DEPARTMENT
OF POLITICAL AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES

# New Party Entry and Political Engagement: Electoral Turnout and Satisfaction with Democracy

Álvaro Canalejo-Molero

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of Political and Social Sciences
of the European University Institute

Florence, 15th of June 2023

European University Institute
**Department of Political and Social Sciences**

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Professor Elias Dinas, European University Institute
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**Researcher declaration to accompany the submission of written work**
**Department of Political and Social Sciences - Doctoral Programme**

I, Álvaro Canalejo-Molero, certify that I am the author of the work "New Party Entry and Political Engagement: Electoral Turnout and Satisfaction with Democracy" I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

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# Abstract

The last two decades have seen a surge in the institutionalization of new political parties, yet low levels of political engagement are persistent in many Western democracies. This raises questions about whether new parties can effectively channel political discontent and promote participation. This thesis argues that new party entry has distinct implications for different forms of political engagement. While new parties can increase electoral participation, they can also reinforce democratic dissatisfaction in affectively polarized environments. The empirical chapters provide evidence to support these arguments. Chapter 2 demonstrates that obtaining parliamentary representation does not significantly increase satisfaction with democracy and even reinforces political discontent among anti-establishment radical party voters. Chapter 3 introduces the concept of disruptive elections and shows that rapid electoral shifts can hinder changes in democratic satisfaction by introducing uncertainty into the government formation process. Chapter 4 proposes that considering an in-group/out-group logic is critical to understanding post-electoral changes in satisfaction with democracy among affectively polarized voters. It provides evidence that the establishment party win fosters political discontent among radical party voters despite electoral success. Finally, chapter 5 offers causal evidence that new party entry increases electoral turnout. These findings contribute to the growing literature on the effects of electoral change on political attitudes and behavior and highlight concerning implications for normative democratic theory. While new political parties may bring new forms of engagement, they can also exacerbate polarizing competition patterns that put democracy at risk. Ultimately, their impact depends on the specific conditions that led to their entry, urging us to consider ways to incorporate new political demands while reducing partisan animosity.

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I guess it is not a coincidence that I see myself writing the acknowledgements of this thesis on the morning of the deadline for submitting the final version. I often argue this habit is cultural. However, deep inside me, I know I am pretty much lying about this argument and not doing any favor to my peers and friends from Spain and Andalusia. Here I want to be completely honest. It is me who still cultivates this habit -although less and less often, I must say. If, despite this and my many other flaws, I am now about to submit my dissertation, it is without any doubt, thanks to those friends and peers to have supported me all my way here. Thanks to them and to all the amazing colleagues and mentors I have had the luck to meet over my short academic life, my dissertation is now finished. To all of you, I am deeply grateful. This is your success as much as it is mine.

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# Contents

# List of Tables

# List of Figures

# Chapter 1. Introduction

On May 15th, 2011, Spaniards were called to demonstrate. The origin of this call was a group of small civic platforms that quickly spread, igniting a burst of protest that led tens of thousands of people to assemble in the main city squares (Hughes, 2011; Sampedro & Lobera, 2014). The protests gained momentum and continued for weeks. Eventually, they became massive and gave place to improvised camps in the squares that brought international coverage throughout Europe and the US (e.g., Beas, 2011; Minder, 2012). Among the protesters' main demands was the renewal of political elites, born out of democratic dissatisfaction under the slogan *¡No nos representan!* ("They do not represent us!").

Ten years later, the two dominant Spanish political parties have lost almost half of their support, reaching historic lows, while at least three parties that did not exist at the time of the protests[1] have achieved substantial representation in parliament. Most notably, the party that most clearly encompassed the protesters' demands is now[2] part of the first coalition government in the history of recent democratic Spain (Orriols & León, 2020; Simón, 2020). However, despite the *15M*'s demand for democratic renewal has been undoubtedly followed by electoral change, political trust is lower than initially, and dissatisfaction with the system has been on the rise (Rodriguez, 2022; Sánchez-Cuenca, 2023).

The protests and electoral changes that followed the post-Great Recession period in Spain are not isolated. Greece had experienced massive protests already in 2008 (Karamichas, 2009), and Italy and Portugal saw similar events a few months before the Spanish protests' outbreak (Della Porta & Portos, 2020). The Occupy Wall Street movement that developed later in the US was partially inspired by the Spanish *15M* and spread over the Western world (Castañeda, 2012). After these events, manifold political outsiders have become more or less successful by embracing some of the unattended demands of the protesters, from the Five Star Movement in Italy or *Syriza* in Greece to the US Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders or Jeremy Corbyn in the UK (Hernández & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Marcos-Marne et al., 2020). In parallel, and partly as a reaction to these changes, a wave of populist radical right parties has become progressively successful by channelling citizens' dissatisfaction through demands for 'bringing politics back to the people' and nativist-oriented policies (Mudde, 2016; Norris & Inglehart, 2019).

Altogether these new actors have undoubtedly transformed the Western electoral landscape (Chiaramonte & Emanuele, 2019; Emanuele & Chiaramonte, 2018; Hutter & Kriesi, 2019; Vries & Hobolt, 2020). Moreover, it seems irrefutable that democratic dissatisfaction has played a crucial role in this change (Kriesi & Schulte-Cloos, 2020). However, despite these

changes being born out of people's demands, there is no evidence they have boosted their levels of political engagement (Martini & Quaranta, 2020), which raises concern about the role that political renovation plays in voters' democratic attitudes and behaviour. This puzzle is the primary motivation of this thesis. Whereas voters have been able to channel their political anger in the polls, they remain largely discontent with the institutions that have allowed them to push forward these changes. Considering these facts, this thesis put together four empirical papers[3] that attempt to answer the following empirical questions. First, does the entry of new political parties increase political engagement? Second, if it does not, why?

To address these questions, this thesis defines political engagement as a complex phenomenon involving both attitudinal and behavioral manifestations. While political engagement has been loosely defined in the literature, typical measures aim to capture two distinct components: the level of involvement in the political process and the evaluations of the system (e.g., Karp & Banducci, 2008; Solt, 2008). The former is commonly measured by indicators such as political interest or political participation, while the latter is often assessed through survey questions that gauge attitudes towards democratic institutions.

Notably, these two dimensions of political engagement do not always correlate with one another. In some cases, citizens who are critical of the democratic process may even have higher political involvement (Norris, 1999, 2011). For example, individuals who are dissatisfied with the political system may have a greater incentive to participate in elections (Ezrow & Xezonakis, 2016). With this in mind, this thesis explores how the entry of new political parties may influence both forms of political engagement by focusing on two of their most recognisable manifestations: electoral turnout and satisfaction with democracy (SWD), respectively. By providing new platforms for citizen representation, new parties may help channel discontent and foster participation. However, as I will argue, this may often not be the case.

Similarly, the concept of new party entry is somewhat ambiguous. Typically, new parties are defined as newly-formed organizations that enter electoral competition (Bolleyer, 2012, 2013). However, marginal parties with a long electoral history may also become *new at* surpassing a given electoral threshold by channelling the same kind of demands that new parties typically address[4]. With these considerations at hand, this thesis defines new party entry as the process by which any political party achieves a higher level of political relevance by surpassing a meaningful electoral threshold (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967, pp. 246–247), whether that means obtaining representation in parliament or competing for the first time in national elections. This includes both truly new parties and existing parties that achieve a substantial new level of success. This definition allows for a flexible approach to studying the impact of

new party entry on political engagement, as explored in different operationalizations across the various chapters of this thesis. Ultimately, the goal is to better understand the consequences of discontent citizens gaining political relevance through the success of marginal parties in the electoral arena.

This thesis makes two central arguments. First, new party entry works as a catalyst for politically frustrated citizens to engage in the democratic process, thus fostering political involvement by providing new means of representation (Adams et al., 2006; Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020). Second, despite the opportunities for representation that new parties provide, their entry into the institutional arena has unintended consequences that may backlash and reinforce democratic dissatisfaction among certain voters. Most notably, new party entry raises the salience of the electoral outcomes (Gattermann et al., 2021), including the victory of political opponents. This may not have a significant impact on moderate voters, but it could generate anger and frustration among those who are most polarized against the establishment (Harteveld, Mendoza, et al., 2021; Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019). As a result, they will reflect these emotions in their evaluations of the system, reinforcing feelings of dissatisfaction (Ridge, 2020).

These arguments are rooted in two strands of research. The first argument builds upon the literature on electoral participation and the number of parties (Adams et al., 2006; Downs, 1957; Grofman & Selb, 2011; Taagepera et al., 2014). The main hypothesis underpinning this literature posits that a larger number of parties should foster electoral participation by increasing the set of policy offers available to voters (Adams et al., 2006). This hypothesis has a long tradition in the political behaviour subfield (see Downs, 1957). However, the existing evidence remains contradictory and quite often suffers from important methodological caveats that hinder its validity (Blais, 2006; Frank & Coma, 2021; Stockemer, 2017). As a consequence, there is still a vivid debate between those who defend the positive effect of new parties on participation against those who argue against it.

The defenders of the null or even negative effect hypotheses argue that increasing the partisan offer introduces noise in the electoral camp (Grofman & Selb, 2011; Taagepera et al., 2014). It renders it difficult to infer correct predictions about parties' chances to win a seat and make their platforms indistinguishable, hence depressing turnout among undecided voters. Additionally, the study of new party entry on turnout also suffers from a fundamental causal inference problem due to the endogeneity of new party entry and the potential for electoral mobilization (Hug, 2001). As a result, observational studies using similar data sources and empirical designs have often reached conflicting conclusions. Some studies suggest that new parties incentivize participation among dissatisfied voters (Heath

& Ziegfeld, 2018; Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020), while others argue that new parties strategically compete to increase their likelihood of success when they anticipate higher mobilization potential, reversing the causality arrow (Lago & Martínez, 2011; Tavits, 2006, 2008). Chapter 5 introduces an empirical strategy aiming to solve these conflicting findings and test the hypothesis of whether new party entry increases electoral turnout.

The second argument builds upon the literature on the consequences of elections for satisfaction with democracy. This line of research has reached two major findings. First, winners of elections experience a large boost in SWD after elections that result in a durable winner-loser gap (e.g., Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Dahlberg & Linde, 2017; Singh et al., 2012; Van der Meer & Steenvoorden, 2018). Second, electoral participation generally increases SWD (Esaiasson, 2011; Kostelka & Blais, 2018; Nadeau & Blais, 1993). That is, voters report higher levels of SWD than abstainers after elections. These two findings are mainly explained through rational and expressive mechanisms. First, the rational view of changes in SWD after elections underscores how the electoral outcomes affect the perceived utility of the system (Anderson et al., 2005, pp. 22–25). According to this view, the likelihood of implementing voters' preferred policies is larger the higher the electoral success of their parties, which voters take into account in their evaluations. Second, the expressive view underlines the intrinsic value of participation (Blais & Achen, 2019; Ginsberg & Weissberg, 1978). Voters' participation raises awareness of the representative function of elections and meets the symbolic role of fulfilling a civic duty. Given these two arguments, new party entry should be associated with an increase on SWD among new party voters because it provides them with the means for representation (i.e., utility gains) and signal the value of elections as a tool for enfranchising new demands (i.e., expressive gains).

Crucially, the expectation that new party entry will increase voters' satisfaction with democracy relies on two assumptions that may not always hold. The first assumption is that voters' satisfaction with democracy is a simple, linear function of their party's electoral success. However, research suggests that entering government has a much bigger impact on SWD than minor electoral gains (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Blais et al., 2017; Martini & Quaranta, 2019). This finding is consistent with the rational mechanism. While even modest electoral success may increase the likelihood of effective representation, becoming part of the executive is by far the most effective way of influencing the policy outcomes. Therefore, whether entering the system is enough to boost SWD will hinge on the utility that voters attribute to these electoral gains.

In turn, voters' views may reflect different conceptions of democracy (G. B. Powell, 2000). The proportional vision of democracy sees elections as a mechanism to select representatives

who engage in post-election bargaining to represent the interests of their constituents. In contrast, the majoritarian vision of democracy emphasizes the control of the majority over the polity. If most voters' vision aligns with the majoritarian conception of democracy, new party entry may not be sufficient to enhance voters' evaluations of the system. Therefore, the effect of new party entry may be moderate or even negligible if the new party does not gain enough support to influence policy outcomes and if voters' views of democracy follows the majoritarian model.

The second assumption is that electorally-driven changes in SWD mostly reflect the own party results. However, there are reasons to believe that this may not always be the case. Particularly, radical and populist party voters have shown high levels of affective polarization (Iyengar et al., 2012; Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021) against the establishment (Harteveld, Mendoza, et al., 2021; Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019). That is, they report strong negative feelings towards their political opponents and delve into anger, frustration and even hate. These affectively charged evaluations of their political competitors could lead to the interpretation of the electoral outcomes in identitarian terms. As a result, the entry of their party could raise awareness of the electoral victory of a disliked out-group and trigger an adverse reaction that permeates their evaluations of the system (Ridge, 2020).

Building on this logic, this thesis advances the argument that the relationship between new party entry and SWD depends on two factors: the degree of affective polarization between new and old party voters and the level of success of the new party. Given a low level of affective polarization, new party entry should positively affect SWD. Moreover, the increase should be larger the better the results of the new party. In contrast, new party entry will decrease SWD among affectively polarized new party voters by raising the salience of the out-group win. For these voters, the impact of new party entry on SWD will not be positive unless they gain enough support to access the executive branch. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide a series of empirical tests for this argument.

The theoretical contribution of this thesis provides a plausible solution to the seemingly conflicting patterns depicted at the beginning of this chapter. While new parties have institutionalized at a fast pace in most Western democracies, voters who demanded the renewal of the political system remain dissatisfied with democratic institutions. This thesis advances two arguments that could help to disentangle this puzzle. First, the entry of new political parties could have different implications for different aspects of political engagement. It may foster participation at the same time that contributes to the decline of democratic evaluations. Second, despite the opportunities for representation brought by new political parties, the combination of a majoritarian conception of democracy with an affectively polarized

political environment may trigger a negative reaction to the entry of new political forces, which could eventually reinforce democratic dissatisfaction. The empirical part of the thesis is structured in four independent chapters that assess the validity of these claims.

Chapter 2 explores the impact of parliamentary representation on satisfaction with democracy. While winning an election is known to increase SWD, the effect of obtaining parliamentary representation remains unclear. This paper theorizes that anti-establishment radical party voters may experience a decrease in SWD because obtaining representation increases the saliency of the establishment win. Two studies are conducted to test this hypothesis. The first study uses a regression-discontinuity design to identify the effect of parliamentary representation on SWD. The study finds an average positive effect of parliamentary representation that becomes negative and substantially large for radical party voters. The second study focuses on the case of the radical party AfD in the 2017 German Federal election, using a panel survey to show that AfD voters become less satisfied with democracy after entering the *Bundestag*. Most importantly, it shows that the negative change is driven by AfD voters with strong anti-establishment attitudes. The findings suggest that the promise of representation barely enhances the system evaluations of most voters, and for those who are more alienated, it may even worsen them.

Chapter 3 introduces the concept of disruptive elections and analyzes their implications on satisfaction with democracy. Disruptive elections are those that break regular volatility patterns because of massive vote transfers to challenger parties. The paper provides evidence of the utility of this concept by analyzing disruptive elections in Western European party systems from 1945 until 2021. Using panel data from five national elections in Europe, the study shows that voters do not experience changes in SWD after disruptive elections, in contrast to after regular elections. The typical winner-loser gap in SWD fades away when challenger parties break into the system without winning, and the resulting uncertainty blurs the winner-loser distinction. The findings show that disruptive elections negatively affect democratic legitimacy, at least in the short-run, and that the post-disruption uncertainty for government formation hinders SWD changes among winners and losers alike.

Chapter 4 proposes that adding an out-group logic is crucial to understanding changes in satisfaction with democracy among affectively polarized voters such as those of radical parties. The prevailing in-group logic takes changes in SWD only as a function of the own party results, which is not consistent with the finding that voters of radical and populist parties are more dissatisfied after elections. The study argues that changes in SWD would be heterogeneously affected by the radical party (in-group) and the mainstream party (out-group) results. When facing a defeat, a negative affective response to the out-group win will

outweigh the positive impact of the relative in-group success. To test this argument, the study leverages the electoral uncertainty between the first and second rounds of the 2022 French presidential election with a survey experiment embedded in a two-wave panel survey. The findings support the affective mechanism, indicating that priming radical party voters with the potential victory of the mainstream opponent is associated with a negative change in SWD. The study sheds light on the overlooked relationship between SWD and affective polarization, suggesting that the institutional inclusion of marginalized political groups may only exacerbate dissatisfaction in highly polarized electoral contexts.

Finally, chapter 5 examines whether new party entry boosts electoral participation. It leverages a unique real-world setting with quasi-exogeneous variation in the distribution of new parties' candidate lists: the 2015 Spanish local elections. In those elections, the two newcomers *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* ran candidates in as many municipalities as possible to jump on the bandwagon of their recent success at the European Parliamentary elections. However, they could not do so in many of them due to their lack of organizational roots. Therefore, the analyses compare official participation records across municipalities with and without new parties' candidate lists using matching techniques within a difference-in-differences approach. The results provide support for the hypothesis that new party entry increases electoral turnout. The finding helps to disentangle the pervasive endogeneity problem of studies on electoral participation and the number of parties. It advises against the naive use of participation rates as an explanatory variable of new party entry while it confirms previous evidence on new party entry effects. More broadly, the finding contributes to the growing literature on the effects of party system change on political behaviour and shows that new parties can promote political engagement by fostering participation in elections.

Chapter 6 concludes with a summary of the main findings and their implications. It brings together the four empirical chapters and reflects upon their findings in view of the main theoretical argument and the motivation for this thesis. While new parties play the crucial role of channelling citizens' unattended demands, their impact on political engagement is put into question. They may bring new forms of political involvement but also exacerbate unhealthy competition patterns that put democracy at risk. Ultimately, their consequences for the well-functioning of democracy will depend on the underlying circumstances that brought them into competition in the first place. Therefore, this thesis urges us to rethink the channels through which new actors can add their demands to the political agenda while minimizing their impact on the levels of political polarization and other pernicious effects.

# Chapter 2. Boost or Backlash? The Heterogeneous Effects of Parliamentary Representation on Satisfaction with Democracy

> "It is true that the caste parties have probably received the most serious corrective in their history at the polls. But I have to say that so far we have not been able to meet our goals of beating them at the polls. [...] I repeat it again: Podemos was not born to play a testimonial role. [...] We don't settle for this, they are part of the problem. We have to throw them out."
>
> — Pablo Iglesias, co-founder and ex-leader of Podemos
>
> 25th May, 2014

On the 17th of January 2014, a group of leftist activists and professors from the Complutense University of Madrid presented a new political party in a small theatre in a working-class neighbourhood of Madrid. The party was named Podemos (*We Can*) and selected Pablo Iglesias, one of the university professors, as its leader. Podemos competed in an election for the first time on the 25th of May 2014 at the European Parliament (EP) elections, only four months after its foundation. Nevertheless, the party surpassed any reasonable expectation and won 7.98% of the vote share, becoming the fourth most voted party in Spain and winning five seats at the EP. To the surprise of many, the reaction of Pablo Iglesias to the electoral results was not optimistic. On the contrary, he emphasized the futility of their victory. The goal of Podemos was the government, and more specifically, to throw the mainstream parties out of it.

The case of Podemos is not unique. Until the 1990s, Western European party systems were said to have 'frozen' so that the same parties dominated the political landscape for decades despite crises, wars and other societal changes (Bartolini & Mair, 1990; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967; Mair, 1993). However, for the last two decades, this is no longer the case. From Podemos in Spain to Brothers of Italy or the German AfD, an array of new radical parties had accumulated impressive gains (Hutter & Kriesi, 2019; Vries & Hobolt, 2020), increasing the fragmentation of Western parliaments and the number of parties holding representation (Chiaramonte & Emanuele, 2017, 2019). Extensive evidence confirms that these parties are primarily supported by citizens dissatisfied with the functioning of democracy (Hernández, 2018; Hernández & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Marcos-Marne et al., 2020; Otjes

& Wardt, 2020). Still, whether their institutional inclusion constitutes a turning point for voters' evaluations of democracy remains largely unclear. This paper aims to shed light on this debate by asking whether obtaining parliamentary representation increases satisfaction with democracy (SWD) or if, as Pablo Iglesias did after the first entry of Podemos into parliament, voters consider it only a futile win.

Drawing upon the literature on changes in SWD after elections (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais et al., 2017; M. Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2018; Rooduijn et al., 2016), the paper departs from two expectations. First, obtaining parliamentary representation should boost SWD by increasing the utility of the election outcomes. Second, it should reduce SWD by increasing the saliency of the establishment's win among anti-establishment radical party voters. The article test these expectations with two complementary studies. The first one leverages the quasi-as-random nature of seat assignment around legally fixed electoral thresholds to identify the effect of parliamentary representation on SWD with a regression discontinuity design (RDD). It employs survey data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) coupled with electoral records from 75 elections in 26 countries with national electoral thresholds. The main finding is robust across model specifications: obtaining representation is associated with an SWD increase. However, the effect never reaches conventional levels of statistical significance. Furthermore, a stratified analysis for specific party groups shows that the effect remains positive but not significant for moderate party voters, even if they did not hold representation in the last term. In contrast, radical party voters experience a substantial SWD decrease.

The second study focuses on the case of AfD voters in the 2017 German Federal election to triangulate the RDD findings with a different set-up and dig into the mechanisms underlying the negative effect of representation among radical party voters. In this election, the populist radical right-wing party AfD (Alternative for Germany) obtained representation in the *Bundestag* for the first time and became the third most-voted party. Given the party's success, this case poses a hard test for our hypothesis. However, an analysis of the pre and post-electoral waves of a panel survey fielded around the election (GLES, 2019) confirms that AfD voters became less satisfied with democracy after the election. Furthermore, an interaction analysis shows that the change is driven by voters with strong anti-establishment attitudes, in line with the hypothesized mechanism. These findings support the hypothesis that radical party voters react negatively to obtaining parliamentary representation because of its side effects. Entering parliament would unintendedly increase the saliency of the establishment's win and cause a backlash among radical party voters.

These findings have troubling implications for normative democratic theory. Parliaments

play a central role in liberal democracy. At the very least, they play two pivotal roles: representation and accountability (Przeworski et al., 1999). Whereas the government leads the policy-making process, parties in parliament can voice their demands, modify and reject laws, and keep the government in check through questions, no-confidence votes, and impeachments. Not without reason, Lipset and Rokkan considered the parliament the second most important threshold of democratic inclusion[5] (Lipset & Rokkan, 1967, pp. 246–247). If voters do not weigh the benefits of parliamentary representation in their evaluations of democracy, the premise of a link between institutional inclusion and satisfaction is broken (Aarts & Thomassen, 2008). Most notably, if the unintended consequences of obtaining representation strike radical voters harder, a prime concern is that precisely the most alienated voters are those more likely to remain dissatisfied.

## 2.1. Elections, parliamentary representation and SWD

There is a vast literature that connects election outcomes with changes in SWD[6]. However, most of it focuses on the effect of winning. The accumulated evidence confirms that winners experience a higher increase in SWD after elections than losers, which generates a noticeable winner-loser gap (Anderson et al., 2005; Bernauer & Vatter, 2012; Cohen et al., 2022; Martini & Quaranta, 2019; Moehler, 2009; Singh, 2014). Furthermore, the winning effect occurs immediately after the election (Blais & Gélineau, 2007) and among radical and populist voters too (Cohen et al., 2022; Fahey et al., 2022; Harteveld, Kokkonen, et al., 2021; Haugsgjerd, 2019). In contrast, the relationship between achieving parliamentary representation and changes in SWD is understudied.

The most accepted explanation for changes in SWD after elections is that winners attribute more utility to the electoral outcomes than losers, which eventually permeates their evaluations of democracy (Anderson et al., 2005, pp. 23–25). So far, only Blais and his colleagues (2017) have extended this argument to the case of gaining representation. They used data from 13 panel election studies to show that voters of parties that obtain representation also experience a positive change in SWD, although the change is smaller than for winners due to the smaller utility of gaining representation.

This finding notwithstanding, their study faces important limitations. First, it lacks a credible identification strategy. Although using panel instead of cross-sectional data is a methodological advance to identify SWD changes (Blais & Gélineau, 2007), it cannot isolate what features of the electoral outcomes and the events surrounding the elections drive them. More specifically, this strategy does not allow to rule out the possibility that voters of parties in parliament are affected by some election outcome different from obtaining representation,

such as the possibility of becoming a minor coalition partner, which might explain the positive change.

Furthermore, its analysis conflates various kinds of parties at different success ratios. This limitation may mask potential heterogeneity. On the one hand, the positive change may be driven by parties that obtain enough representation to push forward more substantial demands. On the other hand, moderate and radical party voters, for example, may have different expectations about the utility of their party results independently of their seat share because of the different probabilities of influencing the status quo (Grofman, 1985).

This paper attempts to overcome these two limitations. Theoretically, it departs from different expectations for the whole pool of voters and voters of specific party types. The main expectation is that obtaining representation will positively affect SWD. In parliamentary democracies, the election winner tends to become the party that leads government formation. However, parties with representation are also in a better position than parties without it. First, parliamentary parties might participate in government. Especially in a fragmented parliament, minor parties can negotiate with other parties to agree on a coalition either by becoming a junior partner or by including some of their demands. Second, parties in parliament can influence the policy-making process. Depending on the status quo and the government's vulnerability, they can pass, modify or reject laws (Martin & Vanberg, 2020), and use the parliament as an institutional vehicle to voice their demands to a larger public (Dunn, 2012). Finally, parliamentary parties hold a crucial accountability function (Strøm et al., 2010). They keep the government in check through questions, control committees, no-confidence votes, and impeachments. Therefore, the political benefits of entering parliament are manifolds. Even if voters only partially acknowledge them, obtaining representation should be perceived as more successful than not. Consequently, I expect voters of parties in parliament to attribute a higher utility to the election outcomes and mirror it in their democratic evaluations:

> **Hypothesis 1**: Voters of parties with parliamentary representation will report a higher average level of SWD.

Notwithstanding the expectation of an average positive effect, obtaining representation may generate unintended negative consequences for specific party groups. Previous evidence from Belgium and the Netherlands suggests that radical party voters may experience a decrease in political trust and SWD after their party entry into parliament (M. Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2018; Rooduijn et al., 2016). Rooduijn and his colleagues (2016) suggest that this is due to the role of parliaments in amplifying the anti-elite rhetoric of radical (populist)

parties. On the other hand, Hooghe and Dassoneville (2018) propose that radical party voters would update their system evaluations downwardly to maintain cognitive consistency with their party's anti-establishment platform. However, none of these arguments is supported by empirical evidence, and their validity rests upon strong theoretical assumptions[7].

Instead, I expect radical party voters to experience an SWD decrease because obtaining representation would increase the saliency of the establishment's win and trigger an adverse reaction. The argument rests upon two assumptions. First, obtaining representation should increase the election results' saliency, especially among radical party voters. Elections have been shown to increase the saliency of a number of political outcomes, such as affective polarization (Hernandez et al., 2021) or partisanship (Singh & Thornton, 2019). They "epitomize the moment of maximum political conflict, information spread, mobilization, and activation of political identities and predispositions" (Hernandez et al., 2021, p. 2). However, their outcomes are not equally emphasized for different political groups. When a political party enters parliament, especially if it is new and delivers radical messages, it is more likely to be mentioned in the media and to arouse comparisons with the winner of the election (Gattermann et al., 2021). Hence, obtaining representation should increase voters' attentiveness to the election results, especially among radical parties.

Second, radical party voters should hold strong anti-establishment attitudes. Comparative evidence demonstrates that "extreme parties tend to emphasize their opposition to political elites" (Polk et al., 2017, p. 5) and capitalize on voters' discontent with the establishment (Kriesi & Schulte-Cloos, 2020). Some scholars even interpret this resentment in affective terms. For them, these voters hold a negative political identity based on the "generalized feeling and belief that *all* mainstream political parties are untrustworthy" (Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019, p. 521). Therefore, obtaining representation could raise attention toward the establishment's win and trigger a negative emotional response that permeates the evaluations of the system of radical party voters (Ridge, 2020). On the contrary, moderate party voters should not experience any adverse reaction:

> **Hypothesis 2a**: Voters of radical parties with parliamentary representation will report a lower average level of SWD.
>
> **Hypothesis 2b**: Voters of moderate parties with parliamentary representation will report a higher average level of SWD.

Nonetheless, not all radical party voters should experience an SWD decrease. One of the implications of the hypothesized mechanism is that only voters with strong anti-establishment attitudes should react negatively to their party's entry into parliament. If this mechanism is

correct, the expected utility of representation should outweigh any negative response triggered by the establishment's win among radical party voters without strong anti-establishment feelings. Consequently, obtaining representation should boost SWD among these voters:

> **Hypothesis 3**: Voters of radical parties with parliamentary representation will report a higher (lower) average level of SWD the weaker (stronger) their anti-establishment attitudes.

The following sections present two complementary studies that test these hypotheses. The first one leverages comparative cross-sectional data with an identification strategy to provide causal evidence for the effect of parliamentary representation on SWD (H1 and H2). The second is a case study that uses panel survey data to triangulate the findings from the first study and dig further into the mechanisms (H3).

## 2.2. Study 1 - Does parliamentary representation affect SWD? Causal evidence from a RDD

### 2.2.1. Empirical design

The aim of this study is to identify the effect of parliamentary representation on SWD. To do so, it takes advantage of national elections with a legally fixed electoral threshold using an RDD. The intuition behind this design is that individuals whose parties are just above and below the electoral threshold are likely to be very similar in terms of their characteristics, such as age, education level, income, and political preferences. Therefore, any difference in SWD between these two groups can be attributed to the effect of obtaining parliamentary representation rather than other factors that may be driving the difference. The main assumption to interpret this difference as causal is that neither individuals nor parties can manipulate the threshold or the marginal votes necessary to surpass it.

This intuition can be formalized with a regression model within the potential outcomes framework. In this design, obtaining representation is a non-random treatment $D$ whose probability depends on the party's vote share $X$, which is the forcing variable. The probability of $D$ given $X$ is discontinuous around the electoral threshold $c$, which is the cut-off. If the probability of $X$ being just above or below $c$ is as good as random, the RDD can identify the effect of $D$ on SWD or any other outcome $Y$ locally around $c$ (Imbens & Lemieux, 2008, p. 616). Therefore, the quantity of interest is the local average treatment effect (LATE), that is, the effect of obtaining representation extrapolated minimally around the threshold. Additionally, to identify this quantity, the model must also account for the possibility of different slopes at each threshold side, which can be captured with an interaction term

between the treatment status and the party's distance to the threshold.

Finally, an additional challenge to identifying the effect of obtaining representation with an RDD is that some electoral thresholds are not deterministic. For example, they may allow parties to gain representation regardless of their national vote share with constituency candidates in mixed-electoral systems. In this case, we can still exploit the discontinuity on the probability of obtaining representation around the electoral threshold with a fuzzy RDD design, which is equivalent to an instrumental variable approach (Lee & Lemieux, 2010). In this design, obtaining parliamentary representation is instrumented by a dummy variable $Z$ that takes a value of 1 always that the party's vote share is higher than the threshold and 0 otherwise. Therefore, the model entails a two-stage regression in which the first stage is given by the following specification:

$$D_i = \alpha + \beta_1(X_i - c) + \gamma Z_i + \delta(X_i - c)Z_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Afterwards, $D$ is substituted by the predicted values $\hat{D}$ in the second-stage equation, where the LATE is given by $\tau$:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1(X_i - c) + \tau\hat{D}_i + \beta_2(X_i - c)\hat{D}_i + u_i$$

In addition, researchers typically included polynomials of the forcing variable to avoid non-linearities from being falsely taken as discontinuities. However, this approach has been widely criticized since polynomials of a higher degree than the quadratic form can lead to flawed estimates (Gelman & Imbens, 2019). Alternatively, the literature on RDD has pushed a consensus on using non-parametric estimation methods. The idea is to focus only on the observations closer to the threshold instead of approximating the functional form of the relationship between X and Y (Valentim et al., 2021, pp. 255–256). Therefore, the main specifications use a local linear regression with a triangular kernel, which gives more weight to the parties whose results are closer to the threshold (Fan & Gijbels, 2018).

I use all the parliamentary elections with legally fixed national electoral thresholds covered by the CSES modules 1 to 5[8]. The elections list is displayed in table 1. It includes countries with either proportional or mixed electoral systems. The parties' electoral performance is normalized around their respective national threshold to allow their comparability ($range = -8.7$ *to* $44.3$). SWD is captured by the answer to a survey item included in the CSES consistently across countries and modules. The question asks whether, 'on the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way

democracy works in [country of the respondent]?'. I transformed the variable into a continuous scale ($range = 1\ to\ 4$) and recoded it so that higher values indicate higher SWD[9].

Table 1: List of elections included in the study

| Country | Elections | Electoral threshold |
|---|---|---|
| Austria | 2008, 2013, 2017 | 4 |
| Bulgaria | 2001, 2014 | 4 |
| Croatia | 2007 | 5 |
| Czech Republic | 1996, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2013 | 5 |
| Denmark | 1998, 2001, 2007 | 2 |
| Estonia | 2011 | 5 |
| Germany | 1998, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017 | 5 |
| Greece | 2009, 2012, 2015 Sept., 2015 Jan. | 3 |
| Hungary | 1998, 2002, 2018 | 5 |
| Iceland | 2003, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2016, 2017 | 5 |
| Israel | 1996, 2003 | 1.5 |
| Italy | 2006 | 4 |
| Latvia | 2010, 2011, 2014 | 5 |
| Lithuania | 2016 | 5 |
| Mexico | 1997, 2000 | 3 |
| Montenegro | 2012 | 3 |
| Netherlands | 1998, 2002, 2006, 2010 | 0.67 |
| New Zealand | 1996, 2002, 2008, 2011, 2014, 2017 | 5 |
| Norway | 1997 2001, 2005, 2009, 2013 | 4 |
| Poland | 1997, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2011 | 5 |
| Romania | 1996 | 3 |
| Serbia | 2012 | 5 |
| Slovakia | 2010, 2016 | 5 |
| Slovenia | 1996 | 3 |
| Sweden | 1998, 2002, 2006, 2014 | 4 |
| Turkey | 2015, 2018 | 10 |

One additional threat to identification is that the countries included in the analyses report asymmetric baseline levels of SWD. The estimation based on this sample could be biased if countries with systemically higher (lower) average SWD levels are disproportionally represented at either side of the threshold. For example, we know that citizens from Nordic countries exhibit consistently higher average levels of SWD than citizens of Southern and Central-Eastern Europe (Kriesi, 2020, p. 245). Let us assume that the proportion of parties

from Nordic countries on the right side of the threshold was disproportionally higher in the sample. Then a significant positive difference in SWD between voters of parties inside and outside the parliament could be misguidedly interpreted as an actual positive effect of parliamentary representation. The main specifications include country-fixed effects to account for this possibility. Besides that, the errors are clustered at the party-election level to account for intra-cluster correlation at the treatment assignment level (Abadie et al., 2017).

Finally, the analyses are implemented with R 'rdrobust' package (Calonico et al., 2017). The bandwidth is calculated with the data-driven algorithm that Calonico and his colleagues propose to minimize the bias-variance trade-off (Calonico et al., 2014, 2020). In addition, the package provides three complementary estimation methods: conventional, bias-corrected and robust to large bandwidths. The estimates from the three non-parametric methods and the parametric specification are reported together for transparency and to allow researchers to identify potential inconsistencies across the estimates [10] (Lee & Lemieux, 2010).

### 2.2.2. Main results

Figure 1 displays the results for the whole pool of respondents. The left-hand side plot reports the binned average levels of SWD reported by voters of parties around the threshold[11]. The relationship between SWD and electoral performance is discontinuously plotted at each side of the cut-off using a LOESS regression. The plot displays a positive jump in SWD that suggests a positive effect of representation. However, the presence of non-linearities and the small jump size suggest caution in its interpretation. The plot also displays the country of the parties closer to the threshold for those whose voters report an average level of SWD closer to the bounds. This visualization confirms that parties from countries with different baseline levels of SWD are asymmetrically represented at each side of the threshold. More specifically, countries with a higher baseline level of SWD are overrepresented on the right side. Therefore, the reported specifications include country fixed-effects to account for this variation and provide a credible identification of the LATE.

The right-hand side plot reports the estimated coefficient associated with obtaining parliamentary representation across various specifications. The estimated effect is always positive and between 0.031 and 0.171 points in SWD. Although the conventional and bias-corrected non-parametric specifications approach statistical significance at a 90% confidence level, none of the estimates is statistically significant at any conventional threshold. That is, obtaining parliamentary representation does not affect voters' SWD significantly.

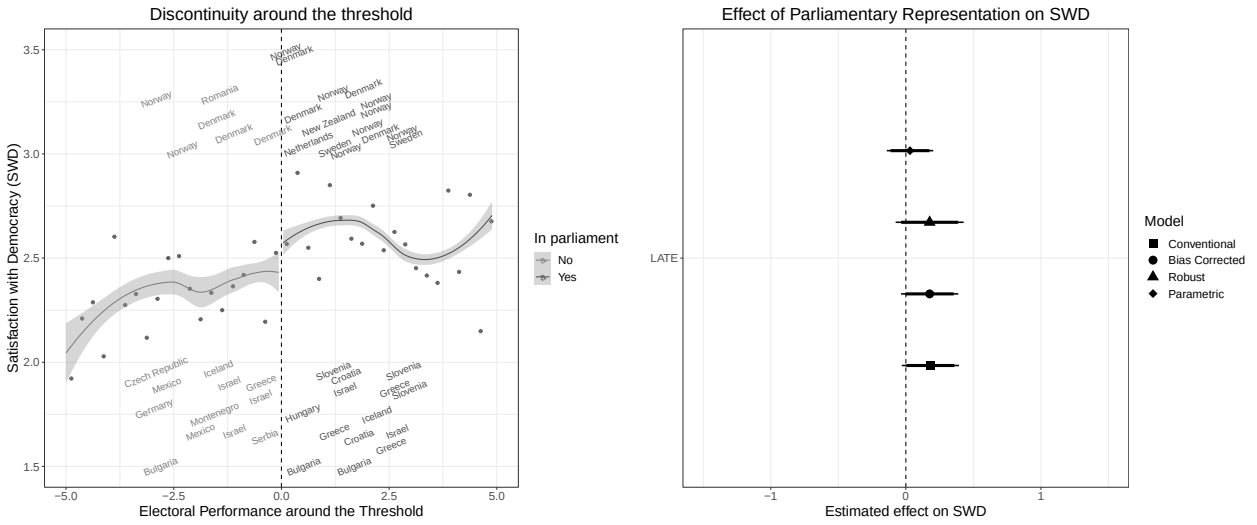


Figure 1: Regression discontinuity plot and coefficient plot of the estimated LATE of parliamentary representation on SWD

A series of observations reinforce the credibility of the results. First, the parametric and non-parametric estimates are consistent across specifications. Second, the estimated coefficient does not vary substantially across specifications with and without country-fixed effects, although the confidence intervals are larger when omitted[12]. Namely, the bias caused by the asymmetric presence of countries with unequal baseline levels of SWD at each side of the threshold is slight at best, so including country fixed-effects does not alter the results. However, they increase the precision of the estimates.

Therefore, with this evidence at hand, hypothesis 1 should be rejected. Running against the expectations, the perceived utility of obtaining representation does not seem enough to trigger a substantial improvement in voters' evaluations of democracy. Although always positive, if achieving representation had any true effect on SWD, this would be too small to be statistically detectable without an extremely large sample.

Despite reporting no significant average effects, the analysis of the whole pool of respondents may mask the presence of non-negligible heterogeneity. If obtaining representation affects SWD in opposite directions for different voters, an average null effect may hide a true effect for specific subgroups. As theorized before, this could be the case for radical and moderate party voters. Obtaining representation is expected to increase SWD among the latter (H2a) and decrease it among the former (H2b). To test these hypotheses, I replicate the analysis on two distinct subsets of the sample. The first subset builds upon the dataset of Valentim (2021) to include only voters of parties typically categorized as radical in the

literature [13]. The second subset includes only moderate party voters[14].

The results of the stratified analysis are summarized in figure 2. The left-hand side of the figure plots the coefficient associated with obtaining parliamentary representation for radical party voters. In contrast, the right-hand side of the figure plots the same coefficient for moderate party voters. The analysis essentially confirms the results of the main specification for moderate party voters. However, the results for radical party voters differ substantially.

The estimated effect of obtaining parliamentary representation is negative and substantial in size. The coefficients report an estimated effect between $-0.27$ and $-0.59$ points over the 1 to 4 SWD scale. The effect is statistically significant at a 95% confidence level and consistent in size across all the non-parametric specifications. As suggested by Gelman and Imbens (2019), the parametric estimates are unreliable when the treatment-outcome function is not linear and diverges at each side of the threshold, which is confirmed by the regression discontinuity plot in the appendices[15]. Therefore, the more consistent interpretation of the results is that voters of radical parties experience a sharp decrease in SWD after obtaining representation.

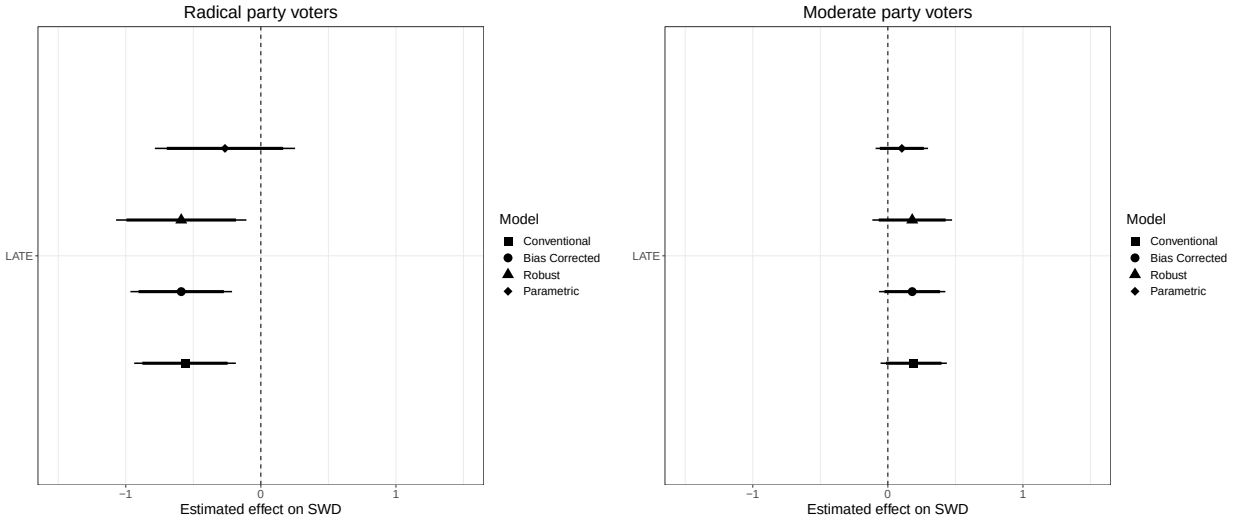


Figure 2: Coefficient plot of the estimated LATE of parliamentary representation on SWD for radical (left) and moderate parties (right)

These findings provide strong support for hypothesis 2a but not hypothesis 2b. Even after excluding radical party voters from the sample, the positive effect of parliamentary representation on SWD is negligible from a statistical point of view. On the contrary, the results confirm that obtaining representation provokes a backlash for radical party voters, who report lower satisfaction with the system after becoming part of it.

### 2.2.3. Robustness checks

The results are robust to a series of additional tests included in the supplementary materials. First, the expectation that obtaining representation will increase SWD rests upon one crucial assumption: that voters of parties in parliament consider not obtaining representation as a benchmark when evaluating the electoral results. This assumption is more likely to hold for voters of parties that enter parliament for the first time[16]. To rule out the possibility that the lack of statistically significant effects of parliamentary representation is led by parties already in parliament, I replicate the analysis for a subset of the sample that includes only voters of parties without previous representation[17]. However, the coefficients remain not statistically significant consistently across specifications[18].

Second, the fuzzy RDD design needs to fulfil the same assumptions as an instrumental variable design to provide a causal interpretation of its results. First, the effect of the instrument on the probability of receiving the treatment must be strong. Second, the only way the instrument could affect the outcome must be through the treatment. Finally, there should be no confounders between the instrument and the outcome. The two latter assumptions are typically assumed to hold in RDDs based on a legally fixed threshold[19]. As for the instrument's strength, figure 22 in the appendix confirms that being above the cut-off provokes a remarkable increase in the probability of entering parliament.

Third, the central assumption underlying the causal identification strategy of the RDD is that there is no sorting around the threshold. In this design, sorting is unlikely since parties cannot manipulate their vote share with precision in order to win a seat under democratic rule, especially in national elections. In addition, voters suffer from asymmetrical information on others' behaviour and preferences, so their probability of coordinating collectively to secure a seat is minimal. These theoretical considerations notwithstanding, appendices A1.8 and A1.9 provide empirical evidence that rules out the possibility of sorting. Appendix A1.8 formally confirms that the density of the forcing variable changes smoothly around the threshold (McCrary, 2008). Appendix A1.9 provides evidence of the lack of any substantial difference among respondents above and below the threshold across a series of socio-demographic characteristics[20]. Finally, appendix A1.10 replicates the non-parametric specifications with different bandwidths and plots the results[21]. This exercise confirms that the estimates are consistently positive across bandwidths and specifications. Nonetheless, they are statistically significant only at a very small bandwidth.

## 2.3. Study 2 - Why radical voters gets no satisfaction? Panel data evidence from the 2017 German Federal elections

### 2.3.1. Empirical design

The goal of this study is twofold. The first one is to triangulate the first study's findings. Although the RDD is considered one of the observational designs that better approach the experimental benchmark (Steiner et al., 2010), the causal identification is restricted to observations around the threshold. Therefore, the generalizability of the results is limited to parties that barely obtained representation or did not. On the contrary, we cannot infer whether parliamentary representation affects SWD among voters of parties with a substantial seat share.

The second goal is to provide evidence on the mechanisms underlying the negative effect of parliamentary representation on radical party voters. The cross-sectional nature of the study 1 design poses a fundamental limitation to testing hypothesis 3. One would like to compare the radical party voters' SWD level conditional on the strength of their anti-establishment attitudes only before the election. Otherwise, the results could face post-treatment bias. That is, parliamentary representation could also systematically affect anti-establishment attitudes so that the analysis would report unreliable findings based on biased estimates.

To overcome these two limitations, this study leverages a large panel survey fielded around a national election in Europe that meets the scope conditions of the argument: the 2017 German Federal election. This election delivered the "dramatic electoral decline of the two traditional main parties, the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) and the Social Democratic Party (SPD), who had governed Germany in a 'grand coalition' government since 2013" (Dostal, 2017, p. 589). The main driver of this shift was the radical right-wing party Alternative for Germany (AfD), which entered parliament for the first time with a sizeable share of the seats.

Following the 2015 Refugee Crisis, a conservative shift in immigration attitudes is crucial to understand the rise of AfD. However, the party did not just attracted voters with negative stances on immigration but also those with stronger anti-establishment sentiments and lower levels of satisfaction with democracy (Hansen & Olsen, 2019). As a result, it "managed to gain around 1.2 million votes from former non-voters and 1 million from former CDU/CSU voters, but also 470,000 and 400,000 from former SPD and Left party voters, respectively" (Dostal, 2017, p. 600). After four years outside the parliament, AfD became the party with the third largest seat share. This result came as a surprise considering the pre-electoral opinion polling. Most importantly, to better understand its success, it is essential to recall that AfD

eventually became the opposition leader. Given the complexity of the new parliament, the formation of a new Grand Coalition pushed AfD to a leading role despite remaining far from defeating the two main parties (Lees, 2018).

In view of its success, the AfD case poses a hard test for hypothesis 2. Parliamentary representation is supposed to boost SWD mainly because it increases voters' expected utility. Thus, AfD voters experiencing an SWD decrease after the 2017 election would provide strong evidence that corroborates the study 1 findings and permits moving beyond its external validity limitations. Furthermore, the variation in the AfD voters' voting motivation should provide enough leverage to identify whether there is significant heterogeneity across anti-establishment attitudes' strength.

The analysis relies on the GLES 2017 short-term panel survey (GLES, 2019). The panel has a large sample ($n \approx 6600$) with an extensive battery of survey items that fit the purpose of this study. First, it includes at least one pre and post-electoral wave with a repeated measure of SWD [22]. The question's wording can translate to "on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in Germany?". After inverting the scale order, it ranges from 1 to 4, where 1 means "not satisfied at all" and 4 means "completely satisfied".

