

# A3.6 Competencies and Educational Choices Across Gender and Immigrant Background in Germany



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Education as a Lifelong Process

## Objectives

Gender-specific as well as ethnic inequalities – both subject of scientific, political and public interest – have hardly ever been connected in empirical research in Germany. The aim of the project was the examination of **ethnic-specific gender differences** within the German education and training system. To that end, different points of time during the educational career have been analysed, and typical pathways have been portrayed in order to identify why and where differences emerge, decrease or reinforce each other. Throughout the project, the focus has been put on the investigation of the **impact of gender-specific socialisation**.

Project major goals were:

1. Explore educational careers of young men and women with and without migrant background in the German education and training system.
  - ☞ Figure out at which points of the educational paths meaningful differences are revealed.
2. Examine underlying mechanisms:
  - ☞ Differences in educational performance.
  - ☞ Differences in educational self-evaluation.
  - ☞ Differences in educational and vocational aspirations/decisions.

## Expectations

- ☞ Children from traditional families show stronger gender-typical educational performance, interests and self-concepts (perception of gendered subjects might create stereotype threat, lower area-specific motivation and reinforce self-handicapping strategies).
- ☞ At the latest in puberty, boys, particularly those originating from more traditional societies, show pronounced disadvantages in educational performance. This is partially attributed to their stereotypically masculine behaviour, which is largely dysfunctional in a school context.
- ☞ In families stemming from more traditional societies, lower educational aspirations and transitions for girls prevail because of anticipated lower labour market participation.
- ☞ Aspired occupations of students from traditional families show a more pronounced gender typicality.

## Data

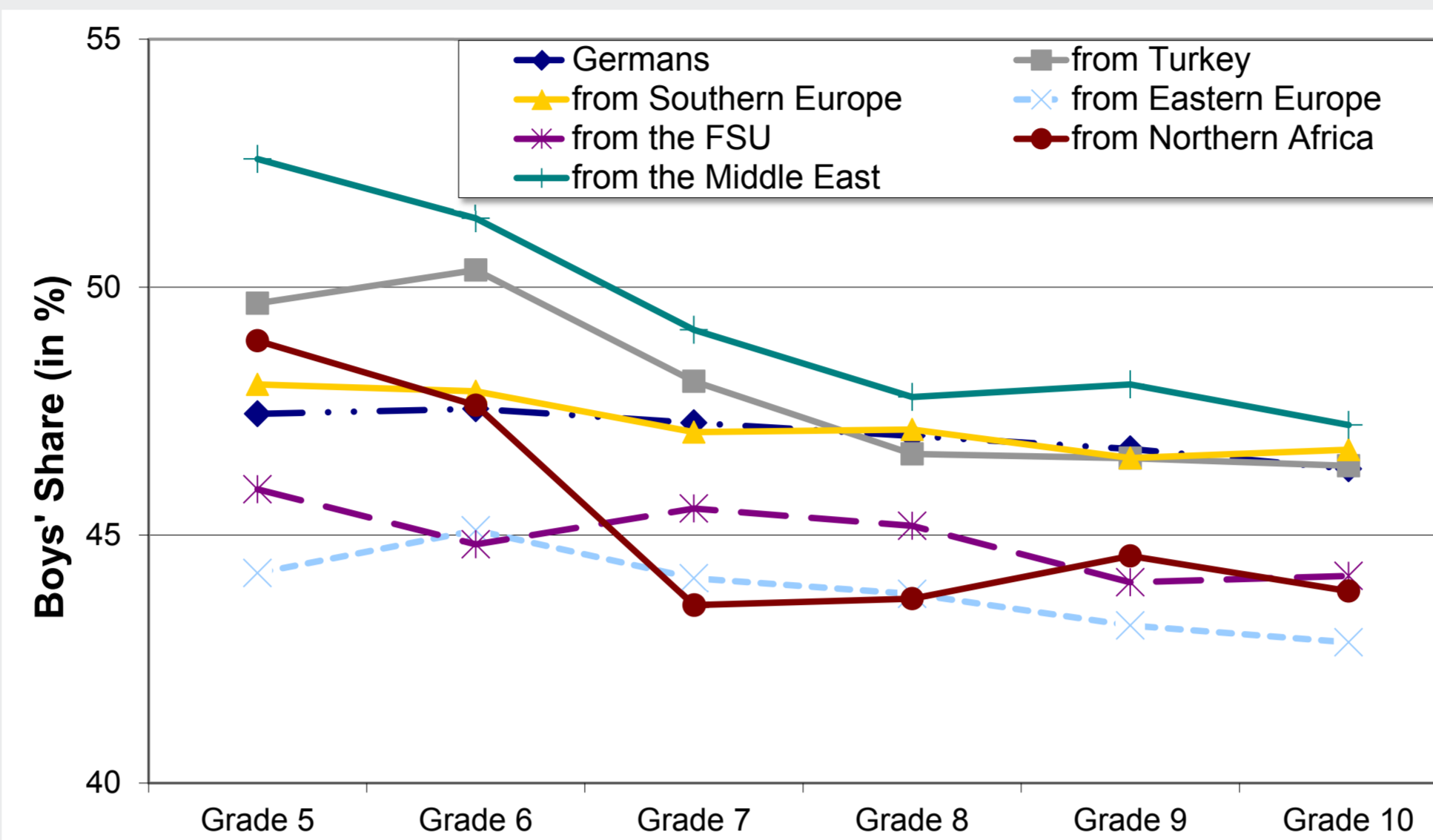
- ☞ National Educational Panel Study (NEPS)
- ☞ Young Immigrants in the German and Israeli Educational Systems
- ☞ Official school statistics (North Rhine-Westphalia)

