects choose "Don't know." While test person 01 and test person 10 state not to know what influence strong patriotic feelings have on Germany's position in the world, test person 11 is unclear to what extent there is "any connection between the two."

## **Question Topic:**

Religion & culture/ Cultural identity

## **Construct:**

National identity/ Patriotism

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## Item Text:

b.) lead to intolerance in Germany? [*zu Intoleranz in Deutschland führen?*]

## Recommendations:

No changes recommended.

## Findings:

For this item, four test persons stated that they "don't know". The reasons for this are very different. Subject 02 confuses "patriot" with "pacifist", so the question makes no sense to them. Test person 06 wonders who could develop intolerance towards. Test person 07 makes the answer to the question dependent on what image of Germany one has: *"It depends on what I see Germany as and we are simply a strong immigration country and we have a lot of migrants. And I personally also think that they are one of them. In this respect, strong patriotic feelings in an immigration country would never lead to intolerance, but rather the opposite. But I don't know whether someone who asks the question like this has the same thought [Germany as an immigration country]. If you see Germany purely as Germany without all the foreigners, then strong patriotic feelings would naturally lead to intolerance. It depends on which Germany you want to feel you belong to. That's why I couldn't say it."*

Test person 16 chooses the "I couldn't say it" category because it fluctuates between two interpretations of the phrase "strong patriotic feelings": If the interpretation is based on the meaning of "national pride", this promotes tolerance in Germany, but if the phrase is interpreted in such a way that it is too strong feelings in the sense of "extremism" or "National Socialism", this leads quasi automatically to intolerance in Germany.

## Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Cultural identity

## Construct:

National identity/ Patriotism

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-> Not Tested Items:

**Item Text:**

e.) are necessary for the national cohesion of Germany? [*für den nationalen Zusammenhalt Deutschlands nötig sind?*]

**Question Topic:**

Religion & culture/ Cultural identity

**Construct:**

National identity/ Patriotism

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**Item Text:**

d.) lead to a negative attitude towards immigrants in Germany? [*zu einer negativen Einstellung gegenüber Zuwanderern in Deutschland führen?*]

**Question Topic:**

Religion & culture/ Cultural identity

**Construct:**

National identity/ Patriotism