Second, it has numerous questions on attitudes toward politicians, politics and political parties. To be sure that these items capture attitudes towards the political establishment, I run a factor analysis to isolate the dimension of interest. The variables included in the analysis tap into populist attitudes, attitudes towards political parties, and external efficacy. In total, they sum 19 survey items. A principal component analysis suggests a maximum of three factors, of which the first one captures most of the variation, and is related to attitudes against the political establishment. Reproducing the question with a highest factor loading serves well to illustrate this point: "please, state whether you agree or disagree (*on a scale from 1 to 5*) with the statement 'The parties are only interested in people's votes, not in what voters think' "[23].

Finally, the survey was conducted online with respondents recruited from a convenience sample using quotas on age, gender and education. Although the sample is not random, its documentation provides evidence that it is representative of the German adult population on a series of observable socio-demographic characteristics[24].

To estimate the change in SWD, I first calculate the change in SWD for each respondent by subtracting self-reported SWD in the pre-electoral wave from self-reported SWD in the post-electoral wave. Second, I regress SWD change on vote choice as self-reported in the post-electoral wave. After their recoding, the vote choice variable ($V$) includes the following

categories: (1) having voted for the party with the majority of the seats (i.e., the winner CDU/CSU), (2) having voted for a party with representation different from the winner of the election and AfD, (3) having voted for AfD, (4) having voted for a party that did not enter into parliament (i.e., the baseline category) and (5) having abstained (i.e., a placebo category). The specifications include the pre-electoral levels of SWD to account for potential ceiling and floor effects (Blais et al., 2017, p. 87). In addition, some of them include a vector of pre-electoral control variables $X'$ that have proved to moderate the effect of elections on SWD (e.g., Singh, 2014; Wang, 2021). The model is given by the following equation:

$$\Delta SWD_{it_{2-1}} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SWD_{it_1} + \beta_2 V_{it_2} + \beta_3 X'_{it_1} + \varepsilon_i$$

To test whether the change in SWD varies at different levels of anti-establishment attitudes among AfD voters, the specification will add an interaction between vote choice and the anti-establishment factor scores ($M$):

$$\Delta SWD_{it_{2-1}} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SWD_{it_1} + \beta_2 V_{it_2} + \beta_3 M_{it_1} + \beta_4 (V_{it_2} * M_{it_1}) + \beta_5 X'_{it_1} + \varepsilon_i$$

### 2.3.2. Main results

The results are plotted in figure 3. The left-hand-side plot displays the estimated average effect of vote choice on change in SWD with two specifications. The light-toned one includes only pre-electoral levels of SWD as a control variable. The dark-toned one includes additional control variables [25]. The estimates are always calculated using robust standard errors and survey weights[26].

The results confirm the first study's findings but introduce some nuances. First, the estimated SWD change for winner party voters is positive, large and statistically significant, in line with the literature on the winner-loser gap. However, voters of parties with representation different from the winner or AfD experience a positive SWD change too. This finding suggests that representation might improve democratic evaluations for parties with a substantial seat share in the short term. However, it should not be interpreted as definitive evidence. The effect of parliamentary representation is not causally identified, which means that we cannot rule out the possibility that some other factor associated with obtaining a fair amount of parliamentary seats, such as increasing the chance of becoming part of the government coalition[27], is driving the change. Nonetheless, this finding aligns with the conclusions from Blais and his colleagues (2017). It should serve to recognize the limitations of the RDD and set up the scope conditions of the limited effect of representation on SWD.

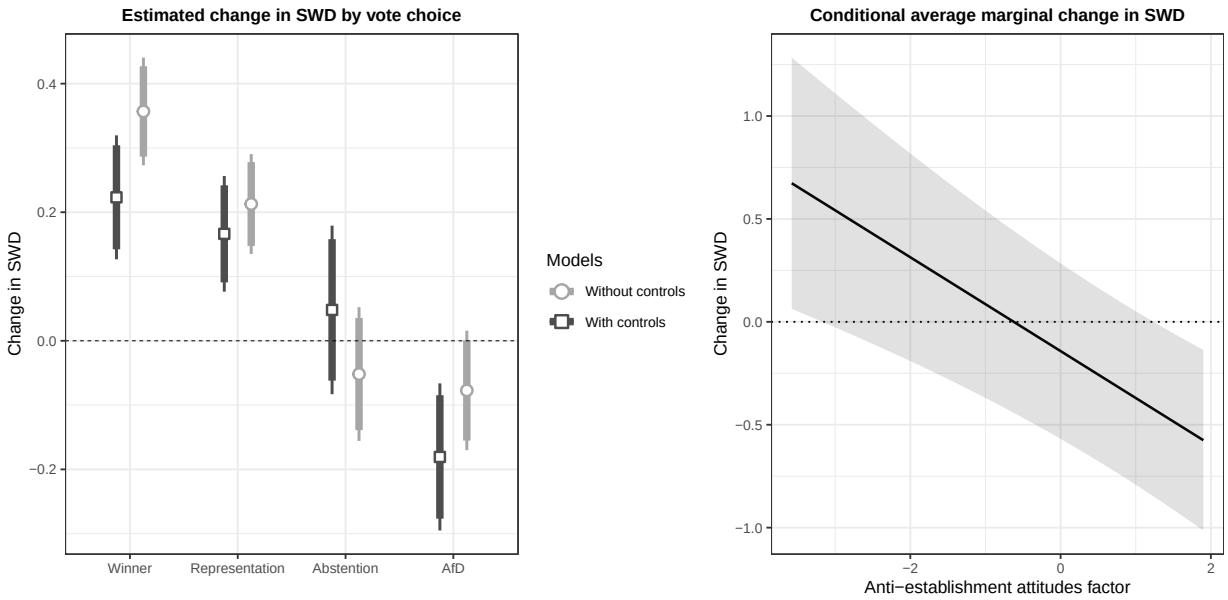


Figure 3: Estimated change in SWD by vote choice and among AfD voters at different levels of anti-establishment attitudes

Second, AfD voters experience a negative change in SWD, which goes in line with the study 1 findings. The change is large and statistically significant in most specifications[28], reinforcing the argument that obtaining parliamentary representation causes a backlash and reduces SWD among radical party voters, but why?

The right-hand-side plot in figure 3 provides evidence that the negative change is driven by radical party voters with strong anti-establishment attitudes. While the average negative change in SWD among AfD voters is close to $-0.2$ points over the $-4$ to 4 scale, the average change difference between voters with the strongest and weakest anti-establishment attitudes is larger than 1 point and statistically significant at the margins. Those AfD voters with the strongest anti-establishment attitudes experience an average negative change larger than $-0.5$ points, while those more pro-establishment experience a positive change larger than 0.5.

This finding provides strong support for hypothesis 3 and suggestive evidence that the negative effect of parliamentary representation on SWD may be driven by a reaction against the increased saliency of the establishment's win. Additionally, it provides evidence against alternative explanations proposed in the literature.

In particular, it speaks against the expectation that the least discontent radical party voters would experience a larger decrease in SWD to maintain cognitive consistency with

their party platform (M. Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2018). In fact, they point in the opposite direction. As Pablo Iglesias mentions in the introductory quote, radical party voters may just want to throw the establishment parties out and they become more dissatisfied after their failure.

### 2.3.3. Robustness checks

This section presents the results of a series of tests aimed at ruling out alternative explanations for the findings. First, to rule out the possibility that self-reported vote choice in the post-electoral wave is systematically affected by the election results, introducing endogeneity bias, I replicate the main regression specifications using self-reported vote intention in the pre-electoral wave as an instrument for self-reported vote choice in the post-electoral wave [29]. The main results hold in this alternative specification. AfD voters systematically report a statistically significant negative average change in SWD compared to voters of parties without representation[30].

Second, parliamentary representation might decrease SWD due to the amplified anti-establishment rhetoric of radical parties in parliament. Rooduijn and his colleagues (2016) propose this mechanism. However, they do not provide evidence that supports it. To rule it out, I run an interaction between voting for AfD and the time between the election and the post-electoral interview. If their argument is correct, the longer AfD exploits its position in parliament, the larger should be the decrease in SWD.

The lower plot on the left-hand side of figure 4[31] provides evidence against this expectation. It shows that the decrease in SWD among AfD voters is more substantial for respondents interviewed immediately after the election and got diluted with time. Moreover, the estimates remain largely imprecise, reinforcing the credibility that anti-establishment attitudes are the main factor behind the variation in SWD change among AfD voters.

Third, variation across AfD voters' reactions to the electoral outcomes may be related to their lack of electoral experience rather than attitudes toward the establishment. On the one hand, Hobolt and Hoerner (2020) show that AfD has successfully mobilized right-wing abstainers. On the other hand, Anderson and Mendes (Anderson & Mendes, 2006) prove that voters in shorter-lived democracies are more likely to rise to protest against unfavourable electoral outcomes due to the lack of democratic experience. Bringing this evidence together, it could be the case that previous abstainers drive the negative change in SWD associated with AfD voters due to their lack of experience in losing an election.

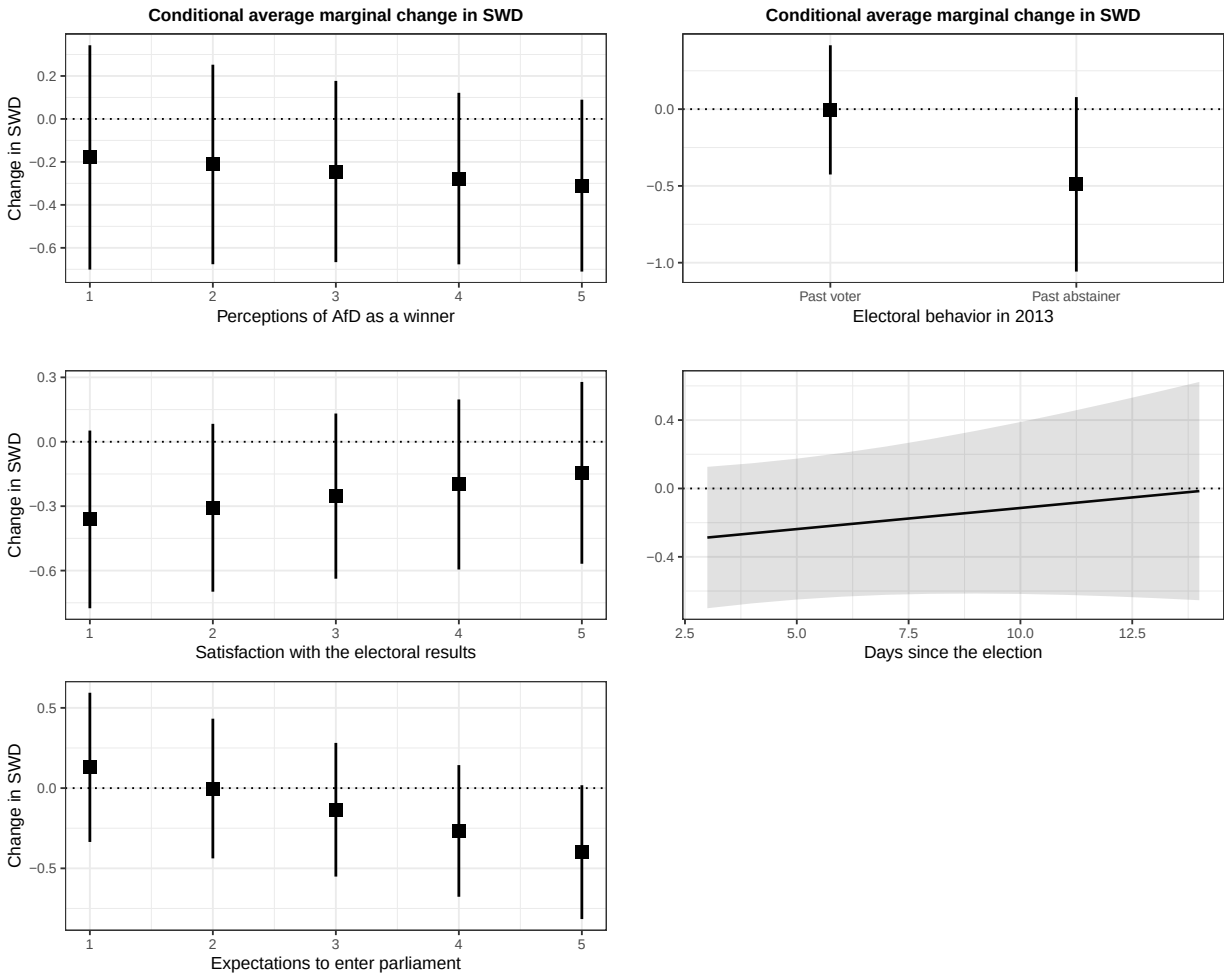


Figure 4: Estimated change in SWD across different interactions

To rule out this possibility, the plot of the upper right-hand side of figure 4 displays the average change in SWD among AfD voters who report having participated in the 2013 German federal elections or having abstained. It provides suggestive evidence that new voters experience the core of the decrease in SWD among AfD supporters. However, the differences are not statistically significant. Furthermore, interpreting this finding requires caution since anti-establishment attitudes could correlate with past political behaviour.

Fourth, AfD voters' adverse reaction to the election results may be driven by unmet expectations and dissatisfaction with them (Hollander, 2014; Plescia, 2019). This possibility is unlikely given that most AfD voters in the sample consider its party as one of the election winners, had correct (but not higher) expectations about the possibility of obtaining representation in parliament, and are generally satisfied with the electoral results[32]. Nonetheless, I run a series of interactions to provide a formal test of these alternative explanations too.

The three plots on the left-hand side of figure 4 report the estimated SWD change associated with having voted for AfD conditional on perceptions of AfD as a winner, the degree of satisfaction with the electoral results and the certainty of the expectation that AfD would enter parliament. They provide supportive evidence that the findings are not driven by unmet electoral expectations or dissatisfaction with the electoral results. They show that, counterintuitively, there is a negative relationship between change in SWD and the perception that AfD is among the election winners. There is also a positive relationship between SWD change and satisfaction with the electoral results and a negative relationship between the certainty of the expectation that AfD would enter parliament and SWD change. However, the three correlations are very weak, and none of the groups is significantly different from the others at any conventional level of statistical significance.

Finally, the argument that parliamentary representation provokes an SWD backlash due to the increased saliency of the establishment win is supported by three alternative strategies to proxy anti-establishment attitudes. A replication of the main interaction with a populist attitudes index, an external efficacy index and an anti-political parties attitudes index provides consistent evidence that supports the main finding[33]. Those AfD voters with the strongest populist and anti-political parties attitudes, as well as the least efficacious, are those registering the largest negative change. Nevertheless, the estimates reported by the anti-establishment attitudes factor remain the most precise.

## 2.4. Discussion

The rise of new, challenger and radical parties has raised concern about the health of Western democracies. Voters discontent with the functioning of the system are shifting massively to those parties (Hernández, 2018; Hernández & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Marcos-Marne et al., 2020; Otjes & Wardt, 2020). However, whether their inclusion in democratic institutions could relieve dissatisfaction remains an open debate. Until now, most studies have focused on the role of entering government (Cohen et al., 2022; Fahey et al., 2022; Harteveld, Kokkonen, et al., 2021; Haugsgjerd, 2019). In contrast, the role of the parliament has been largely neglected.

Across two complementary studies, this paper has provided consistent evidence that parliamentary representation affects SWD differently for voters of moderate and radical parties. With an RD approach, it has shown that parliamentary representation slightly boosts SWD among moderate party voters. However, the effect's size is small and not always significant. In contrast to winning an election (Anderson et al., 2005), obtaining representation in parliament barely enhances most voters' beliefs about the functioning of democracy.

On the contrary, the effect of parliamentary representation on SWD among radical party voters is substantial and negative. It provokes a consistent decrease in voters' system evaluations. Furthermore, the difference between voters of radical parties with and without representation occurs within the same party immediately after the election. The second study confirmed this finding for AfD voters after the 2017 German Federal election.

In addition, relevant variation across AfD voters has shed light on the latter finding's mechanism. As hypothesized, the main predictor of differences in SWD change among radical party voters is their anti-establishment attitudes' strength. Despite AfD's unparalleled success in the 2017 election, those voters with stronger feelings against the system report a more considerable SWD decrease. Together with additional analyses that rule out alternative explanations, this evidence supports the argument that the effect is not driven by parliamentary representation in itself. Instead, it suggests that obtaining representation may cause a backlash if it raises the saliency of the establishment win.

Despite the findings' consistency, they face some important limitations. First, the RDD's main caveat is its limited external validity. The internal validity of the findings is robust, given the RDD approximation to the experimental benchmark (Steiner et al., 2010). In addition, the RDD overcomes the external validity limitations of most social science experiments because it uses observational data to identify the effect of some real-world phenomena, in this case, parliamentary representation. However, as a trade-off, the findings cannot be extrapolated to observations far from the cut-off. In this sense, as the second study suggests, we cannot rule out the possibility that gaining a large proportion of seats produces a larger increase in SWD.

Second, the German study faces external validity limitations too. In this case, the analysis helped to corroborate that voters of radical parties with a substantial seat share also experienced an SWD decrease. The interaction analysis also provided relevant insights about the mechanisms at play. However, we cannot infer that the exact mechanisms would have equal weight in different contexts. In addition, this evidence is only correlational. Although it suggests that the establishment win plays a crucial role in driving negative SWD changes, it cannot definitely rule out alternative explanations unless it isolates this factor experimentally. This area of research would probably benefit from replicating the analyses in a different context and with an alternative research design that identifies the exact mechanism at play.

From a normative standpoint, the findings of this study have troubling implications. They challenge the common assumption in democratic theory that voters care about representation (G. B. Powell, 2004). The results suggest that this may not be the case for many voters,

or at least not to a degree that is reflected in their evaluations of the democratic system. This highlights the need to reevaluate the effectiveness of current democratic institutions in promoting meaningful representation and explore new approaches to better engage citizens in the democratic process.

Parliamentary representation is a cornerstone of liberal democracy, serving to hold the government accountable and represent citizens' views in policy-making (Przeworski et al., 1999). However, the electorate's apathy towards these functions poses a significant threat to the democratic ideal. Furthermore, the realization that some voters prioritize the defeat of their opponents over their own relative success creates an even more complex challenge for the consensus democracy model (Lijphart, 2012; G. B. Powell, 2000). If voters' sole concern is winning, democracies may be at risk of democratic backsliding (Graham & Svolik, 2020; Grossman et al., 2022; Simonovits et al., 2022). To mitigate this risk, it is essential to increase voters' awareness of the value of representation. Ultimately, if democracy is to engage the majority of voters, they must appreciate and recognize the intrinsic value of its most fundamental institutions.

# Chapter 3. Disruptive Elections and their Implications for Satisfaction with Democracy

## 3.1. Introduction

Periodic competitive elections are the cornerstone of democracy, but some have broader implications than others. As democracies consolidate, elections tend to produce a predictable pattern of alternation between winners and losers (Tavits, 2005). However, elections that break this pattern because of massive vote transfers to challenger parties are increasingly frequent in Western Europe (Chiaramonte & Emanuele, 2017, 2019; Hutter & Kriesi, 2019; Vries & Hobolt, 2020). Although the scholarly literature disproportionally focuses on this kind of election (e.g., Kriesi & Hutter, 2019; Schmitt & Teperoglou, 2015; Vachudova, 2021), there is no common conceptual framework for its analysis. As a result, their causes and consequences remain largely unclear.

This paper introduces the concept of disruptive election to address this gap. Disruptive elections are defined as elections with exceptional volatility levels because of sizeable vote transfers to challenger parties. They differ from critical elections (Key Jr, 1955) or party system change (Mair, 1997) because they do not imply an enduring electoral realignment or changes in the patterned interactions between parties. Instead, focusing on electoral volatility levels permits capturing the series of elections recurrently emphasized in the literature while allowing variation across them.

To justify the concept's utility, the paper proposes specific implications of disruptive elections for a well-studied post-electoral outcome: satisfaction with democracy (SWD). Winners tend to become more satisfied than losers in regular elections, provoking a winner-loser gap in SWD (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais et al., 2017; Blais & Gélineau, 2007). In contrast, disruptive elections will increase the uncertainty about the post-electoral scenario, which, in line with previous findings (Halliez & Thornton, 2022), will blur the winner-loser distinction and shrink the corresponding gap in SWD.

The article is structured into two sections. The first one defines, operationalizes and maps all the disruptive elections in WE from 1945 until 2021 using data on electoral volatility and its components in Western Europe (Emanuele, 2015). Consistent with the expectations, the analysis identifies ten elections often categorized as exceptional in the scholarly literature. Despite their commonalities, however, it also confirms substantial variation across them.

Second, an analysis of survey data gathered around three disruptive elections in WE con-

firms that the winner-loser gap in SWD shrinks after a disruption. Most notably, neither mainstream nor challenger voters display any change in SWD after as a result of the electoral outcome. The analysis of two placebo cases provides evidence of the scope conditions of the argument. First, the winner-loser gap prevails after a new challenger party enters parliament without causing a disruption. Second, disruptive elections reproduce the winner-loser gap when a challenger party becomes the clear winner. Therefore, such elections are shown to have specific short-term implications in SWD. Specifically, they censor changes in SWD due to the uncertainty associated with the results.

These findings suggest that the concept of disruptive elections is not trivial. On the contrary, it has several analytical advantages compared to other narrow concepts. First, it provides a precise and parsimonious way to identify and distinguish the series of rare elections that have hit WE in the last decades. Focusing on a single electoral criterion permits exploring their common causes and consequences while allowing variation in their outcomes. Second, the concept is easy to operationalize and measure, allowing its use beyond modern WE and opening a new research avenue. Finally, the analysis of its implications for SWD shows that it captures a specific election type characterized by the uncertainty of its results. At least in the short term, this finding poses troubling normative implications since the disruption's uncertainty prevents the typical electoral boost in SWD.

## 3.2. Critical elections and party system change in Western Europe

Almost seventy years ago, Key (1955, p. 4) coined the concept of critical election to identify "an election type [...] in which more or less profound readjustments occur in the relations of power within the community, and in which new and durable electoral groupings are formed". Around forty years later, Mair (1997, pp. 51–52) built upon Sartori's (1976) party systems typology to elaborate the most commonly accepted definition of party system change, summarized as a transformation "from one class or type of party system into another". Elections scholars have recurrently brought up these terms to classify the rapid electoral changes that have shaken Western European party systems in the last two decades (e.g., Kriesi & Hutter, 2019; Schmitt & Teperoglou, 2015; Vachudova, 2021). However, none of those terms captures the commonalities of these elections without imposing hardly justified assumptions about their consequences.

The extreme example of Italy in the last thirty years serves well to motivate this point. In 1994, Italy experienced the most radical electoral change in WE until that date. Two new parties substituted the traditional centre-right and centre-left parties. The populist right-wing party *Forza Italia* accumulated the largest support among the electorate to the

detriment of the Christian Democrats, the traditional winner. On the other hand, the communist party collapsed, and the newborn *Partito Democratico di Sinistra*, a centre-left party, became the opposition leader. Finally, the centrist coalition *Patto per l'Italia* substituted the traditional Socialist Party as a third pivotal actor.

The 1994 Italian elections are often categorized as an example of party system change (e.g., Bartolini & D'Alimonte, 1996; Brand & Mackie, 1995; Katz, 1996; Sani & Segatti, 2001). However, the comparison between the support for the three major new parties in 1994 and the traditional three main parties in the 1987 election[34] suggests a very modest change at best. As Mair (Mair, 1997) clarifies, a change in the party system must imply a change in the patterned interactions between parties rather than simply a change in the parties that make up the party system. Scholars typically measure change according to one or more dimensions of competition, such as ideology or the degree of electoral support for the main parties (e.g., Bartolini & Mair, 1990; Mair, 1993, 1997). Table 2 compares these two dimensions before and after the 1994 election in Italy. Two minor changes can be identified. First, the modal ideology has shifted to the right. Second, the larger coalitions concentrate a larger vote share, suggesting a slightly less fragmented party system. However, the most remarkable pattern is continuity. Neither the system had become more polarized nor shifted from a pattern of imperfect two-party competition.

Table 2: Comparison between the 1987 and 1994 Italian election results

| Coalition | Ideology | Support |
|---|---|---|
| **1987** | | |
| Christian Democracy | Centre-right | 34.3% |
| Communist Party | Left | 26.6% |
| Socialist Party | Centre-left | 14.3% |
| **1994** | | |
| FI's alliance | Right | 42.8% |
| PDS's alliance | Centre-left | 34.3% |
| Patto per l'Italia | Centre-right | 15.8% |

A similar critique applies to the critical election category. As pointed out by Key (1955), the main criterion to classify an election as critical is that it must produce a sudden and enduring electoral realignment. In order to so it must fulfil at least two conditions. First, it must lead to a substantial and recognizable change in the socio-economic and ideological

composition of the main parties' electorate. Second, these changes must have a certain degree of temporal continuity. Both conditions constrains the classification of any recent European election as critical. First, the realignment criterion is easily identifiable using survey data in majoritarian systems. However, the assessment of this condition in mixed or proportional multi-party systems, such as those in most Western European countries, is more challenging due to the crucial role of new parties in driving political change (Neto & Cox, 1997; Ordeshook & Shvetsova, 1994). Old parties may loose support without suffering substantial changes in the composition of their electorate.

Nonetheless, the most important limitation to identifying critical elections is the need for a long-term perspective. A shift on the parties' social basis should be taken as a sign of realignment only if it is durable. For this reason, this criterion hardly applies to any recent electoral changes in Western Europe. The Italian case serves to illustrate this point too. The already mentioned 1994 election is also often classified as a critical election (e.g., Brusattin, 2007; Burgess, 1994). However, the electoral earthquake provoked by the Five Star Movement in 2013 has also led a series of scholars to claim its 'criticality' (e.g., Bolgherini & Grimaldi, 2017; Campus et al., 2015). Lastly, the recent rise of the far-right party Brothers of Italy in 2022 has provoked similar reactions, illustrated by the title of a round table of scholars aimed to analyze the results: "Italy 2022: Another Critical Election?" (2022). The fact that three national elections in three consecutive decades have caused debates about their criticality suggests that none is likely to fulfil the criteria. A sequence of critical elections is at odds with the concept definition.

The promiscuous use of the party system change and critical elections categories is, by no means, an idiosyncratic Italian problem. Similar critiques apply to recent elections in Greece (2012), Spain (2015) or France (2017), or even older elections in Denmark (1973) or Portugal (1985)[35]. Election scholars have brought special attention to this kind of elections. However, while some may be legitimately classified as critical or transformative of the party system, most studies lack the kind of nuanced analysis to justify the correct use of these terms[36].

These critiques notwithstanding, the intuition that these elections share some features that make them exceptional seems evident in view of their public relevance. The following section proposes a conceptual framework to accurately identify and classify them.

## 3.3. A theory of disruptive elections

The increasing interest in elections that are often misclassified as critical or triggers of a party system change has occurred parallel to the increasing use of the term *challenger party*

(Hernández, 2018; Hino, 2012; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Lavezzolo & Ramiro, 2018; Schulte-Cloos, 2018; Vries & Hobolt, 2020). Although this term is not new (e.g., Müller-Rommel, 1998), scholars have only recently started to agree on its definition. In a seminal paper, Hobolt and DeVries (2012) famously defined challenger parties as those that have not yet participated in government. Thus, it is an umbrella term that includes new and old parties, radical and populist ones or parties, whose only common feature is their exclusion from the executive power. Following this definition, the role of challenger parties has been historically marginal in Europe. However, in the last decades, they have achieved unprecedented success in elections such as those mentioned before.

The co-occurrence of these phenomena is not casual. On the contrary, I argue that the factor that is common to the extraordinary elections that have shaken Western Europe in the recent past is precisely an abrupt vote transfer from mainstream to challenger parties. Any challenger parties' disruption implies a high degree of electoral volatility, which could be driven by changing electoral preferences. Similarly, the appearance of new electoral competitors could alter how parties interact. In other words, disruptive elections may imply an enduring re-alignment of the electorate or a change in the party system respectively. However, those are potential outcomes of the disruption rather than what characterizes the disruption *per se*.

For example, a disruptive election, as defined above, is also compatible with the possibility that new challenger parties replace the old parties without substantial changes in the aligning cleavages that motivate the vote, keeping the party system structure identical to the pre-disruption period. Similarly, the disruption can result from the combination of voters' de-alignment and major scandals affecting the main parties. In this case, if the new challenger parties fail to produce durable linkages with their new voters, the disruption will likely be followed by electoral instability, as in Italy.

Finally, the disruption may be contingent on a specific context, such that it temporarily alters the competition patterns between two routine elections. For example, the 1985 Portuguese elections were characterized by the rise of the new liberal party Democratic Renewal (Gallagher, 1986), which disappeared in the next election without producing any durable changes. In this case, the success of the challenger party could be explained by the temporary demobilization of the traditional parties' electorate combined with the mobilization of traditional abstainers that supported the new party massively. As soon as the party performed poorly in office, its voters returned to their traditional behavior.

Thus, the disruptive election concept captures an increasingly frequent election type, dif-

ferent from regular elections, critical elections or party system change, but related to all of them. It distinguishes a situation where challenger parties suddenly become credible competitors to the mainstream or (even) surpass it. It is distinct from elections in which challenger parties attain minor or progressive gains. However, it does not assume enduring changes in the electorate's preferences or the interaction between parties. Instead, the defining trait of disruptive elections is that parties without governing experience threaten the pattern of alternation between mainstream parties in government.

## 3.4. Mapping disruptive elections in WE

### 3.4.1. Data and operationalization strategy

To be considered disruptive, an election must fulfil at least two criteria. First, the election must be pattern-breaking. That is, the proportion of votes gained by challenger parties must be noticeably higher than in the previous elections, thus deviating from the electoral volatility pattern. Second, it must imply a substantial challenge to the mainstream parties' dominance. Hence, neither highly volatile elections within an ongoing instability period nor barely volatile elections that deviate from a pattern of extreme stability are classified as disruptive. Theoretically, both criteria are necessarily linked. Since the disruption must pose a significant threat to the establishment, a minimum degree of stability must exist to be threatened.

With minimal assumptions, these criteria can be operationalized and proxied with readily available data on electoral volatility in Western Europe (Emanuele, 2015). Electoral volatility is "the net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers" (Pedersen, 1979). It is an index that ranges from 0 to 100, where 0 means no single voter has changed their vote between two elections and 100 means every single voter has changed it. This indicator is helpful for two reasons. First, it gives a fair impression of a country's electoral (in)stability. Second, it can be decomposed to indicate the proportion of vote transfers from one election to the next driven by specific party groups. Therefore, it can identify the vote transfers' proportion driven by exchanges between mainstream and challenger parties.

Some scholars have already carried out this kind of effort. For example, Powell and Tucker (2014) distinguished and measured two volatility types in Eastern Europe. Type A volatility is the proportion of the net total volatility provoked by transfers between parties that enter and exit the system. In contrast, type B volatility is driven by shifts between insider parties. In a similar effort for Western Europe, Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017) distinguished between *regeneration* and *alternation* volatility. The first indicates the volatility driven by

shifts from insider to new parties, and the second is the volatility driven by transfers between insider parties. Given its geographical scope, the latter is more helpful to the purpose of this study.

Regeneration volatility proxies well vote transfers from mainstream to challenger parties because it captures the proportion of the vote driven by parties with less than 1% of the vote share in the previous election. Although this criterion differs from not having participated in government yet, it captures the most sudden electoral gains by challenger parties in Western Europe. For example, both *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* had less than 1% of the vote share before their breakthrough in the 2015 Spanish elections. The same applies to *Forza Italia* in 1994 or the Five Star Movement in 2013 in Italy, as well as to the List of Pim Fortuyn in the 2002 Dutch election or *La République En Marche!* in 2017 France. The assumption required to minimize the measurement error is that most disruptive parties depart from low levels of electoral support[37].

The alternation-regeneration distinction is also useful because the data used by Emanuele and Chiaramonte covers a long period for every Western European country, and it is regularly updated. In addition, it is publicly available and easy to access[38]. It allows to identify all the disruptive elections happening in Western Europe from 1945 to 2021. Within each country, I operationalize the two disruption criteria as two necessary and jointly sufficient conditions:

1. **Pattern-breaking condition**: regeneration volatility must be at least twice the level of the two previous elections[39].

2. **Substantial deviation condition**: regeneration volatility must deviate at least one and a half standard deviations from the country median[40].

The first criterion allows for identifying elections that strongly differ from their predecessors. The second criterion allows for identifying elections that differ substantially from the country series, and its operationalization corresponds to the conventional calculation of outliers in statistics. These two criteria minimize the probability that either a highly volatile election embedded in a period of instability or a minor deviation during an exceptionally stable period is misclassified as a disruption. The pattern-breaking criterion takes two consecutive elections as the baseline to avoid a single stable election to bias the classification. However, this condition could be relaxed to include a shorter or longer period, increasing the likelihood of falsely considering an election as disruptive or *vice versa*. The one-and-a-half standard deviation threshold supposes a similar trade-off. A larger deviation could increase the probability of mistaking an election as not disruptive and *vice versa*.[41]

Although these two conditions are theoretically sufficient, the classification of challenger

parties as those with less than 1% vote share in the previous election could bias the median volatility level downward. As a result, low volatility elections may be wrongly identified as disruptive. To minimize this possibility, I include an additional empirical condition:

3. **Bias-correction condition**: regeneration volatility must surpass a 5% minimum threshold.

### 3.4.2. Disruptive elections in WE from 1945 to 2021

Figure 5 plots all the disruptive elections identified in Western Europe from 1945 to 2021. Each dot represents one election. Disruptive elections are filled in red to differentiate them from regular elections. The Y-axis represents the level of regeneration volatility, and the X-axis the time in years. The horizontal dashed line marks one and a half standard deviations from the country median, while the 5% threshold is represented with a thicker grey line. Some elections above the lines are not filled in red because they do not meet the pattern-breaking condition. The first two elections of each country series are excluded from the analysis because of missing lagged values.

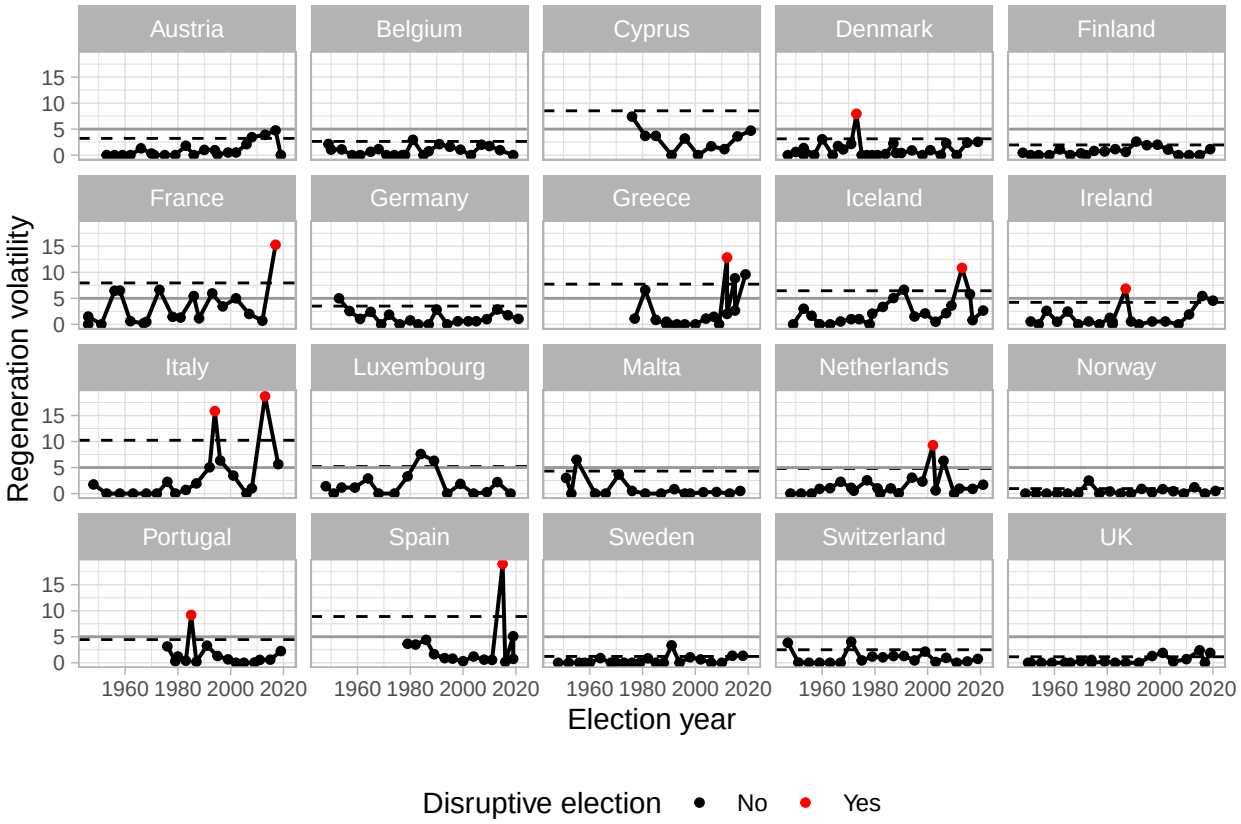


Figure 5: Disruptive elections in Western Europe from 1945 to 2021

The analysis identifies ten disruptive elections across Western Europe in the last eighty years. The most noticeable pattern is that most Western European countries have not experienced any disruptive elections. Furthermore, the analysis suggests that the disruptions are geographically and temporarily clustered. Geographically, half of them have occurred in Southern Europe, where every country has experienced at least one. Moreover, Italy is the only country where two disruptions occurred, in 1994 and 2013, respectively. The cases have already been discussed: in 1994, Silvio Berlusconi's *Forza Italia* led the electoral earthquake, while the populist party Five Star Movement (*M5S*) led the disruption in 2013.

Temporarily, the analysis supports the conclusion of Emanuele and Chiaramonte (2017, p. 382) that "during the last period the occurrence of high volatility elections characterized by salient regeneration has become a more common outcome". More specifically, seven out of ten disruptive elections have occurred in the last thirty years. Remarkably, half of the cases occurred between 2011 and 2021 alone, especially in those countries most hardly hit by the Great Recession.

In fact, besides massive vote transfers to challenger parties, all of these elections seem to have one factor in common: the economic and political context surrounding them was atypically negative. For example, the first disruption of the series occurred in 1973 in Denmark after a period of economic distress. In *the landslide election* (Kosiara-Pedersen, 2020), the effective number of parties doubled from five to ten while the Progress Party became the main opposition leader. Like *Syriza* (2012 Greece), *M5S* (2013 Italy), or *Podemos* (2015 Spain), the Progress Party benefited from "feelings of discontent and distrust in the electorate" (Rusk & Borre, 1974, p. 342) whose roots were initially economic: "inflation, high taxes and the increasing costs of the welfare state [...] have all been cited as reasons for people's feelings of frustration and protest against the government and the established order." (Rusk & Borre, 1974, p. 330).

Similarly, the unique 1985 Portuguese election was preceded by an economic downturn period in which the two main parties governed together in a grand coalition. After the coalition broke, the newcomer Democratic Renewal "traded on widespread disillusionment with the record and image of the existing parties and received 18.5 per cent of the vote on its first outing" (Gallagher, 1986, p. 292).

The 1987 Irish election resembles this narrative too. The Progressive Democrats' upsurge followed a continuing crisis over public finance where "extreme unpopularity of the *(right-wing)* coalition government together with dissatisfaction in some quarters at the stance of the Fianna Fail party on social issues [...], sparked off calls for a 'new political force' to

break the mould of Irish politics"(Farrell, 1987, p. 161) [42]. Lastly, in the 2002 Dutch, 2013 Icelandic and 2017 French elections[43], despite many dissimilarities, at least one new party competing with the establishment benefited from political discontent.

Notwithstanding their context similarities, figure 5 also reveals evident variation in the post-disruption trajectories. This is illustrated by the comparison between Greece and Denmark. In Greece, regeneration volatility follows a continuity pattern until the disruption, followed by instability. In contrast, regeneration volatility in Denmark is higher than in Greece before the disruption. However, the post-disruption period displays a pattern of extreme stability. An in-depth analysis of these elections is beyond the scope of this paper. However, the visualization of volatility patterns after each disruption suggests enough variation to rule out the possibility of homogeneous consequences.

Similarities and dissimilarities notwithstanding, the disruptive election's analytical advantage lies in disentangling the phenomenon from its causes and consequences. Irrespective of the variation in the post-disruption trajectories and on top of certain context similarities, these elections' main characteristic is that parties without governing experience threaten the alternation of mainstream parties in government. This characteristic may have specific implications that influence the subsequent political dynamics. Thus, understanding them is crucial to assess their long-term political consequences.

The next section assesses whether disruptive elections have specific implications on SWD. It focuses on this outcome for three reasons. First, the relationship between elections and changes in SWD has been extensively studied. Therefore, knowing the mechanisms underlying this relationship, one can depart from those characteristics that make disruptive elections different from regular elections to derive unique expectations for each type. Second, the concept of disruptive election is useful as long as it uncovers hidden political realities that could have remained unacknowledged otherwise. Therefore, by testing the consequences of disruptive elections on SWD, one can provide evidence of the framework's utility. Finally, SWD is a good summary measure for citizens' evaluations of the functioning democracy in their countries (Ferrin, 2016), different but intimately related to democratic legitimacy. Thus, the relationship between disruptive elections and SWD has crucial implications from a normative standpoint (Claassen & Magalhães, 2021).

## 3.5. The implications of disruptive elections for satisfaction with democracy

### 3.5.1. Theory and hypotheses

Extensive evidence shows that elections have an immediate effect on democratic evaluations (Anderson et al., 2005; Blais et al., 2017; Blais & Gélineau, 2007). Winners tend to become more satisfied with democracy than losers, which generates a durable winner-loser gap (Dahlberg & Linde, 2017; Nemčok & Wass, 2020). There are two main interpretations of this finding. The first one focuses on the utility of the election outcomes (Anderson et al., 2005, pp. 24–25). Voters would recognize the benefits associated with their party results so that winners would anticipate policies more congruent with their own preferences than losers. As a result, they would also express higher satisfaction with the system.

The second argument is affective (Anderson et al., 2005, p. 25). Winners would experience a positive emotional response to their party's victory and mirror this reaction in their system evaluation. Both arguments rest upon the same crucial assumption. Voters should be able to identify whether their party won the election or not. In other words, they should be able to identify the party that will lead the government with a higher probability.

The available evidence supports the importance of this assumption. First, there is extensive evidence that the winner-loser gap is sharper in majoritarian than in proportional systems (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Martini & Quaranta, 2019). The influence of losers on government policies is larger in proportional than in majoritarian systems, where winners tend to concentrate all the executive power. In proportional systems, unless the winner gets an absolute majority, it must negotiate with losers to form the government and pass policy bills. Thus, the clearer distinction between winners and losers in majoritarian systems leadS to a larger winner-loser gap in SWD.

Second, there is evidence supporting the claim that the winner-loser gap blurs in cases where the election outcome is unclear (Halliez & Thornton, 2022). One illustrative example is the European Parliament election (Kostelka & Blais, 2018). In this election, the link between the formation of government (the European Commission) and the proportion of parliamentary seats at the national level is mediated by the aggregated results of European party groups, which are independent of every single national constituency. Moreover, the executive branch is divided between the Commission and the European Council, which is not accountable to the parliament. Therefore, voters of a party in the majority group might struggle to assess their success, or even consider themselves winners (Plescia, 2019).

In proportional systems, I argue that disruptive elections will mirror this phenomenon and prevent changes in SWD and the formation of the winner-loser gap. In regular elections, most vote transfers occur between parties with governing experience. Hence, the effective number of parties tends to remain stable between elections and voters can use information about the parties' interactions in the past to anticipate their post-electoral behavior. In other words, they can rely on priors to predict the most likely governing coalition after the election (Bowler et al., 2022). In contrast, disruptive elections will introduce uncertainty about the post-electoral outcome and blear the winner-loser distinction.

Disruptive elections are characterized by sudden vote transfers between parties with and without government experience. This situation is likely to raise the uncertainty associated with the government formation process through three complementary mechanisms. First, in a proportional system, the effective number of parties will tend to increase due to the growing support for challenger parties. Traditional parties may keep the part of their electorate with stronger partisan attachments, while challenger parties will primarily benefit from those with weaker attachments or abstainers. A situation in which one challenger party perfectly replaces an old party is improbable. Hence, the distribution of seats will tend to become dispersed, and the complexity of a coalition agreement will grow. Second, challenger parties, by definition, lack coalitional records. Therefore, their sudden success will reduce the information available to voters to anticipate the post-electoral outcome. In contrast to regular elections, voters will have weaker priors to rely on to predict the most likely interaction between challenger and mainstream parties, hence, to anticipate the most likely coalition.

Finally, the interaction between mainstream and challenger parties poses a commitment problem that voters may anticipate. Challenger parties' lack of coalitional records also creates an asymmetrical information problem for mainstream parties. The latter lacks a credible signal to rely on the challengers' commitment to a potential agreement. Moreover, reaching an agreement with the mainstream may hurt the challenger's credibility as an anti-establishment force. For this reason, mainstream and challenger parties have incentives to avoid an agreement, and the likelihood of an eventual electoral repetition is higher than in regular elections.

Given the uncertainty surrounding the government formation process, voters might not be able to identify the winners and losers of the election. As a result, I expect that they will not display a significant change in SWD (*H1*). If this is the case, the winner-loser gap in SWD will blur. That is, there will be no significant differences in SWD change between the voters of the mathematical winner (i.e., the party with the majority of seats) and the losers. Similarly, changes in SWD will not differ between mainstream and challenger party voters either.

The validity of this rationale rests upon two assumptions that define the arguments' scope conditions. First, the proportion of vote transfers to challenger parties must be large enough to generate uncertainty about the government formation process. Disruptive elections are likely to produce this outcome. However, minor vote transfers to challenger parties should not be enough to blur the winner-loser distinction. Thus winners should become more satisfied than losers after an election in which the support for a new challenger party increases without threatening the dominance of mainstream parties (*H2*).

Finally, the disruption should not make a challenger party the winner. This scenario is unlikely in a proportional system. However, in a majoritarian system, the likelihood that a new challenger party becomes the clear winner is higher. In this situation, disruptive elections will reproduce the winner-loser gap in changes in SWD (*H3*).

### 3.5.2. Design, data and methods

To test the implications of disruptive elections on SWD, this study relies on the pre and post-electoral waves of five panel surveys fielded around five national elections in Western Europe. In these elections, at least one challenger party received substantial vote share increases. Three panels are fielded around disruptive elections where none of the new challengers became the clear winner. The other two panels are fielded around elections that do not meet the scope conditions of the argument. In one of them, the challenger party did not attract enough support to provoke a disruption. In the last one, the disruption was strong enough to make the challenger the winner.

The three disruptive elections in which no challenger party became the clear winner are the 2002 Dutch general election (main challenger party = List of Pim Fortuyn), the 2013 Italian general election (5 Star Movement) and the 2015 Spanish general election (We Can). The 2019 Portuguese parliamentary election (Enough!) serves as a placebo case to test whether voters display a winner-loser gap in elections where the main challenger party did not cause a disruption. Finally, the 2017 French presidential election (E. Macron, from On the Move!) will help to test whether changes in SWD after a new challenger party becomes the clear winner reproduces the winner-loser gap. The design is summarized in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the selection design

| Country | Year | Disruptive election | Challenger winner | Main challenger |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Netherlands | 2002 | Yes | No | List Pym Fortuyn (LPF) |
| Italy | 2013 | Yes | No | 5 Star Movement (M5S) |
| Spain | 2015 | Yes | No | We Can (Podemos) |
| France | 2017 | Yes | Yes | On The Move! (lReM!) |
| Portugal | 2019 | No | No | Enough! (Chega!) |

To estimate the average electoral change in SWD, first, I calculate the individual change in SWD for each respondent by subtracting self-reported SWD in the pre-electoral wave from self-reported SWD in the post-electoral wave[44]. Second, I regress SWD change on vote choice as self-reported in the post-electoral wave. The vote choice variable is recoded into the following mutually exclusive categories: (1) having voted for the party with the majority of the seats (i.e., the mathematical winner), (2) having voted for a party with representation and more than 1% of the vote share in the previous term (i.e., a mainstream loser), (3) having voted for a party with representation and less than 1% of the vote share in the previous term (i.e., a new challenger), (4) having voted for a party that did not enter parliament (i.e., the baseline category) and (5) having abstained (i.e., a placebo category)[45]. In addition, the third category is divided into one category for each new challenger party with more than 5% of the vote share (e.g. *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* in 2015 Spain). The specifications include the pre-electoral levels of SWD to account for potential ceiling and floor effects (Blais et al., 2017, p. 87). In addition, some of them include a vector of pre-electoral control variables that have moderate the effect of elections on SWD (e.g., Singh, 2014; Wang, 2021). The model is given by the following equation:

$$\Delta SWD_{it_{2-1}} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SWD_{it_1} + \beta_2 VoteChoice_{it_2} + \beta_3 X'_{it_1} + \varepsilon_i$$

The study uses data from five independent surveys: the 2002-03 Dutch Parliamentary Election Study DPES for the Netherlands (Van Holsteyn & Irwin, 2003), the ITANESS 2011-13 inter-election panel for Italy (Vezzoni, 2014), the 2014-16 CIUPANEL for Spain (Torcal et al., 2016), the Dynamics of Mobilisation panel DdM for France (Tiberj & Gougou, 2017b, 2017a) and the MAPLE project panel for Portugal (Lobo, 2021) [46]. Except for Italy, for which I use a measure of political trust[47], all the surveys contain one pre and one post-electoral wave with a repeated measure of SWD. The question's wording can always translate

to "on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in [country of the panel]?" although the response categories differ in order and scale. Regarding the order, I inverted the values so that higher categories always indicate higher levels. The scale is not standardized to facilitate the identification of net changes. The resulting variable ranges from either -3 to 3 (Spain and France), to -4 to 4 (The Netherlands and Portugal) or -10 to 10 (Italy) [48].