## Summary

- ☞ Girls from all ethnic groups are better positioned in the education system than boys from the 7th grade onwards.
- ☞ Despite similarities with respect to the direction of the gender gaps, their size and development differ across ethnic groups.
- ☞ However, we detect only limited evidence for the expectation that students originating from more traditional societies more often display gender-typical performance, self-concepts or aspirations.
- ☞ Traditional gender roles seem to play a rather minor part in explaining gender differences within the German education system.

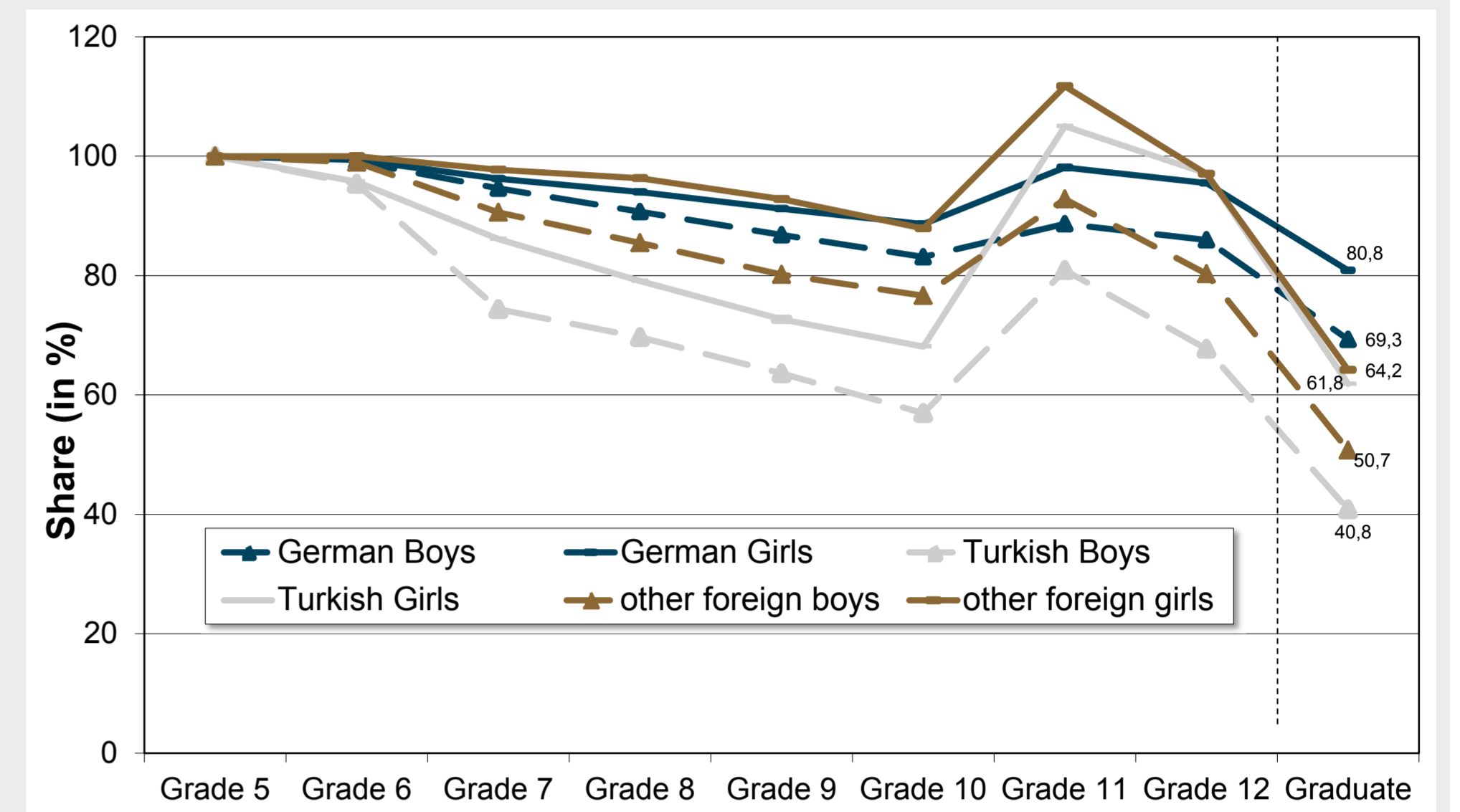
## Findings

Share of boys at Gymnasium in North Rhine-Westphalia between 5th and 10th grade (Synthetic Cohorts)



Source: Roth/Siegert 2013: 176; Data: official school statistics (NRW)

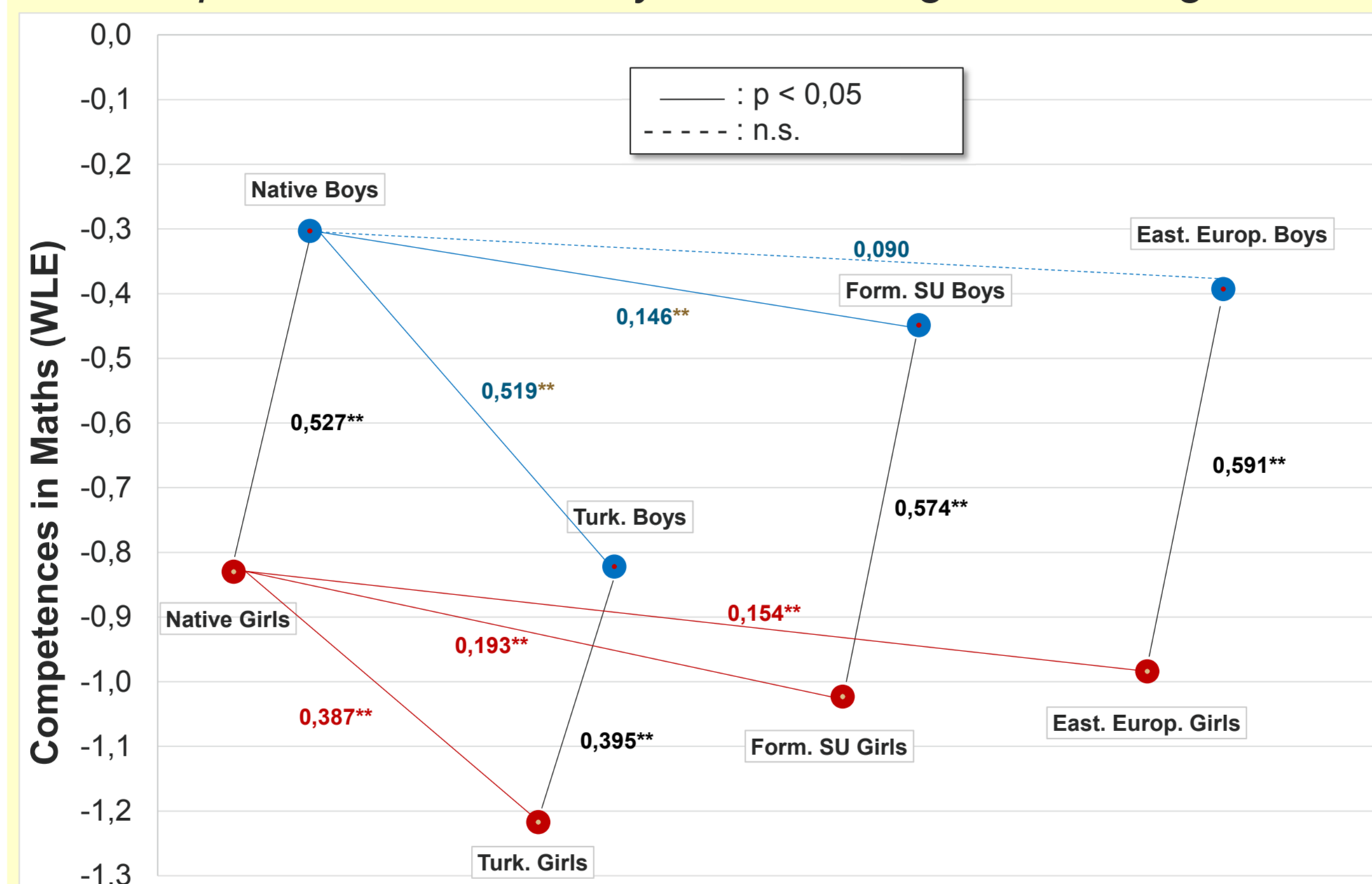
Change in no. of boys and girls between 5th grade and Abitur at Gymnasium in North Rhine-Westphalia (Synthetic Cohorts)



Source: Siegert/Roth 2013: 66; Data: official school statistics (NRW)