### 3.5.3. Results

Figure 6 plots the estimated change in SWD for each group of voters after the three disruptive elections in which no challenger party won. The figure includes two specifications for each case. The light-toned one includes only pre-electoral SWD levels as a control variable, while the dark-toned one includes the full set of control variables [49]. The estimates are always calculated using robust standard errors and survey weights[50].

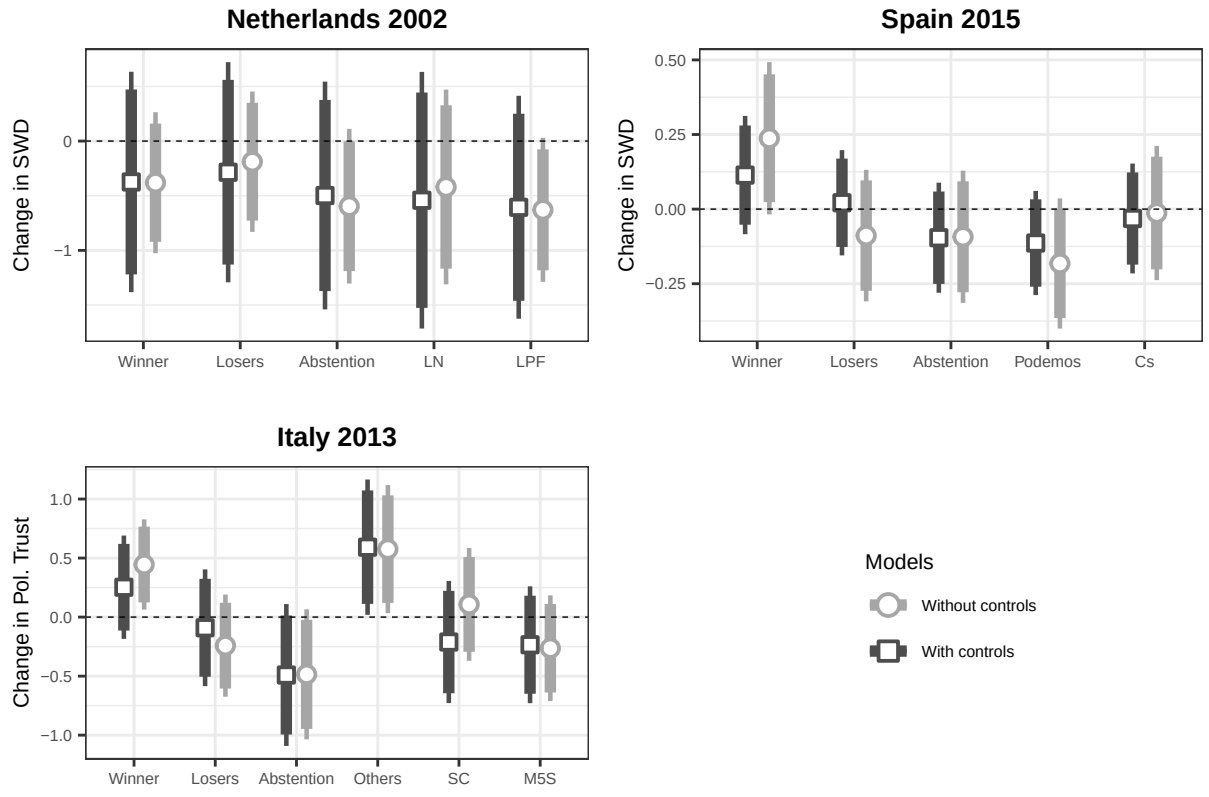


Figure 6: Estimated changes in SWD after the 2002 Dutch, 2013 Italian and 2015 Spanish elections

Overall, the results provide support for hypotheses 1. The Dutch case is paradigmatic. First, the change in SWD is never statistically different from the baseline group (i.e., voters of parties that did not make it into parliament). Second, there are no statistically significant differences between winners and losers, which manifests the absence of a winner-loser gap. Finally, the challenger party voters (Livable Netherlands and the List of Pym Fortuyn) do not express any significant difference from voters of maisntream partues.

The Spanish and Italian elections resemble the Dutch case. None of the groups experiences any statistically significant change in SWD. However, the support for hypothesis 1 is more nuanced. The mathematical winners display a slight positive change in SWD compared to the losers of the election. Nonetheless, this difference is not statistically significant after including the set of control variables.

As for the challenger party voters, none of them expresses any statistically significant difference from mainstream losers. If any, they report an average negative change, consistent with evidence that radical party voters react negatively to the election outcomes unless they win (Canalejo-Molero, 2022; Cohen et al., 2022; Haugsgjerd, 2019). However, none of the coefficients is statistically significant after including the control variables.

In the case of Italy, the only exception is the group of small challenger parties' voters. This group includes voters of parties with less than 5% of the vote share, such as the Left Ecologists and the Democratic Centre. Contrary to the expectations, they report a positive and statistically significant average change in SWD. In their case, the positive change may respond to obtaining parliamentary representation for the first time while staying away from the fight to govern.

Overall, the results support the argument that the winner-loser gap in SWD blurs after disruptive elections. Most notably, SWD remains stable across most voter groups, and there are neither significant differences between mainstream and challenger voters. In addition, the results are robust to using self-reported vote intention in the pre-electoral wave as an instrument for self-reported vote choice. This strategy aims to rule out the possibility of post-treatment bias (i.e., the electoral results affect self-reported vote choice)[51]. The main findings hold to this additional specification [52].

Furthermore, the proposed mechanism is supported by a review of the events following these elections. First, in the Dutch case, the winner attempted to form a minority coalition with the main new challenger party and failed. After a few months, the cabinet broke away and called for new elections in less than a year (Pennings & Keman, 2003; Van Holsteyn & Irwin, 2003).

The winner attempted a complex coalition with several minority partners in Italy too (Baldini, 2013). However, this coalition lasted less than one year and was followed by three other different cabinets until the 2018 election (Chiaramonte et al., 2018). Finally, the Spanish parties did not even manage to form a coalition in the first place and called for a new election six months after the 2015 election (Lancaster, 2017; Orriols & Cordero, 2016).

Given the unsuccessful attempts to form a stable government after these elections, the incapacity of voters to distinguish between effective winners and losers is likely to explain the result. Moreover, it would further imply that voters' assessment of the outcomes may be grounded on a rational response to the uncertainty provoked by the disruption.

To test for the scope conditions of the argument, figure 7 plots the estimated change in SWD for each voter in the two placebo elections. The left-hand side figure plots changes in SWD after an election in which a new challenger party did not cause any disruption. The right-hand side figure plots changes in SWD after a disruptive election where a challenger party became the clear winner[53].

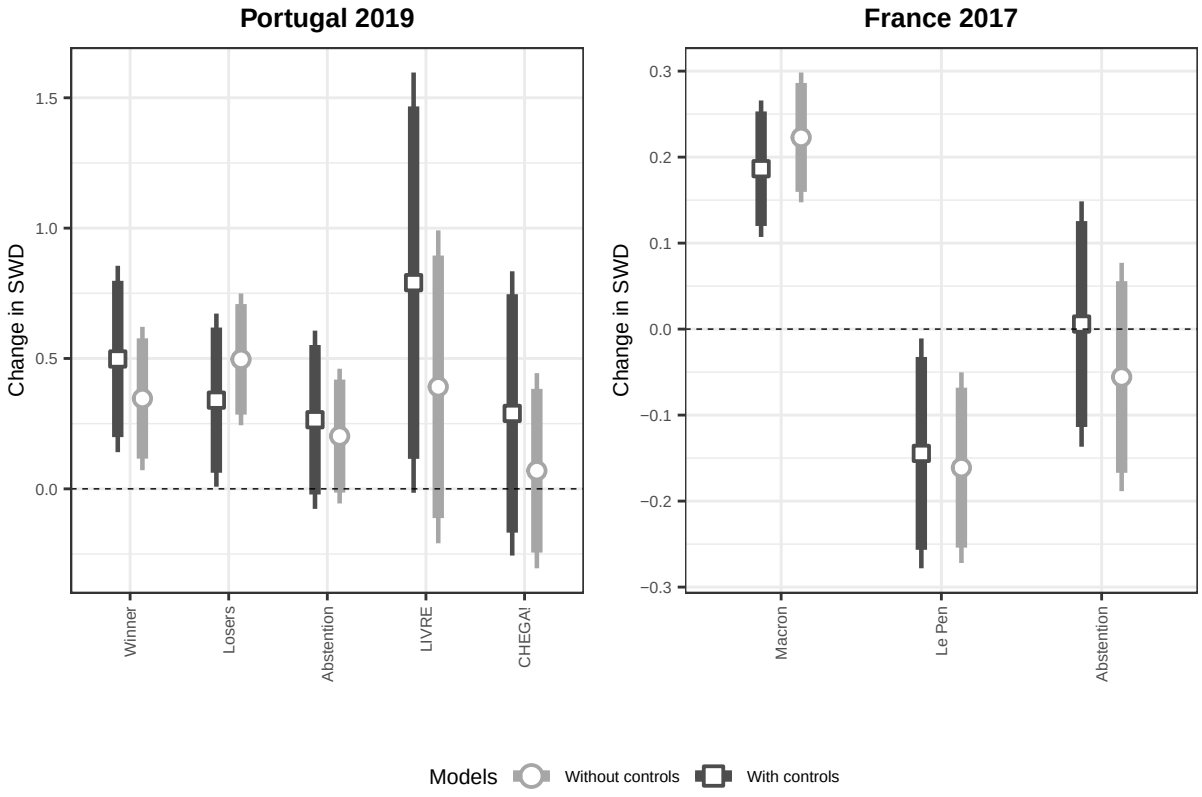


Figure 7: Estimated changes in SWD after the 2017 French and 2019 Portuguese elections

The results provide strong support for hypotheses 2 and 3. In the 2019 Portuguese elections, the new challenger parties *CHEGA!* and *LIVRE* improved their results and obtained parliamentary representation for the first time. However, their combined vote share was negligible. Together, they did not accumulate more than 3% of the vote share. These results should have posed no threat to the dominant parties. Accordingly, the estimated change in SWD is positive and statistically significant for the winners and the mainstream losers. Moreover, the difference between the winners and losers reproduces a clear, although small, winner-loser gap.

Finally, the winner-loser gap in SWD is particularly acute after the 2017 French presidential elections. In these elections, the new candidate Emmanuel Macron passed to the second round and won it against Marine Le Pen. The estimated change in SWD across the two groups resembles a sharp winner-loser gap, consistent with the idea that disruptive elections will not preclude the effect of elections on SWD when the distinction between winners and losers is clear. Thus, winners and losers react quite differently to the election outcome when the disruption leads a challenger party to govern or not.

## 3.6. Conclusion

This paper has introduced the concept of disruptive election to identify an election type where parties without government experience benefit from abrupt vote transfers from mainstream parties. In contrast to the concepts of critical election (Key Jr, 1955) or party system change (Mair, 1997), the disruptive election framework pins down the common factor underlying the series of extraordinary elections that have hit Western Europe in the last decades. Moreover, it provides analytical leverage to advance our understanding of these elections' causes and consequences by removing unnecessary assumptions.

The paper has also proposed an operationalization strategy to map disruptive elections with easy-to-gather data. A descriptive analysis using data on electoral volatility and its components in Western Europe (WE) from 1945 to 2021 (Emanuele, 2015) has successfully identified ten disruptive elections that are recurrently emphasized in the academic literature. The analysis has also proven some patterns. First, they have been more frequent in the last three decades. Second, they are geographically clustered in Southern Europe. Finally, there is relevant variation in their post-disruption trajectories. Given its minimum data requirements, this operationalization strategy provides fertile ground for further empirical studies.

Finally, the paper has shown the utility of the concept of disruptive elections by providing

evidence of their specific consequences for satisfaction with democracy. The analysis of three panel surveys around three disruptive elections in WE has shown that the winner-loser gap in SWD tends to disappear after a disruption. Arguably, the sudden success of challenger parties provokes uncertainty about the government formation process, which blurs the winner-loser distinction. This finding poses critical normative implications. Disruptive elections may only reinforce democratic dissatisfaction if traditional and challenger parties do not find innovative governing formulas to avoid further electoral uncertainty.

Despite the relevance of the findings, the empirical analysis faces some limitations that might guide future research efforts. First, the identification of disruptive elections has drawn upon a flexible operationalization of challenger parties and a set of conditions which may underperform in different settings. Further research might benefit from replicating this process with different operationalization strategies to assess the results' validity. Second, the external validity of the findings on SWD at the aggregate level is hard to assess due to the small population of disruptive elections. Despite data availability limitations, further studies may attempt to replicate the findings with different samples.

These limitations notwithstanding, disruptive elections provide a promising research avenue for political behavior scholars. The distinction between disruptive and regular elections can prevent further mismatches between the phenomena of sudden vote transfers to challenger parties and other related concepts. Most importantly, it provides researchers with a novel conceptual and empirical tool to understand the conditions under which rapid electoral changes may drive to (be driven by) different post (pre) electoral scenarios. Overall, increasing the theoretical repertoire available to the study of elections will hopefully lead to a better comprehension of the current development of elections in Western democracies.

# Chapter 4. Why does Radical Party Entry Reduce Satisfaction with Democracy? The Role of Affective Polarization

With Morgan Le Corre Juratic

## 4.1. Introduction

Might the institutional inclusion of radical and populist parties serve to reconcile their voters with democracy? This old question is ever more pressing as radical and populist parties have institutionalized through many Western democracies in recent years. To cite but a few, in 2017, the *Alternative für Deutschland* (Afd) was the first radical right party since post-war Germany to enter the *Bundestag*. Two years later, Vox, a new radical right party created in 2013, entered the Spanish Congress of Deputies and became the third political force. In some cases, such as the Netherlands, even more than one radical party (*PVV* and *FvD*) now hold representation in parliament. However, while these parties' platform rely to a great extent on extreme and anti-establishment rhetoric (Polk et al., 2017), it is still unclear how their voters' democratic support evolves when democracy successfully integrates them electorally.

Overall, elections tend to boost satisfaction with democracy (SWD). Extensive evidence confirms that winners become more satisfied than losers (Anderson et al., 2005; Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Blais & Gélineau, 2007; Singh et al., 2012) and losers more satisfied the better their results (Blais et al., 2017). Even voters without representation become more satisfied than abstainers (Esaiasson, 2011; Ginsberg & Weissberg, 1978; Kostelka & Blais, 2018; Nadeau & Blais, 1993). The most accepted explanation follows an in-group logic based on an utilitarian mechanism: voters are more satisfied the higher the utility of their party outcome. However, studies of non-mainstream party voters have called this argument into question. For example, populist radical party voters in Belgium and the Netherlands display lower levels of SWD after elections (M. Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2018; Rooduijn et al., 2016). Even more shockingly, obtaining representation in parliament is associated with a SWD decrease among radical party voters (Canalejo-Molero, 2022). These findings are at odds with the prevailing utilitarian explanation. Thus, why do radical party voters become more dissatisfied with democracy despite their parties' electoral success?

This paper advances a novel theoretical argument that integrates the utilitarian with an affective mechanism within an in-group/out-group framework. From a single in-group perspective, new radical party voters should experience a boost in SWD even after modest electoral success, because their institutionalization carries certain objective electoral benefits

that should boost the utility of the election (Blais et al., 2017). However, radical party voters are an affectively polarized group (Harteveld, Mendoza, et al., 2021; Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019). Defined as the divide between positive in-group party and negative out-group party feelings (Iyengar et al., 2012; Lelkes, 2016; Wagner, 2021); growing affective polarization has been shown to be driven by negative affects towards the out-group (Hetherington & Rudolph, 2015; Iyengar et al., 2012, 2019; Lelkes, 2016). Bearing this in mind, we argue that if a radical party wins, its voters will experience an SWD increase (Cohen et al., 2022; Fahey et al., 2022; Haugsgjerd, 2019), as the utilitarian in-group logic predicts. However, in affectively polarized contexts, the out-group win will reduce SWD among radical party voters regardless of their own party results.

We test this argument with the emergence of the radical right-wing candidate Éric Zemmour and by leveraging the electoral uncertainty associated with the period between the first and second rounds of the 2022 French presidential election. While competing for the first time, Zemmour and its platform *Reconquête* obtained an impressive 7.07% of the vote share, becoming the fourth most voted candidate and surpassing the two mainstream party candidates. Despite losing the first round against the incumbent Emmanuel Macron and the traditional radical right-wing candidate Marine Le Pen, such a scenario provided Zemmour with a critical opportunity to become a crucial actor, even in the French majoritarian system. First, he supported the candidacy of Marine Le Pen and could eventually become part of her government if she were to win. Second, he could gain representation in the first national parliament without a clear majority of the presidential winner. Despite these potential benefits, the election's winner was still likely to be Emmanuel Macron, the candidate most clearly aligned with the establishment. Thus, this setting provides a unique opportunity to test whether changes in attitudes towards democracy after elections among radical party voters are driven by the out-group rather than the in-group results and to delve into the the underlying mechanisms.

Our analysis combines a novel mixed-methods design with a social media recruitment strategy for hard-to-reach populations (Schneider & Harknett, 2019). Prior to the first round of elections, we identified and recruited potential Zemmour's supporters from the pool of French Facebook users using Facebook targeted ads (Neundorf & Öztürk, 2021a, 2021b). We fielded the first wave of a panel study before the first round to identify voting intention and measure pre-treatment variables. The second wave of the survey, fielded just after the first round of elections, included an embedded experiment that manipulated the saliency of the winning potential of the in-group or the out-group party, Zemmour's *Reconquête* and Macron's *La République en Marche*, respectively. We analyse the effect of each treatment on change in

satisfaction with democracy and affective polarization. Finally, we triangulate our experimental findings qualitatively using an open-ended question asking about the respondents' overall feelings about the election results.

The results broadly support the argument that changes in SWD among radical party voters are driven by negative affects towards the out-group. The effect of the out-group party's win outweighs the in-group's political benefits in an affectively polarized situation. While none of the treatments focusing on the political potential of Zemmour had any significant effect, emphasizing the potential of Macron's win is associated with a negative effect of almost 1.5 points over a 10 points scale across a wide range of specifications. This is a substantial effect, comparable in size to the winner-loser gap in SWD in low-quality democracies (Nadeau et al., 2021). The qualitative evidence further confirms the link between negative democratic evaluations and feelings toward the out-group. Zemmour's voters are more likely to state that elections are rigged and blame the mainstream out-group party for his control over democratic institutions. In contrast, any positive evaluation of Zemmour's performance is absent.

These findings contribute to our understanding of the political dynamics triggered by the irruption of radical parties and bridge the gap between three commonly alleged symptoms of the liberal democracy crisis, namely, democratic dissatisfaction, affective polarization and the rise of anti-establishment parties. First, introducing an out-group logic to explain post-electoral changes in SWD provides a parsimonious solution to the puzzling negative effect of elections among populist and radical party voters. Second, the findings suggest a self-reinforcing mechanism leading polarized voters to further division and growing dissatisfaction when losing elections, regardless of their party performance. This may have important consequences for long-term satisfaction and democratic stability overall, as political alternation and the consent to the opponents' victory are key conditions for a working democracy (Anderson et al., 2005). Whereas it has been largely theorized that the political inclusion of marginalized political groups may have a corrective function for representative democracy (Kaltwasser, 2012; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012), these arguments had neglected the disruptive role of growing affective polarization.

## 4.2. Elections, radical parties and SWD

Since as early as 1978, scholars have theorized about the role of electoral participation on democratic legitimacy (Ginsberg & Weissberg, 1978). Over the years, the accumulated evidence has confirmed two major findings. First, winners of elections express a higher degree of satisfaction with the political system than losers (e.g., Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Dahlberg

& Linde, 2017; Singh et al., 2012; Van der Meer & Steenvoorden, 2018). Second, those who participate in the election display a higher level of satisfaction than abstainers (e.g., Esaiasson, 2011; Kostelka & Blais, 2018; Nadeau & Blais, 1993). Overall, the main implication is that elections play a legitimizing role, boosting satisfaction among participants differently across levels of party success and renewing system legitimacy for the subsequent electoral cycle.

These findings are often interpreted through a utilitarian lens (see Anderson et al., 2005, pp. 23–25). According to this interpretation, winners become more satisfied than losers because of the larger benefits associated with their electoral outcomes. In line with this logic, voters of major coalition partners become more satisfied than those of minor coalition partners, and voters of parties in parliament become more satisfied than those of parties that fail to obtain representation (Blais et al., 2017). Finally, even the latter group experiences a larger increase in satisfaction than those that miss the opportunity to vote, even if only because of the expressive benefits of voting (Kostelka & Blais, 2018).

Patterns of cross-country variation also support this explanation. For example, the winner-loser gap in SWD tends to be larger in majoritarian than in proportional systems, arguably due to the sharper distinction between winners and losers in their access to the executive power (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Martini & Quaranta, 2019). In the same vein, the gap tends to blur in elections where the winner is not immediately clear, such as in conditions of uncertainty or high fragmentation (Halliez & Thornton, 2022; Kostelka & Blais, 2018). There are also remarkable individual-level differences that lend support to this logic. For example, there is evidence that within-winners variation on changes in SWD depends on the degree of affinity with the party, so that party identifiers become more satisfied than strategic voters after elections (Singh et al., 2012; Singh, 2014).

Despite its empirical consistency, the utilitarian explanation falls short of explanatory power for studies on populist and radical voters. For example, Hooghe and Dassoneville (2018) demonstrate that populist party voters in Belgium display even lower levels of SWD after elections. Rooduijn (2016) finds a similar pattern among populist party voters in the Netherlands. Most recently, Canalejo-Molero (2022) uses post-electoral survey data from more than 70 democratic elections worldwide to show that obtaining parliamentary representation has a negative effect on SWD among radical party voters. Although none of these studies provides definitive evidence on the mechanisms, they challenge the generalizability of the utilitarian argument altogether. Since institutionalization is associated with a series of political benefits, from increased visibility to the capacity of conditioning coalition or policy agreements (Dunn, 2012; Martin & Vanberg, 2020), the reason why radical and

anti-establishment party voters become more dissatisfied after elections remains unclear.

## 4.3. The in-group/out-group framework of changes in SWD after elections

The utilitarian view of elections and SWD does not preclude alternative explanations. For example, it has been argued that the positive effect of winning on SWD could result from a cognitive dissonance avoidance mechanism. According to this view, winners would positively update their prior democratic evaluations to maintain cognitive consistency with a positive evaluation of the electoral results (Anderson et al., 2005, pp. 24–25). It has also been argued that the winning effect is just an attitudinal expression of a positive affective response (Anderson et al., 2005, p. 25). However, none of these mechanisms provide an intuitive explanation as to why radical party voters in particular become more dissatisfied after elections.

Hooghe and Dassoneville (2018) propose a cognitive-based mechanism in which populist party voters would become more dissatisfied to maintain consistency with the anti-elite platform of their party. Similarly, Rooduijn (2016) proposes that the parliamentary entry of populist parties would provide them with a channel to amplify their anti-elitist rhetoric and eventually increase dissatisfaction among their voters. However, none of these explanations is supported by accompanying empirical evidence. In contrast, Canalejo-Molero (2022) provides evidence that only those radical party voters who already held strong anti-establishment attitudes before the election become more dissatisfied after it. Based on this evidence, it is suggested that parliamentary entry would increase not only the salience of their own party success but also the salience of the mainstream party win, which may trigger a negative affective response. The main novelty of this argument is that it introduces an out-group logic according to which changes in SWD would not only be a function of the own party results but also of the results of the opponent.

We extend this argument and integrate it with the utilitarian in-group logic by incorporating the role of party identity and affective polarization (Iyengar et al., 2012; Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021). Our main argument departs from the assumption that populist and radical party voters are, to a certain extent, affectively polarized between their party (in-group) and the mainstream and radical parties on the opposite side of the ideological spectrum (out-group) (Harteveld, Mendoza, et al., 2021; Meléndez & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2019; Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021). Given this assumption, changes in SWD after elections would be a function of two factors. The first is the utility of the in-group party outcomes, which is assumed to be positively correlated with vote share. According to this factor, changes in SWD will always

be positive and they will be larger the greater the political benefits associated with the own party results. In line with the accumulated evidence, this utilitarian factor would explain the classic winner-loser gap, which becomes more evident the sharper the differential access to power. The second would be an affective-based out-group factor that varies by the degree of affective polarization between winners and losers.

For clarity, let us assume a simple scenario with two differentiated blocks and a dichotomous winner-loser status so that if group A is the winner, group B would be the loser and *vice versa*. In this scenario, if the degree of affective polarization between the blocks is low, the out-group factor would be close to zero and changes in SWD would depend exclusively on the utility of the outcomes. Thus, winners would become more satisfied than losers after elections, and losers would still become more satisfied than abstainers. However, if the degree of affective polarization is high, changes in SWD among losers would be negatively affected by the salience of the out-group block win. Henceforth, the net effect of electoral participation by vote choice would be jointly determined by the utility of the outcome for the in-group and the intensity of negative feelings towards the out-group winner.

Suppose we relax the assumption of a dichotomous winner-loser status and let utility take continuous values while keeping affective polarization constant. In that case, there will always be a utility value below which the positive effect of utility for losers will be lower than the negative effect of the out-group win. In this scenario, voting for the loser will be associated with a net negative SWD change. That is, the classic utilitarian explanation of changes in SWD after elections would still be valid for the case of populist and radical party voters. However, the inclusion of an affective out-group discount would be necessary to understand negative changes at low levels of party success.

This argument is consistent with evidence that voters of radical and populist parties become more satisfied with democracy when entering government (Cohen et al., 2022; Fahey et al., 2022; Haugsgjerd, 2019) since the utility of the election would be larger than the out-group penalization. It is also consistent with the available evidence that in-group/out-group identity plays a role in explaining individual differences in SWD. Specifically, Ridge (2020) uses cross-sectional data from the CSES to show that election losers with stronger negative feelings towards the winner display lower levels of SWD. Our argument goes one step forward and suggests that given a clear winner-loser distinction and a high level of affective polarization, losers may display a net negative change in SWD after elections.

The main empirical implication of this argument is that, given an affectively polarized in-group and keeping the out-group results constant, better in-group results should increase

SWD. Inversely, better out-group results should decrease SWD, *ceteris paribus*. We cannot directly manipulate the results of an election to test these expectations. However, we can leverage a period of electoral uncertainty to subtly increase the saliency of equally likely electoral outcomes. In this way, we can introduce variation in the perceived success of the in-group while minimizing the variation in the perceived success of the out-group and *vice versa*.

We draw on these implications to derive two sets of testable hypotheses specifically tailored to our setting. The first set of hypotheses tests the utilitarian in-group logic. In our setting, the in-group candidate could benefit from becoming a government coalition partner or playing a minor but potentially crucial role in parliament. Both potential outcomes should increase the utility of the elections' results. Therefore, we can test whether raising their saliency boosts SWD. The following pre-registered hypotheses[54] capture these expectations:

> **Hypothesis 1a**: Increasing the saliency of the in-group party's representation potential will be associated with a positive change in SWD.

> **Hypothesis 1b**: Increasing the saliency of the in-group party's coalition-making potential will be associated with a positive change in SWD.

In addition, we can provide evidence of the utilitarian mechanism by comparing the relative effect of each outcome. The utilitarian mechanism predicts that positive changes in SWD should be larger the higher the utility of the in-group electoral results. Entering government, even as a minor coalition partner, should permit the in-group to exert a larger influence on policy decisions than playing a key role in parliament. Therefore, the SWD increase associated with the coalition-making potential should be higher than with the parliamentary representation potential:

> **Hypothesis 2**: Increasing the saliency of the in-group party's coalition-making potential will be associated with a larger positive change in SWD than increasing the saliency of the in-group party's representation potential.

The second set of hypotheses focuses on the affective out-group logic. In our setting, the out-group candidate is the other potential election winner. Given that the in-group candidate supporters are highly affectively polarized, increasing the saliency of the potential out-group win should decrease SWD. The following pre-registered hypothesis captures this expectation:

> **Hypothesis 3**: Increasing the saliency of the out-group party's winning potential will be associated with a negative change in SWD.

Furthermore, we can provide evidence of the underlying mechanism. According to our

theory, the out-group candidate's win should decrease SWD by provoking a negative affective response among the in-group candidate's supporters. Although we cannot test this mechanism directly, we can provide indirect evidence by testing some of its implications. Specifically, we can test whether increasing the saliency of the out-group party win elicits more explicit negative feelings towards it:

> **Hypothesis 4**: Increasing the saliency of the out-group party's winning potential will be associated with stronger negative feelings towards the out-group party.

Finding support for all the hypotheses would provide strong evidence of an in-group/out-group logic of changes in SWD among affectively polarized voters. Instead, finding support only for hypotheses 1 and 2 (hypotheses 3 and 4) would suggest that electoral changes in SWD follow a single in-group (out-group) logic. We expect to find support for all the hypotheses. However, we depart from the assumption that the in-group party supporters are highly polarized. Given this assumption, the effect associated with the potential out-group win should outweigh the positive impact of the in-group's relative success because of the low utility of obtaining second-order political benefits compared to taking over the executive power:

> **Hypothesis 5**: Increasing the saliency of the out-group party's winning potential will be associated with a larger change in SWD than increasing the saliency of the in-group party's representation or coalition-making potential.

We build on the uncertainty of the 2022 French presidential election test to these hypotheses. In particular, we focus on the supporters of the new radical right candidate Éric Zemmour. The following section justifies the case selection and describes the participants' recruitment strategy and the study design.

## 4.4. Targeting French radical right voters: case selection and recruitment strategy

### 4.4.1. The case of 2022 French presidential elections and the emergence of Eric Zemmour's *Reconquête*

We test our expectations using a mixed methods -experimental and qualitative- approach that builds on the unique contextual setting of the 2022 French presidential elections. In particular, we focus on supporters of the emerging radical right party *Reconquête*, led by Éric Zemmour. This case is particularly suited to test our hypotheses. The electoral outcome of Éric Zemmour following the first round of the elections and the uncertainty regarding

its potential role as a coalition partner or within the National Assembly enables us to manipulate the salience of his relative electoral success and of the mainstream out-group party *La République en Marche*.

On November 30th 2021, four months before the elections, Éric Zemmour officially announced his candidacy for the French Presidency. This new candidate did not build on an existing party or a long-standing organized movement for it. Despite his newness, Éric Zemmour obtained about 7% of the vote share in the first round, outperforming both the Socialist Party and *Les Républicains*, the two traditional mainstream parties of the French political system. His initial electoral success made him and his party a potentially crucial political player thanks to the characteristics of the French majoritarian system and its electoral calendar.

The French system is semi-presidential and majoritarian. Presidential and parliamentary elections are held close to each other and occur every five years following a two-round, first-past-the-post system. The presidential elections always take place first. The President is directly appointed according to the majority rule, while the "second" head of the executive, the Prime Minister, as well as the government, are appointed by the President. If the President lacks a clear majority in the Assembly, the government formation requires the approval of a majority coalition, as the government is subject to the Assembly's confidence vote. In the case of an opposition majority in the Assembly, a "cohabitation" executive emerges where most governing powers are held in the hands of the Prime Minister. Hence, while the majoritarian semi-presidential system sharpens the winner-loser distinction in France, the doors to becoming a coalition partner within the government or in the Assembly were still open for Zemmour's *Reconquête* after the first round of the presidential elections.

Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen were the winners of the presidential elections' first round held on April 10th 2022, with 27.85% and 23,15% of the vote share, respectively. The second round was due to take place on April 24th while the two rounds of the legislative elections would be held three months later. Marine Le Pen's first-round victory, together with the increasing fragmentation of the French political space, gave Zemmour's party the potential to become a key partner in government or the Assembly. The candidates themselves clarified this possibility. In his speech following the announcement of the first round results, Éric Zemmour clearly called his voters to support Marine Le Pen in the second round while she appealed to all kinds of voters to join her movement[55]. Therefore, the potential to obtain large political benefits despite not passing the first round allows for credibly manipulating the saliency of the representation and coalition-making potential of Zemmour's party among its voters and testing the utilitarian in-group hypotheses.

In addition to these contextual factors of the 2022 French presidential elections, Éric Zemmour's party and its supporters make a particularly well-suited case to explore the affective out-group hypotheses. By focusing on polarized, radical right voters, we can test the expectation that affective polarization plays a role in explaining decreasing satisfaction with democracy. As figure 8 shows, Zemmour supporters in our sample display strong *"[..] positive in-group affect and negative out-group affect towards parties"* (Wagner, 2021, p. 1), corresponding to the textbook definition of affective polarization.

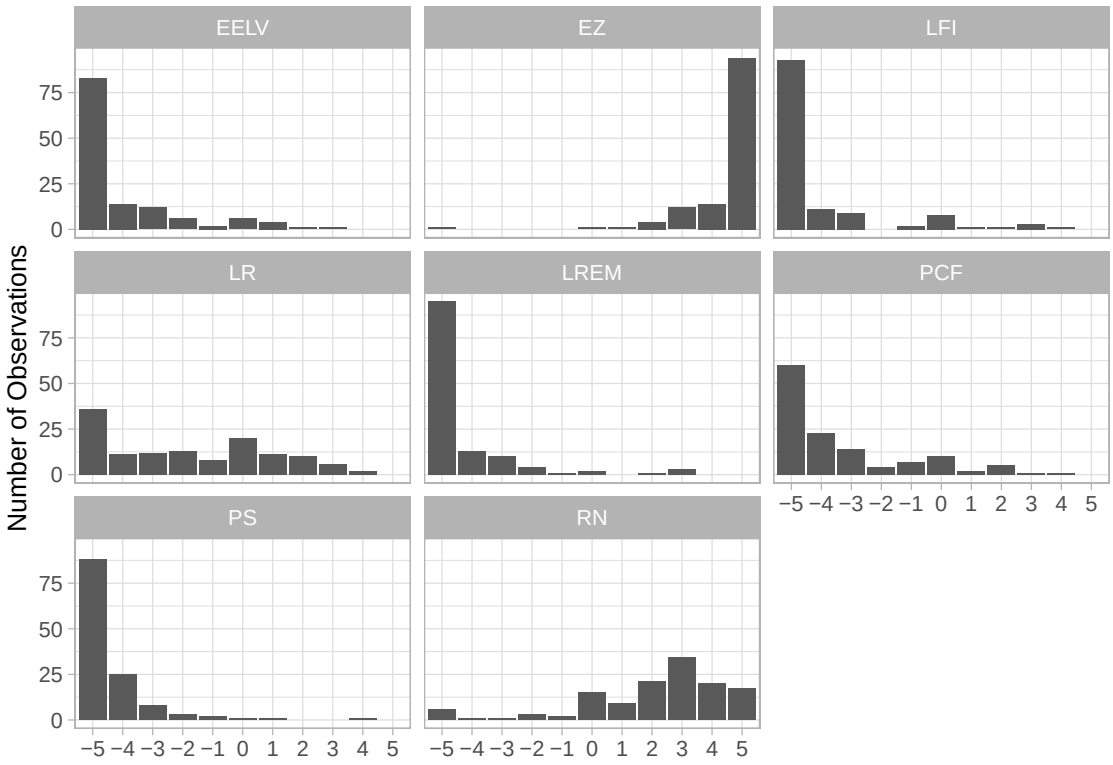


Figure 8: Zemmour Voters Like-Dislike Scales for Each Party

Following patterns of affective polarization in multi-party systems, these strong negative affects are directed not only toward the other side of the political spectrum (Mélenchon's party: *La France Insoumise (LFI)*), but mainly towards the mainstream winner *La République en Marche (LREM)*, led by Emmanuel Macron. According to our expectations, these polarized voters should be particularly sensitive to the increased salience of the out-group mainstream party victory rather than their own electoral success and utility gains. Focusing on these polarized voters enables us to test whether the salience of out-group victory explains radical voters growing dissatisfaction with democracy following elections.

### 4.4.2. Recruiting Éric Zemmour's supporters through the Facebook Advertisement System (FAM)

The implementation of the study, therefore, required that we recruit a convenience sample of potential radical right (Zemmour) voters. However, this group falls within the term of a hard-to-reach population for at least two reasons. First, individual ideological preferences are not typically observable in any official census or public administrative registry in France. Second, radical ideological views are more likely to be hidden in survey responses because of social norms (Bursztyn et al., 2020; Valentim, 2021). Henceforth, the strategy requires a method to infer radical right preferences from publicly available observable characteristics.

Following previous recruiting strategies from sociological and medical research (Guillory et al., 2018; Pötzschke & Weiß, 2021), we rely on the Facebook Advertisement Management (FAM) system to gather our sample. This service offered by the Meta company enabled us to display an ad linking to our survey on Meta networks (Facebook and Instagram). This service's advantage is getting access to the wide range of Meta networks users while micro-targeting users on their self-selected publicly observable characteristics.

Our strategy followed two steps. First, we designed the ad to appeal to radical right voters, and Zemmour voters in particular, using keywords and images appealing to the nationalist values corresponding to the political platform of these parties and their supporters[56] (L. Hooghe et al., 2002; Kriesi et al., 2008; Mudde, 2007). More specifically, all our ads mentioned the French "Nation" or strong feelings toward the "Country" 's future. In addition, all our chosen pictures accompanying the ad displayed citizens holding French flags. Figure 9 displays an example of one of our sample ads. The exact content of the message and picture varied to target different groups and increase the variability of our sample in terms of gender and age[57].

Second, we used the Meta targeting tool to select groups of users based on Meta users' information. One public information made available through the Meta tool is the users' preferences for media outlets. We, therefore, designed our targeting objectives toward Meta users who liked and seemed to consume right-leaning media outlets and TV shows. In particular, we selected users who liked the RTL radio, where Éric Zemmour worked as a columnist prior to his candidacy, or the TV show *"Touche pas à mon poste"*, which was shown to over-represent radical right candidates in terms of broadcasting time. In her study comparing (potential) candidates broadcasting time on this TV show, Secail (2022) evidenced that Éric Zemmour alone represented 42% of the broadcasting time between September and October 2022, and radical right candidates overall shared more than 51% of the time.

Therefore, we leveraged that interest in these programs is publicly available on Facebook to refine our target audience.

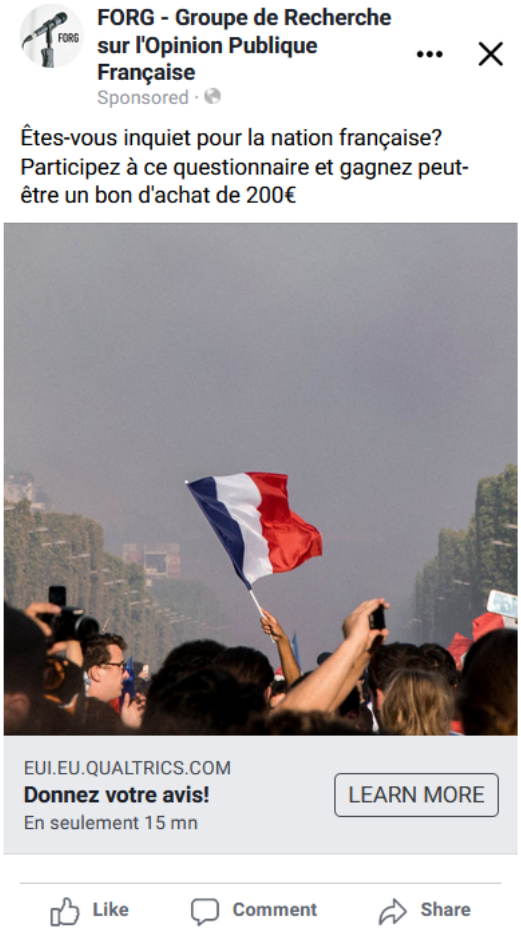


Figure 9: Facebook ad Example

One limitation of this strategy is that it focuses on self-selected social media users who may differ from the average population on a series of underlying characteristics. One specific threat of our sample is that the FB users who decide to participate in a study on social issues might be more politically interested and actively engaged than the average radical right voter. The interpretation of the results should bear this limitation in mind. Despite it, the strategy was largely successful.

Our recruitment strategy succeeded at over-representing radical right and Zemmour's potential voters compared to the French population. In the experiment sample, 52% of the respondents hold a radical right stance, including 34% of respondents who planned to vote for Zemmour prior to the first round of the elections. Contrary to our expectations, however,

a sizeable share (16%) of our sample also positioned itself on the extreme left and planned to vote for Jean Luc Mélenchon in the first round. Table 4 describes the sample in more detail and the descriptive characteristics of the three blocks of voters that we distinguish[58]. As they show, our convenience sample is dominated by right-leaning male respondents, typically older and more educated than the average French citizen.

Table 4: Summary of descriptive statistics

| block | Zemmour's voters | | | Le Pen's voters | | | Others | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Variable | N | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD | N | Mean | SD |
| Gender | 123 | | | 64 | | | 174 | | |
| ... male | 94 | 76% | | 44 | 69% | | 98 | 56% | |
| ... female | 29 | 24% | | 20 | 31% | | 76 | 44% | |
| ... other | 0 | 0% | | 0 | 0% | | 0 | 0% | |
| Age | 123 | 47.5 | 19.2 | 64 | 55.1 | 15.6 | 176 | 47.7 | 17.3 |
| Education | 123 | | | 64 | | | 175 | | |
| ... Primary school or none | 1 | 1% | | 9 | 14% | | 4 | 2% | |
| ... Middle School | 7 | 6% | | 2 | 3% | | 3 | 2% | |
| ... Professional certificate | 17 | 14% | | 12 | 19% | | 22 | 13% | |
| ... High School | 31 | 25% | | 12 | 19% | | 26 | 15% | |
| ... University first-cycle | 25 | 20% | | 17 | 27% | | 31 | 18% | |
| ... University second-cycle | 42 | 34% | | 12 | 19% | | 89 | 51% | |
| Left-right | 122 | 9.4 | 1.8 | 60 | 9.3 | 1.8 | 164 | 4.9 | 3.1 |

In the following section, we turn to the two-step mixed-methods study. First, we summarize the experimental part of our study design which manipulates the salience of in-group and out-group party success in the French presidential elections, followed by the analysis results. In the second stage, we describe our methodological approach and qualitative analysis of open-ended survey questions to triangulate these experimental results.

## 4.5. "Us versus Them" in SWD change: a mixed-methods approach

### 4.5.1. Study 1 - Experimental evidence

#### 4.5.1.1. Manipulating the parties' perceived success: the experimental design

To test our hypotheses, we opted for a pre-registered (Canalejo-Molero & Le Corre Juratic, 2022) vignette experiment that manipulates the frame presenting the first round of the election outcomes[59]. This frame aims to vary the salience of the in-group (new radical right party candidate: Éric Zemmour) or the out-group (mainstream party candidate: Emmanuel

Macron) party success following the first round of the elections. As a reminder of our hypotheses, we expect that increasing the salience of the in-group party success should enhance satisfaction with democracy (H1), especially when focusing on the power potential of the executive compared to the legislative power (H2). However, in the case of polarized voters, we also expect that they become less satisfied with democracy when increasing the saliency of the out-group party potential win (H3) by increasing negative feelings towards it (H4). Finally, we expect the out-group-based frame's effect to be larger than the in-group-based effect (H5).

Our vignettes presented a text describing the electoral ranking of the first four candidates and stating the two winners of the first round of the elections: Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen. While the control condition only displayed this descriptive information, our four treatments complemented it with an additional statement.

The first two treatment conditions (T1a, T1b) included a statement emphasizing the prospective success of the in-group candidate (Zemmour). While both vignettes emphasized his result positively, the first one put emphasis on the coalition potential in the government (T1a). In contrast, the other emphasized the representation potential in the assembly following the upcoming legislative elections (T1b). As the French electoral system is majoritarian and semi-presidential, we test twice the in-group hypothesis to strengthen the efficiency of our experiment by making more explicit the type of representation and power control accessible to losers of the presidential elections. Differentiating between these two types further allows disentangling whether voters are sensitive to the variation in the utility associated with each outcome.

The third treatment condition (T2) tests our out-group hypotheses underlining the likelihood of the mainstream out-group (Macron) victory in the second round of the elections. Finally, our fourth treatment (T3) serves as a placebo test to rule out alternative explanations for the negative effect of elections on SWD. As an example, table 5 displays the vignettes of the control and the first treatment conditions[60].

The first goal of the placebo is to rule out the possibility that any negative frame could lead to negative changes in SWD. The second is to rule out a specific alternative hypothesis. Drawing upon the literature on social norms and the radical right (Bursztyn et al., 2020; Valentim, 2021), the placebo condition emphasizes the mainstream censorship of the new radical right candidate. The underlying expectation is that elections might decrease SWD among radical right voters because of increasing the saliency of the social norm against them. Including an explicit test of this alternative mechanism is an additional hard check for our

hypotheses.

Table 5: Vignettes' example

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| **Control** | The results of the first round of the presidential elections were known already the 10th of April. Among the competing candidates, Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen passed to the second round. The candidate Jean-Luc M*é*lenchon and the candidate *É*ric Zemmour were the third and fourth most voted candidates, respectively. |
| **Treatment 1a** | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Éric Zemmour** obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **the winner of the second round may include him in the new government**. |

The experiment was conducted within the second wave of a panel study. The first wave of the panel enabled us to collect data on the respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, their baseline level of attitudes towards democracy and institutions, partisan identification and affective polarization, and vote intention in the two weeks prior to the first round of the elections. Voluntary participants were then contacted by email to participate in the second survey wave[61]. Using the vote intention indicator, we blocked the randomization into three groups of party supporters: Zemmour, Le Pen, and other party supporters. Blocking on the voting preferences maximizes the number of respondents per treatment condition to secure sufficient power of analysis for our population of interest: Zemmour supporters. We use the two other blocks as placebos, where we do not expect a similar effect of our treatments on satisfaction with democracy and affective polarization. In the first placebo group, Le Pen's block, voters differ because their party wins the first round of the elections. By contrast, the "others" supporters group is heterogeneous and not as polarized as the group of Zemmour voters[62].

Within each block, respondents were exposed either to the control or one of the four treatment conditions. The block of "others" was presented with the same vignettes as the "Zemmour" block. Instead, we modified the vignettes for the "Le Pen" block. For this block, the government potential condition (T1a) emphasizes Marine Le Pen's potential to win the second round of the election (instead of becoming a coalition partner), while in the assembly condition (T1b), we replace any reference to Zemmour with Le Pen. This modification aims to replicate the experiment on a group of radical right potential winners. This group, as opposed to Zemmour's supporters, should not be as affected by the out-group win due to the larger utility derived from their outcome. The goal of replicating the original vignettes on the "others" group is to confirm that only radical right voters are affected by the treatments

in the expected direction. A diagram of the experimental design is displayed in figure 10.