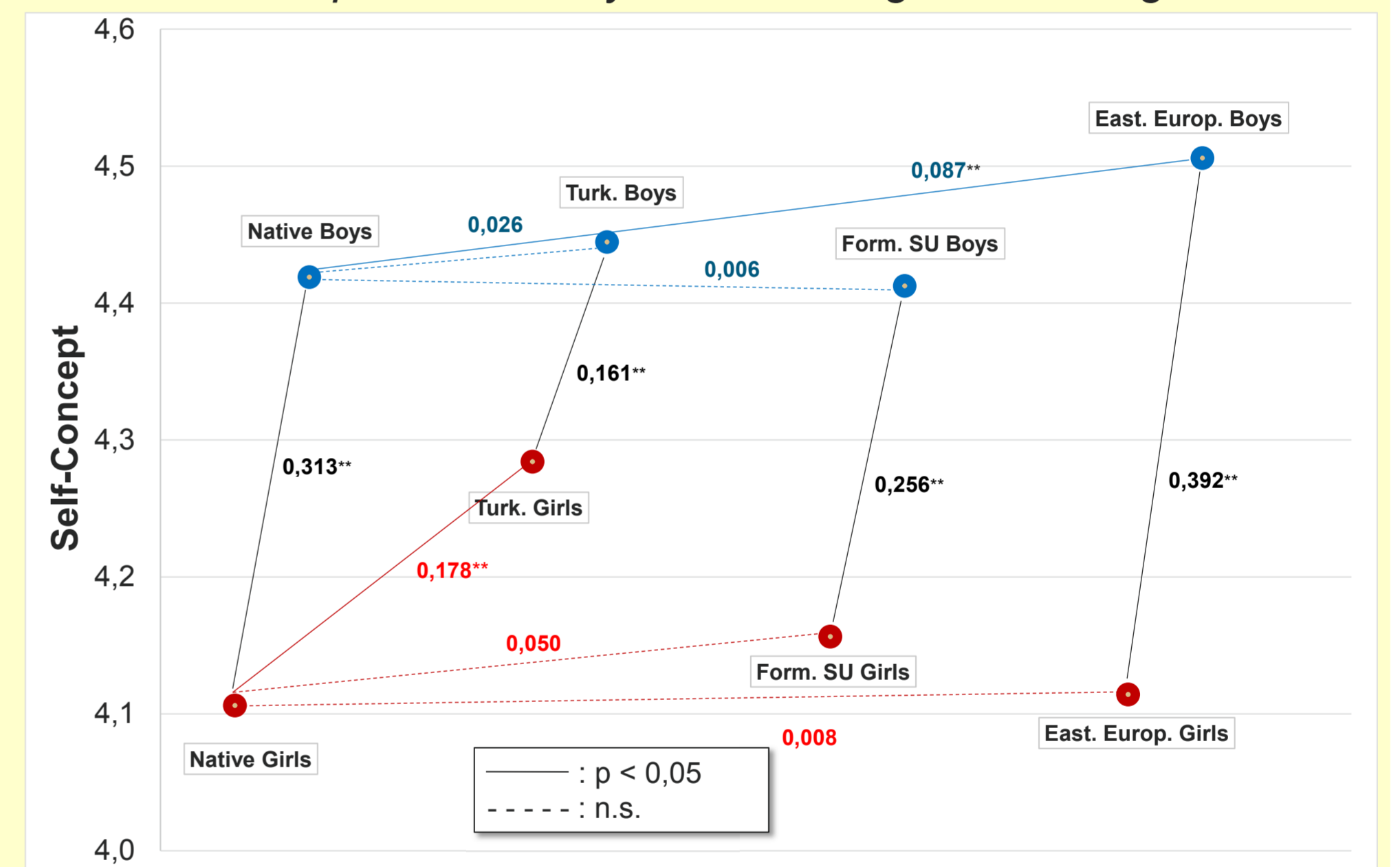
- ☞ On average, girls more often than boys make the transition to Gymnasium after primary school.
- ☞ Girls originating from more traditional societies have no (substantial) disadvantages at this transition.
- ☞ At the latest from the 7th grade onwards, girls are better positioned in the education system than boys in all groups.
- ☞ Students can join the 11th grade of Gymnasium after having achieved an intermediate secondary school certificate at another school type; the strongest increase in the Gymnasium attendance at this stage is among Turkish girls.
- ☞ More girls than boys eventually achieve the Abitur and the gender gap is mostly pronounced among Turkish students.
- ☞ The extent of female advantages in each of the aspects varies between ethnic groups, but overall trends are similar.