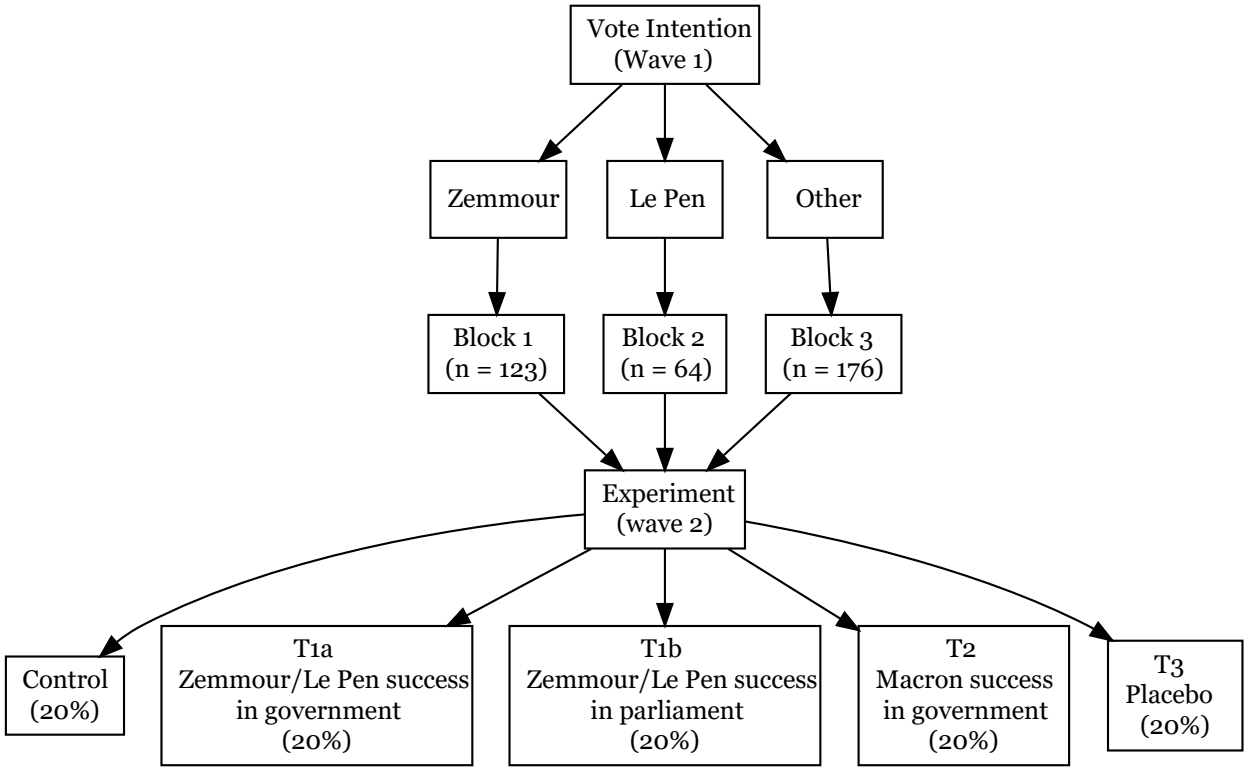


Figure 10: Experimental design diagram

The vignette was followed by the measure of our two dependent variables: satisfaction with democracy and party affects[63]. Satisfaction with democracy is measured with the answer to the question 'on the whole, how satisfied are you with the way democracy works in France?', whose answer ranges from 0 to 10, 0 means 'not satisfied at all' and 10 means 'completely satisfied'. Change in SWD measures the difference between the post-treatment score and the first wave response (*range = -10 to 10*). Our second dependent variable measures changes in affective polarization. Given that our expectation regarding the effect of electoral outcomes on affective polarization concerns the in-group-loser and out-group-winner division and not the overall changes in affective polarization within a multi-party system (Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021), our dependent variable is the mainstream party negative partisanship (NPID) (Ridge, 2020). We measure negative partisanship with a 10-point like-dislike scale for the mainstream out-group party (Emmanuel Macron's *LREM*). Again, change in NPID measures the difference between the second and first wave score (*range = -10 to 10*).

#### 4.5.1.2. Results and discussion

We estimate two different models to test the hypotheses. The first model tests hypotheses 1, 2, 3 and 5 by regressing change in SWD on a categorical treatment variable. The second model tests hypothesis 4 by regressing change in feelings towards Macron's party *LREM* on the treatment. The main specifications use OLS regression to estimate the average treatment effect (ATE). While the first one includes only the treatment variable, the second adds a set of pre-treatment socio-demographic characteristics as control variables to increase the precision of the estimates[64]. The standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust across specifications. The baseline is the control group's average change. Figure 11 plots the coefficient and confidence intervals associated with each treatment condition. The left-hand side figure plots the ATE on change in SWD while the right-hand side figure plots the ATE on change in feelings towards *LREM*.

Figure 11 shows that, in line with the out-group hypothesis, increasing the saliency of the potential mainstream party's win consistently and negatively affects SWD. Respondents primed with the high chances that Macron would win the election display an average change in SWD close to -1.5 across specifications. This is a substantive effect, comparable in size to the winner-loser gap in SWD in low-quality democracies (Nadeau et al., 2021). Furthermore, the effect is significant at a 90% confidence level, which supports hypothesis 3. The estimates are noisy due to the small sample size (*n=123*). However, finding a statistically significant effect despite this limitation reinforces our confidence that the true effect is substantially large. In addition, the p-values calculated with non-robust standard errors are always significant at a 95% confidence level [65], and an out-of-the-sample replication using the pilot study draws similar conclusions[66]. Bearing these considerations in mind, we can confidently reject the null hypothesis that priming Zemmour's voters with Macron's potential victory does not affect change in SWD.

Further supporting the affective mechanism, we find that priming Zemmour's voters with Macron's potential win also has an effect of almost -0.5 points on feelings towards Macron's party (H4). The coefficient is statistically significant at a 90% confidence level when the control variables are not included. However, none of the estimates substantially varies across specifications, and the effect always remains close to conventional levels of statistical significance. Again, the results must be interpreted with caution due to the low precision of the estimates. However, the effect is sizeable too. This is particularly striking when considering that the pre-treatment average affect towards Macron's party is -3.24 on a scale from -5 to 5. Overall, these two pieces of evidence together lend support to an affective driven out-group logic of change in SWD among radical party voters when facing a defeat. The victory of a party towards which they hold strong negative feelings seems to reduce their satisfaction

levels despite their own party's electoral breakthrough and reinforce their negative feelings towards it.

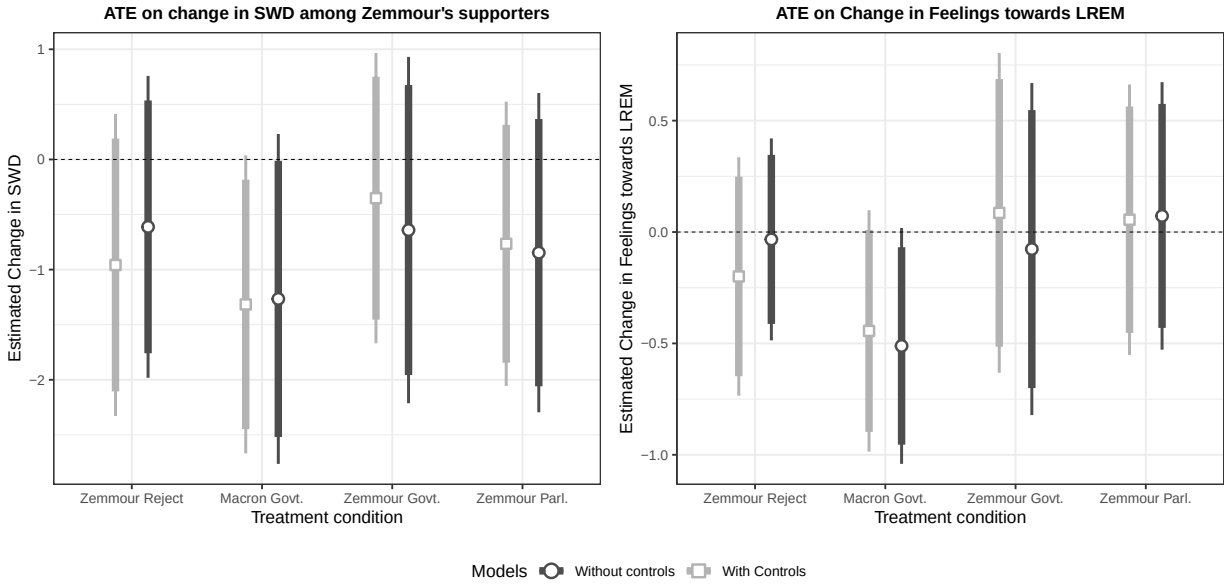


Figure 11: ATE on change in SWD (left) and in feelings towards LREM (right)

Conversely, none of the in-group-based hypotheses (H1a and H1b) receives any empirical support. Respondents primed with either the potential of Zemmour to be part of the government or to play a decisive role in parliament do not report statistically significant differences in SWD change. Furthermore, the estimated coefficients are always negative, which speaks against the possibility that the lack of statistical significance is due to underpowering. Nevertheless, the findings provide some support for an underlying utilitarian mechanism behind in-group-based SWD changes (H2). Although none of the in-group treatments had any significant effect, the respondents primed with the parliament potential condition display a larger negative coefficient than respondents primed with the government potential condition. To sum up, we can conclude that the negative effect provoked by the potential Macron's victory largely outweighs the potential benefits associated with the electoral results of Zemmour among his supporters (H5).

Three more pieces of evidence reinforce our confidence in our interpretation of the findings and help to set out the scope conditions of the argument. First, the placebo condition has no significant effect on change in SWD or feelings towards *LREM*. Although the coefficients associated with this condition are always negative, the potential negative effect of displaying a normative reaction censoring the *Reconquête* platform is not strong enough to significantly

reduce SWD. Altogether, this evidence suggests that the cause of the seemingly negative effect of elections on democratic satisfaction is the mainstream win itself.

Second, the replication of the experiment on Le Pen's voters suggests that the negative effect of the potential out-group win is not strong enough to reduce SWD among potential radical party winners. Le Pen's voters in our sample are equally polarized towards the mainstream and the radical left. However, they differ from the group of Zemmour voters because their party is not new and has a real chance of winning. It must be acknowledged that this sample is significantly smaller ($n$=64), and some of the pre-treatment socio-demographic characteristics are not wholly balanced[67]. Therefore, only the specifications that include the control variables arguably identify the ATE. Despite these limitations, the replication provides suggestive evidence about the scope conditions of the argument. As displayed in the left-hand side plot in figure 12, neither the in-group nor the out-group success treatments significantly affect change in SWD among Le Pen's voters. On the one hand, these results suggest that affectively polarized voters do not experience any significant change in SWD because of utilitarian reasons unless they clearly win. On the other hand, the out-group win neither significantly affects change in SWD when not facing a defeat.

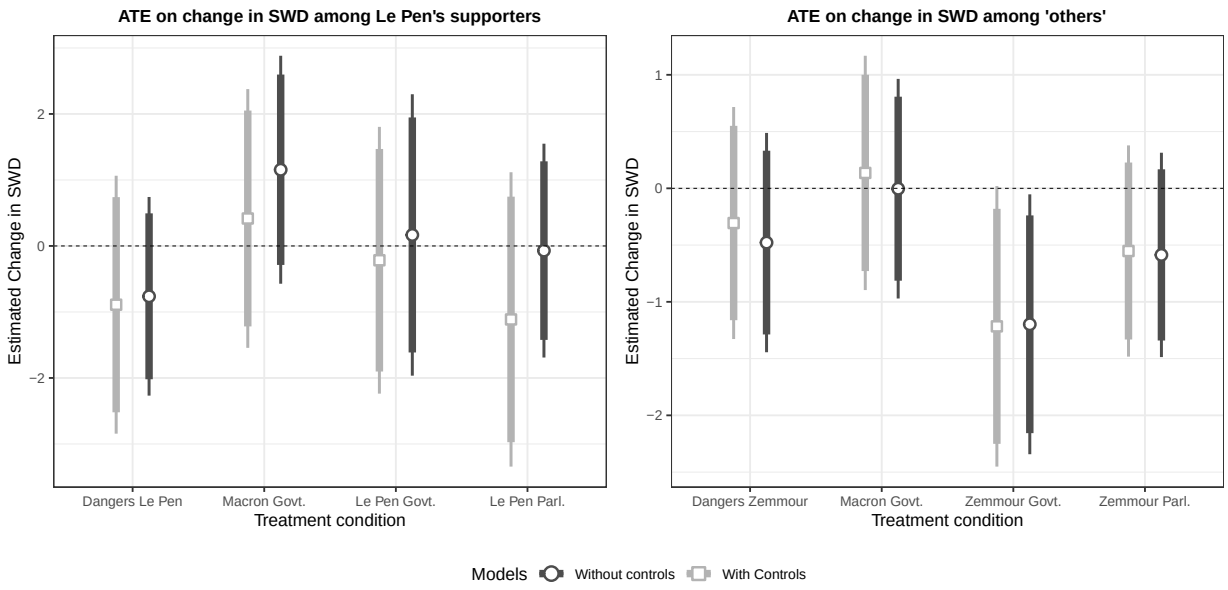


Figure 12: ATE on change in SWD among Le Pen's supporters (left) and 'others' (right)

Finally, the replication of the experiment on the "others" group provides an even stronger case for the prevalence of the affective out-group logic among polarized voters, even beyond radical parties. This group is mainly composed of Melenchon (35.79%) and Macron sup-

porters (18.18%) that share one feature in common: a strong negative identity against the newcomer Éric Zemmour[68]. The right-hand side plot in figure 11 displays the coefficients associated with each treatment condition for this block. In this group, the respondents primed with the potential win of Macron's party did not experience any significant difference in change in SWD. Neither priming them with the controversial takes of Zemmour nor with the possibility that he plays a crucial role in parliament have any significant effect either. However, those respondents primed with the possibility that Zemmour becomes part of a future coalition government display a consistently significant negative effect on change in SWD. In view of the accumulated evidence, this finding has at least two crucial implications. The first one is that in-group/out-group identity plays a substantially bigger role than utility on changes in SWD under electoral uncertainty and high affective polarization. The second one is that its role is not necessarily restricted to radical parties, but it may affect any group with a strong negative identity against the winner. Unfortunately, our sample of other radical voters beyond Zemmour supporters is not large enough to run the analyses separately for different sub-groups. However, the heterogeneity of the sample argues strongly in favour of this conclusion.

Overall, the quantitative analysis of the experiment points to three main conclusions. First, the utilitarian in-group logic fails to predict changes in SWD in a context of electoral uncertainty, at least in majoritarian systems. Second, an affective out-group logic is better fitted to predict changes in SWD among affectively polarized groups. Finally, and more specifically, the win of an out-group party is a robust predictor of negative changes in SWD among voters with a negative identity against the winner when facing a defeat. In order to triangulate our experimental findings, we rely on the qualitative analysis of an open-ended question that follows the intervention. The following section presents our approach in further detail.

### 4.5.2. Study 2 - Qualitative evidence

#### 4.5.2.1. Disentangling utility and affect qualitatively: the methodological approach

To further explore the mechanisms at play between radical right party entry and its voters' SWD and to triangulate our expectations regarding the role of affective polarization in explaining growing dissatisfaction, we conducted a qualitative analysis using respondents' answers to an open-ended question. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked: *"Finally, in one or two sentences and using your own words, could you describe your feelings regarding the results of these elections?"*.

Triangulating our findings qualitatively using such type of questions is particularly well-suited for identifying mechanisms. Using an open-ended question with a broad scope on respondents' "feelings" enables to strengthen the internal validity of the results. Through their answer, respondents can freely express anything they consider most salient and relevant to them, including elements not related to our expectations. In other words, if the affective polarization mechanism appears evident in these answers, this would support an in-group/out-group logic as opposed to alternative mechanisms. Finally, as both party-affects and satisfaction with democracy are treated as dependent variables and located after the treatment vignette, the experiment can only provide evidence of the co-occurrence of changes in these two variables, while our theory suggests a mediating relationship. A qualitative analysis has the potential to uncover the full causal path that links both phenomena. Hence, by exploring whether and how the different concepts are related in our respondents' answers, a supplementary qualitative analysis enables us to overcome the limitations implicit in the experimental design.

Our analytical strategy to triangulate our experimental findings builds upon the following expectations. First, if an affective out-group logic holds, we would expect to find more answers mentioning negatively the out-group party and its leader (Macron and *La République en Marche*) charged with negative affects, rather than positive evaluations of the in-group party (Zemmour's *Reconquête*) and references to his performance. Second, if Zemmour voters become more dissatisfied with democracy because of this affective polarization mechanism, we would expect that some of these expressions of out-group negative affects should be related to negative evaluations of the democratic system. To explore whether these open answers are in line with these two expectations, we adopted a systematic coding approach of all 423 open survey answers using three coding categories. A "feeling" code (1), describing the main feeling(s) expressed by respondents in their answer. This code included pre-defined subcategories of feelings and emotions associated with affective polarization according to the literature, such as "anger", "disgust-loathing", and "fear-anxiety" (Iyengar et al., 2012; Mason, 2018; Reiljan, 2020). A "group" code (2), within which any party mentions and the tone of evaluation or affects (positive or negative), were included. Finally, a "democracy evaluation" code (3), gathering all answers mentioning the working of democracy. This initial and deductive codebook was complemented during the qualitative coding process using an inductive approach to allow alternative mechanisms to emerge from the qualitative data. Practically speaking, other feelings (such as "fatalism" or "hope") and non-party groups (in particular "the media", "French people", or "the extremes") mentioned by respondents were integrated into the codebook as subcategories. The resulting final codebook and the corresponding number of answers to each of these codes can be found in the supplementary

materials[69].

To triangulate our experimental findings and analyze these coded segments, we qualitatively compare the answers of the Zemmour supporters block to the two placebo groups. We expect Zemmour voters to focus their answers and feelings towards the mainstream out-group and express more clearly negative evaluations, feelings and affects towards them compared to the two placebo blocks. The following section describes our findings.

#### 4.5.2.2. Qualitative analysis of the open-ended question: triangulation of the affective polarization mechanism

Our experimental findings showed that regardless of the relative electoral success of Éric Zemmour's party, especially considering his late entry into the presidential elections, neither his coalition nor representation potential increases SWD among his supporters, contrary to the utilitarian in-group logic. However, the emphasis on the out-group party victory shows that this feature of the electoral outcome leads to more dissatisfaction with democracy. This phenomenon, we show, goes hand in hand with stronger negative feelings towards the mainstream party leader. Overall, the qualitative evidence we present below supports our experimental findings.

The most striking evidence speaking against a utilitarian mechanism among Zemmour voters is the overwhelmingly negative feelings they express and the absence of any satisfaction regarding these elections. The most commonly expressed feelings (present in about 30% of Zemmour supporters' answers) are a form of disappointment, as well as a form of fatalism, given that the second round of these elections reproduced the outcome of the 2017 presidential elections. When looking at the sources of these feelings, the most often cited cause of these feelings among Zemmour supporters is Macron's victory, as this series of answers illustrate[70]:

> Q1: *"A great frustration to find a duel Macron Le Pen in the second round. The absence of a sanction vote against Macron."*
>
> Q2: *"Disappointed not to see Reconquête in the 2nd round and to see Macron qualified"*
>
> Q3: *"Deeply disappointed that more than 25% of the voters voted for Macron after 5 terrible years for France"*

By contrast, over the 127 open answers, none of them mentions Zemmour's results as an electoral success and none but one answer mentions the 1st round victory of Marine Le Pen and her party as a promising result for *Reconquête*'s weight in the political system. While

some may mention Zemmour and his party in a positive light when mentioning his ideas or his campaign, the lack of utility derived from his electoral performance is particularly visible through the absence of "hope" or "satisfaction" regarding the results. This is especially striking when compared to Le Pen supporters' answers, which also display very negative feelings but comprise more hopeful and satisfied comments compared to Zemmour voters.

Beyond being almost exclusively negative, some specific feelings and evaluations of these elections tap more directly into the concept of affective polarization as identified by the literature (Iyengar et al., 2012; Mason, 2018). For instance, many respondents also express feelings of disgust, anger, or anxiety regarding the out-group party leader and his victory, as the following excerpts show:

> Q4: *"I am disgusted that Macron is in the second round of the presidential election after all the dirty deals he has done."*

> Q5: *"Disappointing, Macron is in the second round, 9 million French people vote for this sinister character. They should be made to pay for it, and make them pay dearly."*

> Q6: *"Scary, after 5 years of violence and lies to a level like never known so many people vote for Macron"*

To be sure, the mainstream party out-group and their leader, Macron, are not the only source of these negative feelings and targets of affective polarization. Another out-group is occasionally mentioned by Zemmour supporters, and his electoral success is associated with worry or disgust: the radical left out-group represented by Jean-Luc Mélenchon and his party, as the following answer illustrates.

> Q7: *"Disappointed by the score of Éric Zemmour, and very worried to see that LFI + LREM cumulate 50% of the votes of the voters while they want to destroy France."*

However, as the coding table in appendix C3 shows, these references to Mélenchon and *La France Insoumise* are less frequent in Zemmour supporters' answers compared to the overwhelming mentions of Macron and his party. Respondents, therefore, focus on the out-group party winner of elections.

In addition to parties and leaders, other groups were mentioned in respondents' comments on elections. The most important alternative source of negative feelings and evaluations comes from blaming "the media" and their "polls". While this might not seem to immediately relate to our expectations, the more fine-grained qualitative analysis of these answers reveals

that these references often connect negative evaluations of the winning mainstream party and general criticism of the democratic system.

Indeed, the qualitative analysis of these open answers supports our expectation that Zemmour voters tie together dissatisfaction with democracy and the out-group party victory. About 30% of Zemmour supporters make some criticism of the democratic process[71]. Among those, many criticize the result, the electoral process, and the existence of - at least- a bias advantaging the mainstream party winner with media help. At worst, respondents suggest that the democratic electoral process is "rigged" and illegitimate, which is the main criticism of democracy made by Zemmour supporters. They shared many examples of such impressions:

> Q8: *"Rigged non-democratic election confiscated by the media subjected to the billionaire friends of Macron"*
>
> Q9: *"A media lockdown orchestrated by the outgoing president"*
>
> Q10: *"Given the fervor of the meetings of Éric Zemmour I thought he would be in the second round and I wonder if the results are not manipulated to make Macron elected."*
>
> Q11: *"Considering the media pressure and the pro"Macron" polls I am very bitter because everything is truncated and not at all unbiased"*

Overall, this qualitative analysis supports the experimental findings and show how an affective response against the out-group win overcomes any utility gain from the electoral results. Respondents tie an out-group negative feeling to dissatisfaction with democracy, notably through perceived control of the system through the media.

Comparing these answers to the other two blocks of respondents shows different patterns. As mentioned earlier, the answers from Marine Le Pen supporters display many similarities with Zemmour voters with regard to the strong negative feelings toward Macron and his party, even though their candidate won the first round of the elections. Two main differences are yet observable in this block. First, Le Pen supporters express more hopeful and enthusiastic statements about her candidate and the elections, in accordance with her greater winning potential in the upcoming second round. Second, they do not link the ideas of the out-group party, his control of the media, and expressions of dissatisfaction with democracy or the belief that elections were "rigged" as much as Zemmour voters do. Regarding the other parties' supporters block, composed in great part by *LREM* and *LFI* party supporters, some polarized feelings toward the radical right out-group were expressed, especially in terms of feelings of fear and anxiety given their electoral success. Focusing on Mélenchon's supporters,

another polarized loser group, show that they also express negative feelings about the electoral process and the working of democracy, but this criticism rarely spills over to claims that the overall system is rigged, unlike the Zemmour block. A lot more focus is put on more specific constitutional and electoral rules in accordance with the *LFI*'s proposal to create a Constitutive assembly and a new Constitution.

To summarize, the qualitative evidence shows further support for an affective mechanism. The Zemmour block spontaneously expresses negative out-group feelings toward Macron and his party in an open-ended question about the election results. More importantly, many respondents link this negative partisanship with the idea that elections and the system are rigged. Our qualitative data enables us to be more precise about how these two ideas are linked together in the eyes of these voters. Many of Zemmour's supporters share the idea that Macron had full control of the system and the outcome of elections by controlling and manipulating the media. Other groups of party supporters do not link these ideas together, including other radical and polarized voters who lost elections, such as Mélenchon's supporters. However, our qualitative findings also suggest that Marine Le Pen voters may be subject to similar mechanisms in the case of defeat. Her block of supporters displays almost as much negative affect towards Macron as Zemmour's block, and surprisingly little positive evaluation of her or the system's performance, even after winning the first round of presidential elections. Overall, both the experimental and qualitative evidence point toward the importance of the out-group negative partisanship in shaping satisfaction with democracy for polarized radical right voters.

## 4.6. Conclusion

Our findings are rather sobering for the utilitarian in-group model of changes in democratic satisfaction. Using a mixed-method approach, we show both experimentally and qualitatively that new radical right party voters do not become more satisfied with democracy even when their preferred party gains relatively high electoral support in its first election. We show that the prospects of gaining power through coalition-making or representation in the parliament are not enough to overcome a negative boost in SWD and in negative affects towards the mainstream party following an electoral defeat.

This study, while providing both experimental and qualitative evidence of the importance of an affective mechanism shaping the effect of electoral outcomes on SWD, suffers from some limitations. First, the French political context is a specific majoritarian and semi-presidential system, which may have affected the credibility of our treatment manipulation. In particular, the prospect of coalition-making or significant weight within the national assembly may seem

too optimistic or far in time for voters of a loser party. However, this context still provides a clearer test of the winner-loser gap between party supporters, which we take advantage of in our voters' blocks comparison.

In addition, the specificity of the qualitative data we rely on for our complementary analysis does not enable us to take a full-fledged interpretative or comparative approach. The open answers were constrained in terms of length, limiting the possible linkages and mechanisms more elaborate answers from our respondents would have allowed. This drawback, combined with the small sample size of our different groups of voters, does not enable us to make a more systematic qualitative comparison of the three blocks of voters in our study or across treatment conditions. However, the short length of the answers invited the respondents to focus on their more salient feelings. Thus the qualitative and quantitative evidence combined offers robust and comprehensive evidence of the affective mechanism.

Overall, this paper contributes to the literature on democratic support by emphasizing the role of identity and affective polarization in mediating more utilitarian considerations about the corrective role of representation for disengaged voters (Kaltwasser, 2012; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012). This paper suggests that dissatisfaction with democracy and affective polarization might be two reinforcing phenomena. Emerging radical parties seem to be no cure to this vicious circle, which may threaten the legitimacy of democratic systems in the long run. Ignoring entirely the benefits of entering the system democratically on your first elections and questioning its legitimacy because of hatred toward your political opponent could weaken democratic stability, as accepting electoral (mis)fortunes is an unconditional element of the democratic game.

# Chapter 5. Does New Party Entry Increase Electoral Turnout? Quasi-Experimental Evidence from the 2015 Spanish Local Elections

## 5.1. Introduction

The emergence of new political parties has attracted a great deal of scholarly attention since the very foundations of political science as a modern scientific discipline (Downs, 1957; Duverger, 1959; LaPalombara & Weiner, 1966). However, systematic empirical research has focused either on explaining the causes of their unequal success across countries and over time (Bolin, 2014; Hug, 2001; Lago & Martínez, 2011; Sikk, 2005, 2012; Tavits, 2006, 2008), or the reason why some of them persist whereas others decline and disappear after some initial success (Bolleyer, 2013; Bolleyer & Bytzek, 2013). In contrast, the consequences of their irruption are much less clear. In particular, the relationship between the number of parties and electoral participation has been extensively theorized from several strands of the literature. However, the empirical evidence sustaining this relationship remains weak and quite often contradictory (Blais, 2006; Cancela & Geys, 2016; Frank & Coma, 2021; Geys, 2006; Stockemer, 2017).

There are strong theoretical foundations to believe that new political parties may increase electoral turnout, from models of spatial voting (Adams et al., 2006; Downs, 1957) to mobilization theory (Green & Gerber, 2019; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Notwithstanding these predictions, the most up-to-date evidence faces critical identification threats that weaken the validity of its findings. Heath and Ziegfeld (2018) and Hobolt and Hoerner (2020) have provided the most recent evidence supporting the claim that new party entry increases electoral participation. Compared to previous research using cross-sectional data, they made a significant advance by introducing two-way fixed effects models with panel data. However, most evidence on the causes of new party entry relies on the same model specification using increases in participation as an explanatory variable to justify the exact opposite, namely, that higher turnout increases the likelihood of new party entry (e.g., Lago & Martínez, 2011; Tavits, 2006, 2008). In both cases, their approach fails to disentangle causes from effects because their identification assumptions are not explicit, and the causal arrow is theoretically plausible in both directions. As a consequence, whether new party entry increases electoral turnout remains unclear.

To solve this endogeneity puzzle, this paper leverages a unique real-world setting that approximates the experimental ideal: the 2015 Spanish local elections. In those elections,

two newcomers which had previously signalled their viability by gaining seats at the 2014 European Parliamentary Elections ran candidates in the whole country for the first time: *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*. *Ciudadanos* decided to run candidate lists in as many municipalities as possible. In contrast, *Podemos* decided not to run official lists, but a myriad of their recently born local organizations managed to run alternative lists under a variety of names, quite often in alliance with the traditional radical left party *Izquierda Unida* (IU) and other regional and local leftist parties. This situation provoked a scenario in which some localities had candidates from the two newcomers, whereas others had only one of the two or none. Thus, it allows comparing official participation records across municipalities to identify the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout.

To account for potential selection bias, I combine two methodological approaches. First, I compare treated and non-treated municipalities with a difference-in-differences (DiD) design, which keeps time-invariant factors constant and control for common period effects (Angrist & Pischke, 2008, ch. 5). Second, I match treated and control municipalities by a series of time-variant covariates that predict the presence of new parties' candidate lists. After the matching refinement, a series of plots suggests that the (conditional) parallel trends assumption holds (Imai et al., 2021). The results provide supportive evidence that new party entry increases turnout. Localities where either *Podemos*, *Ciudadanos*, or both new parties run candidate lists display an average of 0.8% higher participation rates than those in which none of the new parties competed. In addition, an analysis of different subsets of the sample suggests that only the presence of *Ciudadanos* or *Podemos* is enough to boost electoral turnout.

These findings confirm previous evidence on the effect of party entry on electoral participation (Heath & Ziegfeld, 2018; Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020) and advise against the use of electoral participation increases as an explanatory variable of new party success. More broadly, this paper contributes to the growing literature on the effect of party system change on political attitudes and behaviour (Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Canalejo-Molero, 2022; Valentim, 2021). From a normative perspective, it also defies the folk wisdom that increasing party system fragmentation has mostly a negative impact on democratic quality, in line with other recent findings (Valentim & Dinas, 2023). On the contrary, this study provides evidence that new parties can promote the political engagement of citizens that would otherwise abstain from participating in the electoral process.

## 5.2. Theoretical background

Does new party entry increase electoral turnout? The relationship between the number of parties and electoral participation has been theorized from at least two strands of the lit-

erature: the literature on spatial voting and on mobilization theory. In the spatial voting tradition, the expectation that increasing the number of parties should foster turnout was first proposed by Downs (1957). Building on his work, Adams and his colleagues (2006) distinguish two mechanisms through which adding one new party should foster turnout and illustrate them by differentiating between two ideal types of abstainers: alienated and indifferent abstainers. Alienated abstainers would be those that do not participate because no available political platform is close enough to their preferences to justify the cost of voting. In contrast, indifferent abstainers would be equally close to all the available options so that any electoral result would yield them the same gains. Following this logic, if a new party irrupts, alienated abstainers would have incentives to participate if it occupies an ideological space close enough to their preferences to raise the expected utility of voting, as happens when a new party places itself on either extreme of the ideological spectrum. On the contrary, the likelihood of turnout will increase among indifferent abstainers if the new party offers a distinct platform between two equally distant competitors, typically around the centre. Regardless of the specific mechanism, spatial models predict that increasing the number of parties should positively affect electoral turnout.

This prediction notwithstanding, the available evidence using cross-sectional data has reported mixed evidence at best. Across several meta-analyses on the correlates of turnout, the effective number of parties is not robustly associated with higher electoral participation rates and, in some cases, the relationship is even negative (Blais, 2006; Cancela & Geys, 2016; Frank & Coma, 2021; Geys, 2006; Stockemer, 2017). Some scholars have attempted to reconcile the spatial models' predictions with the empirical patterns displayed by the cross-sectional evidence. For example, Taagepera and his colleagues (2014) develop the logical argument that the relationship between the effective number of parties and electoral turnout follows an inverse U-type. According to them, an increase in the number of available options has a positive effect on participation up to a peak, after which the effect fades away. That is, too many parties may drive turnout down by obscuring the available information to the electorate and discouraging participation. The argument is empirically confirmed in their setting and goes in line with previous findings (Grofman & Selb, 2011).

Nevertheless, an alternative explanation for the inconsistency between the spatial models' predictions and the empirical patterns of cross-sectional analysis is that the effect of new party entry is unspecified. Thus, the number of parties may be confounded by a series of non-observable characteristics that could correlate with electoral turnout in a negative fashion. As such, they obscure rather than clarify whether the entry of new parties boosts electoral participation or not. The latest research following the spatial voting tradition

addresses some of these limitations and provides evidence that new party entry increases electoral turnout. Hobolt and Hoerner (2020) use panel data from Germany to show that the presence of AfD candidates in German regional elections is associated with an increase in vote intention, especially among those respondents with more congruent ideological positions, thus supporting the alienated-abstainer logic and reinvigorating Downs' initial hypothesis.

This evidence is consistent with another recent study that suggests an alternative mechanism for the relationship between party entry and electoral turnout: the role of political mobilization. In the context of the Indian parliamentary elections with long-term district-level panel data, Heath and Ziegfeld (2018) show that the entry of a new party is associated with an increase in turnout and the probability of having being contacted before the election to vote, while party exit has the opposite effect. They theorize that, as new parties enter the political arena, they would build local grassroots structures in order to mobilize new voters, thus augmenting the number of canvassers and party activists involved in the campaign. Similarly, the organizational resources of an old party would cease its activity as the party exits the system (i.e., stop running candidates in the following election). Therefore, from the perspective of mobilization theory, electoral turnout would fluctuate as a function of party entry and exit because the number of activists involved in the campaign would directly affect the probability of contacting undecided voters and asking them to attend the polls (Green & Gerber, 2019; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993).

Despite these recent methodological advances, the latest evidence still suffers crucial identification threats that challenge its conclusions. The two-way fixed effects model accounts for constant heterogeneity across units of observations and common period effects, so it can effectively identify the co-occurrence of new party entry and increases in electoral turnout within a given district (Heath & Ziegfeld, 2018) or region (Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020). However, the causal interpretation of this correlation rests upon the untestable assumption that new parties compete homogeneously across districts regardless of the variation in the presence of abstainers with potential for mobilization, which is, precisely, one recurrent explanation for the strategic emergence of new parties (Lago & Martínez, 2011; Tavits, 2006, 2008). Research on new party emergence and entry often argues that new parties decide to compete strategically precisely in those districts where they anticipate an increase in electoral turnout, which they would exploit to their advantage. Even more importantly, the empirical strategy to identify the effect of the abstainers' mobilization potential on new party entry is precisely to regress new party emergence and success on increases in turnout with two-way fixed effects models. Thus, their interpretation of a positive significant coefficient is "that turnout tends to increase due to dissatisfied voters who would have stayed home were they satisfied with

the status quo" (Tavits, 2008, p. 129) rather than as the result of new party mobilization efforts, and despite recognizing "some concern with the endogeneity of this variable" (Tavits, 2008, p. 129).

Therefore, it is necessary to identify an exogenous source of variation in new party availability to rule out endogeneity concerns. In the following section, I justify why the 2015 Spanish local elections make an exceptional case which approximates this experimental ideal.

## 5.3. The 2015 Spanish local elections

Since Spain transitioned to democracy in 1981 until its 2015 general elections, the Spanish party system had been characterised by the dominance of two moderate parties that used to alternate in the formation of government: the centre-left Socialist Party (*Partido Socialista Obrero Español* or PSOE) and the centre-right People's Party (*Partido Popular* or PP). However, the harsh economic downturn following the 2008 subprime crisis, together with the exposure of major corruption scandals involving both PP and PSOE, put this pattern of alternation at risk. As well as in other Southern European countries, the economic and political crisis opened an opportunity window for new parties to capitalise on the growing societal discontent. In the Spanish case, two newcomers rallying on political renewal and alternative economic policies to mitigate the consequences of the crisis gained momentum at the 2014 European Parliamentary election and jumped into the national parliament in 2015: *Podemos* (We Can) and *Ciudadanos* (Citizens) (Bosch & Durán, 2019; Hutter et al., 2018; Orriols & Cordero, 2016). In between these two elections, however, they faced the challenge of competing in as many municipalities as possible in the 2015 Spanish local elections.

The antecedents can be summarised as follows. First, in the 2011 general elections, the incumbent PSOE suffered an unprecedented defeat against the main opposition party, the PP. As a result of the harsh austerity measures taken to meet the EU deficit goals, the Socialist Party obtained its worst result since the first democratic elections of the country in 1981. The main beneficiary of the Socialist Party's quasi-collapse was the People's Party, which gained 186 seats of the 350 total in the lower chamber and formed a majority government. Despite its extraordinary victory, the electorate remained dissatisfied with the PP's government due to its poor economic performance. Additionally, the media untapped a series of deep-rooted corruption cases affecting PP and PSOE, feeding the citizens' political resentment (Christmann & Torcal, 2017). As a consequence, massive protests took place in 2011 ('Indignados' movement) and during the following years (Kriesi et al., 2020)

This scenario provided a unique opportunity for new parties to capitalise on voters' dis-

content to succeed. As predicted by the economic voting theory, the incumbent had already been punished for its poor economic performance at the beginning of the crisis (Hernández & Kriesi, 2016). However, as the economy performed poorly also under the new government, dissatisfied voters were likely to shift to third parties as a response (Hutter & Kriesi, 2019). In this context, new parties could use their 'newness' as a valence advantage to signal detachment from the harmful practices associated with traditional politics and campaign on this issue (Lago & Martínez, 2011; Sikk, 2012). In the Spanish case, *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* followed this strategy.

*Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* had some crucial similarities and differences. Strategically, both parties shared critical common features. Their leaders, Pablo Iglesias and Albert Rivera, respectively, became both widely known around 2013 and 2014 thanks to their regular appearances in national TV broadcasts of political debates. Taking advantage of their media exposure, Pablo Iglesias, together with other professors from the Complutense University of Madrid, founded *Podemos* in 2014, just a few months before the European Parliamentary election. In contrast, Albert Rivera was already the leader of *Ciudadanos* since its foundation in 2006 as a centrist Catalan party with a strong anti-secessionist discourse. However, it also leveraged the upcoming European election's strategic advantage to jump into the national arena (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016). Substantively, both parties campaigned on anti-corruption policies and political renewal (Vidal, 2018). However, they differed on the specific policies. On the one hand, *Podemos* promoted deliberative decision modes coupled with a left-oriented economic policy platform. Instead, *Ciudadanos* promoted expert-based policymaking and pro-market economic reforms (Lavezzolo & Ramiro, 2018).

In Spain, the European Parliamentary (EP) election works as a facilitating channel for entering the national party system. The Spanish electoral system is more proportional in the EP election than in the general elections because the average district magnitude is substantially larger. Moreover, since the EP election is a second-order election, voters are more likely to take risks and shift to parties without experience in office. Once new parties enter the European Parliament, they can gain further visibility and signal their viability as credible competitors in the subsequent elections (Dinas & Riera, 2018; Schulte-Cloos, 2018).

The strategy of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* to first compete in the EP election was successful. They obtained representation in a non-regional institution for the first time[72] with 7.98% and 3.16% of the national vote share, respectively. The media largely reported their success, which pushed forward the idea that PP and PSOE may face credible rivals in the upcoming national election (Cordero & Montero, 2015). However, this decision brought an unintended consequence. While the new parties' ultimate goal was the government[73], they faced the

dilemma of whether to compete in the local elections preceding the parliamentary one.

In Spain, the local elections are fixed by law. They must be held simultaneously in every Spanish municipality on the fourth Sunday of May every four years. In contrast to regional or national elections, whose calendar may be manipulated by the government through its resignation or by a majority in parliament through impeachments and votes of no-confidence, the 2015 local elections were exogenously placed on the 24th of May 2015, just one year after the EP elections and six months before the national elections. This scenario was strategically challenging for *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*. On the one hand, their electorate trusted them to initiate political changes at the local level, where corruption had become a major issue (Fernández-Vázquez et al., 2016; Jiménez, 2009; Riera et al., 2013). On the other hand, they lacked sufficient local structures to secure control over the candidates. Therefore, their national leaders feared that potential local scandals during the six months preceding the national elections could damage their valence advantage and reduce their electoral expectations for the national parliament (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016; Rodríguez-Teruel et al., 2016).

Each party responded to the dilemma differently. *Podemos* had been founded just before the EP elections and lacked local structures. However, it had rapidly connected with many civic platforms and social movements born out of the *Indignados* protests that promoted informal local party brands groups called *Círculos* (circles). To formalize the affiliation of the different *Círculos*' members, the party also allowed free registration through an online platform, which skyrocketed their official membership numbers (Gomez & Ramiro, 2019). However, the many new members organized in *Círculos* were not hierarchically structured under the national leadership, which lacked the organizational resources to keep the local groups under control. This factor was decisive for the party's official choice not to compete in the local elections formally. Nevertheless, the local *Círculos* infrastructure was leveraged by their local leaders to form independent political platforms to run in many localities. In many cases, the party openly endorsed the platforms that often competed with other minor leftist parties with renowned local activists as their leaders (Martín, 2015; Rodríguez-Teruel et al., 2016). These electoral platforms participated in each municipality with different but related names[74] next to the name of the specific municipality or town, which allowed citizens to recognize them as their local '*Podemos* brand'. It is enough to mention that they won in the two main Spanish cities to illustrate their success, with *Ahora Madrid* and *Barcelona En Común* in Madrid and Barcelona, respectively.

In contrast to *Podemos*, *Ciudadanos* decided to compete in as many municipalities as possible using its stronger organisational resources. The party was born only as a Catalan party in 2006. Despite its regional idiosyncrasy, it had unsuccessfully attempted to expand

over the national territory already in the past. In previous local elections, it had managed to run candidate lists in some non-Catalan municipalities. Nonetheless, the cases are anecdotal, and the party was relatively unsuccessful. For this reason, the party allowed citizens to become party members through an online procedure already in 2007 and irrespectively of the few available local party brands. Compared to *Podemos*, *Ciudadanos* was much more institutionalised by 2015. However, the non-Catalan structures were scarce and weak. This is why allowing digital affiliation "was critical in the 2015 local elections, when C's allowed these new members to present lists of candidates in areas where the party had no prior organisational presence" (Rodríguez Teruel & Barrio, 2016). Thus, *Ciudadanos* formally competed in many municipalities. Yet, the national party headquarters had to intervene when independent affiliates were suspicious of corruption and retire some of the lists (Mateo, 2015).

The consequences of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* response to the 2015 local elections dilemma make this setting a particularly well-suited case to identify the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout. Despite both parties finally competing in many municipalities, their lack of organizational roots combined with the temporal overlap between the EP and local elections impeded them from formalizing enough candidate lists to compete in around half of them. Moreover, their decision to run candidate lists in some municipalities but not in others was primarily independent of the party headquarters. The official decision was to compete indiscriminately over the territory through official candidate lists or with non-formal 'local brands'. Therefore, whether they competed in a specific locality resulted from the variation in local political resources and, more specifically, the availability of potential candidates. The following section proposes a design to exploit this variation in the presence of new parties' candidate lists to estimate the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout.

## 5.4. Empirical strategy

The empirical design relies on publicly available administrative data on the Spanish local elections. The Spanish Ministry of Interior regularly updates official electoral records at the municipality level for all local elections since the first democratic elections in 1979. For each municipality with more than 250 inhabitants[75], this data provides information on the name of the official candidatures, number of votes, number of citizens eligible to vote, population, province and region. In Spain, citizens become eligible to vote in the local elections when they turn eighteen. Moreover, they get automatically registered to vote. Therefore, I calculate the electoral turnout rate for each municipality and election year by dividing the number of registered votes by the eligible population. Finally, I multiplied this variable by 100 to

obtain each municipality's electoral turnout percentage.

To locate the municipalities where a new party competed in 2015, I first removed all the Catalan municipalities from the dataset since *Ciudadanos* was not a new party in Catalonia. Second, I identified all the municipalities with *Ciudadanos*' candidate lists with a string search using the string roots 'ciudadan' and 'ciutatan'[76] and cross-validated the cases individually. I created a dummy variable indicating whether the municipality had a *Ciudadanos* candidate list following this search. Third, I systematically searched for newspaper reports about *Podemos*' local brands in the 2015 elections using the keywords 'Podemos', 'local elections', 'local brand' and 'store brands'[77], as people used to refer to these candidatures (see Moreno-Mendieta, 2015). I listed the most common names and identified all the municipalities where at least one candidate list had one of them using an extensive string-searching. Afterwards, I cross-validated the results by checking whether the same candidature was registered in the previous election and carried out an online search for the most unlikely cases to rule out potential false positives. Then, I created a dummy variable indicating whether the municipality had a *Podemos* candidate list. To increase the balance between the number of units with and without new parties' candidatures, I finally created a treatment dummy variable which takes the value 1 when the municipality had any *Podemos* or *Ciudadanos* candidate list in 2015 and 0 otherwise.

The resulting dataset has 4315 unique municipalities. In the 2015 elections, 1827 municipalities are treated, i.e. they have at least one candidate list from one of the two new parties. Among them, *Ciudadanos* run in 982 municipalities, *Podemos*' local brands competed in 845 and both parties together in 293 municipalities[78]. In contrast, the control group consists of 2488 municipalities. Figure 13 displays the geographical distribution of the treatment[79]. The missing values correspond to municipalities with less than 251 inhabitants or Catalan municipalities. The map shows that the treatment does not follow any clear geographical distribution except for two distinguishable patterns. First, most municipalities in the north-western region of Galicia are in the control group. This is because the new parties faced a higher entry barrier due to the Galician regional cleavage, which, in contrast to the Basque Country or Catalonia, overlaps with the classical left-right divide. For this reason, *Ciudadanos* did not compete in many municipalities, and *Podemos*' local leaders very often merged with the nationalistic leftist party *Bloque Nacionalista Galego* (BNG). Due to the lack of variation in this region, I exclude Galician municipalities from the remainder of the analyses.

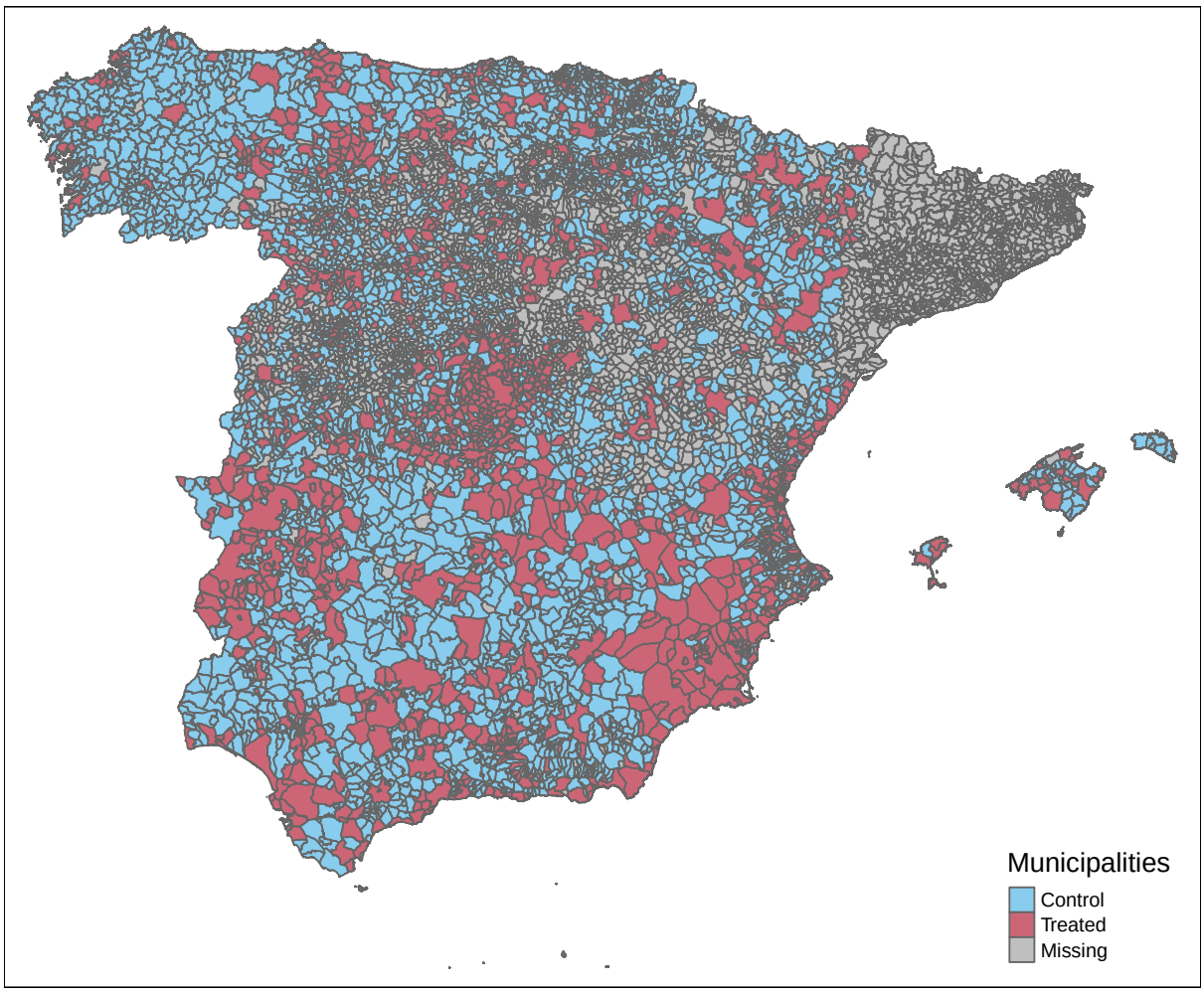


Figure 13: Geographical distribution of the treatment (Canary Islands not displayed)

The second distinguishable pattern is the variation between cities and towns. Most cities had new parties' candidate lists. In contrast, the presence of *Ciudadanos* or *Podemos* candidatures in small towns is more heterogeneous. This pattern provides evidence that the new parties competed in those municipalities with larger organizational resources. The likelihood of building hierarchical local structures in such a short time should be larger the larger the population since it increases the pool of pre-existing politically-oriented social networks, such as neighbourhood associations and civic platforms (Poertner, 2020). Figure 14 provides ad-

ditional evidence that confirms this intuition. The plot displays the relationship between population and the number of parties by treatment status across municipalities. It shows that the number of parties increases with population, and most new parties' candidate lists are concentrated in those municipalities with a larger population.

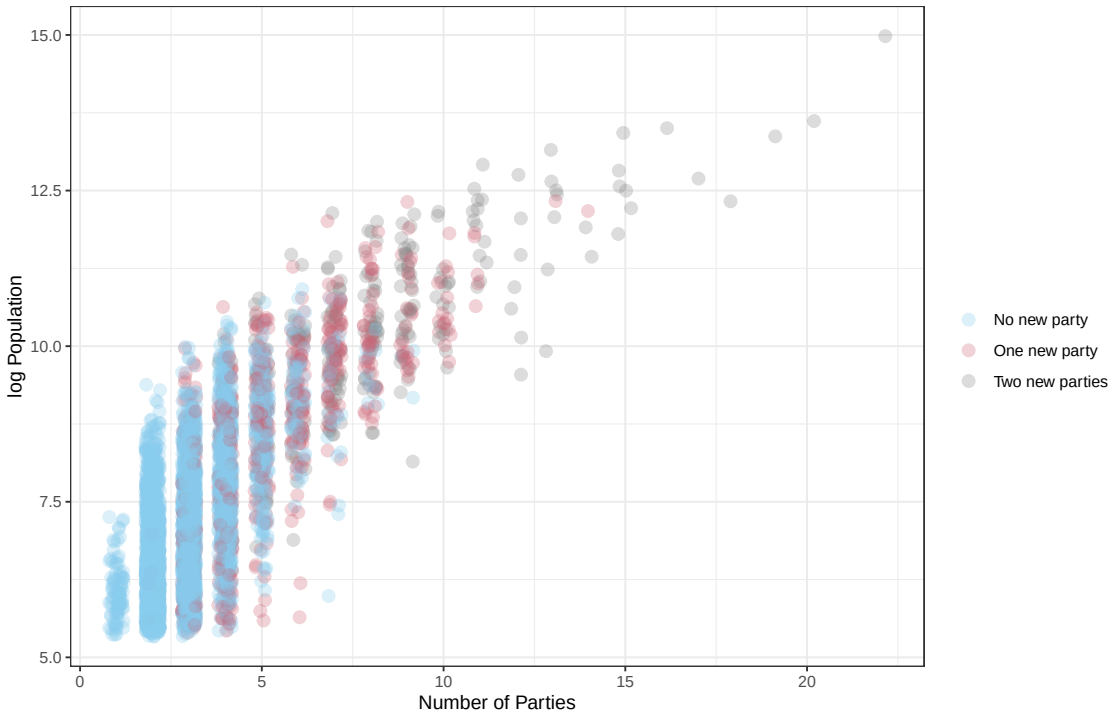


Figure 14: Relationship between population, number of parties and treatment status

Since the availability of new parties' candidate lists is endogenous to the organizational resources of each municipality, a simple difference-in-means between treated and control municipalities would yield a biased estimate of the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout. I combine two methodological approaches to rule out self-selection bias and identify the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout. The first approach leverages the exogenous timing of the local elections, which have been simultaneously held in every municipality on the same day every four years since the beginning of the democratic period. I extend the dataset by including up to three previous local elections: 2003, 2007 and 2011. Additionally, I include the 2019 elections to perform placebo tests[80]. The new dataset has a balanced panel data format that allows estimating a difference-in-differences (DiD) model. This model keeps unit time-invariant heterogeneity constant by including unit fixed-effects and control for common secular shocks by adding time-period dummies (Angrist & Pischke, 2008, ch. 5). Within the regression framework, the DiD estimator is specified with the following equation:

$$ElecPart_{it} = \gamma_0 + \rho_i + \gamma_1 NewParty_{it} + \gamma_2 T_t + \omega_{it}$$

In this specification, the dependent variable $ElecPart_{it}$ is the turnout rate of each municipality and election, measured in percentage, $\gamma_0$ is the common intercept, $\rho_i$ is the municipality-specific intercept, which captures all the time-invariant factors that are correlated with participation, $T_t$ denotes the time-period, capturing common secular trends, and $NewParty_{it}$ denotes whether a municipality has at least one of the two new parties' candidate lists in each election. The value of this variable for all the elections different from 2015 is 0, whereas it varies across municipalities in 2015. Thus, the associated coefficient $\gamma_1$ should capture the effect of new party entry on electoral participation, while $\omega_{it}$ captures the residual variation.

The parallel trends assumption is the only crucial assumption to interpret $\gamma_1$ as a causal estimate of the average treatment effect on the treated municipalities (ATT). In this case, the assumption implies that the average ratio of change in electoral participation between the pre- and post-treatment period across treated and control municipalities would have been the same in the absence of new parties. Although this assumption is untestable, we can reasonably verify its credibility by comparing the average level of electoral participation between treated and non-treated localities before the treatment period. Figure 66 in the appendix compares electoral participation trends before and after 2015 among treated and non-treated municipalities. The trends do not largely differ. However, the plot displays some heterogeneous variation across groups that threats the plausibility of the parallel trends assumption.

To maximize the likelihood that the parallel trends assumption holds, I combine the DiD design with a complementary methodological approach. I apply a matching refinement for panel data that uses pre-treatment observable characteristics' history to minimize pre-treatment differences among unit pairs (Imai et al., 2021). In particular, I use three lags of population to proxy the level of latent organizational resources in each municipality. I also match municipalities by region to reduce region-specific time-variant characteristics[81]. After the matching refinement, the DiD can estimate the ATT even if the treatment assignment is confounded by some unobserved time-variant characteristic that also affects the outcome, given that the parallel trends assumption holds conditional on the matching covariates (Imai et al., 2021, pp. 10–11).

Figure 15 displays the standardized difference in electoral participation trends between the treated and control group for each time point before (above) and after (below) the matching

correction. The control group average is centred to the mean, such that the flatter the treated-group curve is, the more likely the (conditional) parallel trends assumption holds. The plot suggests that the matching correction substantially improves the plausibility of the parallel trends. After matching municipalities by their population, the average ratio of change in electoral turnout between elections evolves in parallel between the control and treated group. Furthermore, the plot suggests that new party entry increased participation in the 2015 elections. The following section provides a formal test of this hypothesis.

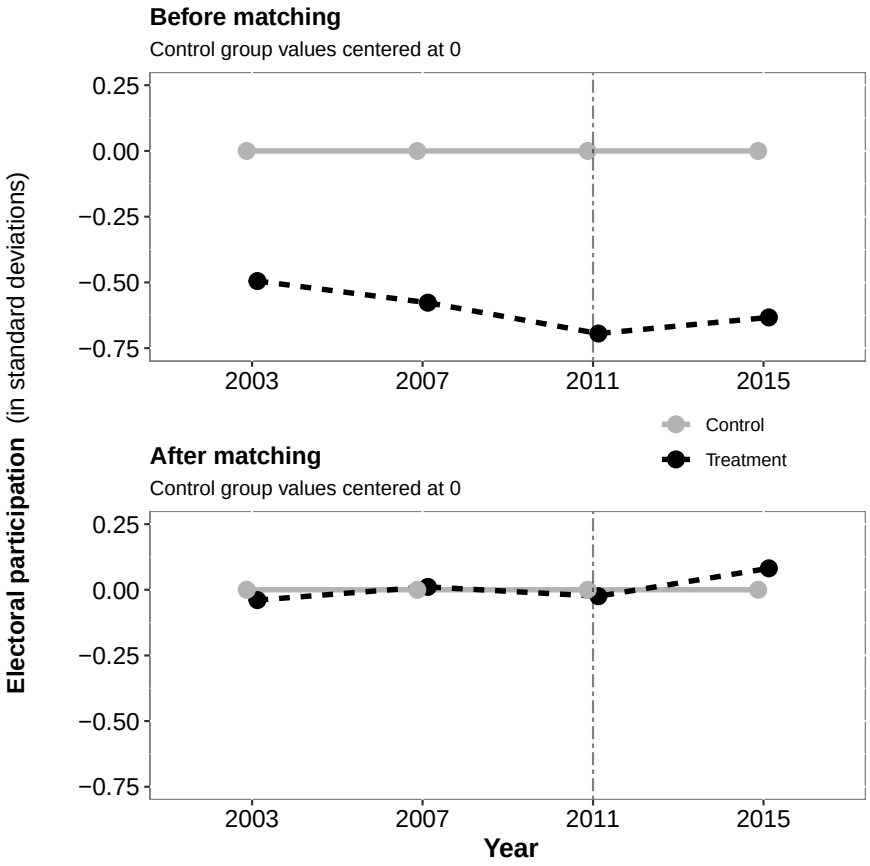


Figure 15: Standardized pre- and post-matching electoral participation trends

## 5.5. Results

### 5.5.1. Main results

After the matching correction, the difference-in-differences is estimated by assigning weights to each municipality so that only the matched units are compared [82]. The standard errors are calculated with 1000 bootstraps for a 95% confidence level. The results are displayed in table 6. They show that those municipalities in which at least one new party presented a

candidature in 2015 experienced an average increase close to 0.8% higher electoral turnout than those other municipalities in which neither a *Podemos*' brand nor *Ciudadanos* competed. Notably, there are no significant differences between control and treated units before the treatment, reinforcing the causal claim that any difference in 2015 is due to the presence of new parties. Surprisingly, this difference persists almost entirely in the 2019 elections. It could be the case that, once engaged in 2015, these voters continued to attend the polls as a habit, as previously suggested in the literature (Fujiwara et al., 2016). However, this interpretation requests caution, given that the lead effects are not causally identified.

Table 6: PM Estimates of Average Treatment Effect on the Treated (ATT) by Period

| Time-period | Estimate | Std. Error | Lower CI | Upper CI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| At least one new party t-3 | -0.11 | 0.27 | -0.64 | 0.44 |
| At least one new party t-2 | 0.26 | 0.26 | -0.26 | 0.77 |
| At least one new party t-1 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| **At least one new party t+0** | **0.78** | **0.28** | **0.22** | **1.31** |
| At least one new party t+1 | 0.84 | 0.37 | 0.13 | 1.50 |

*Note:*
Weighted Difference-in-Differences with Propensity Score. Matches created with 3 lags. Standard errors computed with 1000 Weighted bootstrap samples.

Figure 16 displays the coefficients graphically[83]. The 2011 elections are set as the baseline, while the 2007 and 2003 elections work as placebo tests. The effect is statistically significant both in 2015 and 2019, despite decreasing. In contrast, neither the 2007 nor the 2003 elections are associated with a significant coefficient. However, is this effect substantively significant? Although a 0.8% increase in electoral turnout might seem small, I argue that it is substantially relevant for at least two reasons. First, it goes in line with previous findings in the literature. Second, it is substantially larger than other local-level factors that explain electoral turnout in Spain.

Heath and Ziegfeld (2018) find that new party entry is associated with an average 0.7% increase in electoral turnout at the Indian parliamentary elections. This effect is similar to the effect of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* in Spain. On the one hand, this is remarkable because their study potentially conflates the effect of some confounders, and their setting focuses on first-order elections, which are considered more salient. On the other hand, *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* had already proven their viability in the 2014 EP elections, limiting the cases' comparability. Given these similarities and differences, the presence of new parties' candidate lists in the 2015 Spanish local elections seemed to have affected turnout at least to the same

degree that in other comparable settings.

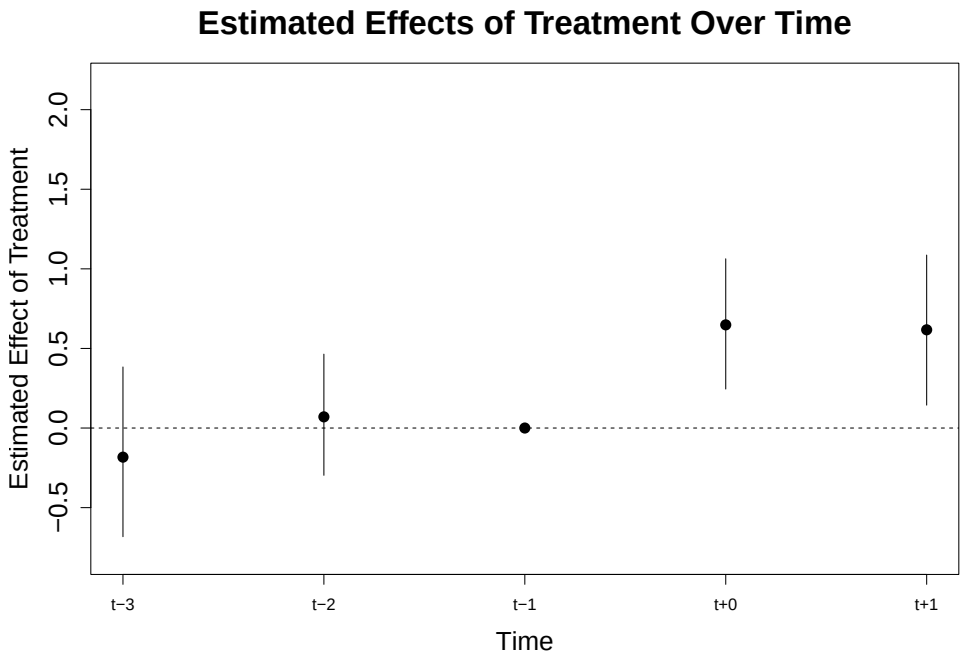


Figure 16: PM Treatment vs. Placebo Effects

Furthermore, the effect size is not negligible compared to other local-level factors influencing turnout in Spain. For example, Artés (2014) analyze the effect of rainfall and unemployment variation at the local level on turnout at the Spanish general elections between 1986 and 2011. While both factors significantly impact turnout, only the effect provoked by a 20% increase in unemployment could be comparable to having a new candidature by *Podemos* or *Ciudadanos* in the 2015 local elections. Moreover, assuming that most of the increase provoked by new party entry in 2015 had benefited *Ciudadanos* and *Podemos* themselves[84], such an effect would have been decisive for their success. Hence, the mobilization brought by new parties might even crucially modify the results of an election.

### 5.5.2. Additional analyses

To check for the robustness of the results, I replicate the analysis with three sample subsets. Each compares municipalities without new parties with municipalities with candidate lists from only *Ciudadanos*, only *Podemos* or only both of them, respectively. Pooling municipalities with candidate lists from at least one of the new parties together has the advantage of increasing the balance between the number of treated and untreated observations, as well

as the number of total observations. However, it may masks potential heterogeneity and misguide the interpretation of the results.

Therefore, I applied the same matching correction for each subset of the sample. Figure 64 in the appendix replicates figure 15 for each group. It shows a substantial increase in the probability that the parallel trends assumption holds after the matching correction in every case. However, decreasing the number of observations in the treatment group increases the variation between time-periods, suggesting that the DiD estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Thereafter, I estimate the same weighted DiD model for each subset. Figure 17 summarizes the results[85]. The main finding is that, in every case, the municipalities in which at least one new party competed experienced a higher average participation rate in 2015. Moreover, the pre-treatment placebos are not statistically significant in any case, implying that the main findings are robust and that there is no substantial heterogeneity within treated municipalities that could explain the results. However, there are important differences between subsets.

First, municipalities where only *Ciudadanos* competed in 2015 display a substantially higher increase in turnout in 2015 than those where only *Podemos* competed. The effect associated with *Ciudadanos* is close to a 1.2% average increase in electoral turnout, while the effect associated with *Podemos* is close to a 0.7% increase, almost a 0.5% difference. Moreover, both coefficients are statistically significant at a 99% confidence level despite the smaller number of observations, which suggests that the effect is robust, as well as the difference between them. There is no clear explanation for this gap. It may be that *Ciudadanos* provided a more distinct platform to engage with voters whose preferences would have been unattended otherwise. In contrast, the traditional radical left party IU could mobilize a proportion of the electorate that would have been mobilized by *Podemos* if present (Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020). An alternative explanation is that *Ciudadanos*, having an older organization, had more developed local structures where it competed, so its mobilization efforts were greater (Heath & Ziegfeld, 2018). In any case, the main conclusion is that a single new party suffices to boost electoral turnout in the municipalities where it competes.

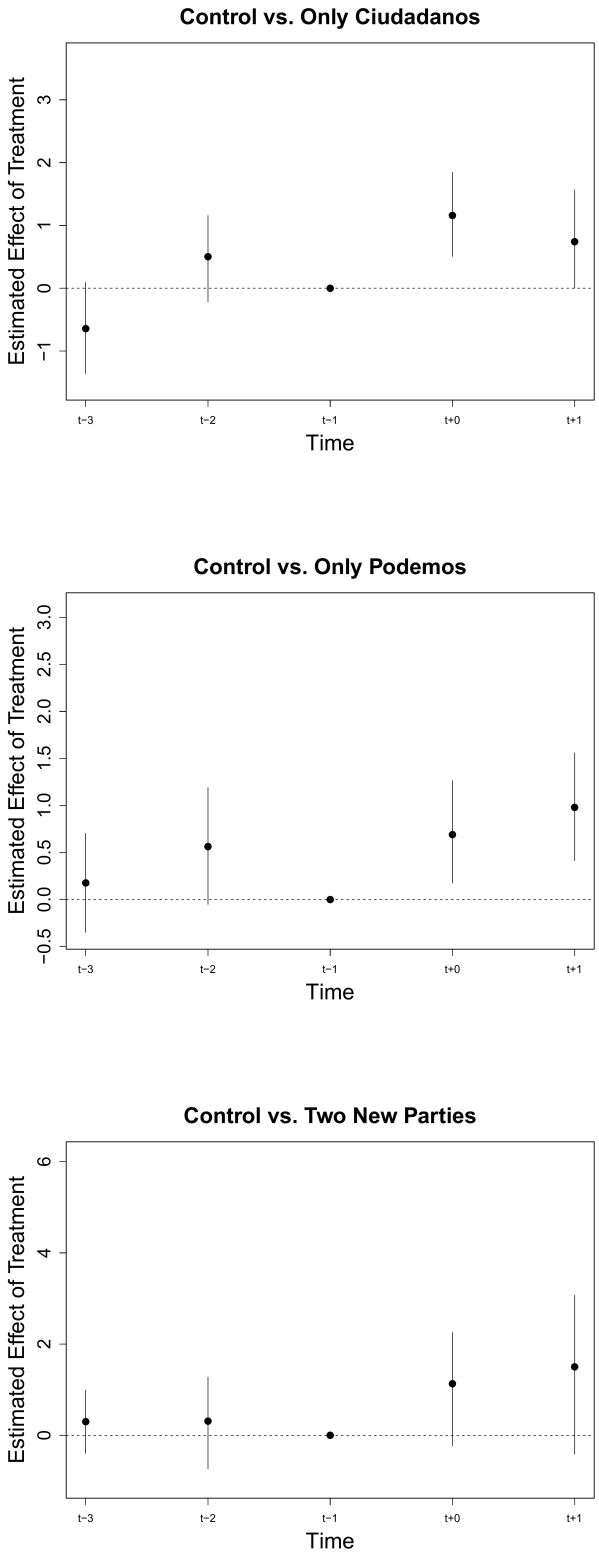


Figure 17: PM Treatment vs. Placebo Effects by Treatment Category

Second, the municipalities in which both new parties competed for display an average 1.1% increase in electoral turnout, similar to that of *Ciudadanos*. This is a relevant finding because it suggests that the presence of more than one new party is not cumulative. The effect is not driven by the accumulated mobilization efforts of *Ciudadanos* and *Podemos* and the increasing competitiveness around the political renewal issue (Vidal, 2018) did not bring more participation. Furthermore, the coefficient associated with the effect of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* combined does not reach the statistical significance threshold at any conventional level. This is probably due to the smaller size of the sample, which reduces the total number of observations and decreases the variation across treated municipalities. The municipalities where both new parties competed are also the most populated in the sample. Hence the control-group matched set may include municipalities with a large number of parties. An alternative explanation for the lack of significant effects is that the supply of those parties counteracted the lack of candidate lists from *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* (Grofman & Selb, 2011; Taagepera et al., 2014). The main conclusion, however, is that the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout is not cumulative.

Finally, an interesting pattern emerges from the analysis of the different subsets. In all cases, the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout lasts until the next election. In the case of *Podemos*, the coefficient is even larger in the 2019 elections. Again, we must be cautious about interpreting this coefficient as a causal effect because it is not identified. However, it reinforces the claim that, once engaged, new party voters keep their commitment to the democratic process.

As a final robustness check, I also run a series of sensitivity tests for the matching correction. In particular, I replicated the analyses for each subset while modifying the size ($s$) of the matched set ($m$) at different levels of $m_s$. A series of figures in appendix D5 confirms that none of the coefficients varies significantly and that the lagged placebos remain not statistically significant across specifications.

## 5.6. Conclusion

Does new party entry increase electoral turnout? Based on the evidence presented in this paper, the answer is yes. This study has leveraged a unique setting with quasi-exogenous variation in the presence of new parties' candidate lists to provide a causal estimate of the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout close to a 0.8% increase. It has applied a novel identification strategy combining matching techniques with a difference-in-differences design (Imai et al., 2021) to rule out self-selection bias and endogeneity concerns. The results suggest that the presence of candidate lists from only one new party is enough to boost

electoral turnout, and the effect of having more than one new party is not cumulative.

The 2015 Spanish local elections are a relevant case that can be generalizable beyond the Spanish context for at least two reasons. First, the rise of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* cannot be understood in isolation. It has been part of a larger transformational wave that has affected most Western European party systems since 2008. Both the context preceding the emergence of these parties and their political strategies are similar to those of other new parties in neighbouring countries, such as the Five Star Movement in Italy or even Alternative for Germany (AfD), with which they share an anti-elitism component. Most notably, the estimated effect of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos*' entry on electoral turnout may even be conservative compared to other cases. Neither *Podemos* nor *Ciudadanos* occupied a genuinely empty space. IU had an ideological platform similar to *Podemos* before 2015, as well as *Unión Progreso y Democracia* (UPyD) compared to *Ciudadanos*. In cases where the new party provided a truly original platform, such as *AfD* in Germany, we might expect an even larger mobilization effect.

The relevance of the findings notwithstanding, this study has some limitations. First, the case of *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* is distinct from some other new parties because they had already proven their viability in the 2014 EP election. Therefore, the results should not be extrapolated to new parties that have not yet signalled their credibility as potential competitors. Second, the mechanism at work remains unexplored due to data availability constraints. Further studies should replicate the findings in different settings combining a causal approach with fine-grained individual-level data to provide evidence on the underlying mechanisms. Despite these limitations, the paper's main contribution remains to have provided factual evidence on the causal effect of new party entry on electoral turnout.

Overall, this paper contributes to the literature on the relationship between the number of parties and electoral turnout (Grofman & Selb, 2011; Heath & Ziegfeld, 2018; Hobolt & Hoerner, 2020; Taagepera et al., 2014). It has disentangled the reverse causality problem between new party entry and (potential for) electoral mobilization by identifying the effect of adding one more new party candidature on electoral turnout. Similarly, it contributes to the literature on new party success by demonstrating that new party entry precedes increases in turnout, at least partially. Thus, naively using turnout changes as an explanatory variable of new party success (e.g., Lago & Martínez, 2011; Tavits, 2006, 2008) should be avoided. More generally, the findings add to the growing literature on the effect of party entry on changes in political attitudes and behaviour (Bischof & Wagner, 2019; Canalejo-Molero, 2022; Valentim, 2021). Specifically, from a normative perspective, it shows that the entry of new parties may contribute to the political engagement of disillusioned citizens who would have otherwise

abstained from participating in the democratic process.

# Chapter 6. Conclusion

Does the entry of new political parties foster political engagement? This dissertation advances the argument that the relationship between new party entry and political engagement is nuanced, depending on the specific form of engagement and the electoral context. In light of the evidence presented here, my contention is that new party entry promotes electoral participation, but its effect on evaluations of democracy varies according to the underlying level of affective polarization and the party's degree of success. While the net effect of new party entry on satisfaction with democracy (SWD) is positive, it can trigger a negative reaction among anti-establishment voters that permeates their evaluations of the system. These arguments are supported by evidence from a series of experimental, quasi-experimental and observational studies, combining insights from quantitative and qualitative data into four empirical chapters. The findings help clarify the conflicting patterns of party system renovation and pervasive political dissatisfaction found in Western democracies. Although claims for political renewal have been followed by substantial electoral change, the success of radical platforms may have fueled political discontent by drawing the attention of their voters to the victory of their opponents.

In chapter 2, I exploited post-electoral survey data from more than seventy elections with a regression discontinuity design to provide evidence that obtaining parliamentary representation has a minimal but positive net effect on SWD. However, the effect is negative and substantially large for voters of radical parties. The chapter proposes an original explanation for this finding. While the entry of radical parties into parliament may be perceived as positive, it may also unintendedly raise the salience of the electoral outcomes, including the victory of the establishment parties, which could trigger a backlash on SWD. Using panel data from the 2017 German Federal elections, the analyses confirm that voters of the new radical party AfD became less satisfied with democracy after the election despite obtaining representation in the *Bundestag*. However, the negative change is driven by voters with strong anti-establishment attitudes, which provides suggestive evidence supporting the argument.

Chapter 3 focused on elections in which challenger parties obtain massive electoral gains. It coins the term disruptive elections to refer to these cases, operationalize the concept and map all the disruptive elections in Western Europe between 1945 and 2021. It then proposes that these elections have implications for SWD. Unless the main challenger party becomes the indisputable winner, disruptive elections produce uncertainty about the government formation process, hindering changes in SWD among challenger and mainstream party voters. Using panel data from five national elections in Western Europe, the analyses provide supportive

evidence for the argument. More broadly, the findings suggest that challenger party voters do not become more satisfied with democracy after elections unless entering the government and despite unequivocal electoral success.

Chapter 4 provided evidence about the mechanisms behind the negative effect of radical party entry on SWD. It builds on the explanation proposed in chapter 2 and extends it by combining insights from the literature on the winner-loser gap in SWD and on affective polarization. It argues that introducing an out-group logic is crucial to understanding changes in SWD among affectively polarized voters, such as those of radical parties. When facing a defeat, a negative affective response to the out-group win will outweigh the positive impact of the relative in-group success, resulting in a net negative effect of elections in SWD. To provide evidence for this argument, it presented the results of an original survey experiment run among voters of the new radical right candidate Éric Zemmour immediately after the first round of the 2022 French presidential elections. The experiment primed Zemmour supporters with the relative success of their party or the likelihood of Macron's win. Then, it asked the participants about their evaluations of the system and feelings toward the competing candidates, as well as to express their feelings about the election results in an open manner. Combining quantitative and qualitative analyses, the findings support the argument that the victory of the establishment candidate has a stronger negative effect on SWD than the relative success of their own candidate. Furthermore, they suggest a link between a negative affective response to the election results and their evaluations of the system, whose procedural fairness is questioned. Together with chapters 2 and 3, the results suggest that the institutional inclusion of new parties may have limited effects on SWD, and that radical party entry may only reinforce democratic dissatisfaction in highly polarized environments.

Finally, chapter 5 shifted the focus from democratic attitudes to the behavioral manifestations of political engagement. It builds on the literature on the number of parties and electoral turnout to suggest that new party entry should foster electoral participation by providing new means of representation. The paper focuses on the case of the 2015 Spanish local elections, in which the two new parties *Podemos* and *Ciudadanos* competed for the first time. It leveraged variation in the availability of new parties' candidate lists to identify the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout. Combining a difference-in-differences approach with matching techniques, it provides evidence that new party entry increases electoral participation. Thus, although parties may compete strategically where they anticipate higher turnout increases, their electoral availability also encourages participation. Therefore, the entry of new political parties can have heterogeneous consequences for political engagement. Its impact on democratic attitudes may be negligible or even negative. However, it could

also promote participation and other forms of political involvement.

This dissertation makes a contribution in three fronts. First, the findings add to the accumulated evidence that different forms of political engagement do not go hand-in-hand (Ezrow & Xezonakis, 2016; Norris, 1999, 2011). In the case of new parties, this nuance has important implications because normative accounts of the effects of new parties on democratic quality have tended to express the potential outcome of new party entry as a dichotomous variable. Specifically, the literature on populism has formulated the question of whether new political parties have any effect on democratic engagement as a false dilemma in which new parties correct or threaten liberal democracy (Kaltwasser, 2012; Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2012). Instead, this dissertation stresses the importance of distinguishing behavioral from attitudinal expressions of engagement. New political parties, including populists, may promote electoral participation and other forms of political involvement and at the same time reinforce patterns of democratic dissatisfaction.

Second, chapters 2, 3 and 4 makes a contribution to the literature on the effect of elections on evaluations of democracy (e.g., Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Anderson & Tverdova, 2001; Blais et al., 2017; Martini & Quaranta, 2019; Singh et al., 2012) by shifting the focus from winning to a more flexible conception of electoral success, ranging from obtaining parliamentary representation (ch. 2) to major vote share increases (ch. 3 and 4). Following this flexible operationalization of new party entry, the evidence points to two major findings. First, the positive effect of new party entry on SWD is minimal. Voters of new parties do not seem to reward the democratic system for providing them with institutional representation, even on a large scale. In contrast to entering government (Cohen et al., 2022; Fahey et al., 2022; Haugsgjerd, 2019), new party voters do not recognize the valuable implications of having a voice in parliament or at least do not reflect them in their evaluations of the system. Thus, the cognitive link between evaluations of democracy and of the electoral results works through majoritarian lenses (G. B. Powell, 2000), even in parliamentary democracies with consensual rules (Lijphart, 2012).

Second, voters' evaluations of democracy in view of the election outcomes do not only reflect the perceptions of their own party results. Especially in environments of high affective polarization (Iyengar et al., 2012; Reiljan, 2020; Wagner, 2021), voters take into consideration the results of the out-group party at least as much as the in-group. Therefore, this dissertation stresses the need to reflect on our conceptual approach to the effect of elections on voter-level outcomes -SWD and beyond. When 'hating the other' is as informative about voters' attitudes and behaviour 'as liking the own', elections cannot be solely interpreted as signals about the in-group (e.g., Valentim, 2021). Instead, switching the focus to what the results

of the out-group says about society opens new venues for future research.

The third contribution of this thesis is methodological. Specifically, chapter 4 introduces a novel approach to identifying the effect of new party entry on electoral turnout, providing causal evidence to the long-debated question of whether the number of parties affects electoral participation (Adams et al., 2006; Downs, 1957; Grofman & Selb, 2011; Taagepera et al., 2014). The other three chapters also contribute to this matter. They make advance over previous research on the winner-loser gap in SWD by combining the traditional panel data approach with novel experimental, quasi-experimental and qualitative designs to provide a more fine-grained account of the consequences of electoral outcomes on democratic evaluations. More broadly, they show how combining different methods with extensive implication analysis (Lieberson & Horwich, 2008) can be exploited to triangulate seemingly conflicting findings and advance our knowledge in a sometimes methodologically corseted field.

That being said, this dissertation bears certain limitations that can be grouped into three categories. First, the conclusions rest upon the combination of different findings with unequal external and internal validity. Although this dissertation makes a significant effort to combine various designs for compensating the caveats of one another, the degree to which their findings can be interpreted together rests upon the assumption that they deal with cases from the same population. Therefore, we must be cautious with generalizing the results from each individual study to the other. For example, this limitation must be acknowledged when drawing conclusions from the experimental design in chapter 4 to explain the whole range of cases analyzed in chapter 2. To better define the scope conditions of the arguments, further research should aim to replicate the findings in new contexts and with different methods.

Second, by identifying the causal effect of new party entry on political engagement and proving the role of affective polarization, this dissertation leaves some heterogeneity unexplored. Specifically, further research may benefit from exploring the media's role in portraying the new parties' platforms and their impact (Van Spanje & Azrout, 2019). Similarly, given the importance of leaders in shaping the success of new parties (Dollbaum & Dollbaum, 2022), how new party leaders frame their electoral performance may help better understand the mechanisms. Finally, uncovering country and institutional-level differences in how new party entry shapes political engagement could be a successful strategy to refine the argument and the scope of its implications.

Finally, the conclusions are constrained by the short-term time frame of the causal relationships identified in the empirical chapters. For most of it, this thesis looks at the immediate effect of elections on attitudinal outcomes (ch. 2, 3 and 4) or of party availability on elections

(ch. 5). This leaves an open space for exploring how the party-voter dynamics evolving after the election may crystallize or countervail the effects triggered by the electoral outcomes. It may be the case that once new parties enter institutions cooperate with the establishment parties or initiate a dynamic of increasing polarization and conflict (De Giorgi et al., 2021). Relatedly, they may use their position in parliament to secure advances in policy outcomes that benefit their constituency or at least voice their disagreement with the existing policies. Alternatively, they might just exploit it to amplify some emotional rhetoric emptied of substantial policy content (Valentim & Widmann, 2021). Moreover, how these different paths may affect voters is probably conditional on the degree to which voters remain engaged with the political process, which is also to be explored. Further research would benefit from linking questions about these processes with the initial conditions in which new parties enter the system.

Despite these limitations, this dissertation poses important implications. Although it provides evidence that new political parties can promote political participation, the findings point to a pessimistic overview of their role in political engagement. First, they show a major mismatch between the inspiring principles of consensual democratic institutions, such as the parliament and proportional electoral rules, and voters' prevailing interpretation of the electoral outcomes through majoritarian lenses. Second, they point to the overlooked role that affective polarization plays in moderating the impact of new parties' success on their voters' evaluations of democracy. From a normative standpoint, the findings challenge the assumption that voters care about representation, which is crucial for the self-reinforcement of the chain of responsiveness (G. B. Powell, 2004). Especially in contexts of high affective polarization, the role of new political parties in politicizing unattended issues may not result in increasing engagement and correcting democratic deficits. Instead, it may reinforce polarizing competition dynamics that threaten compliance with the democratic norms and support for liberal institutions (Graham & Svolik, 2020; Grossman et al., 2022; Simonovits et al., 2022). Therefore, this thesis urges us to promote modes of incorporating new political demands while fostering consensual dynamics and the adherence of voters to the democratic game. In the end, voters must realize the intrinsic value of representation together with its limitations. They must learn to tolerate the opponent, accepting policy trade-offs and eventually losing (Anderson et al., 2005).

The policies that can better address the abovementioned challenges are not immediately clear. One promising avenue may be promoting modes of deliberative democracy. Deliberation has been shown to reduce partisan animosity and can be used to raise new demands and reach policy agreements between conflicting positions (Fishkin et al., 2021; Niemeyer et

al., 2023). Promoting the implementation of deliberative discussion platforms as a response to the increasing impact of new parties may not be an antidote to the underlying circumstances that led to their entry. Yet, it may help to reduce its adverse effects on political engagement. Similarly, reinforcing civic education might not directly address the issue of introducing new political demands while reducing partisan animosity. However, it may help new party voters to build more realistic expectations about democracy and its institutions (E. Finkel et al., 2021), thus increasing the congruence between their views of democracy and the inspiring principles of representative institutions. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of these policies in addressing the negative consequences of new party entry for political engagement needs further assessment.

In summary, this dissertation has made the first comprehensive attempt to understand how the entry of new political parties affects political engagement. It has shown that new party entry can promote political participation while increasing democratic dissatisfaction, especially in affectively polarized contexts. In doing so, it has pointed to new research venues and suggested potential policies to tackle the negative effects of new party entry on democratic satisfaction. Although much research is still needed, especially for the latter, paving the way to understanding the relationship between the increasing impact of new parties and persistent disengagement in Western democracies will hopefully help address some of its most pressing challenges. At the very least, I hope this dissertation provides guidance on why the *"No nos representan"* claim remains a crucial issue despite profound transformations of the Western electoral landscape.

# Notes

[1]The exception is *Ciudadanos*, which existed only as a regional political party operating mostly in Catalonia.

[2]The date refers to March 2023.

[3]The terms 'paper' and 'chapter' will be used interchangeably along the text in reference to the empirical chapters (chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5).

[4]For example, the left radical parties *Syriza* (Greek) and *Podemos* (Spanish) have been often compared, since both parties managed to gain support among politically discontent citizens after the Great Recession. Both of them achieved impressive gains and *entered* the electoral competition as viable competitors for the executive power. However, while *Podemos* was a truly new party by 2015, *Syriza* had competed in elections since 2006, although achieving only moderate electoral success.

[5]The ultimate threshold is entering the government.

[6]SWD is a common indicator included in numerous surveys and survey research. It has often raised critiques due to its ambiguous meaning and confusion with indicators of support for the core principles of democracy (Canache et al., 2001; Linde & Ekman, 2003). Despite attempts to overcome these limitations (e.g., Ferrín & Kriesi, 2016), it works as a good summary measure to capture citizens' evaluations of the functioning democracy in their countries (Ferrin, 2016). For this reason, it is still often used in comparative research. However, it should never be treated as an indicator of democratic legitimacy. Instead, it is fair to interpret it as "an instrumental or performance-based appraisal of the regime" (Claassen & Magalhães, 2021, p. 872) that captures a meso-level of support. It is diffuser than the assessment of political leaders or the government coalition but more specific than the core principles or values of the system (Norris, 2017, p. 23).

[7]The first assumption is that their party takes advantage of its parliamentary position to voice its anti-elite messages immediately after the election. Otherwise, the change would not be noticeable in post-electoral surveys. Second, even if this happened, a majority of these voters should hold high levels of SWD and political trust in the first place, which is highly unlikely given the accumulated evidence on the effect of democratic dissatisfaction on radical, populist and challenger parties (Bélanger & Nadeau, 2005; Engler, 2016; Hernández, 2018; Hernández & Kriesi, 2016; Hobolt & Tilley, 2016; Marcos-Marne et al., 2020; Otjes & Wardt, 2020). Otherwise, the change should be negligible given the presence of floor effects.

[8]The Ukrainian 1998 election is the only case meeting these criteria excluded from the sample. In this election, the average level of SWD across respondents of different parties is exceptionally low. Therefore, I excluded it to avoid influential data points to bias the results.

[9]Some of the countries included a different formulation of the response categories. Luckily, these countries had either presidential or non-proportional electoral systems (e.g., South Africa or Japan). Therefore, they were already excluded from the sample. In other cases, such as in the Netherlands, the question included a fifth response category for respondents that were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied'. Fortunately, these cases were rare. Yet, respondents that selected this category were excluded from the sample to allow the comparability. Under the assumption that these respondents were homogeneously distributed across parties outside and within the parliament, this should not introduce any bias in the estimation.

[10]The reported parametric estimates are those of the specification that includes a second-order polynomial,

as suggested by the lower Akaike Information Criteria (AIC) reported in appendix A1.6 (Lee & Lemieux, 2010, p. 326).

[11]The plot includes 40 bins for a range of −5 to 5 in electoral performance, which are wide enough to reduce potential noise but narrow enough to permit the comparison, as suggested by Lee and Lemieux (2010, pp. 308–309).

[12]The coefficients of the specifications that do not include country fixed-effects are plotted in appendix A1.4.

[13]This subset includes the voters of all the parties categorized as radical parties by Valentim (2021). Although my sample includes more countries than his sample, none of the additional countries had any radical party competing according to the same sources. These sources are primarily March (2012), Mudde (2007) and Norris (2005). The parties included in the subset are listed in table 8 in the appendix. For more information on the coding scheme, see the supplementary materials of Valentim (2021) at https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/suppl/10.1177/0010414021997159/suppl_file/sj-pdf-1-cps-10.1177_0010414021997159.pdf

[14]This subset includes the voters of all the parties not categorized as radical parties.

[15]The RD plot in appendix A1.4 suggests a sharp positive jump in SWD at the threshold. However, it also shows strong non-linearities at both sides of the threshold and important country-level variation. The coefficient plot in the same appendix confirms this intuition. The coefficients are positive and substantially large but not statistically significant before including the fixed effects. After the country-level variation is accounted for in the model, the coefficients become negative and significant in most specifications.

[16]Unlike the government, once a party enters parliament, it is more likely to stay in parliament at the subsequent election (Dinas et al., 2015). Therefore, voters of parties used to parliamentary representation may consider their party entry only as a confirmation of their previous status and not experience attitudinal change.

[17]This subset includes the voters of all the parties that, according to national official electoral records, had no representation in the previous term, regardless of their previous performance. For data collection reasons, the sample is trimmed to include only those parties that, at the current election, obtained between −6 and 6 per cent of the vote share below or above the threshold, respectively. The parties included in the subset are listed in table 9 in the appendix.

[18]The RD plot in appendix A1.4 suggests a pronounced negative jump at the threshold. However, the average SWD levels immediately soar more than 0.5 points to return to its baseline and eventually stabilize at a level similar to the left side average within a bandwidth of only 5% of the vote share. This heterogeneity is reflected in the coefficients plot, which shows that most estimates are close to an average null effect with large confidence intervals. Only the conventional and bias-corrected estimators report a significant and substantially large negative effect after including fixed-effects. However, as explained by Gelman (2011), the tiny confidence intervals suggest that the estimates are flawed due to the poor fit of the data. This intuition is confirmed by the large confidence intervals reported with the robust method. Henceforward, parliamentary representation does not seem to affect SWD among voters of parties without previous representation either.

[19]The only way in which being above the threshold could reasonably affect SWD is through parliamentary representation. Disconfirming this assumption would require that the any factor that could systematically

modify the marginal votes share required to be above or below the threshold also had an independent effect on SWD.

[20]Neither differences in gender nor in household incomes between parties around the threshold are statistically significant. The only statistically significant difference is age, but it is substantially small ($= -1.927$) and does not change the results when included in the RD specifications as a control variable.

[21]The replication model includes country fixed-effects in all the specifications.

[22]The average timespan between the pre and post-electoral interview is 40.7 days ($SD = 2.52$).

[23]The second factor captures attitudes about direct democracy mechanism. The third factor captures attitudes about people's homegeneity and good will. The details about the factor analysis can be found in the appendix [A2.2][Building an 'anti-establishment attitudes' index with factor analysis].

[24]See the documentation at GLES (2019).

[25]The control variables are grouped in three clusters: socio-demographic, economic-attitudinal and political-attitudinal. The variables included in the first cluster are gender, age, age squared, education level, occupational status, household income and urban-rural habitat. The second cluster includes egotropic and sociotropic evaluations of the economy. The third cluster includes political interest, party identification, left-right self-positioning and left-right self-positioning squared. The specification with control variables displayed in figure 3 includes the variables from all the clusters together. A series of tables in appendix A2.4 replicates each specification, dropping one cluster at a time, but none of the results changes substantially.

[26]All the specifications include post-electoral weights calculated by the data provider.

[27]In this case, for example, SPD voters are categorized as voters of parties with representation because they did not obtain the majority of seats. However, the constitute the larger group in the category and its party became an eventual coalition partner.

[28]See table 19 in the appendix.

[29]See figure 29 in the appendix.

[30]The main visible pattern is that the 2SLS coefficients report larger confidence intervals, which may be due to the larger number of missing observations after including only those respondents that answered to the vote choice question in both waves.

[31]The figure plots the estimates from the specifications with the full set of control variables. The regression outputs are displayed in the appendix A2.4.

[32]Figure 28 the appendix displays three stacked bar plots with the distribution of electoral expectations, the subjective perception of electoral winners and losers and satisfaction with the electoral results across parties.

[33]The 'populist attitudes index' is a summative index of the response to the question "to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements (1) Politicians talk too much and take too little action", "(2) ordinary people are of good and honest character", "(3) differences between the elite and the people are larger than the differences among the people" and "(4) the politicians in Parliament need to follow the will of the people.". The 'anti-political parties attitudes index' is also a summative index of the response to the

question "to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements (1) the parties are only interested in people's votes, not in what voters think", "(2) the parties' only concern is their power", "(3) the parties take too much influence in the society" and "(4) The parties consider the state to be a self-service store.". Finally, the 'external efficacy index' is a summative index of the response to the question "to what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements (1) politicians care about what ordinary people think" and "(2) politicians try to get in close contact with the population". All of the indexes are divided by the number of questions so that they range from 1 to 5.

[34]The 1987 election was the last one before the major corruption case *Tangentopoli* initiated the disruption.

[35]The 1973 Danish election is often referred to as the *landslide election* by Danish political scientists, who claim its transformative nature (Kosiara-Pedersen, 2020; e.g., Rusk & Borre, 1974). Although to a lesser extent, the 1985 Portuguese elections have also received special attention due to its deviation from previous competition patterns too (e.g., Gallagher, 1986). Finally, the 2012 Greek, 2015 Spanish and 2017 French elections are considered as transformative or critical by the scholarly literature too (e.g., Hutter & Kriesi, 2019).

[36]Some studies attempt to overcome the limitations of these concepts with reformulations that relax their original assumptions. For example, Hutter and Kriesi (Kriesi & Hutter, 2019) speak of a two-step critical election. Instead of a single transformative election, the re-alignment would be preceded by an important shift to the main opposition party. Only afterwards, voters would massively shift to new challenger parties. However, they do not recognize that re-alignment may be transitory, which still hampers the validity of the classification. To the best of my knowledge, only Chiaramonte and Emanuele (2017) differentiate between extraordinary volatile elections that lead to a more durable re-alignment or instability.

[37]In addition, new parties, defined as parties outside the party system before a given election, are theoretically similar to challenger parties. Given a continuum that ranges from no programmatic linkages, performance and coalitional records at all, to very strong programmatic linkages, performance and coalitional records, mainstream parties would score the highest score while new parties the lowest and challenger parties somewhere in between. However, while not all the challenger parties are new, by definition, all new parties are challenger parties too. Hence, the main difference between both concepts is that some challenger parties may have higher programmatic and past performance constraints that new parties.

[38]The data comes from the *Electoral volatility and its components in Western Europe from 1945 to 2021* dataset (Emanuele, 2015).

[39]It can be formalized as it follows: $RegVolatility_{t_0} > RegVolatility_{t_{-1}} \wedge RegVolatility_{t_0} > RegVolatility_{t_{-2}}$.

[40]It can be formalized as it follows: $RegVolatility_{t_0} > (1.5 * (med(RegVolatility) + sd(RegVolatility)))$.

[41]Finally, the use of the median instead of the mean diminishes the probability that high within-country variance disproportionally influences the calculation.

[42]The words in italics are not originally included in the text quoted.

[43]While the newcomer List of Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands 2002 meets the classic populist party criteria, the Pirate and the Bright Parties in Iceland 2013, as well as Macron's *La République en Marche!* do not match its exact definition (Mudde & Kaltwasser, 2017; Rooduijn et al., 2019). However, the two Icelandic

platforms raced against the mainstream anti-EU position held by the governing centre-right coalition, mobilizing dissatisfied voters (Önnudóttir et al., 2017). Similarly, Macron did not only race against the extreme parties on the left and the right, but also against the traditional centre-left and centre-right parties, presenting himself as a party more focused on competence than ideology, and benefiting from moderate voters with anti-establishment feelings (Durovic, 2019).

[44]The estimation of of electoral effects rests upon the assumption that attitudinal changes between the pre and post-electoral waves are only the result of the election, which is likely to hold given the small time lapse between the pre and post-electoral interviews. More specifically, the average timespan between the pre and post-electoral interviews ranges from 12.84 days (Ciupanel-Spain, $SD = 3.58$) to 30.73 days (DPES-The Netherlands, $SD = 11.82$). The italian data (ITANES) lacks information about the date of the interviews.

[45]The categories *mainstream loser* and *new challenger* depends on the 1% vote share criterion to maintain consistency with the Emanuele and Chiaramonte's classification (Chiaramonte & Emanuele, 2017). An additional advantage of this criterion is that parties that may not have participated in a government at the national level but have a long electoral records are categorized as mainstream losers instead of new challenger parties.

[46]The DPES was conducted over a random sample of the Dutch population stratified across 90 randomly selected Dutch municipalities via personal interviews. In contrast, the rest of the surveys were conducted online on respondents recruited from a convenient sample. CIUPANEL use quotas to guarantee the representativeness of the population on age, gender and region. DdM uses quotas on age, gender, nationality and education. The MAPLE project panel use quotas on gender, age and education. Finally, ITANES uses quotas on age, gender, education and region. Despite these differences, their respective documentation provides evidence that the resulting samples adjust to the general population on a series of observable socio-demographic characteristics.