Competences in maths by ethnic background and gender



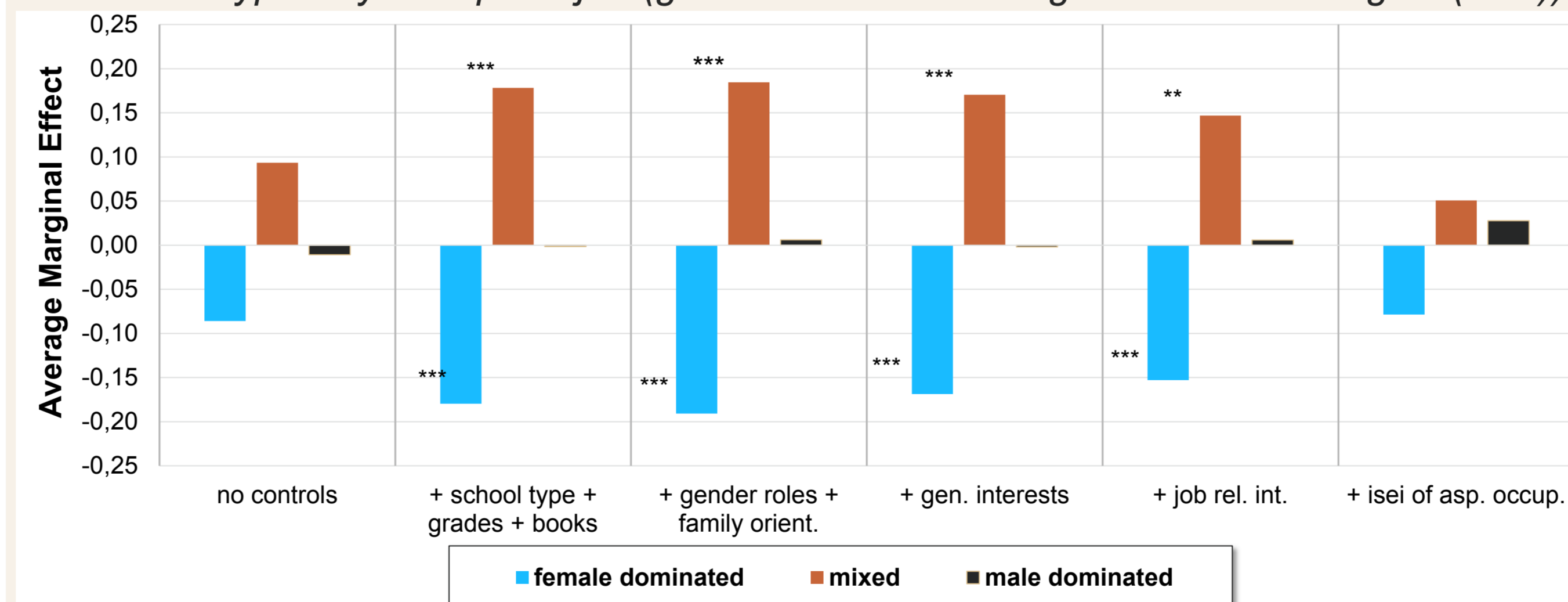
Source: NEPS-SC4\_R\_1-1-0; own calculation and illustration; controlling for school type, no. of books in household, (right figure + competences and grades in maths)

Self-concept in maths by ethnic background and gender



- ☞ Boys have better grades and competences as well as a more positive self-evaluation in maths than girls.
- ☞ Although students with a Turkish background have the lowest competences in maths, they show very positive self-evaluations; this is especially true for Turkish girls. Comparable results can be found with regard to the overall academic self-concept.
- ☞ Generally, there is rather little variation in the degree of gender differences between ethnic groups and, contrary to our expectations, the smallest differences are found for students with a Turkish background.
- ☞ There is no indication of substantial effects of gender roles on maths competences and attitudes towards maths.

Gender typicality of aspired job (girls with Turkish background vs. native girls (Ref.))



Source: NEPS-SC4\_R\_4-0-0, own calculation and illustration

Gender typicality of aspired and expected jobs of girls

		Without Migration Background	Turkish Background
Gender specificity of aspired occupation	male-dominated	13.6%	12.6%
	mixed	62.8%	71.6%
	female-dominated	23.6%	15.8%
Gender specificity of expected occupation	male-dominated	12.6%	11.6%
	mixed	47.5%	48.1%
	female-dominated	39.9%	40.3%

Source: NEPS-SC4\_R\_4-0-0, own calculation

- ☞ Descriptive results from the German Microcensus show that young women with a Turkish background more often work in female-dominated jobs than native young women (ca. 65% vs. 50%).
- ☞ However, this seems not to be the result of their preferences since Turkish girls at the end of secondary school aspire to gender-typical jobs less often than native girls.
- ☞ Gender roles, family orientation and importance of (female) job characteristics do not substantially alter the gap between Turkish and native girls.
- ☞ Gender roles seem to have only a minor impact on the gender typicality of the aspired job.
- ☞ The lower preferences for female-typical jobs among Turkish girls are mainly due to their overall high occupational aspirations (mixed jobs are on average of higher status than female-typical jobs)
- ☞ Although Turkish girls rarely aspire to female jobs, many of them anticipate that they will work in such jobs later on.