[47]Political trust was initially conceived as a form of diffuse support, while SWD would be more specific (Easton, 1975). However, modern theoretical accounts which consider the distinction of specific and diffuse support as a continuum place political trust just behind SWD on the scale. They are both argued to capture messo-level forms of support, diffuser than the assessment of specific party leaders or governmental coalitions but more specific than of the core principles or values of the system (Norris, 2017, p. 23). ITANES contains one continuous measure of trust in parliament and another one of trust in political parties, both ranging from 0 to 10. Despite measuring a similar latent variable to SWD, the fact that they differ in the specific institutions under evaluation may carry some problems. Therefore, I checked if changes in political trust and satisfaction with democracy follow parallel trends. Using data from the cumulative dataset of the European Social Survey (ESS), which includes both questionnaire items on SWD and trust in political parties, I calculated the average for each country-year unit. Thereafter, I plotted the evolution of these values over time. The resulting plot displays parallel slopes with different intercepts for all Western European countries (see figure 32 in the appendix). These results support that changes in political trust and SWD are comparable. Therefore, I first collapsed both measures of trust into a single index of political trust (Cronbach alpha = 0.78). Thereafter, I subtracted the pre-electoral from the post-electoral value for each respondent. The outcome is a continuous variable ranging from -10 to 10, which measures the change in political trust after the election. Finally, to correct for the fact that changes in political trust and SWD are not perfectly correlated, I weighted the Italian values by the coefficient resulting from regressing changes in SWD on changes in political trust with aggregated data from the European Social Survey.

[48]DPES data posed an additional challenge since the pre-electoral scale of the measure ranges from 1 to 5 whereas the post-electoral scale ranges from 1 to 4. To correct for this, I added an intermediate category to the post-electoral variable in which I included all the respondents in the second and third categories who gave a conflictive answer to a survey item asking about "how well politicians reflect people's view". When a respondent said that he is fairly satisfied with the way democracy works, but he also thinks that politicians poorly reflect people's views, I put it into the intermediate category "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied". I did the same to respondents who showed a similar dissonance in the opposite direction. The resulting variable displays a distribution close to normal, which provides evidence to the reliability of the method (see figure 31 in the appendix).

[49]The control variables are grouped in three clusters: socio-demographic, economic-attitudinal and political-attitudinal. The variables included in the first cluster are gender, age, age squared, education level, occupational status, household income and urban-rural habitat. The second cluster includes egotropic and sociotropic evaluations of the economy. The third cluster includes political interest, party identification, left-right position and left-right position squared. In addition, the Dutch data includes a dummy variable indicating whether the respondent answered the pre-electoral questionnaire before or after the death of Pym Fortuyin (Dinas et al., 2016). In some cases, not all the variables are included in each cluster due data constraints. The specification with control variables displayed in figure 6 includes the variables from all the clusters together. A series of tables in appendix B2.4 replicates each specification, dropping one cluster at a time, but none of the results changes substantially.

[50]The specifications include socio-electoral (Netherlands), post-electoral (Spain and Italy), and stratification weights (Portugal and France). The weights were included already in the dataset, as calculated by the provider, except for the case of Italy and Spain, for which they were calculated adjusting for the vote share of each voting category using official electoral records.

[51]See appendices B2.5 and B2.6.

[52]The only statistically significant difference is that the winners display a positive and statistically significant average change in SWD after the Italian and Spanish elections. However, the estimate is significant at a 90% confidence level only after including the control variables. Therefore, the support for hypotheses 1a and 1c hold. However, the support for hypothesis 1b is less robust.

[53]Again, the figure includes two specifications for each case. The estimates are calculated using robust standard errors and survey weights. An additional specification displayed in appendix B2.5 estimates the coefficients by instrumenting self-reported vote choice in the post-electoral wave by self-reported vote intention in the pre-electoral wave.

[54]Table 43 in the appendix summarises the pre-registered and exploratory hypotheses.

[55]See the post-1st round speeches of both candidates (FRANCE 24, 2022; Marine Le Pen, 2022).

[56]Table 44 in the appendix displays the details on our micro-targeting strategy.

[57]These groups correspond to the three experiment blocks: self-reported Zemmour supporters, self-reported Le Pen supporters, and self-reported supporters of any other party or abstainers.

[58]These groups correspond to the three experiment blocks: self-reported Zemmour supporters, self-reported Le Pen supporters, and self-reported supporters of any other party or abstainers.

[59]The pre-analysis plan of the experiment is registered in EGAP through OSF and available at https://osf.io/a4fby. As mentioned in the endnote 1, the study deviates slightly from the pre-analysis plan by incorporating three exploratory hypotheses.

[60]All the vignettes are displayed in table 45 in the appendix.

[61]This novel approach led to a large attrition of participants in the second wave. We asked respondents to share their email to complete a second questionnaire. We informed them that only those respondents that completed both questionnaires would participate in the lottery of a 200€ Amazon voucher both to encourage active engagement and minimize attrition. Despite this strategy, only 370 out of the 1199 first wave participants completed the second wave and participated in the experiment.

[62]See the like-dislike distribution of the other two blocks in appendix C2.2.

[63]Following the treatment vignettes, we also included a question to ensure that differences in our dependent variables were not due to text-comprehension differences. After the dependent variables, we also included a question measuring the perceived success of each party as a manipulation check. The text comprehension check shows that most respondents found it easy to understand the vignettes, and there are no significant differences in their difficulty. However, the question aimed to capture the perceived success of each party fails to show any significant changes across treatment conditions. The manipulation check failure is likely due to the wrong formulation of the question, which asks what parties are considered to be part of the winners and the losers instead of straightforwardly asking about the perceived success of each party. As a result, the formulation captures relative success, which is hard to assess given the uncertainty about the respondents' benchmark when answering the question. See appendix C1.5 for the exact wording of these questions and appendix C4.3 for their analysis.

[64]We include age, gender, latest level of education achieved and income.

[65]The whole range of specifications are plotted in appendix C4.6.

[66]Appendix C5 displays a description of the pilot study and a plot of the estimated ATE on the pilot study sample.

[67]Appendix C4.2 plots the covariate balance between blocks and treatment groups.

[68]See the like-dislike distribution of the other two blocks in appendix C2.2.

[69]For more information on the qualitative codebook schema, see appendix C30.

[70]Selected quotes always show the full answer. The authors' translation from French was assisted by the DeepL software.

[71]See appendix C3.

[72]*Ciudadanos* already had representation in some Catalan municipalities and in the Catalan parliament.

[73]See Pablo Iglesias discourse after the EP elections (*Iglesias Dice Que Podemos Estaría Listo Para Gobernar Tras Las Elecciones Generales* (2014)).

[74]Some examples are *Ahora* (Now), *En Común* (In Common), or *Ganemos* (Let's Win), next to the name of the specific locality

[75]Municipalities with less than 251 inhabitants follow different electoral rules.

[76]The root of the Catalan translation of *Ciudadanos*.

[77]Originally, '*elecciones locales*', '*marca local*' and '*marcas blancas*'

[78]Figure 60 in the appendix graphically displays this distribution.

[79]The Canary Islands are not displayed on the map, but their municipalities are included in the dataset.

[80]A summary of descriptive statistics can be found in the table **??** in the appendix.

[81]Specifically, I use Propensity Score (PS) matching using three lags of the log population variable, taking the 2015 local elections as $t_0$, and the region.

[82]That is, for every treated unit, every matched unit in the control group is assigned a weight equal to 1, while non-matched units are excluded from the sample by weighting them by 0.

[83]The replication of this analysis before the matching correction is displayed in table **??** and figure 65 in the appendix.

[84]This is a strong assumption, since new party entry can also foster mobilization among old party voters.

[85]The output of the estimation is displayed in table 59 in the appendix. The results of the difference-in-differences estimator before the matching correction for each subset is displayed in figure 66 in the appendix.

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# Appendix A. Supplementary material for Chapter 2

## A1. Study 1

### A1.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 7: Summary of descriptive statistics

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| performance | 89,513 | 18.3 | 12.1 | −8.7 | 7.0 | 27.5 | 44.3 |
| parl | 89,513 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| swd | 85,808 | 2.6 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| year | 89,513 | 2,006.2 | 6.6 | 1,996 | 2,001 | 2,012 | 2,018 |
| age | 89,149 | 48.1 | 17.0 | 16.0 | 34.0 | 61.0 | 101.0 |
| female | 89,424 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| householdinc | 75,455 | 3.1 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| pol_weight_elec | 89,513 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 8 |

### A1.2. List of radical parties

Table 8: List of radical parties

| Party name | Radical left | Radical right | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Freedom Party of Austria | No | Yes | Austria | 2008 |
| Alliance for the Future of Austria | No | Yes | Austria | 2008 |
| Freedom Party of Austria | No | Yes | Austria | 2013 |
| Alliance for the Future of Austria | No | Yes | Austria | 2013 |
| Sebastian Kurz List | No | Yes | Austria | 2017 |
| Attack | No | Yes | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| BSP - Left Bulgaria - Coalition for Bulgaria | Yes | No | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Croatian Party of Rights | No | Yes | Croatia | 2007 |
| Association for the Republic | No | Yes | Czech Republic | 1996 |
| Miroslav Sladek's Republicans | No | Yes | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Communist Party Of The Czech Lands And Moravia | Yes | No | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia | Yes | No | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| National Party | No | Yes | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Socialist People's Party | Yes | No | Denmark | 1998 |
| Danish People's Party | No | Yes | Denmark | 1998 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Denmark | 1998 |
| United List | Yes | No | Denmark | 1998 |

Table 8: List of radical parties *(continued)*

| Party name | Radical left | Radical right | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Socialist People's Party | Yes | No | Denmark | 2001 |
| Danish People's Party | No | Yes | Denmark | 2001 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Denmark | 2001 |
| Red-Green Unity List | Yes | No | Denmark | 2001 |
| Socialist People's Party | Yes | No | Denmark | 2007 |
| Danish People's Party | No | Yes | Denmark | 2007 |
| United List - The Red-Greens | Yes | No | Denmark | 2007 |
| Republicans | No | Yes | Germany | 1998 |
| German People's Union | No | Yes | Germany | 1998 |
| Republicans | No | Yes | Germany | 2002 |
| Die Linke | Yes | No | Germany | 2005 |
| The Republicans | No | Yes | Germany | 2005 |
| National Democratic Party | No | Yes | Germany | 2005 |
| Die Linke | Yes | No | Germany | 2009 |
| National Democratic Party | No | Yes | Germany | 2009 |
| Left Party | Yes | No | Germany | 2013 |
| National Democratic Party of Germany | No | Yes | Germany | 2013 |
| Alternative for Germany | No | Yes | Germany | 2017 |
| Left Party | Yes | No | Germany | 2017 |
| Communist Party of Greece | Yes | No | Greece | 2009 |
| Popular Orthodox Rally | No | Yes | Greece | 2009 |
| SYRIZA | Yes | No | Greece | 2012 |
| The Independent Greeks | No | Yes | Greece | 2012 |
| Golden Dawn | No | Yes | Greece | 2012 |
| The Communist Party of Greece | Yes | No | Greece | 2012 |
| SYRIZA | Yes | No | Greece | 2015 |
| Syriza | Yes | No | Greece | 2015 |
| Communist Party of Greece | Yes | No | Greece | 2015 |
| Independent Greeks | No | Yes | Greece | 2015 |
| MIEP | No | Yes | Hungary | 1998 |
| Hungarian Worker's Party | Yes | No | Hungary | 1998 |
| Hungarian Justice And Life Party | No | Yes | Hungary | 2002 |
| Workers Party (Munkaspart) | Yes | No | Hungary | 2002 |
| NA | No | Yes | Hungary | 2018 |
| Likud | No | Yes | Israel | 1996 |
| MafDal | No | Yes | Israel | 1996 |
| Likud | No | Yes | Israel | 2003 |
| MafDal | No | Yes | Israel | 2003 |
| Likud | No | Yes | Israel | 2006 |
| Mafdal | No | Yes | Israel | 2006 |
| Likud | No | Yes | Israel | 2013 |
| National Alliance (Alleanza Nazionale-AN) | No | Yes | Italy | 2006 |
| Communist Refoundation Party | Yes | No | Italy | 2006 |
| Northern League (Lega Nord) | No | Yes | Italy | 2006 |

Table 8: List of radical parties *(continued)*

| Party name | Radical left | Radical right | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Party of Italian Communists | Yes | No | Italy | 2006 |
| League | No | Yes | Italy | 2018 |
| Brothers of Italy | No | Yes | Italy | 2018 |
| National Union All for Latvia | No | Yes | Latvia | 2010 |
| National Alliance All For Latvia! | No | Yes | Latvia | 2011 |
| National Alliance All For Latvia! | No | Yes | Latvia | 2014 |
| Centre Democrats | No | Yes | Netherlands | 1998 |
| List Pim Fortuyn | No | Yes | Netherlands | 2002 |
| Socialist Party | Yes | No | Netherlands | 2002 |
| Socialist Party (SP) | Yes | No | Netherlands | 2006 |
| Party for Freedom (PVV) | No | Yes | Netherlands | 2006 |
| Party for Freedom | No | Yes | Netherlands | 2010 |
| Socialist Party (SP) | Yes | No | Netherlands | 2010 |
| Socialist Left Party | Yes | No | Norway | 1997 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Norway | 1997 |
| Socialist Left Party | Yes | No | Norway | 2001 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Norway | 2001 |
| Socialist Left Party | Yes | No | Norway | 2005 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Norway | 2005 |
| Socialist Left Party | Yes | No | Norway | 2009 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Norway | 2009 |
| Progress Party | No | Yes | Norway | 2013 |
| Socialist Left Party | Yes | No | Norway | 2013 |
| Red Party | Yes | No | Norway | 2013 |
| Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland | No | Yes | Poland | 1997 |
| League of Polish Families | No | Yes | Poland | 2001 |
| League of Polish Families | No | Yes | Poland | 2005 |
| Self-Defence | Yes | No | Poland | 2005 |
| League of Polish Families | Yes | Yes | Poland | 2007 |
| Greater Romania Party | No | Yes | Romania | 1996 |
| Romanian Social Democratic Party | Yes | No | Romania | 1996 |
| Greater Romania Party | No | Yes | Romania | 2004 |
| Socialist Party of Serbia | Yes | No | Serbia | 2012 |
| Serbian Radical Party | No | Yes | Serbia | 2012 |
| Dveri for Life of Serbia | No | Yes | Serbia | 2012 |
| Communist Party Of Slovakia | Yes | No | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Slovak National Party | No | Yes | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Direction - Social Democracy | Yes | No | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Direction - Social Democracy | Yes | No | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Slovak National Party | No | Yes | Slovakia | 2016 |
| People's Party Our Slovakia | No | Yes | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Communist Party of Slovakia | Yes | No | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Slovenian National Party | No | Yes | Slovenia | 1996 |
| Slovenian National Party | No | Yes | Slovenia | 2004 |

Table 8: List of radical parties *(continued)*

| Party name | Radical left | Radical right | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Slovenian National Party | No | Yes | Slovenia | 2008 |
| Slovenian National Party | No | Yes | Slovenia | 2011 |
| Left Party | Yes | No | Sweden | 2006 |
| Sweden Democrats | No | Yes | Sweden | 2006 |
| Left Party | Yes | No | Sweden | 2014 |
| Sweden Democrats | No | Yes | Sweden | 2014 |

## A1.3. List of parties without representation in the last term

Table 9: List of parties not in parliament before

| Party name | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|
| Liberal Forum | Austria | 2008 |
| Dinkhauser list | Austria | 2008 |
| The New Austria | Austria | 2013 |
| Communist Party of Austria | Austria | 2013 |
| Team Stronach for Austria | Austria | 2013 |
| Movement 21 (Tatyana Doncheva's movement) | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Reformist Bloc | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Bulgaria without Censorship | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Alternative for Bulgarian Revival | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Patriotic Front | Bulgaria | 2014 |
| Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja | Croatia | 2007 |
| Left Bloc | Czech Republic | 1996 |
| Free Democrats | Czech Republic | 1996 |
| Civic Democratic Alliance | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Humanistic Alliance | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Hope | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Miroslav Sladek's Republicans | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Rural Party - Citizens Joint Strength | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Association of Independents (SN) | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Green Party (SZ) | Czech Republic | 2002 |
| Common Sense Party | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Balbin Poetic Party | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| SNK European Democrats (SNK ED) | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Right Bloc | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Czech National Socialistic Party | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Moravians | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Green Party (SZ) | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| National Party | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Folklore and Society | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Party of Equal Chances | Czech Republic | 2006 |
| Public Affairs | Czech Republic | 2010 |

Table 9: List of parties not in parliament before *(continued)*

| Party name | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|
| Public Affairs | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| National Prosperity | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Party of Citizen Rights-Zemanites | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Right Bloc | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Sovereignty | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Czech Pirate Party | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Worker's Party of the Social Justice | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| The Free (Party of free citizens) | Czech Republic | 2010 |
| Dawn of Direct Democracy of Tomio Okamura | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Christian and Democratic Union-Czech People's Party | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Party of Greens | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Czech Pirate Party | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Party of Free Citizens | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Political Change Movement | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Party of Civic Rights - Zeman's people | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Workers' Party of Social Justice | Czech Republic | 2013 |
| Danish People's Party | Denmark | 1998 |
| Christian People's Party | Denmark | 1998 |
| Democratic Reform | Denmark | 1998 |
| Christian Democrats | Denmark | 2007 |
| New Alliance | Denmark | 2007 |
| Russian Party in Estonia | Estonia | 2011 |
| Estonian Christian Democrats | Estonia | 2011 |
| Republicans | Germany | 1998 |
| German People's Union | Germany | 1998 |
| Republicans | Germany | 2002 |
| Schill-Partei | Germany | 2002 |
| The Republicans | Germany | 2005 |
| National Democratic Party | Germany | 2005 |
| The Greys | Germany | 2005 |
| National Democratic Party | Germany | 2009 |
| Family Party | Germany | 2009 |
| Party of Literal Exegesis | Germany | 2009 |
| Alternative for Germany | Germany | 2013 |
| Pirate Party of Germany | Germany | 2013 |
| National Democratic Party of Germany | Germany | 2013 |
| Free Voters | Germany | 2013 |
| Animal Protection Party | Germany | 2013 |
| Free Democratic Party | Germany | 2017 |
| Free Voters Party | Germany | 2017 |
| The Party | Germany | 2017 |
| Animal Protection Party | Germany | 2017 |
| Pirate Party | Germany | 2017 |
| Ecological Democratic Party | Germany | 2017 |

Table 9: List of parties not in parliament before *(continued)*

| Party name | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|
| Ecologists- Greens | Greece | 2009 |
| Union of Centrists | Greece | 2015 |
| MIEP | Hungary | 1998 |
| Hungarian Worker's Party | Hungary | 1998 |
| Democratic People's Party | Hungary | 1998 |
| Alliance For Hungary - Center Party | Hungary | 2002 |
| Workers Party (Munkaspart) | Hungary | 2002 |
| Civic Movement | Iceland | 2009 |
| Democratic Movement | Iceland | 2009 |
| Bright Future | Iceland | 2013 |
| Pirate Party | Iceland | 2013 |
| Iceland Democratic Party | Iceland | 2013 |
| Right-Green People's Party | Iceland | 2013 |
| Rural Party | Iceland | 2013 |
| Households Party | Iceland | 2013 |
| Reform Party | Iceland | 2016 |
| People's Party | Iceland | 2016 |
| Dawn Party | Iceland | 2016 |
| Centre Party | Iceland | 2017 |
| HADERECH HASHLISHIT | Israel | 1996 |
| ISRAEL BA'ALIYA | Israel | 1996 |
| Greenleaf | Israel | 2003 |
| Herut | Israel | 2003 |
| Greens | Israel | 2003 |
| Gimlaim | Israel | 2006 |
| Ale Yarok | Israel | 2006 |
| Greens | Israel | 2006 |
| Hatnua | Israel | 2013 |
| Am Shalem | Israel | 2013 |
| Otzma Leyisrael | Israel | 2013 |
| Ale Yarok | Israel | 2013 |
| Italy of Values | Italy | 2006 |
| Union of Social Democratic Parties Responsibility | Latvia | 2010 |
| For a presidential republic | Latvia | 2010 |
| Last Party | Latvia | 2010 |
| For Human Rights in United Latvia | Latvia | 2011 |
| Last Party | Latvia | 2011 |
| For Latvia from the Heart | Latvia | 2014 |
| Latvian Association of Regions | Latvia | 2014 |
| Latvian Russian Union | Latvia | 2014 |
| United for Latvia | Latvia | 2014 |
| Latvian Development | Latvia | 2014 |
| Anti-Corruption Coalition | Lithuania | 2016 |
| Lithuanian Poles Electoral Action | Lithuania | 2016 |

Table 9: List of parties not in parliament before *(continued)*

| Party name | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|
| Lithuanian Freedom Union | Lithuania | 2016 |
| Mexican Ecological Party | Mexico | 1997 |
| Cardenista Party | Mexico | 1997 |
| Popular Socialist Party | Mexico | 1997 |
| Social Democracy | Mexico | 2000 |
| Democratic Center Party of Mexico | Mexico | 2000 |
| NA | Montenegro | 2012 |
| NA | Montenegro | 2012 |
| NA | Montenegro | 2012 |
| Netherlands Mobile | Netherlands | 1998 |
| Natural Law Party | Netherlands | 1998 |
| Livable Netherlands | Netherlands | 2002 |
| United Seniors Party | Netherlands | 2002 |
| Green Left | Netherlands | 2006 |
| Christian Union | Netherlands | 2006 |
| Party for the Animals | Netherlands | 2006 |
| One NL | Netherlands | 2006 |
| Proud of the Netherlands | Netherlands | 2010 |
| ACT New Zealand | New Zealand | 1996 |
| Christian Coalition | New Zealand | 1996 |
| United NZ | New Zealand | 1996 |
| Mana Maori | New Zealand | 1996 |
| Legalise Cannabis | New Zealand | 1996 |
| McGillicuddy Serious | New Zealand | 1996 |
| Progressive Green | New Zealand | 1996 |
| Jim Anderton's Progressive | New Zealand | 2002 |
| Christian Heritage | New Zealand | 2002 |
| Legalise Cannabis | New Zealand | 2002 |
| Mana Maori Movement | New Zealand | 2002 |
| Outdoor Recreation New Zealand | New Zealand | 2002 |
| Bill and Ben | New Zealand | 2008 |
| Kiwi | New Zealand | 2008 |
| Family Party | New Zealand | 2008 |
| New Zealand First | New Zealand | 2011 |
| Conservative Party | New Zealand | 2011 |
| MANA Movement | New Zealand | 2011 |
| Conservative Party | New Zealand | 2014 |
| The Opportunities Party | New Zealand | 2017 |
| Red Electoral Alliance | Norway | 2001 |
| Red Electoral Alliance | Norway | 2005 |
| Red Electoral Alliance | Norway | 2009 |
| The Greens | Norway | 2013 |
| Red Party | Norway | 2013 |
| National Christian Democratic Party | Poland | 1997 |

Table 9: List of parties not in parliament before *(continued)*

| Party name | Country | Election year |
|---|---|---|
| National Alliance of the Retired of the Rep of Poland | Poland | 1997 |
| Movement for the Reconstruction of Poland | Poland | 1997 |
| National Party of the Retirees | Poland | 1997 |
| Self Defence Of The Polish Republic | Poland | 2001 |
| Law And Justice | Poland | 2001 |
| League of Polish Families | Poland | 2001 |
| German Minority Of Upper Silesia | Poland | 2001 |
| Polska Partia Pracy | Poland | 2005 |
| Democratic Party | Poland | 2005 |
| Social Democracy of Poland | Poland | 2005 |
| Polish Labour Party | Poland | 2007 |
| Polska Kobiet | Poland | 2007 |
| Palikots Movement | Poland | 2011 |
| Poland Comes First | Poland | 2011 |
| Congress of the New Right | Poland | 2011 |
| Polish Labour Party | Poland | 2011 |
| National Liberal Party | Romania | 1996 |
| Christian Democratic National Peasant's Party | Romania | 2004 |
| Democratic Party of Serbia | Serbia | 2012 |
| Dveri for Life of Serbia | Serbia | 2012 |
| Communist Party Of Slovakia | Slovakia | 2010 |
| People's Party - Our Slovakia | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Most Hid | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Party Of The Democratic Left | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Union Party for Slovakia | Slovakia | 2010 |
| Slovak National Party | Slovakia | 2016 |
| People's Party Our Slovakia | Slovakia | 2016 |
| We are family - Boris Kollar | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Network | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Hungarian Coalition | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Party TIP | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Democrats of Slovakia | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Green Party of Slovakia | Slovakia | 2016 |
| Communist Party of Slovakia | Slovakia | 2016 |
| For Real-New Politics Party | Slovenia | 2008 |
| Gregor Virant's Civic List | Slovenia | 2011 |
| New Slovenia - Christian People's Party | Slovenia | 2011 |
| Sweden Democrats | Sweden | 2006 |
| Feminist Party | Sweden | 2014 |
| NA | Turkey | 2015 |
| Good Party | Turkey | 2018 |

## A1.4. RD plot and coefficient plot including models without country fixed-effects for each subset of the sample

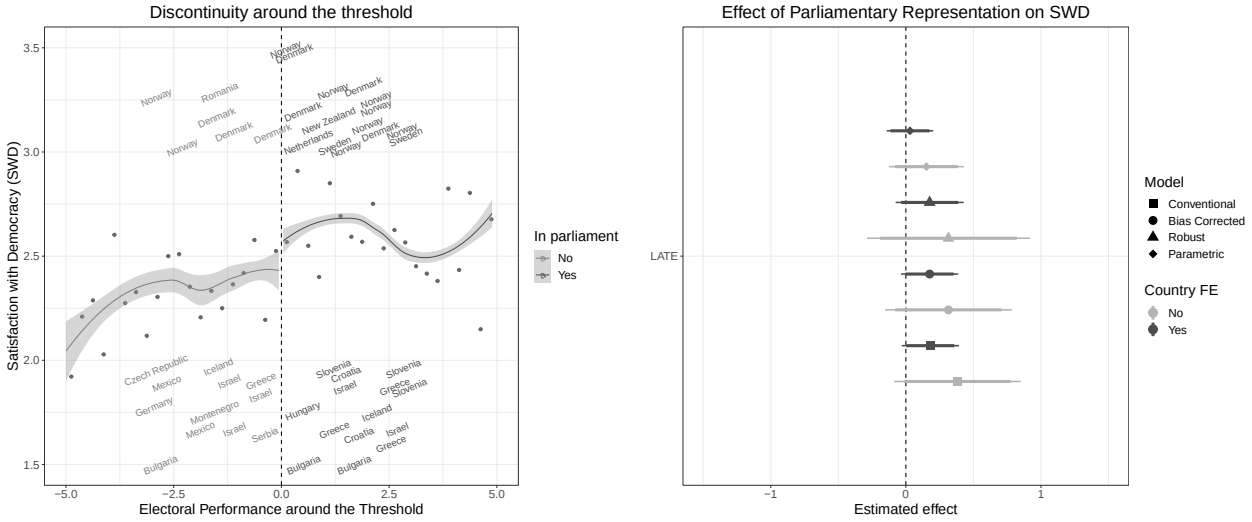


Figure 18: Whole sample

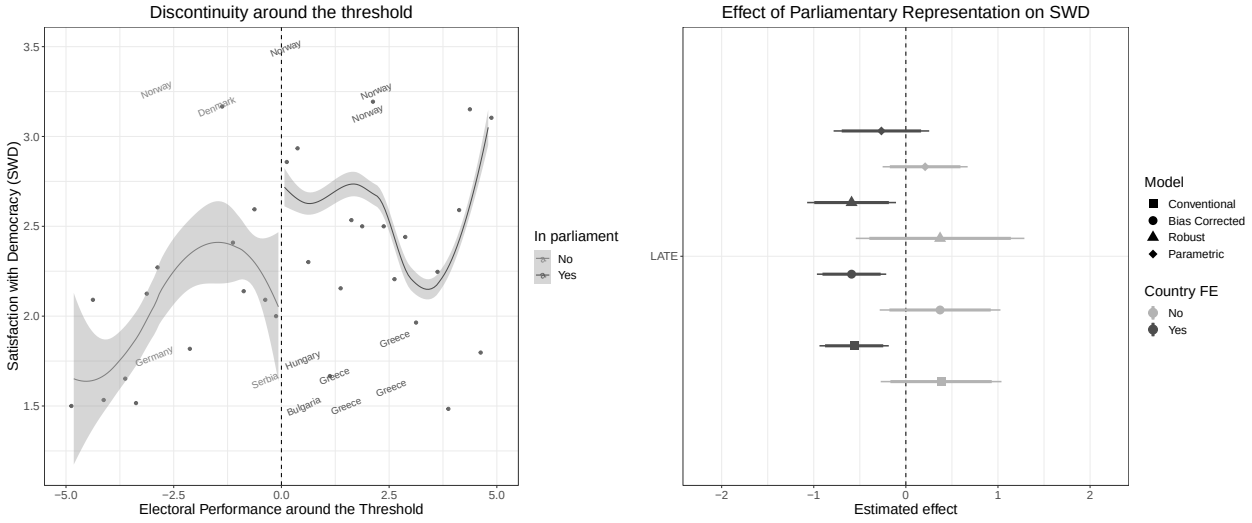


Figure 19: Radical parties

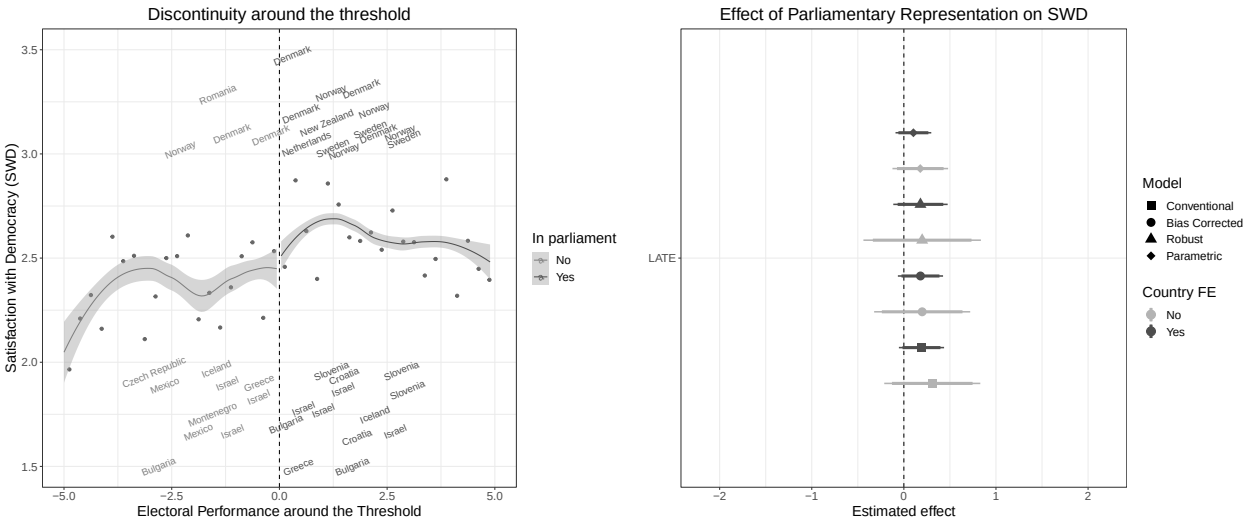


Figure 20: Non radical parties

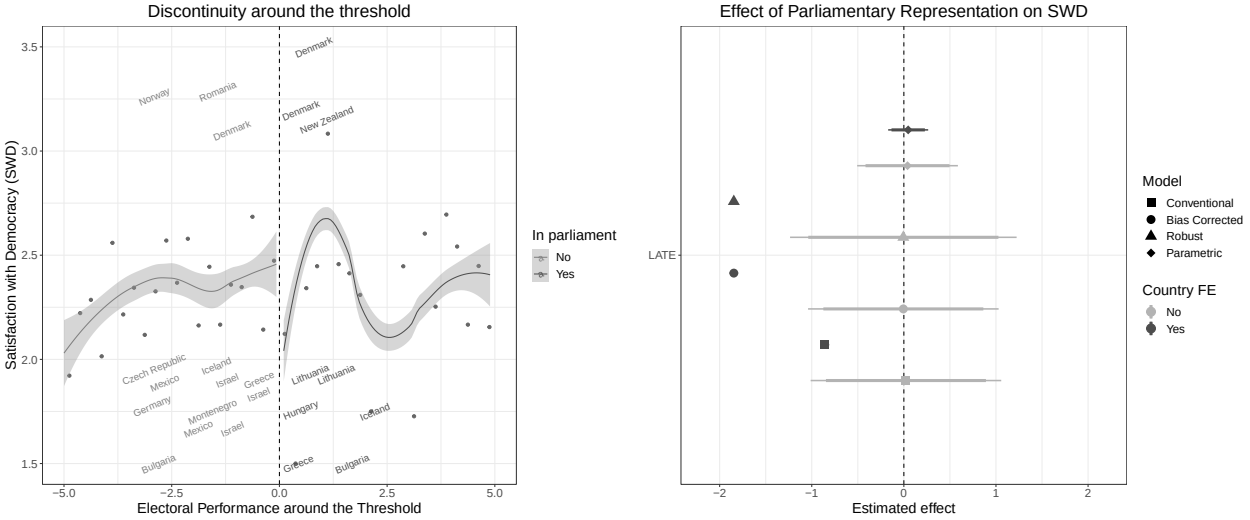


Figure 21: Parties wihout representation in the previous term

## A1.5. Summary of model outputs

Table 10: Whole sample

| | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LATE | 0.171 | 0.110 | 0.110 | 0.152 | 0.086 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.031 |
| | (0.343) [0.180] | (0.542) [0.180] | (0.593) [0.206] | (0.283) [0.142] | (0.256) [0.076] | (0.327) [0.076] | (0.381) [0.085] | (0.727) [0.088] |
| Country FE | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Bandwidth | 1.877 | 3.372 | 3.372 | Global | 1.823 | 3.559 | 3.559 | Global |
| Total.Numb.Obs | 85804 | 85804 | 85804 | 88597 | 85804 | 85804 | 85804 | 88597 |
| Effective.Numb.Obs | 6874 | 11944 | 11944 | 88597 | 6689 | 12454 | 12454 | 88597 |
| Left.CutOff | 1983 | 2879 | 2879 | 2792 | 1983 | 2984 | 2984 | 2792 |
| Right.CutOff | 4891 | 9065 | 9065 | 85805 | 4706 | 9470 | 9470 | 85805 |

Following the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the parametric models include one polynomial.
Standard errors are clustered by party-election.
Standard errors in parentheses; p-values in brackets.
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 11: Radical parties

| | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LATE | 0.383 | 0.372 | 0.372 | 0.209 | −0.562** | −0.589** | −0.589* | −0.266 |
| | (0.253) [0.334] | (0.267) [0.334] | (0.426) [0.467] | (0.371) [0.233] | (0.003) [0.192] | (0.002) [0.192] | (0.017) [0.246] | (0.313) [0.262] |
| Country FE | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Bandwidth | 3.602 | 4.895 | 4.895 | Global | 4.531 | 4.936 | 4.936 | Global |
| Total.Numb.Obs | 9838 | 9838 | 9838 | 88597 | 9838 | 9838 | 9838 | 88597 |
| Effective.Numb.Obs | 1827 | 2792 | 2792 | 88597 | 2561 | 2792 | 2792 | 88597 |
| Left.CutOff | 298 | 353 | 353 | 2792 | 347 | 353 | 353 | 2792 |
| Right.CutOff | 1529 | 2439 | 2439 | 85805 | 2214 | 2439 | 2439 | 85805 |

Following the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the parametric models include one polynomial.
Standard errors are clustered by party-election.
Standard errors in parentheses; p-values in brackets.
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 12: Non radical parties

| | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LATE | 0.309 | 0.199 | 0.199 | 0.178 | 0.191 | 0.180 | 0.180 | 0.104 |
| | (0.246) [0.266] | (0.455) [0.266] | (0.541) [0.325] | (0.247) [0.154] | (0.126) [0.125] | (0.150) [0.125] | (0.231) [0.151] | (0.295) [0.099] |
| Country FE | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Bandwidth | 3.682 | 4.922 | 4.922 | Global | 2.707 | 4.165 | 4.165 | Global |
| Total.Numb.Obs | 75966 | 75966 | 75966 | 88597 | 75966 | 75966 | 75966 | 88597 |
| Effective.Numb.Obs | 11209 | 13312 | 13312 | 88597 | 8432 | 12477 | 12477 | 88597 |
| Left.CutOff | 2760 | 3211 | 3211 | 2792 | 2311 | 2961 | 2961 | 2792 |
| Right.CutOff | 8449 | 10101 | 10101 | 85805 | 6121 | 9516 | 9516 | 85805 |

Following the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the parametric models include one polynomial.
Standard errors are clustered by party-election.
Standard errors in parentheses; p-values in brackets.
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 13: Parties without representation in the previous term

| | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric | Conventional | Bias Corrected | Robust | Parametric |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LATE | 0.023 | −0.006 | −0.006 | 0.040 | −0.857*** | −1.846*** | −1.846* | 0.047 |
| | (0.966) [0.528] | (0.991) [0.528] | (0.993) [0.627] | (0.886) [0.277] | (0.000) [0.024] | (0.000) [0.024] | (0.044) [0.916] | (0.671) [0.110] |
| Country FE | No | No | No | No | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Bandwidth | 1.553 | 2.192 | 2.192 | Global | 1.065 | 1.624 | 1.624 | Global |
| Total.Numb.Obs | 5299 | 5299 | 5299 | 88597 | 5299 | 5299 | 5299 | 88597 |
| Effective.Numb.Obs | 1672 | 2156 | 2156 | 88597 | 976 | 1789 | 1789 | 88597 |
| Left.CutOff | 817 | 920 | 920 | 2792 | 561 | 817 | 817 | 2792 |
| Right.CutOff | 855 | 1236 | 1236 | 85805 | 415 | 972 | 972 | 85805 |

Following the Akaike information criterion (AIC), the parametric models include one polynomial.
Standard errors are clustered by party-election.
Standard errors in parentheses; p-values in brackets.
+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

## A1.6. AIC comparison of the parametric models

Table 14: Whole sample

| Polynomial | AIC |
|---|---|
| Low order polynomial | 203813.0 |
| Second order polynomial | 203820.0 |
| Third order polynomial | 203652.9 |
| Fourth order polynomial | 203729.2 |

Table 15: Radical parties

| Polynomial | AIC |
|---|---|
| Low order polynomial | 24479.34 |
| Second order polynomial | 24463.58 |
| Third order polynomial | 24449.38 |
| Fourth order polynomial | 24454.46 |

Table 16: Non radical parties

| Polynomial | AIC |
|---|---|
| Low order polynomial | 181709.9 |
| Second order polynomial | 181716.0 |
| Third order polynomial | 181604.2 |
| Fourth order polynomial | 181687.1 |

Table 17: Parties without representation in the previous term

| Polynomial | AIC |
|---|---|
| Low order polynomial | 13308.14 |
| Second order polynomial | 13603.03 |
| Third order polynomial | 14885.88 |
| Fourth order polynomial | 30320.06 |

## A1.7. First stage regression

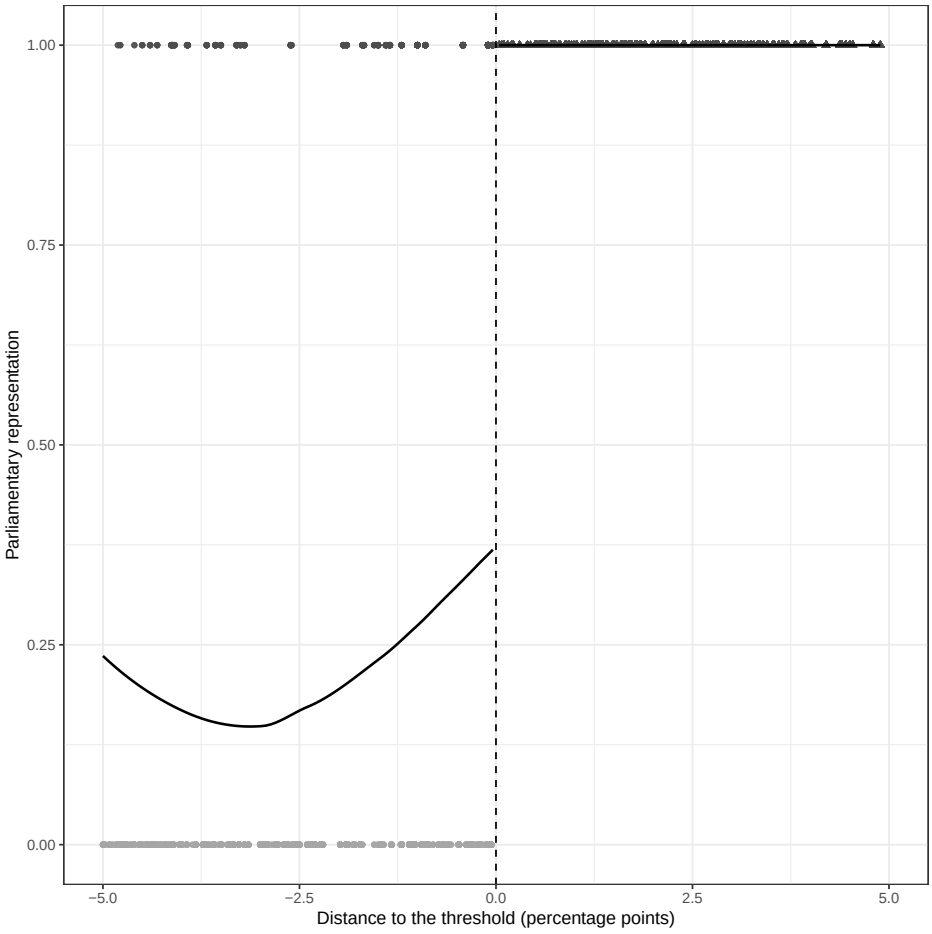


Figure 22: First Stage RD regression

### A1.8. McCrary test for no discontinuity of density around the cutpoint

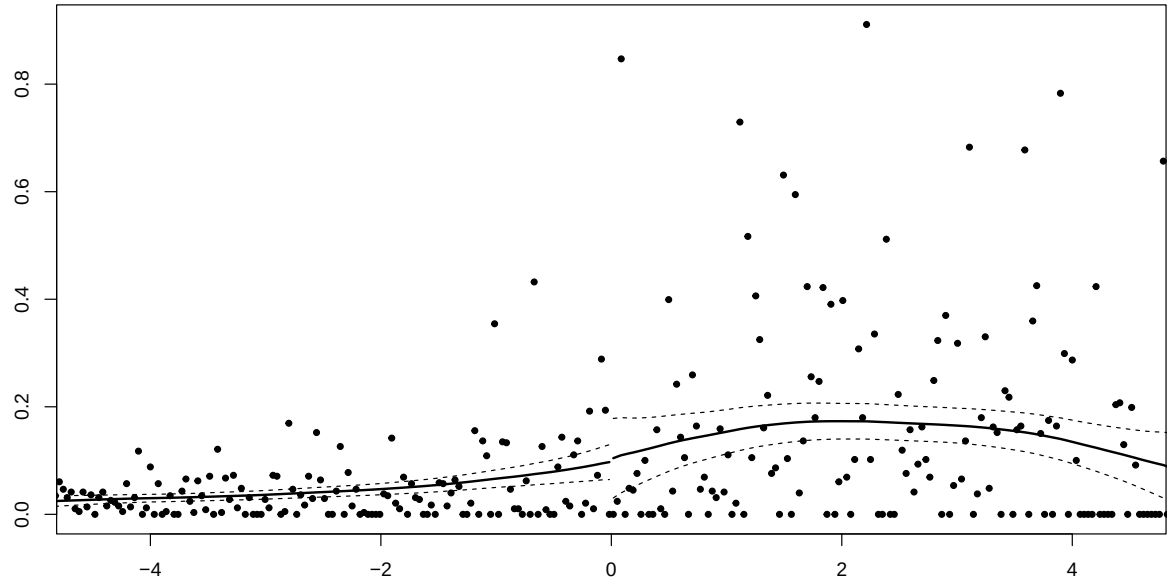


Figure 23: Density (dis)continuity at the threshold

z-val = 0.71521, p-value = 0.4745, sample estimate of discontinuity = 0.03160439

Alternative hypothesis: Density is discontinuous around the cutpoint

## A1.9. Covariate balance

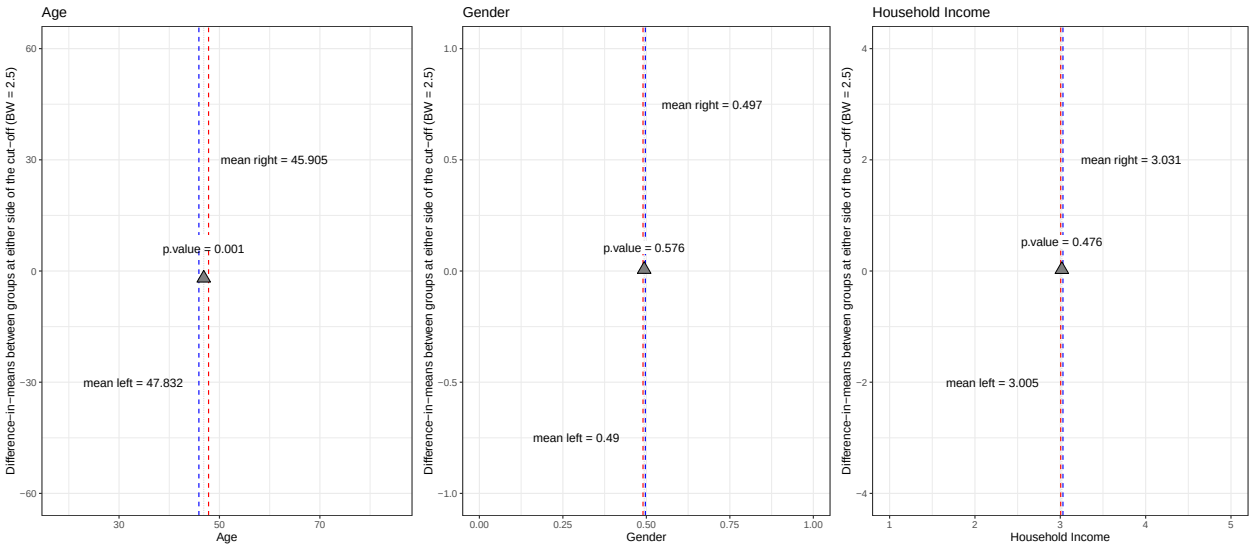


Figure 24: Socio-demographic balance between control and treatment groups

## A1.10. Replication of the main specification with different bandwidths

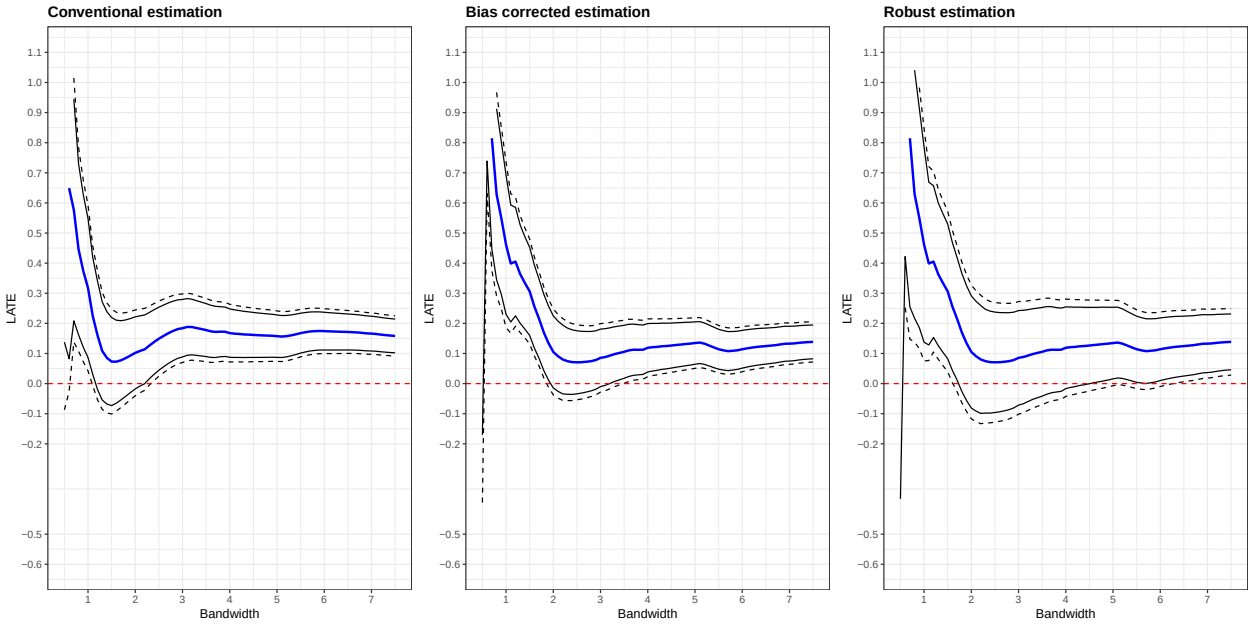


Figure 25: RD estimation at different bandwidths

# A2. Study 2

## A2.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 18: Summary of descriptive statistics (GLES short-campaign panel 2017)

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| swd_pre_lag | 7,271 | 3.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| swd_pre | 8,711 | 3.2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| swd_post | 9,471 | 3.2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| monthly_income | 7,238 | 6.8 | 2.6 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 9.0 | 13.0 |
| urban_rural | 7,277 | 3.3 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| econ_eval_ego | 8,681 | 3.3 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| econ_eval_soc | 8,672 | 3.6 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| pol_int | 8,330 | 3.6 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| ideol | 7,953 | 5.6 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 11.0 |
| imm_att | 8,277 | 2.9 | 1.7 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 |
| diff_govt | 8,292 | 3.4 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| trst_parl_pre | 7,006 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| trst_parl_post | 9,495 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| afd_parl | 8,248 | 3.7 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| winner_loser | 9,010 | 4.5 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| stf_elec | 9,462 | 2.6 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| past_abs_pr | 5,269 | 0.01 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 |
| past_abs_dc | 5,246 | 0.01 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 |
| soc_weights | 6,693 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 1.3 | 3.6 |
| age | 9,507 | 48.8 | 14.4 | 18 | 38 | 60 | 89 |
| ch_swd | 8,677 | 0.1 | 0.8 | −4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 |
| ch_swd_lag | 6,666 | 0.1 | 0.8 | −4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 4.0 |
| time_since_elec | 9,507 | 4.5 | 2.0 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 15 |
| ext_eff_index | 8,661 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.5 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| anti_part_index | 8,574 | 3.5 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.2 | 5.0 |
| pop_att_index | 8,554 | 3.8 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 3.2 | 4.2 | 5.0 |
| n_seats | 8,679 | 122.0 | 75.3 | 0.0 | 69.0 | 153.0 | 246.0 |
| vote_share | 9,507 | 17.1 | 9.8 | 0 | 9.2 | 23.8 | 33 |
| seats_share | 8,679 | 17.2 | 10.6 | 0.0 | 9.7 | 21.6 | 34.7 |
| anti_party_factor | 8,192 | −0.004 | 1.0 | −3.6 | −0.8 | 0.8 | 1.9 |
| direct_part_factor | 8,192 | −0.004 | 1.0 | −3.1 | −0.7 | 0.8 | 1.7 |
| pro_people_factor | 8,192 | −0.002 | 1.0 | −3.9 | −0.6 | 0.6 | 3.9 |

## A2.2. Building an 'anti-establishment attitudes' index with factor analysis

### A2.2.1. List of the survey items included in the factor analysis

- **External efficacy** (original code: *kp5_050*)

**Intro:**

Here are some common statements on politics and society.

**Question:**

Please state whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

(A) Politicians care about what ordinary people think.
(B) Politicians try to get in close contact with the population.

**Coding:**

(1) strongly disagree
(2) disagree
(3) neither agree nor disagree
(4) agree
(5) strongly agree

- **Attitudes to parties in general** (*kp5_040*)

**Question on screen 1:**

Here you can find some statements on parties in Germany.

Please state whether you agree or disagree with each statement.

(A) The parties are only interested in people's votes, not in what voters think.
(B) Most politicians are trustworthy and honest people.
(C) Even ordinary party members are able to exert influence on their parties.
(D) Our country would be governed worse with parties having no professional politicians.
(E) Citizens barely have any possibilities to influence politics.

**Question on screen 2:**

And how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(F) The parties' only concern is their power.
(G) Please choose "disagree" for testing the functioning of the questionnaire.
(H) The parties take too much influence in the society.
(I) The parties consider the state to be a self-service store.

**Coding:**

(1) strongly disagree
(2) disagree
(3) neither agree nor disagree

(4) agree
(5) strongly agree

- **Populist attitudes** (*kp5_3103*)

**Intro on screen 1:**

Here you can find some more statements on politics and society with which some people agree, while others do not.

**Question on screen 1:**

How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(A) Politicians talk too much and take too little action.
(B) Ordinary people are of good and honest character.
(C) The people should have the final say on the most important political issues by voting on them directly in referendums.
(D) Ordinary people all pull together.

**Question on screen 2:**

And how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(E) Differences between the elite and the people are larger than the differences among the people.
(F) The people, and not politicians, should make our most important policy decisions.
(G) The politicians in Parliament need to follow the will of the people.
(H) Ordinary people share the same values and interests.

**Coding:**

(1) strongly disagree
(2) disagree
(3) neither agree nor disagree
(4) agree
(5) strongly agree

### A2.2.2. Scree plot

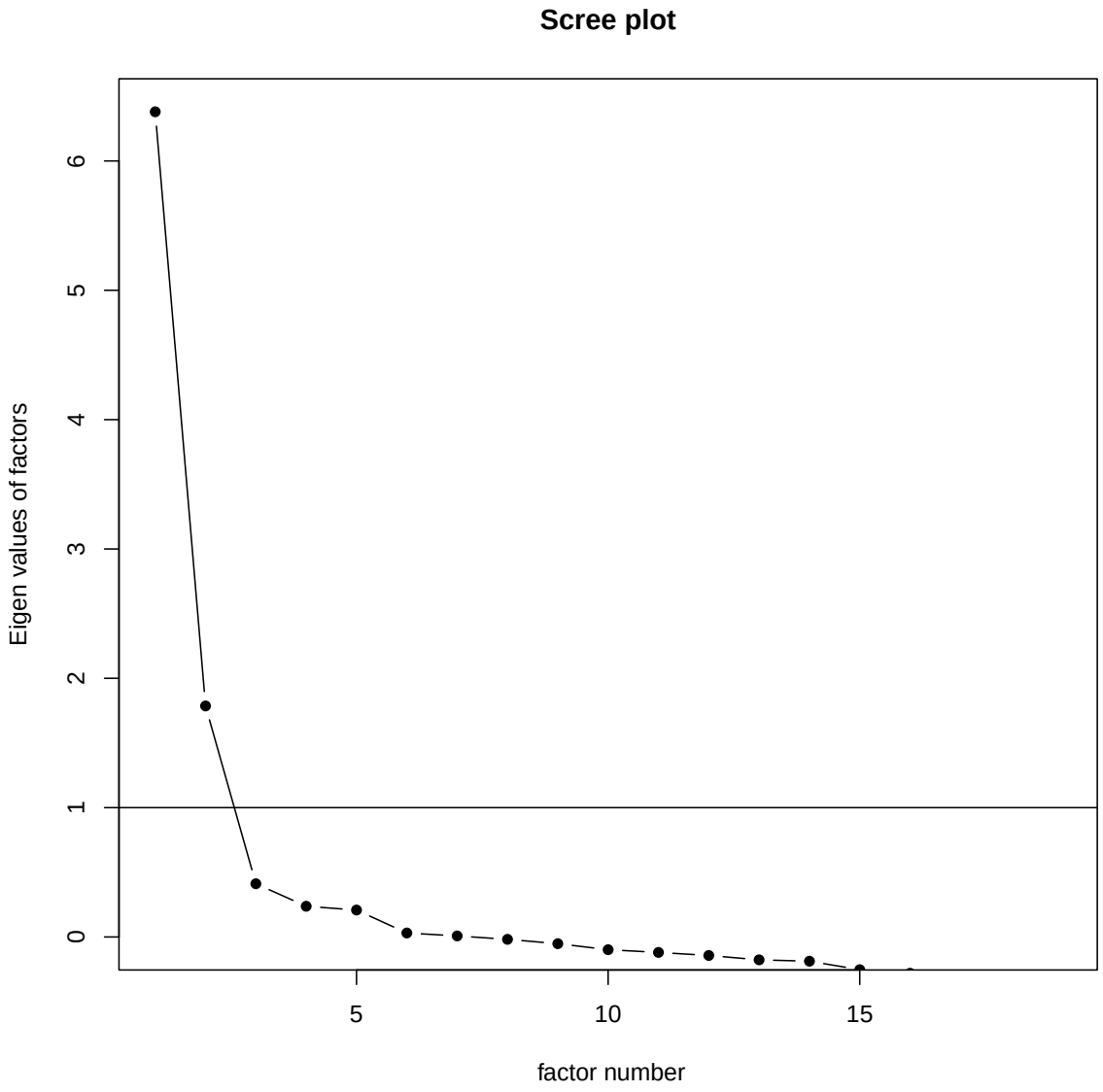


Figure 26: Factor analysis' scree plot

The scree plot suggests a maximum of three factors.

### A2.2.3. Biplot of the three factor loadings

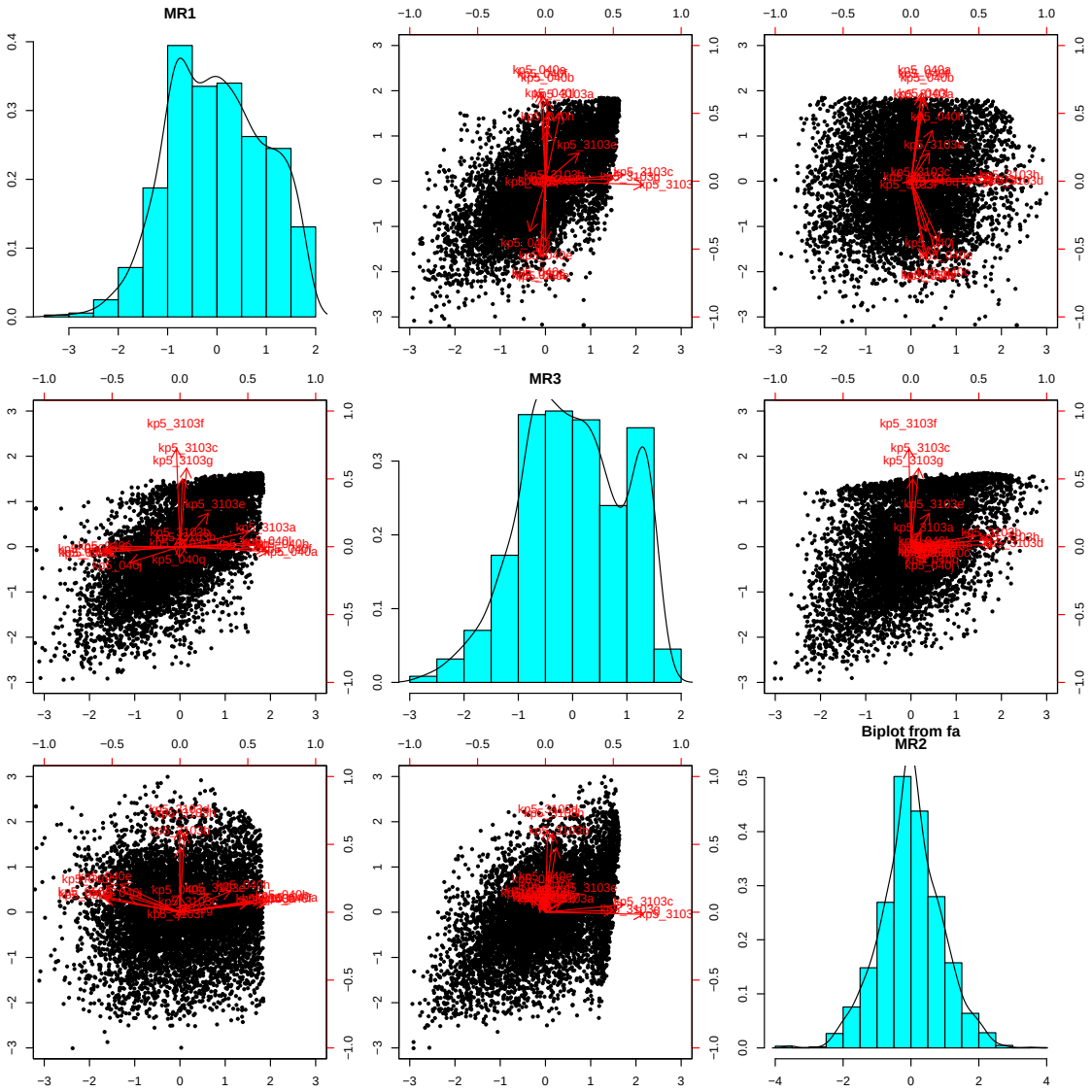


Figure 27: Factor analysis' biplot. MR1 captures anti-establishment attitudes, MR2 captures pro-direct democracy mechanisms and MR3 captures pro-ordinary people attitudes

## A2.3. Perceptions about AfD's electoral performance

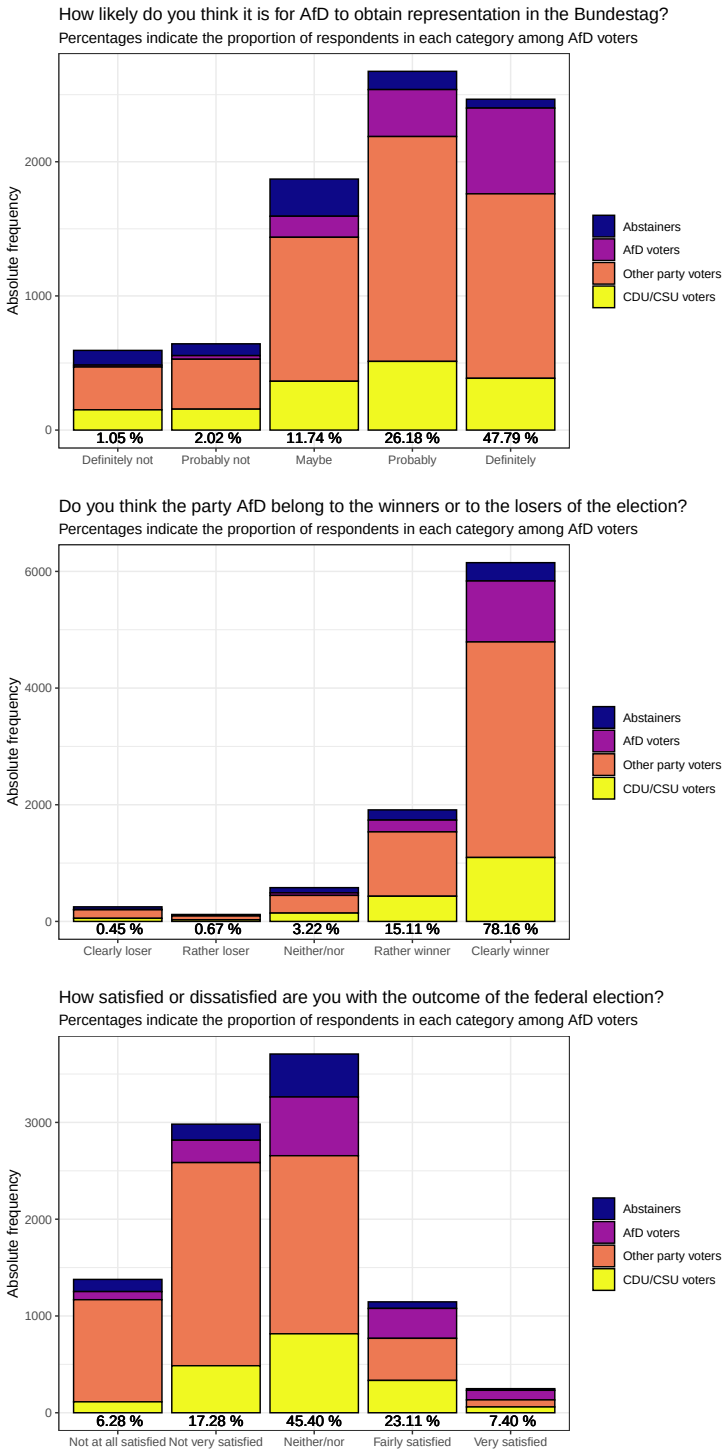


Figure 28: Stacked barcharts of survey responses about perceptions of the electoral performance of AfD at the 2017 German Federal election

### A2.4. Summary of regression model outputs

Table 19: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatmentNew party into parliament | −0.077 | −0.107* | −0.094* | −0.169** | −0.181** |
| | (0.047) | (0.054) | (0.045) | (0.054) | (0.058) |
| treatmentAbstention | −0.052 | −0.028 | −0.012 | 0.027 | 0.048 |
| | (0.053) | (0.062) | (0.050) | (0.062) | (0.067) |
| treatmentOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.189*** | 0.180*** | 0.184*** | 0.166*** |
| | (0.040) | (0.044) | (0.037) | (0.043) | (0.046) |
| treatment(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.318*** | 0.293*** | 0.294*** | 0.223*** |
| | (0.043) | (0.048) | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.049) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 5143 | 6626 | 6102 | 4716 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.226 | 0.258 | 0.235 | 0.278 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.223 | 0.258 | 0.234 | 0.273 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 20: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. Interactions I

| | Baseline model (BM) | Baseline model (BM) | BM * Anti-establishment | BM * Anti-establishment | BM * Time since elections | BM * Time since elections |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_afdAfD | −0.077 | −0.181** | −0.013 | −0.063 | −0.138 | −0.293* |
| | (0.047) | (0.058) | (0.059) | (0.072) | (0.119) | (0.148) |
| treatment_afdAbstention | −0.052 | 0.048 | −0.051 | 0.039 | −0.050 | 0.107 |
| | (0.053) | (0.067) | (0.057) | (0.072) | (0.139) | (0.172) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.166*** | 0.187*** | 0.139** | 0.152 | 0.130 |
| | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.043) | (0.047) | (0.095) | (0.112) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.223*** | 0.309*** | 0.192*** | 0.329** | 0.230+ |
| | (0.043) | (0.049) | (0.047) | (0.053) | (0.104) | (0.122) |
| anti_party_factor | | | −0.112* | −0.121* | | |
| | | | (0.043) | (0.049) | | |
| treatment_afdAfD:anti_party_factor | | | −0.055 | −0.107 | | |
| | | | (0.058) | (0.070) | | |
| treatment_afdAbstention:anti_party_factor | | | −0.086 | −0.086 | | |
| | | | (0.059) | (0.074) | | |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:anti_party_factor | | | −0.037 | 0.002 | | |
| | | | (0.046) | (0.051) | | |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:anti_party_factor | | | 0.006 | 0.045 | | |
| | | | (0.048) | (0.054) | | |
| time_since_elec | | | | | −0.013 | −0.004 |
| | | | | | (0.018) | (0.022) |
| treatment_afdAfD:time_since_elec | | | | | 0.015 | 0.028 |
| | | | | | (0.026) | (0.033) |
| treatment_afdAbstention:time_since_elec | | | | | −0.001 | −0.014 |
| | | | | | (0.030) | (0.035) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:time_since_elec | | | | | 0.015 | 0.009 |
| | | | | | (0.020) | (0.024) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:time_since_elec | | | | | 0.006 | −0.002 |
| | | | | | (0.022) | (0.026) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 4716 | 6242 | 4419 | 6644 | 4716 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.278 | 0.241 | 0.298 | 0.214 | 0.278 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.273 | 0.240 | 0.293 | 0.213 | 0.273 |

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 21: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. Interactions II

| | Baseline model (BM) | Baseline model (BM) | BM * Expectations parl. | BM * Expectations parl. | BM * Satisf. with results | BM * Satisf. with results |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_afdAfD | −0.077 | −0.181** | 0.241 | 0.384+ | 0.173 | 0.059 |
| | (0.047) | (0.058) | (0.181) | (0.220) | (0.166) | (0.188) |
| treatment_afdAbstention | −0.052 | 0.048 | −0.033 | 0.064 | −0.236 | −0.038 |
| | (0.053) | (0.067) | (0.179) | (0.223) | (0.201) | (0.268) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.166*** | −0.009 | 0.006 | 0.494*** | 0.425** |
| | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.136) | (0.164) | (0.138) | (0.147) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.223*** | 0.439** | 0.327+ | 0.703*** | 0.528*** |
| | (0.043) | (0.049) | (0.139) | (0.168) | (0.147) | (0.156) |
| afd_parl | | | 0.019 | 0.000 | | |
| | | | (0.034) | (0.042) | | |
| treatment_afdAfD:afd_parl | | | −0.079+ | −0.132* | | |
| | | | (0.046) | (0.056) | | |
| treatment_afdAbstention:afd_parl | | | −0.001 | −0.002 | | |
| | | | (0.057) | (0.072) | | |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:afd_parl | | | 0.060+ | 0.044 | | |
| | | | (0.036) | (0.044) | | |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:afd_parl | | | −0.022 | −0.029 | | |
| | | | (0.037) | (0.045) | | |
| stf_elec | | | | | 0.205*** | 0.164** |
| | | | | | (0.049) | (0.052) |
| treatment_afdAfD:stf_elec | | | | | −0.129* | −0.110+ |
| | | | | | (0.059) | (0.066) |
| treatment_afdAbstention:stf_elec | | | | | 0.054 | 0.025 |
| | | | | | (0.077) | (0.104) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:stf_elec | | | | | −0.108* | −0.100+ |
| | | | | | (0.051) | (0.055) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:stf_elec | | | | | −0.145** | −0.122* |
| | | | | | (0.052) | (0.056) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 4716 | 6615 | 4699 | 6623 | 4704 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.278 | 0.221 | 0.283 | 0.234 | 0.286 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.273 | 0.220 | 0.278 | 0.233 | 0.281 |

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 22: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. Interactions III

| | Baseline model (BM) | Baseline model (BM) | BM * Perception winner | BM * Perception winner | BM * Past abstention | BM * Past abstention |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_afdAfD | −0.077 | −0.181** | −0.042 | −0.137 | −0.076 | −0.111+ |
| | (0.047) | (0.058) | (0.370) | (0.373) | (0.074) | (0.067) |
| treatment_afdAbstention | −0.052 | 0.048 | 0.367 | 0.336 | 0.059 | 0.047 |
| | (0.053) | (0.067) | (0.413) | (0.449) | (0.113) | (0.109) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.166*** | 0.305 | 0.122 | 0.264*** | 0.239*** |
| | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.297) | (0.301) | (0.063) | (0.056) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.223*** | 0.493 | 0.104 | 0.395*** | 0.366*** |
| | (0.043) | (0.049) | (0.303) | (0.311) | (0.066) | (0.060) |
| winner_loser | | | 0.042 | −0.026 | | |
| | | | (0.062) | (0.062) | | |
| treatment_afdAfD:winner_loser | | | −0.011 | −0.007 | | |
| | | | (0.079) | (0.080) | | |
| treatment_afdAbstention:winner_loser | | | −0.098 | −0.077 | | |
| | | | (0.091) | (0.099) | | |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:winner_loser | | | −0.022 | 0.009 | | |
| | | | (0.064) | (0.065) | | |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:winner_loser | | | −0.031 | 0.026 | | |
| | | | (0.065) | (0.067) | | |
| past_abs_prPast abstainer | | | | | −0.709*** | −0.512*** |
| | | | | | (0.144) | (0.117) |
| treatment_afdAfD:past_abs_prPast abstainer | | | | | 0.434** | 0.182 |
| | | | | | (0.150) | (0.131) |
| treatment_afdAbstention:past_abs_prPast abstainer | | | | | 0.684*** | 0.636** |
| | | | | | (0.173) | (0.200) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:past_abs_prPast abstainer | | | | | 0.333 | 0.125 |
| | | | | | (0.413) | (0.422) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:past_abs_prPast abstainer | | | | | 0.348 | 0.082 |
| | | | | | (0.394) | (0.403) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 4716 | 6359 | 4589 | 3889 | 3842 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.278 | 0.216 | 0.282 | 0.221 | 0.236 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.273 | 0.215 | 0.277 | 0.219 | 0.230 |

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 23: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. Interactions IV

| | Baseline model (BM) | Baseline model (BM) | BM * Populist attitudes | BM * Populist attitudes | BM * Anti-parties att. | BM * Anti-parties att. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_afdAfD | −0.077 | −0.181** | 0.827* | 1.083** | 0.214 | 0.540+ |
| | (0.047) | (0.058) | (0.329) | (0.389) | (0.265) | (0.302) |
| treatment_afdAbstention | −0.052 | 0.048 | 0.548 | 0.786 | 0.048 | 0.236 |
| | (0.053) | (0.067) | (0.348) | (0.480) | (0.280) | (0.353) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.166*** | 0.545* | 0.333 | 0.324+ | 0.189 |
| | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.265) | (0.317) | (0.193) | (0.220) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.223*** | 0.444 | 0.158 | 0.227 | 0.028 |
| | (0.043) | (0.049) | (0.276) | (0.328) | (0.202) | (0.227) |
| pop_att_index | | | −0.002 | −0.023 | | |
| | | | (0.064) | (0.079) | | |
| treatment_afdAfD:pop_att_index | | | −0.219** | −0.306** | | |
| | | | (0.082) | (0.098) | | |
| treatment_afdAbstention:pop_att_index | | | −0.161+ | −0.199 | | |
| | | | (0.090) | (0.124) | | |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:pop_att_index | | | −0.086 | −0.046 | | |
| | | | (0.068) | (0.082) | | |
| anti_part_index | | | | | −0.117* | −0.116* |
| | | | | | (0.049) | (0.058) |
| treatment_afdAfD:anti_part_index | | | | | −0.060 | −0.166* |
| | | | | | (0.067) | (0.077) |
| treatment_afdAbstention:anti_part_index | | | | | −0.031 | −0.059 |
| | | | | | (0.078) | (0.099) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:anti_part_index | | | | | −0.033 | −0.010 |
| | | | | | (0.052) | (0.061) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party:anti_part_index | | | | | 0.035 | 0.054 |
| | | | | | (0.056) | (0.064) |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 4716 | 6510 | 4627 | 6534 | 4635 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.278 | 0.224 | 0.292 | 0.232 | 0.297 |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.273 | 0.223 | 0.287 | 0.231 | 0.292 |

+ p < 0.1, * p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001

Table 24: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. Interactions

| | Baseline model (BM) | Baseline model (BM) | BM * External efficacy | BM * External efficacy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_afdAfD | −0.077 | −0.181** | −0.211+ | −0.336* |
| | (0.047) | (0.058) | (0.123) | (0.149) |
| treatment_afdAbstention | −0.052 | 0.048 | −0.292+ | −0.187 |
| | (0.053) | (0.067) | (0.154) | (0.201) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament | 0.213*** | 0.166*** | 0.110 | 0.131 |
| | (0.040) | (0.046) | (0.110) | (0.130) |
| treatment_afd(Old) winner party | 0.357*** | 0.223*** | 0.310** | 0.226 |
| | (0.043) | (0.049) | (0.119) | (0.142) |
| ext_eff_index | | | 0.081 | 0.085 |
| | | | (0.051) | (0.057) |
| treatment_afdAfD:ext_eff_index | | | 0.081 | 0.098 |
| | | | (0.063) | (0.074) |
| treatment_afdAbstention:ext_eff_index | | | 0.115 | 0.109 |
| | | | (0.080) | (0.103) |
| treatment_afdOld party into parliament:ext_eff_index | | | 0.040 | 0.007 |
| | | | (0.053) | (0.058) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 4716 | 6588 | 4671 |
| R2 | 0.214 | 0.278 | 0.233 | 0.292 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.213 | 0.273 | 0.232 | 0.287 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 25: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatmentNew party into parliament | 0.108 | −0.008 | 0.030 | −0.146 | −0.210* |
| | (0.087) | (0.100) | (0.083) | (0.092) | (0.107) |
| treatmentAbstention | 0.045 | −0.035 | 0.038 | −0.011 | −0.051 |
| | (0.096) | (0.107) | (0.092) | (0.104) | (0.118) |
| treatmentOld party into parliament | 0.464*** | 0.343*** | 0.355*** | 0.287*** | 0.210* |
| | (0.082) | (0.093) | (0.077) | (0.087) | (0.101) |
| treatment(Old) winner party | 0.643*** | 0.526*** | 0.503*** | 0.417*** | 0.319** |
| | (0.084) | (0.095) | (0.080) | (0.089) | (0.101) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 6644 | 5143 | 6626 | 6102 | 4716 |
| R2 | 0.204 | 0.220 | 0.253 | 0.232 | 0.275 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.203 | 0.216 | 0.252 | 0.231 | 0.270 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

## A2.5. Coefficient plot of the 2SLS specification

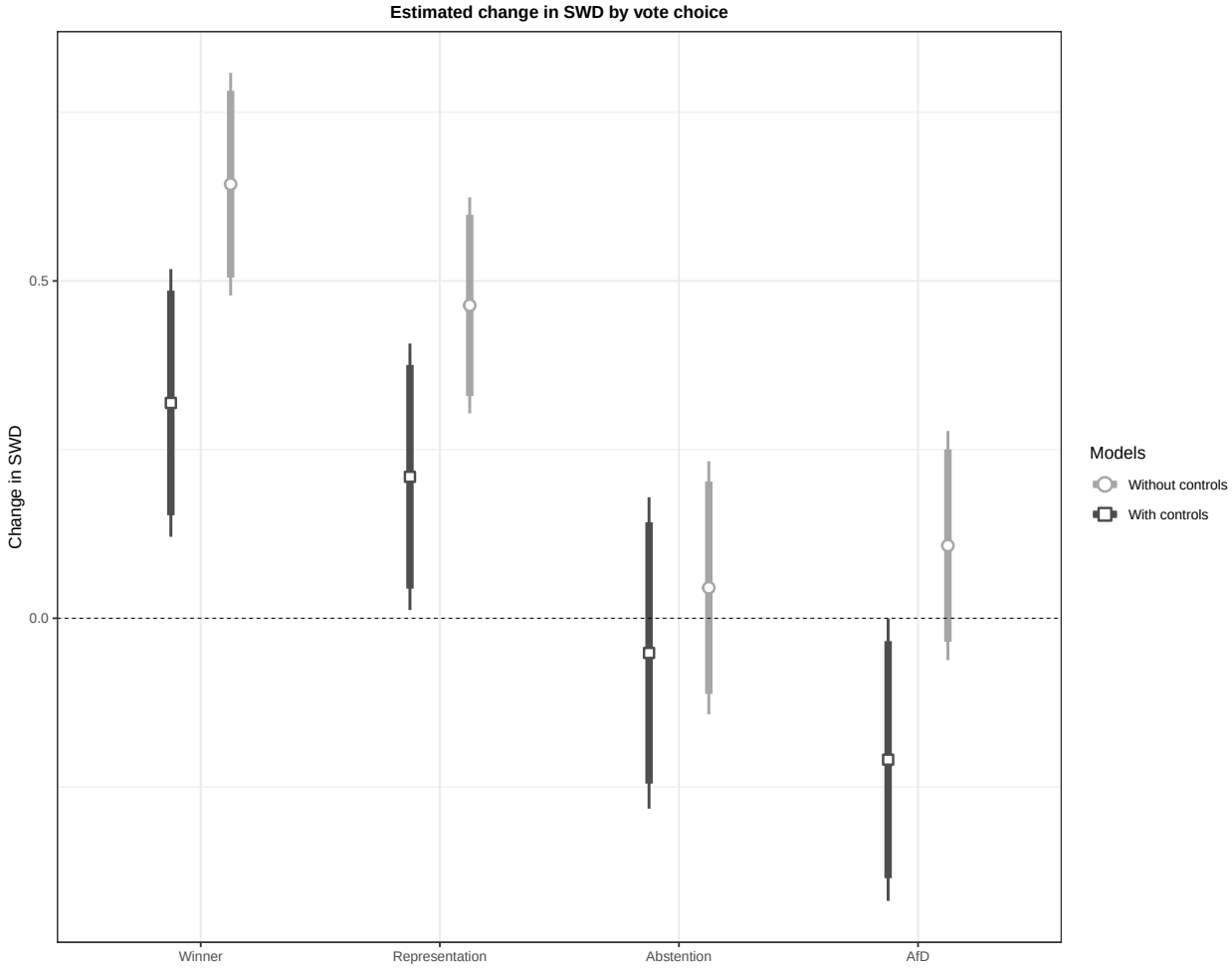


Figure 29: Coefficient plots of the effect of parliamentary results on SWD (IV)

## A2.6. Plot of the interaction between having voted for AfD and alternative proxies for anti-establishment attitudes

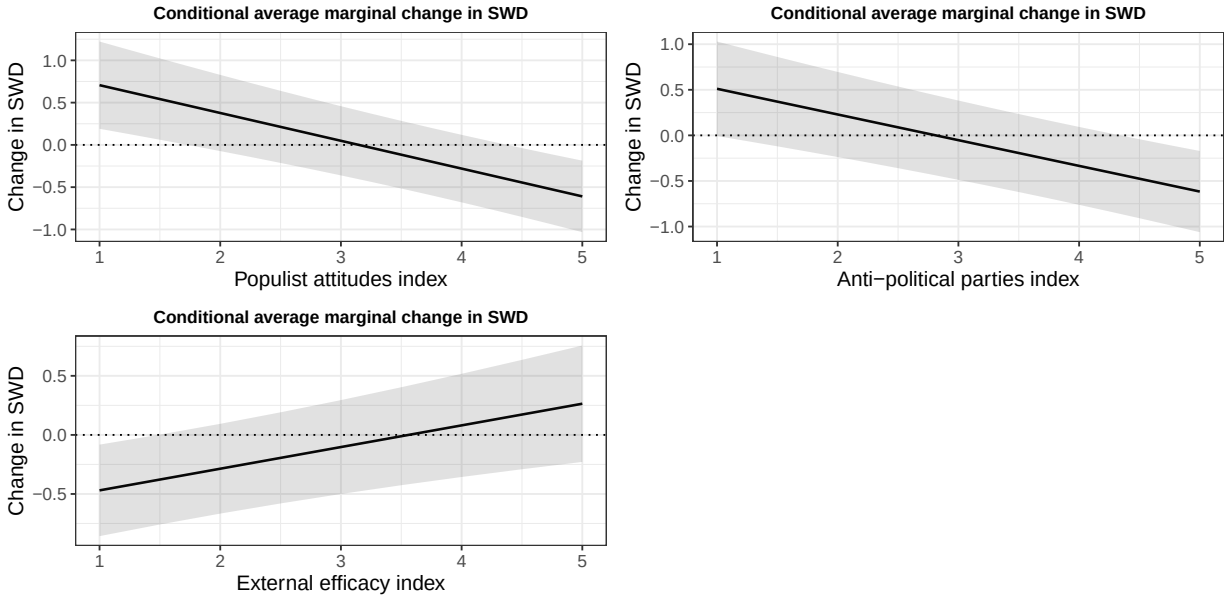


Figure 30: Estimated change in SWD among AfD voters at different levels of alternative proxies for anti-establishment attitudes

# Appendix B. Supplementary material for Chapter 3

## B1. Disruptive elections in WE from 1945 to 2021

### B1.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 26: Summary of descriptive statistics, Electoral Volatility and its Components in WE 1945-2021

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| year | 382 | 1,985.1 | 21.3 | 1,946 | 1,968 | 2,003 | 2,021 |
| reg_vol | 382 | 1.6 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 19.0 |
| alt_vol | 382 | 8.5 | 5.3 | 0 | 4.6 | 11.4 | 37 |
| oth_vol | 382 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.2 | 1.1 | 4.8 |
| tot_vol | 382 | 10.9 | 7.0 | 0.2 | 6.0 | 14.2 | 48.5 |
| mean_reg_vol | 382 | 1.6 | 0.9 | 0.4 | 0.9 | 2.4 | 3.5 |
| mean_alt_vol | 382 | 8.5 | 1.8 | 4.6 | 7.1 | 9.7 | 12.5 |
| mean_oth_vol | 382 | 0.7 | 0.4 | 0.2 | 0.4 | 1.0 | 1.9 |
| mean_tot_vol | 382 | 10.9 | 2.7 | 6.1 | 8.6 | 12.6 | 16.9 |
| median_reg_vol | 382 | 0.8 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 0.4 | 1.1 | 3.4 |
| median_alt_vol | 382 | 7.5 | 1.8 | 4.2 | 6.4 | 8.6 | 11.8 |
| median_oth_vol | 382 | 0.6 | 0.4 | 0.1 | 0.3 | 0.9 | 1.7 |
| median_tot_vol | 382 | 9.5 | 2.7 | 4.2 | 7.7 | 11.1 | 16.9 |
| sd_reg_vol | 382 | 2.1 | 1.3 | 0.6 | 0.9 | 2.6 | 5.5 |
| sd_alt_vol | 382 | 4.9 | 1.5 | 2.1 | 3.8 | 5.4 | 8.8 |
| sd_oth_vol | 382 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 1.1 |
| sd_tot_vol | 382 | 6.2 | 2.4 | 2.6 | 4.5 | 7.1 | 11.5 |
| lag1_regvol | 362 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 19.0 |
| lag2_regvol | 342 | 1.5 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.9 | 19.0 |
| lag3_regvol | 322 | 1.4 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.8 | 19.0 |
| disrup_elec | 379 | 0.03 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 |

### B1.2. List of disruptive elections

Table 27: List of disruptive elections in WE, 1945-2021

| Country | Year | Date | RegVolatility | TotalVolatility |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Denmark | 1973 | 1973-12-04 | 7.95 | 21.20 |
| France | 2017 | 2017-06-11 | 15.30 | 40.70 |
| Greece | 2012 | 2012-05-06 | 12.85 | 48.50 |
| Iceland | 2013 | 2013-04-27 | 10.85 | 34.65 |
| Ireland | 1987 | 1987-02-17 | 6.85 | 16.75 |
| Italy | 1994 | 1994-03-27 | 15.85 | 39.25 |
| Italy | 2013 | 2013-02-25 | 18.70 | 36.65 |
| Netherlands | 2002 | 2002-05-15 | 9.30 | 31.30 |
| Portugal | 1985 | 1985-10-06 | 9.20 | 21.80 |
| Spain | 2015 | 2015-12-20 | 19.00 | 35.50 |

## B2. The implications of disruptive elections for satisfaction with democracy

### B2.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 28: Summary of descriptive statistics, DPES 2002

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| swd_pre | 1,549 | 3.3 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| swd_post | 1,556 | 2.8 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| age | 1,563 | 49.7 | 16.0 | 18 | 38 | 61 | 97 |
| perc_soc_class | 1,522 | 3.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| urban_rural | 1,563 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| sat_govt_index | 1,563 | 1.5 | 1.1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| pol_int_index | 1,563 | 2.2 | 1.1 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| ideol | 1,541 | 6.0 | 2.0 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 11.0 |
| symp_cda | 1,551 | 56.3 | 19.8 | 0.0 | 40.0 | 70.0 | 100.0 |
| symp_lpf | 1,529 | 33.5 | 29.0 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 60.0 | 100.0 |
| symp_cda_leader | 1,499 | 59.4 | 20.9 | 0.0 | 50.0 | 75.0 | 100.0 |
| symp_lpf_leader | 1,538 | 39.0 | 30.6 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 65.0 | 100.0 |
| imp_coalition_part | 1,553 | 2.7 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| elec_exp_lpf | 1,408 | 18.7 | 9.2 | 0.0 | 12.0 | 24.0 | 99.0 |
| ext_eff_index | 1,563 | 2.6 | 1.4 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| soc_weights | 1,563 | 1.0 | 0.4 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 1.2 | 2.5 |
| soc_elec_weights | 1,563 | 1.0 | 1.1 | 0.3 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 12.6 |
| swd_post_mod | 1,556 | 3.3 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| ch_swd | 1,543 | 0.1 | 1.0 | −3.0 | −1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 |
| time_since_elec | 1,434 | 14.3 | 9.4 | 1.0 | 7.0 | 20.0 | 44.0 |
| n_seats | 1,514 | 24.3 | 13.6 | 0.0 | 10.0 | 43.0 | 43.0 |
| vote_share | 1,563 | 16.1 | 8.6 | 0.1 | 7.0 | 27.9 | 27.9 |
| seats_share | 1,514 | 16.2 | 9.1 | 0.0 | 6.7 | 28.7 | 28.7 |

Table 29: Summary of descriptive statistics, ITANES panel 2013

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| trst_parl_pre_lag | 989 | 4.1 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_part_pre_lag | 993 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_parl_pre | 989 | 4.2 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_part_pre | 990 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_parl_post | 982 | 4.9 | 2.5 | 0.0 | 4.0 | 7.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_part_post | 981 | 3.6 | 2.4 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| turnout_int | 995 | 1.5 | 0.6 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 |
| age | 996 | 52.6 | 16.5 | 18.0 | 43.0 | 64.0 | 98.0 |
| econ_eval_ego | 995 | 2.4 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| econ_eval_soc | 996 | 1.8 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 |
| pol_int | 997 | 2.7 | 0.8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ideol | 921 | 4.3 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| swd | 988 | 2.0 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| ext_eff | 979 | 2.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| trst_pol_pre_lag | 986 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_pol_pre | 984 | 3.6 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 9.5 |
| trst_pol_post | 975 | 4.2 | 2.2 | 0.0 | 2.5 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| ch_trst | 966 | 0.6 | 1.9 | −6.0 | −0.5 | 1.5 | 9.0 |
| ch_trst_lag | 975 | 0.05 | 1.9 | −7.5 | −1.0 | 1.0 | 7.0 |
| n_seats | 929 | 165.7 | 118.7 | 0.0 | 39.0 | 297.0 | 297.0 |
| vote_share | 997 | 19.8 | 9.0 | 0.2 | 21.6 | 25.4 | 25.6 |
| seats_share | 929 | 26.3 | 18.8 | 0.0 | 6.2 | 47.1 | 47.1 |
| elec_weights | 997 | 1.2 | 0.8 | 0.6 | 0.6 | 1.6 | 3.6 |

Table 30: Summary of descriptive statistics, CIUPANEL 2014-15

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| swd_pre_lag | 1,623 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 |
| swd_pre | 1,848 | 2.1 | 0.7 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| swd_post | 1,848 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 |
| age | 1,848 | 47.7 | 15.4 | 18 | 35 | 59 | 87 |
| econ_eval_ego | 1,848 | 2.6 | 0.9 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| econ_eval_soc | 1,848 | 2.2 | 0.8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| pol_int | 1,848 | 2.8 | 0.8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| ideol | 1,732 | 4.0 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| reg_nat_id | 1,848 | 3.1 | 1.0 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 5 |
| neg_feel_pp_leader | 1,823 | 2.6 | 2.9 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| neg_feel_podemos_leader | 1,809 | 4.4 | 3.1 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 7.0 | 10.0 |
| neg_feel_pp | 1,795 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| neg_feel_podemos | 1,795 | 3.2 | 3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 10.0 |
| ext_eff_one | 1,848 | 3.2 | 2.7 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| ext_eff_two | 1,848 | 2.8 | 2.4 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 10 |
| ext_eff_three | 1,848 | 2.5 | 2.3 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 |
| trst_pol | 1,848 | 2.2 | 2.1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 |
| trst_pol_part | 1,848 | 2.3 | 2.1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 10 |
| ch_swd | 1,848 | −0.2 | 0.6 | −3 | −1 | 0 | 3 |
| ch_swd_lag | 1,623 | 0.1 | 0.6 | −3.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.0 |
| time_since_elec | 1,848 | 6.5 | 3.8 | 2 | 3 | 9 | 22 |
| ext_eff_index | 1,848 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 4.3 | 10.0 |
| trst_pol_index | 1,848 | 2.2 | 2.0 | 0 | 0.5 | 3.5 | 10 |
| n_seats | 1,544 | 62.6 | 39.7 | 0.0 | 40.0 | 90.0 | 123.0 |
| vote_share | 1,848 | 19.4 | 9.5 | 0 | 13.9 | 28.7 | 30 |
| seats_share | 1,544 | 9.9 | 6.3 | 0.0 | 6.3 | 14.3 | 19.5 |
| elec_weights | 1,848 | 1.9 | 15.1 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 1.9 | 530.6 |

Table 31: Summary of descriptive statistics, Dynamiques de Mobilisation 2017

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| swd_pre | 1,943 | 2.3 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| ideol | 1,928 | 5.8 | 2.5 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 8.0 | 11.0 |
| pol_int | 1,950 | 2.7 | 0.8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| long_weights | 1,866 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.02 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 7.8 |
| long_weights15 | 1,950 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.03 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 6.7 |
| swd_post | 1,945 | 2.5 | 0.7 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| pol_int_post | 1,950 | 2.7 | 0.8 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| long_weights16 | 1,950 | 1.0 | 0.9 | 0.02 | 0.4 | 1.3 | 7.5 |
| ch_swd | 1,939 | 0.2 | 0.6 | −2.0 | 0.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 |
| vote_share_1round | 1,950 | 18.2 | 7.3 | 0.5 | 19.6 | 24.0 | 24.0 |
| elec_weights | 1,950 | 1.2 | 0.5 | 0.2 | 0.9 | 1.4 | 2.4 |

Table 32: Summary of descriptive statistics, MAPLE panel

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| swd_pre | 1,134 | 2.9 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| swd_post | 1,384 | 3.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| age | 1,143 | 47.9 | 14.8 | 18.0 | 36.0 | 59.0 | 84.0 |
| monthly_income | 988 | 3.0 | 1.1 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| econ_eval_ego | 1,139 | 3.2 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| econ_eval_soc | 1,123 | 3.5 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| ideol | 991 | 4.6 | 2.7 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| imm_att1 | 1,099 | 2.6 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| imm_att2 | 1,097 | 2.2 | 0.9 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 3.0 | 4.0 |
| abort_att | 1,106 | 3.2 | 1.4 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| ext_eff | 1,122 | 3.9 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| corrpt_part | 1,092 | 3.5 | 2.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 5.0 | 11.0 |
| trst_govt | 1,129 | 4.7 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 3.0 | 7.0 | 10.0 |
| trst_parl | 1,125 | 4.4 | 2.6 | 0.0 | 2.0 | 6.0 | 10.0 |
| ps_weights1_pre | 1,144 | 1.0 | 0.7 | 0.1 | 0.5 | 1.1 | 3.0 |
| ps_weights2_pre | 1,144 | 1.0 | 0.03 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| ps_weights1_pos | 1,399 | 0.9 | 0.6 | 0.1 | 0.7 | 1.1 | 2.5 |
| ps_weights2_pos | 1,399 | 0.9 | 0.1 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| ch_swd | 1,125 | 0.1 | 1.0 | −4.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 3.0 |
| imm_att_index | 1,066 | 3.8 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 2.0 | 5.0 | 8.0 |
| n_seats | 922 | 57.7 | 45.4 | 0.0 | 5.0 | 108.0 | 108.0 |
| vote_share | 1,334 | 22.9 | 19.9 | 0.4 | 4.6 | 51.4 | 51.4 |
| seats_share | 922 | 25.1 | 19.8 | 0.0 | 2.2 | 47.0 | 47.0 |
| elec_weights | 1,334 | 1.0 | 0.6 | 0.2 | 0.5 | 1.7 | 1.7 |

### B2.2. SWD distribution in the DPES post-electoral wave

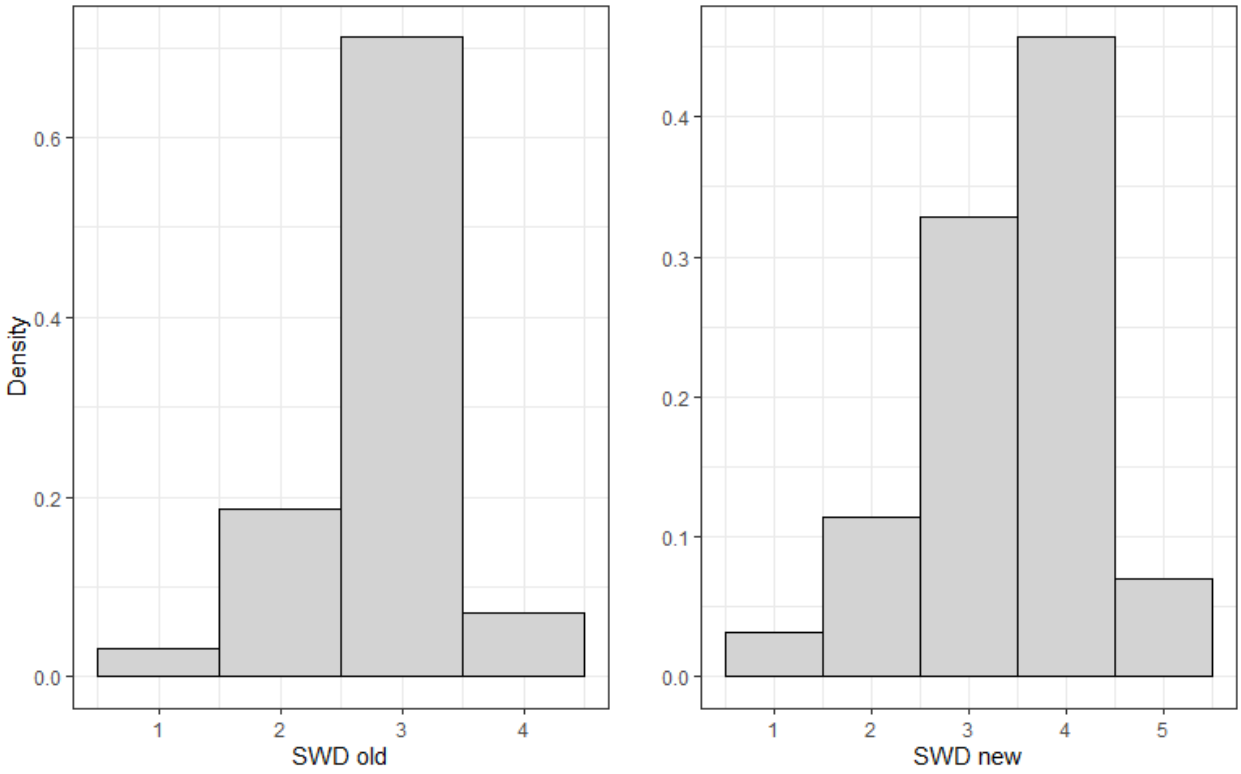


Figure 31: Histogram of SWD before and after the transformation

**B2.3. Comparative time-trends of political trust and satisfaction with democracy in Western Europe**

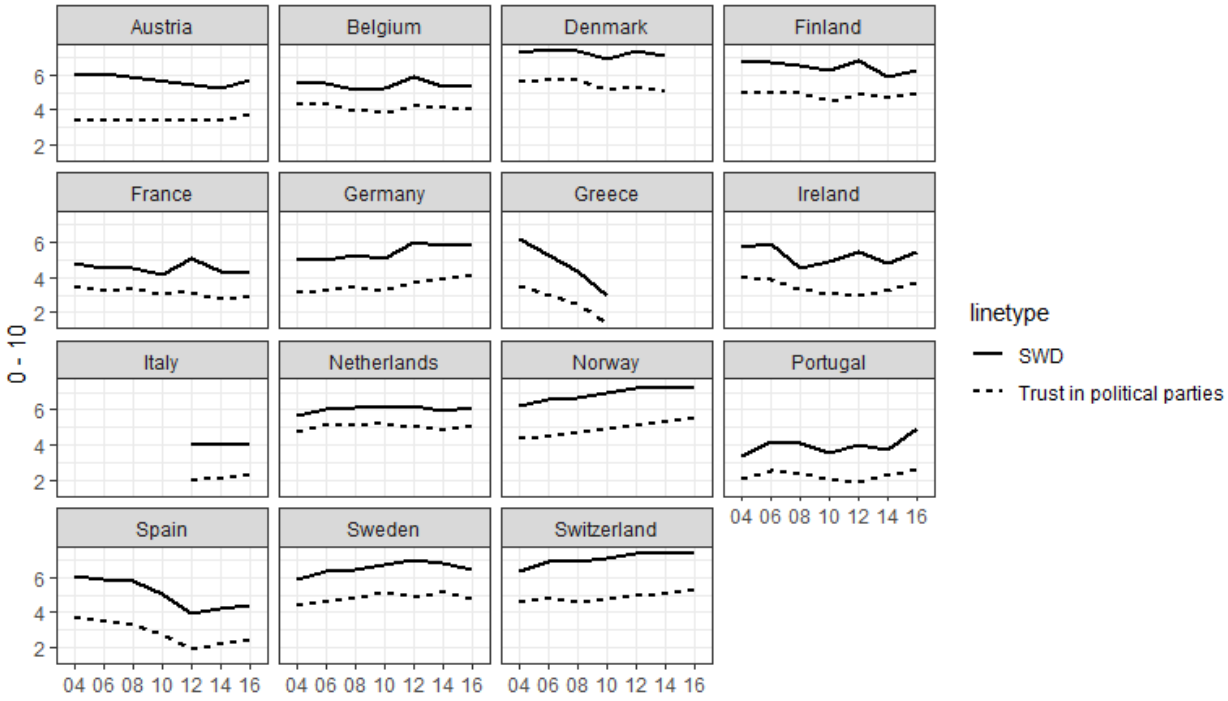


Figure 32: Trends in SWD and trust in political parties across Western Europe. Data from the cumulative files of the European Social Survey

### B2.4. Summary of the main model outputs

Table 33: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: DEPS 2002.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyLPF | −0.629+ | −0.647 | −0.635 | −0.613 | −0.606 |
| | (0.336) | (0.414) | (0.646) | (0.377) | (0.520) |
| treatment_bypartyLN | −0.420 | −0.594 | −0.423 | −0.401 | −0.541 |
| | (0.454) | (0.506) | (0.646) | (0.489) | (0.599) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −0.596+ | −0.542 | −0.602 | −0.586 | −0.498 |
| | (0.361) | (0.433) | (0.646) | (0.395) | (0.531) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | −0.189 | −0.276 | −0.195 | −0.226 | −0.285 |
| | (0.327) | (0.407) | (0.646) | (0.367) | (0.513) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | −0.381 | −0.382 | −0.388 | −0.390 | −0.374 |
| | (0.329) | (0.408) | (0.646) | (0.369) | (0.514) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Post Pim Fortuyn Death Dummy | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1543 | 1500 | 1540 | 1515 | 1471 |
| R2 | 0.313 | 0.366 | 0.314 | 0.313 | 0.371 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.311 | 0.357 | 0.310 | 0.309 | 0.359 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 34: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in Political Trust Index'. Data: ITANES 2013.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyM5S | −0.264 | −0.217 | −0.240 | −0.303 | −0.234 |
| | (0.228) | (0.223) | (0.229) | (0.252) | (0.252) |
| treatment_bypartySceltaCivica | 0.107 | 0.087 | −0.109 | 0.003 | −0.211 |
| | (0.244) | (0.242) | (0.244) | (0.263) | (0.263) |
| treatment_bypartyOtherNewParties | 0.576* | 0.606* | 0.545+ | 0.592* | 0.592* |
| | (0.277) | (0.279) | (0.278) | (0.291) | (0.292) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −0.485+ | −0.484+ | −0.496+ | −0.476 | −0.491 |
| | (0.281) | (0.279) | (0.280) | (0.306) | (0.306) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | −0.242 | −0.152 | −0.196 | −0.215 | −0.091 |
| | (0.220) | (0.221) | (0.222) | (0.247) | (0.252) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 0.445* | 0.484* | 0.385+ | 0.323 | 0.253 |
| | (0.195) | (0.194) | (0.197) | (0.224) | (0.223) |
| Pre-electoral Pol. Trust Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 966 | 965 | 962 | 892 | 890 |
| R2 | 0.204 | 0.221 | 0.221 | 0.210 | 0.248 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.198 | 0.207 | 0.213 | 0.201 | 0.228 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 35: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: CIUPANEL 2015.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyCs | −0.013 | −0.039 | −0.053 | −0.026 | −0.032 |
| | (0.115) | (0.100) | (0.121) | (0.127) | (0.094) |
| treatment_bypartyPodemos | −0.182 | −0.238* | −0.177 | −0.133 | −0.114 |
| | (0.111) | (0.095) | (0.119) | (0.127) | (0.089) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −0.093 | −0.103 | −0.119 | −0.090 | −0.096 |
| | (0.113) | (0.099) | (0.120) | (0.127) | (0.094) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | −0.089 | −0.079 | −0.085 | −0.046 | 0.021 |
| | (0.112) | (0.097) | (0.120) | (0.127) | (0.090) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 0.237+ | 0.170+ | 0.167 | 0.203 | 0.114 |
| | (0.130) | (0.101) | (0.140) | (0.141) | (0.101) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1848 | 1466 | 1848 | 1732 | 1390 |
| R2 | 0.145 | 0.178 | 0.164 | 0.153 | 0.210 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.142 | 0.165 | 0.161 | 0.148 | 0.193 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 36: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: DdM 2017.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_1roundAbstention | −0.056 | 0.006 | −0.052 | 0.006 |
| | (0.068) | (0.068) | (0.073) | (0.073) |
| treatment_1roundMarine Le Pen (old/loser) | −0.161** | −0.127* | −0.189** | −0.145* |
| | (0.057) | (0.064) | (0.060) | (0.068) |
| treatment_1roundEmmanuel Macron (new/winner) | 0.223*** | 0.218*** | 0.201*** | 0.187*** |
| | (0.038) | (0.040) | (0.039) | (0.040) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Stratification Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1939 | 1616 | 1918 | 1602 |
| R2 | 0.218 | 0.240 | 0.226 | 0.251 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.216 | 0.225 | 0.222 | 0.234 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 37: OLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: MAPLE 2019.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyCHEGA! | 0.069 | 0.087 | 0.053 | 0.128 | 0.289 |
| | (0.191) | (0.211) | (0.189) | (0.244) | (0.277) |
| treatment_bypartyLIVRE | 0.391 | 0.545 | 0.383 | 0.475 | 0.791+ |
| | (0.306) | (0.347) | (0.320) | (0.307) | (0.410) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | 0.202 | 0.191 | 0.173 | 0.239 | 0.265 |
| | (0.132) | (0.143) | (0.131) | (0.164) | (0.174) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | 0.497*** | 0.486*** | 0.448*** | 0.296+ | 0.340* |
| | (0.129) | (0.138) | (0.129) | (0.160) | (0.169) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 0.346* | 0.302* | 0.323* | 0.424* | 0.498** |
| | (0.140) | (0.149) | (0.140) | (0.173) | (0.182) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Stratification Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1109 | 953 | 1091 | 524 | 456 |
| R2 | 0.229 | 0.246 | 0.238 | 0.274 | 0.298 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.225 | 0.231 | 0.232 | 0.259 | 0.259 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

### B2.5. Replication of the main models using vote intention in the pre-electoral wave as an instrumental variable

Table 38: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: DEPS 2002.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyLPF | −1.264 | −1.131 | −1.258 | −1.321 | −1.156 |
| | (1.760) | (1.980) | (1.644) | (1.804) | (2.049) |
| treatment_bypartyLN | −0.809 | −0.778 | −0.800 | −1.004 | −0.909 |
| | (2.026) | (2.284) | (2.082) | (2.116) | (2.380) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −1.402 | −1.283 | −1.402 | −1.438 | −1.270 |
| | (1.816) | (2.050) | (1.571) | (1.890) | (2.158) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | −0.535 | −0.459 | −0.529 | −0.655 | −0.552 |
| | (1.757) | (1.984) | (1.622) | (1.806) | (2.056) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | −0.833 | −0.649 | −0.829 | −0.931 | −0.729 |
| | (1.758) | (1.982) | (1.721) | (1.804) | (2.050) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-electoral Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Post Pim Fortuyn Death Dummy | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1543 | 1500 | 1540 | 1515 | 1471 |
| R2 | 0.282 | 0.326 | 0.282 | 0.288 | 0.340 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.279 | 0.316 | 0.278 | 0.284 | 0.327 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 39: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in Political Trust Index'. Data: ITANES 2013.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyM5S | 0.192 | 0.326 | 0.305 | 0.318 | 0.735 |
| | (0.817) | (0.868) | (0.826) | (0.914) | (1.268) |
| treatment_bypartySceltaCivica | 0.379 | 0.247 | −0.154 | 0.543 | −0.141 |
| | (0.691) | (0.671) | (0.691) | (0.700) | (0.705) |
| treatment_bypartyOtherNewParties | 0.959+ | 1.092+ | 0.946+ | 0.939 | 0.978+ |
| | (0.579) | (0.578) | (0.569) | (0.628) | (0.583) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −0.620 | −0.785 | −0.701 | −1.148 | −2.426 |
| | (1.050) | (1.102) | (1.045) | (2.804) | (4.026) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | 0.265 | 0.339 | 0.322 | 0.338 | 0.603 |
| | (0.653) | (0.627) | (0.642) | (0.849) | (0.905) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 1.266* | 1.341* | 1.162* | 1.244* | 1.077+ |
| | (0.564) | (0.551) | (0.551) | (0.579) | (0.571) |
| Pre-electoral Pol. Trust Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 966 | 965 | 962 | 892 | 890 |
| R2 | 0.177 | 0.182 | 0.187 | 0.140 | −0.006 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.171 | 0.167 | 0.180 | 0.129 | −0.032 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 40: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: CIUPANEL 2015.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyCs | 1.605* | 2.001+ | 1.583* | 1.317+ | 1.603 |
| | (0.792) | (1.105) | (0.799) | (0.772) | (1.084) |
| treatment_bypartyPodemos | 1.321+ | 1.747 | 1.347+ | 1.110 | 1.491 |
| | (0.800) | (1.132) | (0.804) | (0.774) | (1.119) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | 1.299 | 1.723 | 1.301 | 0.903 | 1.155 |
| | (0.808) | (1.143) | (0.810) | (0.822) | (1.162) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | 1.717* | 2.124+ | 1.729* | 1.488+ | 1.772 |
| | (0.815) | (1.120) | (0.820) | (0.780) | (1.099) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 1.920* | 2.400* | 1.867* | 1.581+ | 1.963+ |
| | (0.831) | (1.126) | (0.846) | (0.838) | (1.126) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Post-electoral weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1848 | 1466 | 1848 | 1732 | 1390 |
| R2 | −0.062 | −0.109 | −0.041 | −0.032 | −0.015 |
| R2 Adj. | −0.065 | −0.127 | −0.045 | −0.038 | −0.038 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 41: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: DdM 2017.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_1roundAbstention | 0.024 | −0.020 | 0.023 | −0.050 |
| | (0.302) | (0.230) | (0.371) | (0.258) |
| treatment_1roundMarine Le Pen (old/loser) | −0.256** | −0.170+ | −0.348*** | −0.211* |
| | (0.088) | (0.098) | (0.098) | (0.102) |
| treatment_1roundEmmanuel Macron (new/winner) | 0.229** | 0.218** | 0.182* | 0.160+ |
| | (0.081) | (0.081) | (0.088) | (0.085) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Stratification Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1939 | 1616 | 1918 | 1602 |
| R2 | 0.163 | 0.237 | 0.141 | 0.243 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.161 | 0.222 | 0.138 | 0.226 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table 42: 2SLS Specifications with Robust Standard Errors. DV: 'Change in SWD'. Data: MAPLE 2019.

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| treatment_bypartyCHEGA! | −0.189 | −0.350 | −0.227 | −0.353 | 0.155 |
| | (0.894) | (1.064) | (0.904) | (1.536) | (1.892) |
| treatment_bypartyLIVRE | 0.091 | −0.428 | 0.011 | −0.660 | −1.254 |
| | (0.995) | (1.259) | (0.996) | (1.811) | (2.707) |
| treatment_bypartyAbstention | −0.030 | −0.241 | −0.086 | 0.130 | 0.478 |
| | (0.679) | (0.784) | (0.687) | (1.094) | (1.229) |
| treatment_bypartyOld party into parliament | 0.575 | 0.447 | 0.503 | 0.124 | 0.433 |
| | (0.662) | (0.743) | (0.672) | (1.086) | (1.217) |
| treatment_byparty(Old) winner party | 0.331 | 0.136 | 0.280 | −0.013 | 0.330 |
| | (0.689) | (0.777) | (0.695) | (1.175) | (1.299) |
| Pre-electoral SWD Levels | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Stratification Weights | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Socio-demographic Controls | No | Yes | No | No | Yes |
| Econ. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| Pol. Attitudinal Controls | No | No | No | Yes | Yes |
| Num.Obs. | 1109 | 953 | 1091 | 524 | 456 |
| R2 | 0.210 | 0.209 | 0.218 | 0.237 | 0.198 |
| R2 Adj. | 0.206 | 0.194 | 0.212 | 0.222 | 0.153 |

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

## B2.6. Coefficient plots 2SLS

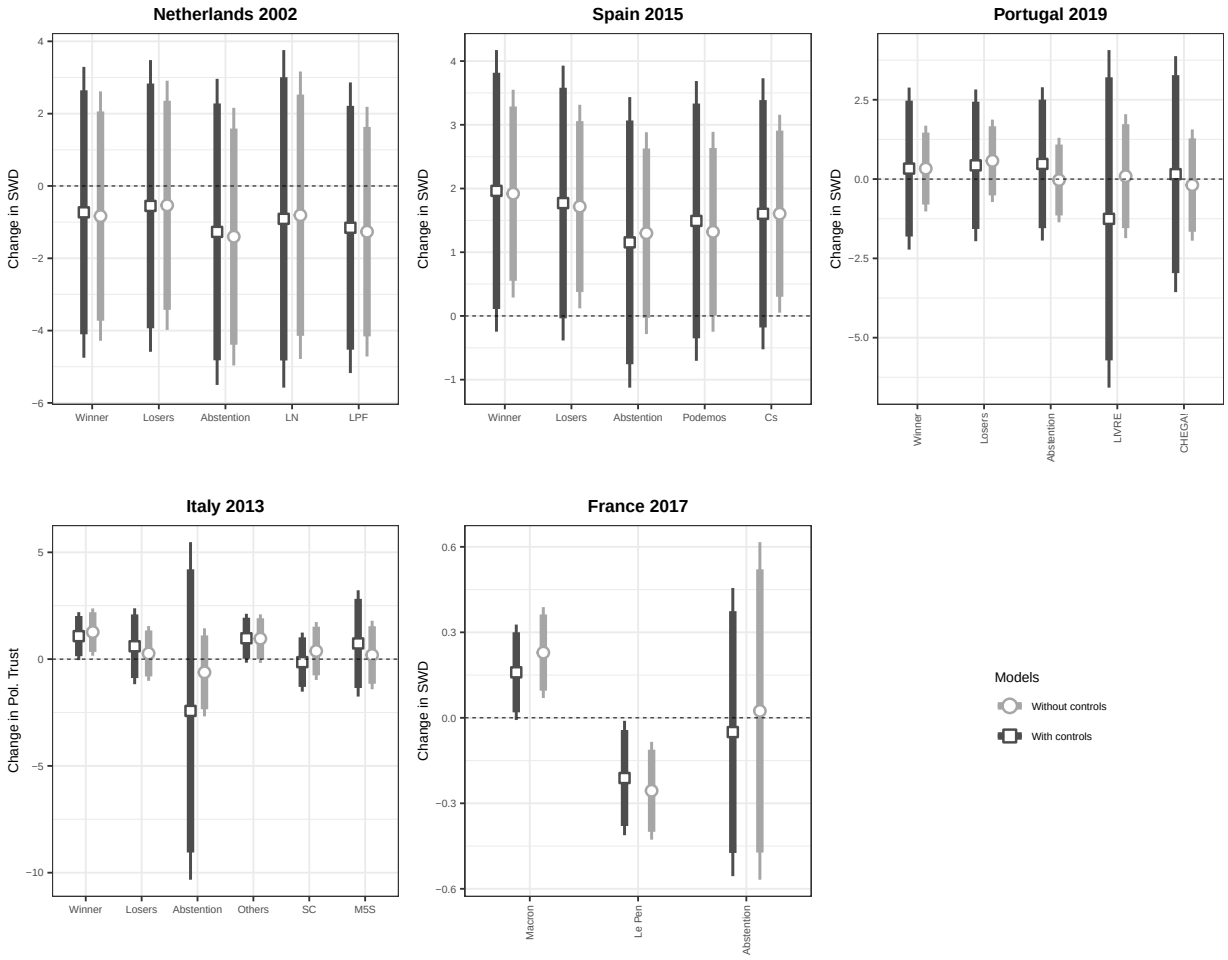


Figure 33: Coefficient plots of change in SWD after the elections (2SLS)

# Appendix C. Supplementary material for Chapter 4

## C1. Experimental design

### C1.1. Summary of the hypotheses

Table 43: Summary of the hypotheses

| Hypothesis | Treatment | Expectation |
|---|---|---|
| **Pre-registered** | | |
| Hypothesis 1a | T1a | +SWD |
| Hypothesis 1b | T1b | +SWD |
| Hypothesis 3 | T2 | -SWD |
| **Exploratory** | | |
| Hypothesis 2 | T1a < T1b | $\Delta SWD$ |
| Hypothesis 4 | T2 | -OutgroupAffects |
| Hypothesis 5 | T1a\|T1b < T2 | $\Delta SWD$ |

### C1.2. Summary of the micro-targetting strategy

Table 44: Summary of the micro-targetting strategy

| Age | Gender | Ads | Interests |
|---|---|---|---|
| 18-39 | Female | Ad 1/Ad 2 | M6 TV channel/RTL TV/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |
| 40-65 | Female | Ad 2/Ad 3 | M6 TV channel/TF1/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |
| +65 | Female | Ad 3 | M6 TV channel/TF1/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |
| 18-39 | Male | Ad 4/Ad 5 | M6 TV channel/RTL TV/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |
| 40-65 | Male | Ad 5/Ad 6 | M6 TV channel/TF1/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |
| +65 | Male | Ad 6 | M6 TV channel/TF1/Touche Pas à Mon Poste |

## C1.3. Images of Facebook targeted ads

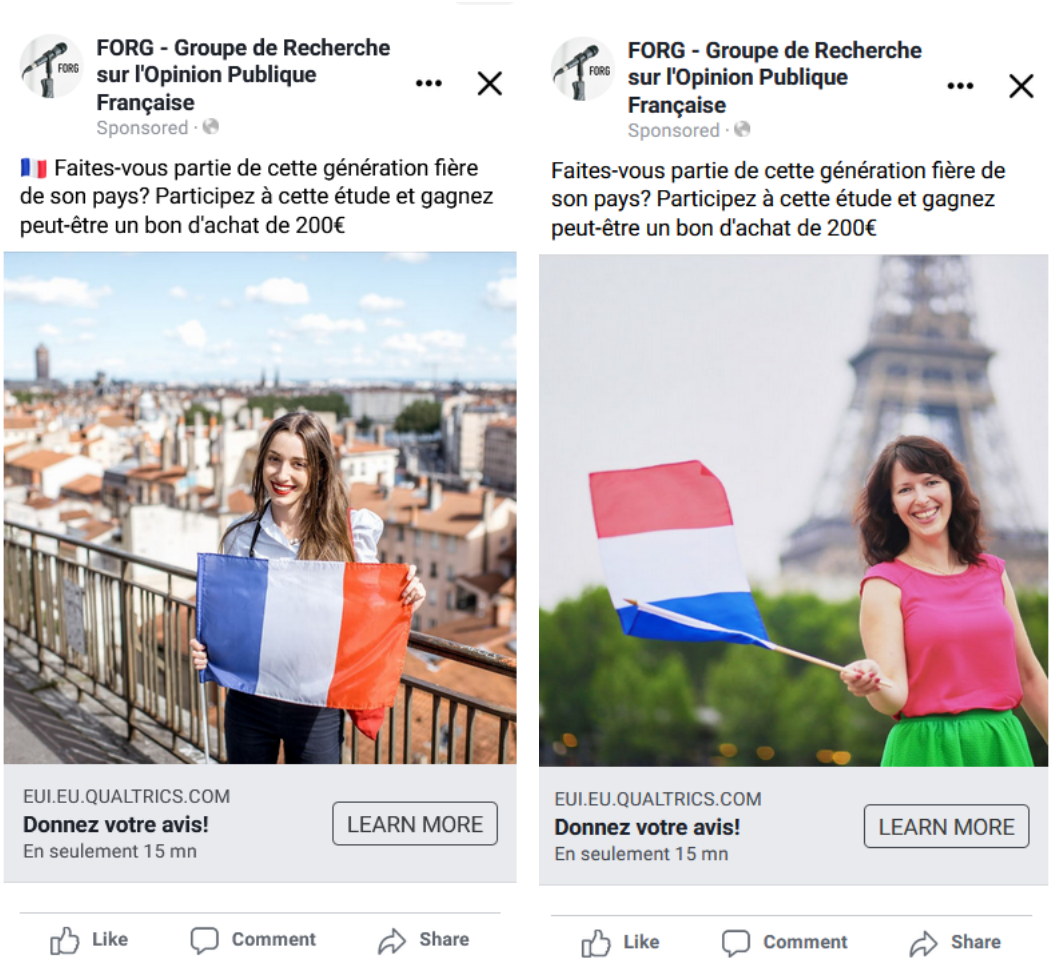


Figure 34: Facebook ads 1 and 2

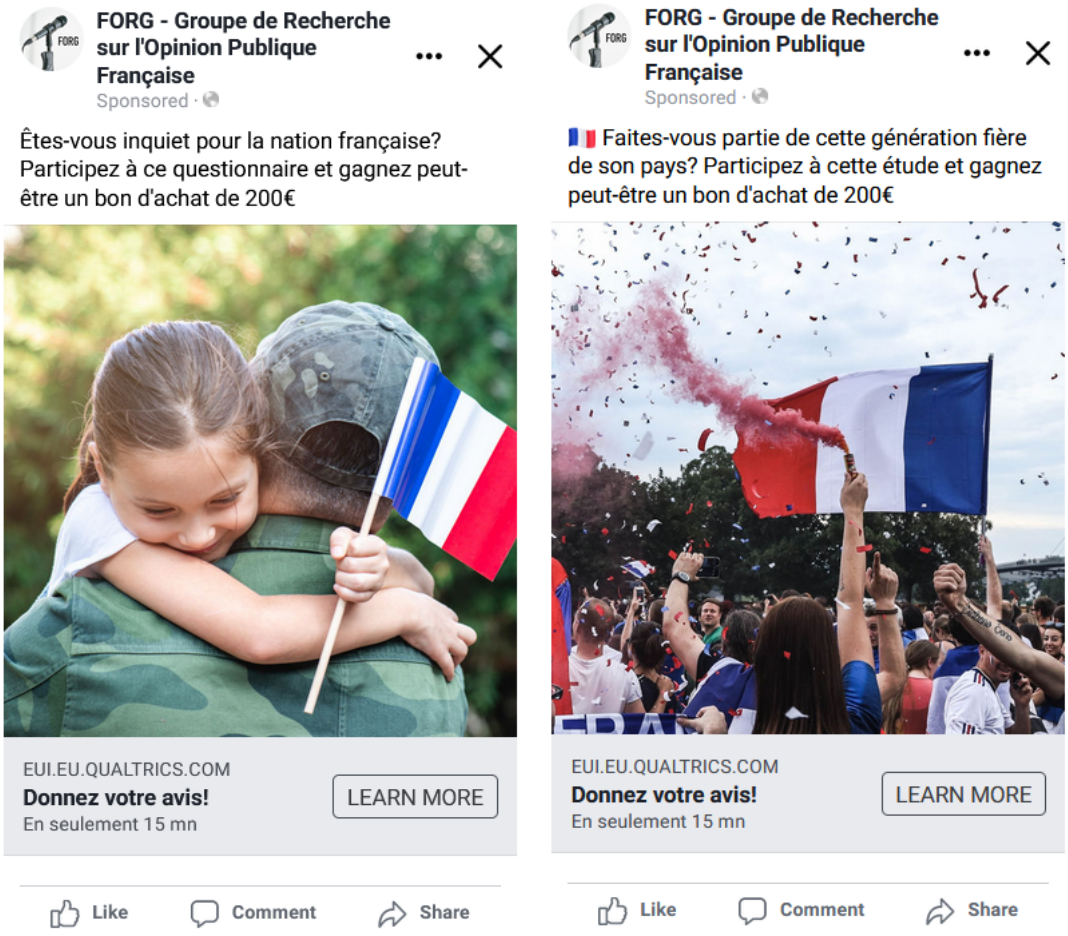


Figure 35: Facebook ads 3 and 4

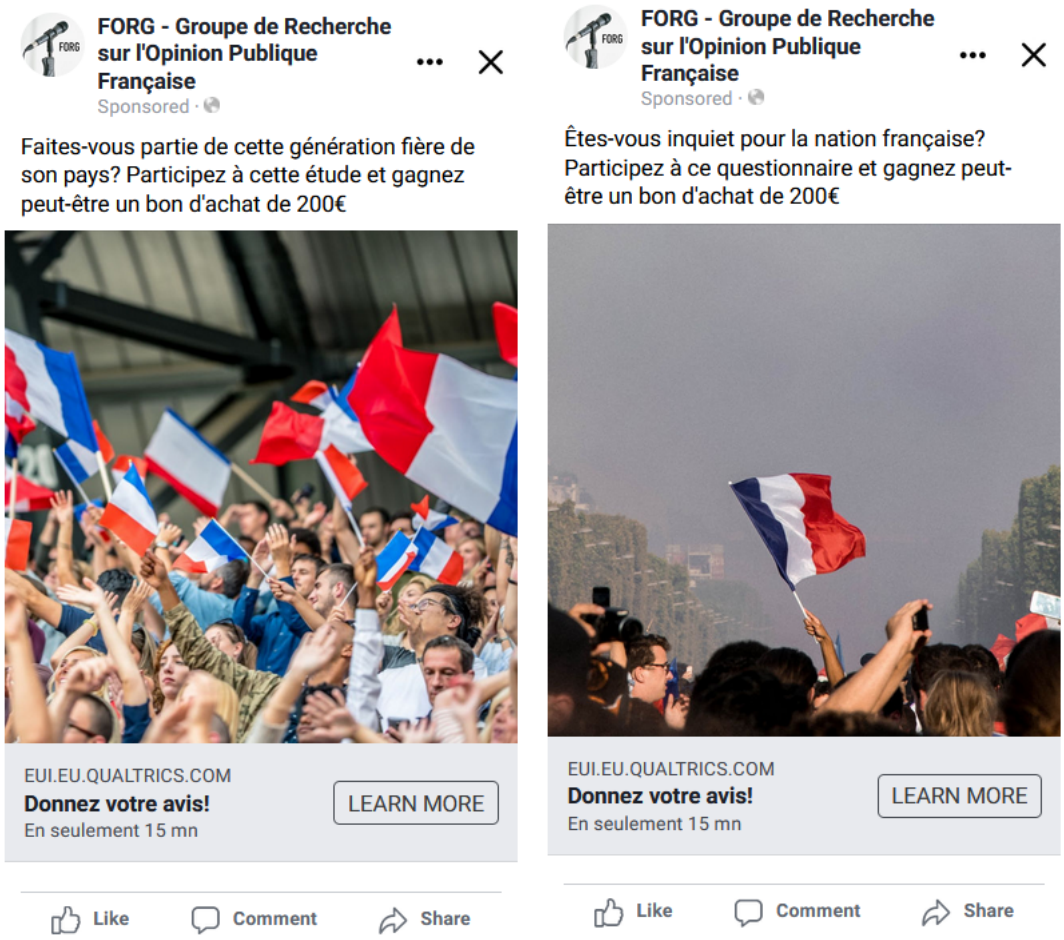


Figure 36: Facebook ads 5 and 6

## C1.4. Description of the vignettes

Table 45: Description of the vignettes by treatment condition

| Condition | Text |
|---|---|
| **Control** | The results of the first round of the presidential elections were known already the 10th of April. Among the competing candidates, Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen passed to the second round. The candidate Jean-Luc M*é*lenchon and the candidate *É*ric Zemmour were the third and fourth most voted candidates, respectively. |
| **Treatment 1a** (Zemmour version) | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Éric Zemmour** obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **the winner of the second round may include him in the new government**. |
| **Treatment 1a** (Le Pen version) | + Some people highlight that the candidate Marine Le Pen obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **he has a great chance of becoming the winner of the second round**. |
| **Treatment 1b** (Zemmour version) | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Éric Zemmour** obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **with the confirmation of these results in the legislative elections, he could play a central role in the National Assembly**. |
| **Treatment 1b** (Le Pen version) | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Marine Le Pen** obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **with the confirmation of these results in the legislative elections, he could play a central role in the National Assembly**. |
| **Treatment 2** | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Emmanuel Macron** obtained particularly **good** results, especially because **he has a great chance of becoming the winner of the second round**. |
| **Treatment 3** | + Some people highlight that the candidate **Éric Zemmour** obtained particularly **worrying** results, **especially because of his controversial opinions during the campaign**. |

## C1.5. Manipulation checks

- **Perceptions of electoral success**

"If you think about the outcome of the election, which candidates do belong to the winners and which to the losers?"

[For all the parties nominated to the first round of the elections]

1. Clearly to the losers
2. Rather to the losers
3. Neither to the losers nor to the winners
4. Rather to the winner
5. Clearly to the winners

- **Text comprehension check**

"To what extent do you think this text was difficult or easy to understand?"

1. To a very large extent
2. To a large extent
3. To a moderate extent
4. To a small extent
5. To a very small extent

# C2. Data description

## C2.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 46: Summary of descriptive statistics - Zemmour supporters

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| munic_size | 122 | 2.3 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| gender | 123 | 1.8 | 0.4 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| educ | 123 | 4.6 | 1.3 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 6 |
| occup_current | 123 | 5.3 | 2.2 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 |
| income | 123 | 2.6 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 |
| swd_ch | 123 | 0.6 | 2.2 | −4 | 0 | 2 | 10 |
| ext_eff_index_ch | 111 | −0.2 | 1.5 | −4.0 | −1.5 | 0.5 | 4.0 |
| int_eff_index_ch | 112 | −0.3 | 2.0 | −6.5 | −1.5 | 0.6 | 5.0 |

Table 47: Summary of descriptive statistics - Le Pen supporters

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| munic_size | 64 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5 |
| gender | 64 | 1.7 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 |
| educ | 64 | 4.0 | 1.6 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 6 |
| occup_current | 64 | 6.3 | 1.7 | 2 | 5 | 8 | 8 |
| income | 64 | 2.4 | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 3.2 | 5 |
| swd_ch | 64 | 1.0 | 2.5 | −6 | 0 | 3 | 8 |
| ext_eff_index_ch | 58 | 0.3 | 2.5 | −9.0 | −0.5 | 1.5 | 8.5 |
| int_eff_index_ch | 60 | −0.1 | 2.1 | −5.5 | −1.0 | 1.0 | 6.0 |

Table 48: Summary of descriptive statistics - Others

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| munic_size | 173 | 2.2 | 1.2 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 5.0 |
| gender | 176 | 1.6 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| educ | 175 | 5.0 | 1.3 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 6.0 | 6.0 |
| occup_current | 175 | 5.4 | 2.2 | 1.0 | 3.0 | 7.0 | 8.0 |
| income | 174 | 2.6 | 1.5 | 1.0 | 1.0 | 4.0 | 5.0 |
| swd_ch | 176 | 0.7 | 2.1 | −7 | 0 | 1.2 | 9 |
| ext_eff_index_ch | 154 | 0.1 | 1.7 | −10.0 | −0.5 | 1.0 | 6.0 |
| int_eff_index_ch | 157 | −0.1 | 1.7 | −5.0 | −1.0 | 0.5 | 4.5 |

### C2.2. Like-dislike distribution across blocks of respondents

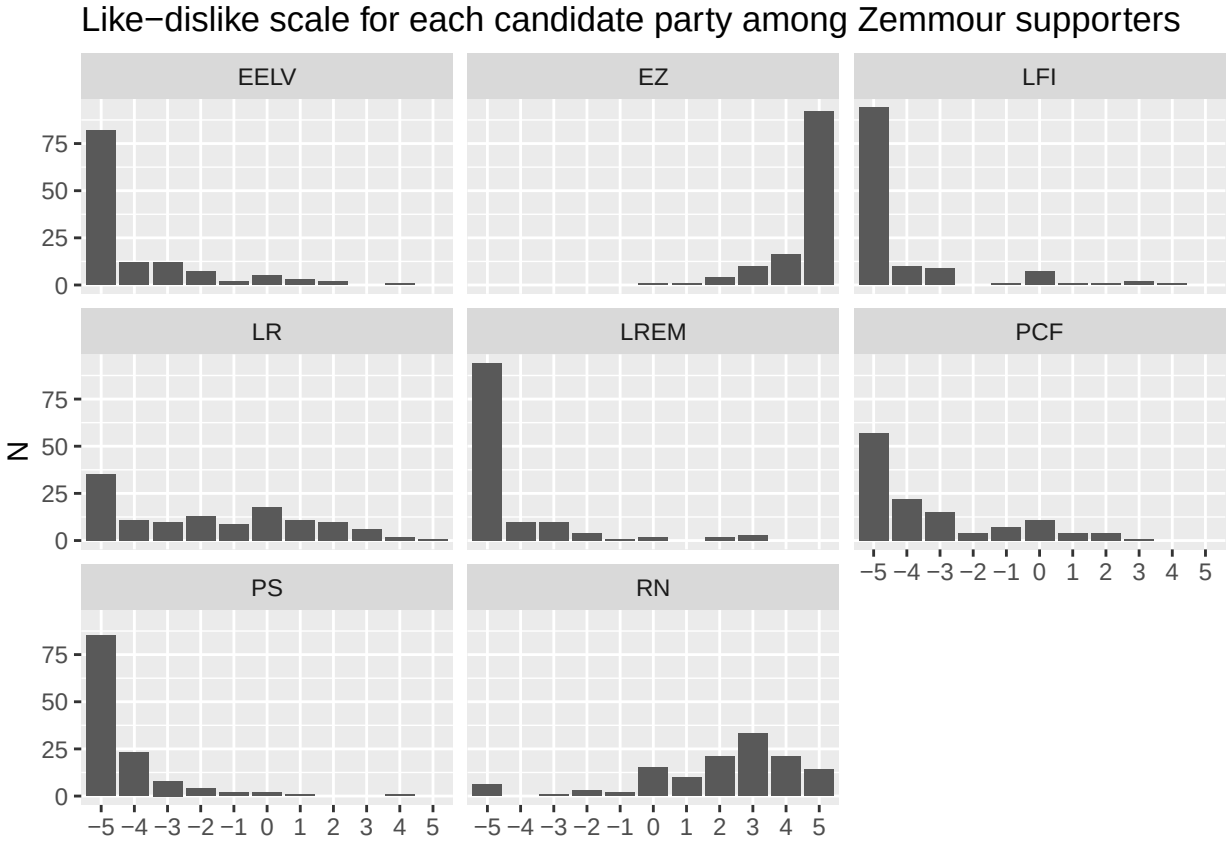


Figure 37: Zemmour supporters like-dislike scales

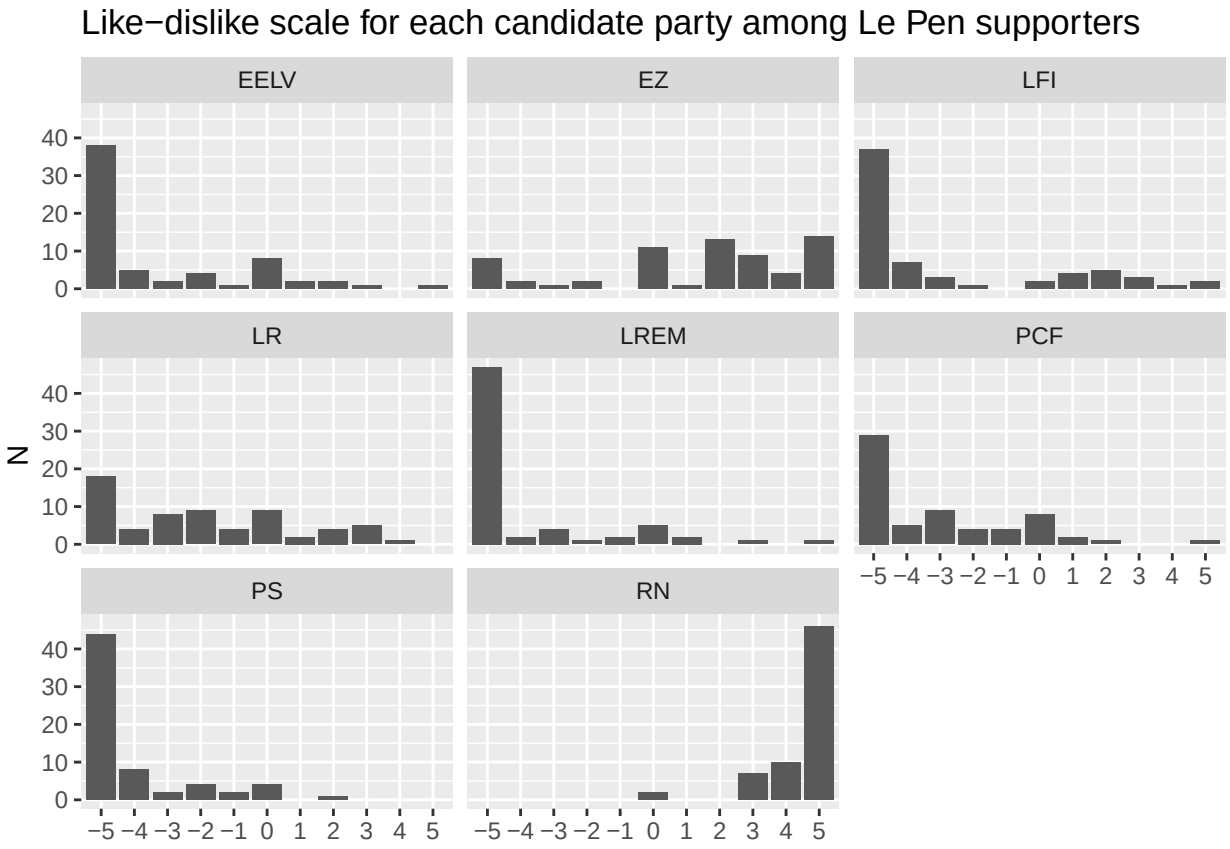


Figure 38: Le Pen supporters like-dislike scales

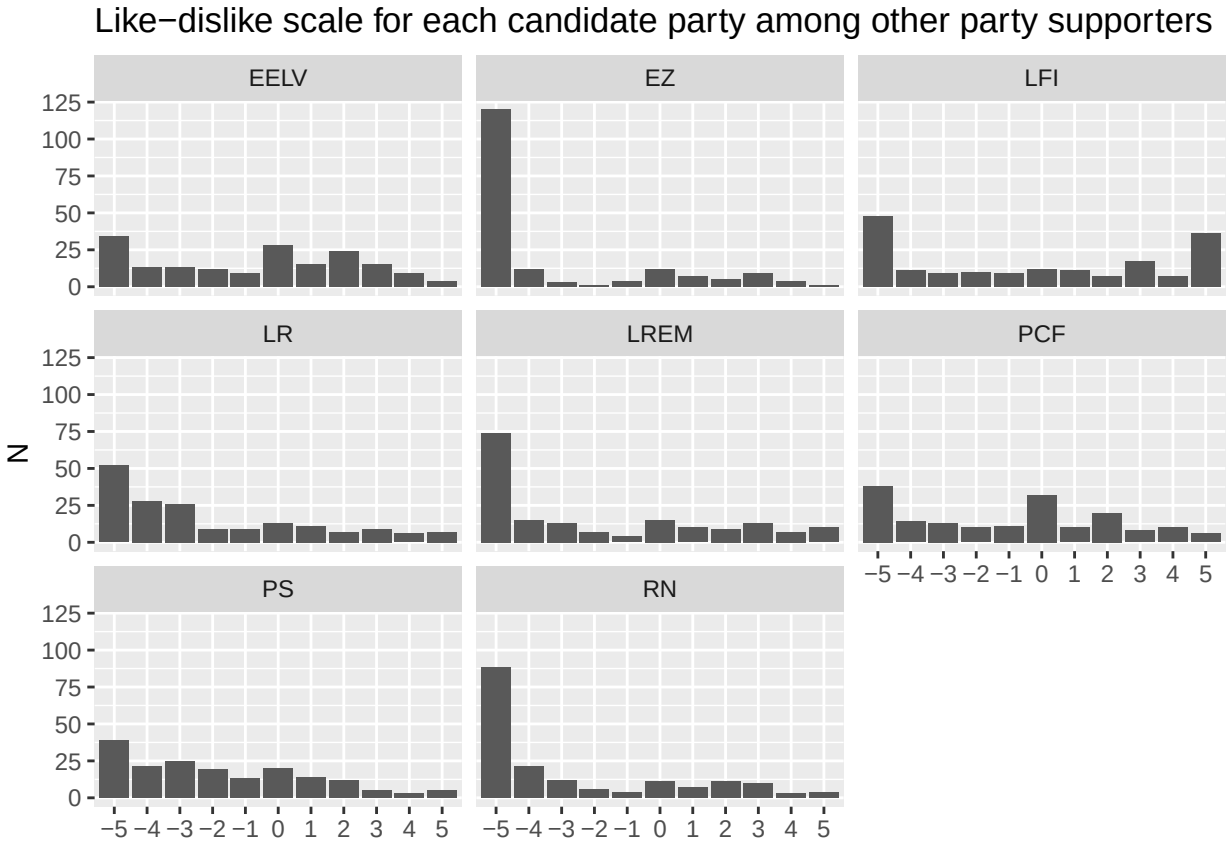


Figure 39: Others like-dislike scales

## C3. Qualitative codebook schema and results

Table 49: Qualitative codebook schema and results

| Code | Zemmour Block | Prop. Code Z | Other Block | Prop. Code O | Le Pen Block | Prop. Code LP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FEELING | 76 | 59.84 | 100 | 55.25 | 36 | 55.38 |
| Disgust_Loathing | 5 | 3.94 | 10 | 5.52 | 2 | 3.08 |
| Unsurprised | 6 | 4.72 | 8 | 4.42 | 4 | 6.15 |
| Disbelief | 4 | 3.15 | 1 | 0.55 | 4 | 6.15 |
| Disapointment | 28 | 22.05 | 33 | 18.23 | 5 | 7.69 |
| Fatalism | 17 | 13.39 | 23 | 12.71 | 9 | 13.85 |
| Negative | 10 | 7.87 | 17 | 9.39 | 3 | 4.62 |
| Fear_Anxiety | 8 | 6.3 | 15 | 8.29 | 3 | 4.62 |
| Surprised | 5 | 3.94 | 3 | 1.66 | 1 | 1.54 |
| Satisfaction | 2 | 1.57 | 5 | 2.76 | 5 | 7.69 |
| Hope | 2 | 1.57 | 2 | 1.1 | 4 | 6.15 |
| Pride_Enthusiasm | 5 | 3.94 | 5 | 2.76 | 0 | 0 |
| GROUP | 79 | 62.2 | 71 | 39.23 | 33 | 50.77 |
| I. POSITIVE | 16 | 12.6 | 13 | 7.18 | 7 | 10.77 |
| R_Zemmour | 8 | 6.3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Radical_Right | 3 | 2.36 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.54 |
| RN_LePen | 5 | 3.94 | 1 | 0.55 | 6 | 9.23 |
| LREM_Macron | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2.21 | 0 | 0 |
| LFI_Melenchon | 0 | 0 | 8 | 4.42 | 0 | 0 |
| Left | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 |
| LR_Pecresse | 1 | 0.79 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| II. NEGATIVE | 74 | 58.27 | 67 | 37.02 | 27 | 41.54 |
| LREM_Macron | 38 | 29.92 | 18 | 9.94 | 19 | 29.23 |
| PS_Hidalgo | 1 | 0.79 | 2 | 1.1 | 1 | 1.54 |
| LR_Pecresse | 1 | 0.79 | 1 | 0.55 | 3 | 4.62 |
| Radical_Left | 2 | 1.57 | 1 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| EELV_Jadot | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.54 |
| Media | 21 | 16.54 | 11 | 6.08 | 3 | 4.62 |
| French_people | 19 | 14.96 | 10 | 5.52 | 7 | 10.77 |
| LFI_Melenchon | 8 | 6.3 | 6 | 3.31 | 3 | 4.62 |
| Elites | 4 | 3.15 | 6 | 3.31 | 3 | 4.62 |
| Left | 4 | 3.15 | 7 | 3.87 | 1 | 1.54 |
| RN_LePen | 6 | 4.72 | 18 | 9.94 | 2 | 3.08 |
| Extremism | 1 | 0.79 | 3 | 1.66 | 0 | 0 |
| Radical_Right | 0 | 0 | 5 | 2.76 | 0 | 0 |
| Populist | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1.66 | 0 | 0 |
| R_Zemmour | 9 | 7.09 | 2 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 |
| III. DESCRIPTIVE | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| PS_Hidalgo | 2 | 1.57 | 3 | 1.66 | 0 | 0 |
| LR_Pecresse | 2 | 1.57 | 3 | 1.66 | 0 | 0 |
| Left | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| LREM_Macron | 2 | 1.57 | 3 | 1.66 | 0 | 0 |
| RN_LePen | 5 | 3.94 | 2 | 1.1 | 0 | 0 |
| LFI_Melenchon | 1 | 0.79 | 1 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| Extremism | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0.55 | 0 | 0 |
| DEMOCRATIC EVALUATIONS | 40 | 31.5 | 49 | 27.07 | 17 | 26.15 |
| Rigged_Elections | 20 | 15.75 | 16 | 8.84 | 12 | 18.46 |
| Other_Eval_Negative | 11 | 8.66 | 20 | 11.05 | 1 | 1.54 |
| Electoral_System | 5 | 3.94 | 11 | 6.08 | 2 | 3.08 |
| Bias | 14 | 11.02 | 10 | 5.52 | 2 | 3.08 |

## C4. Quantitative analysis of the experiment

### C4.1. Distribution of the treatment among respondents

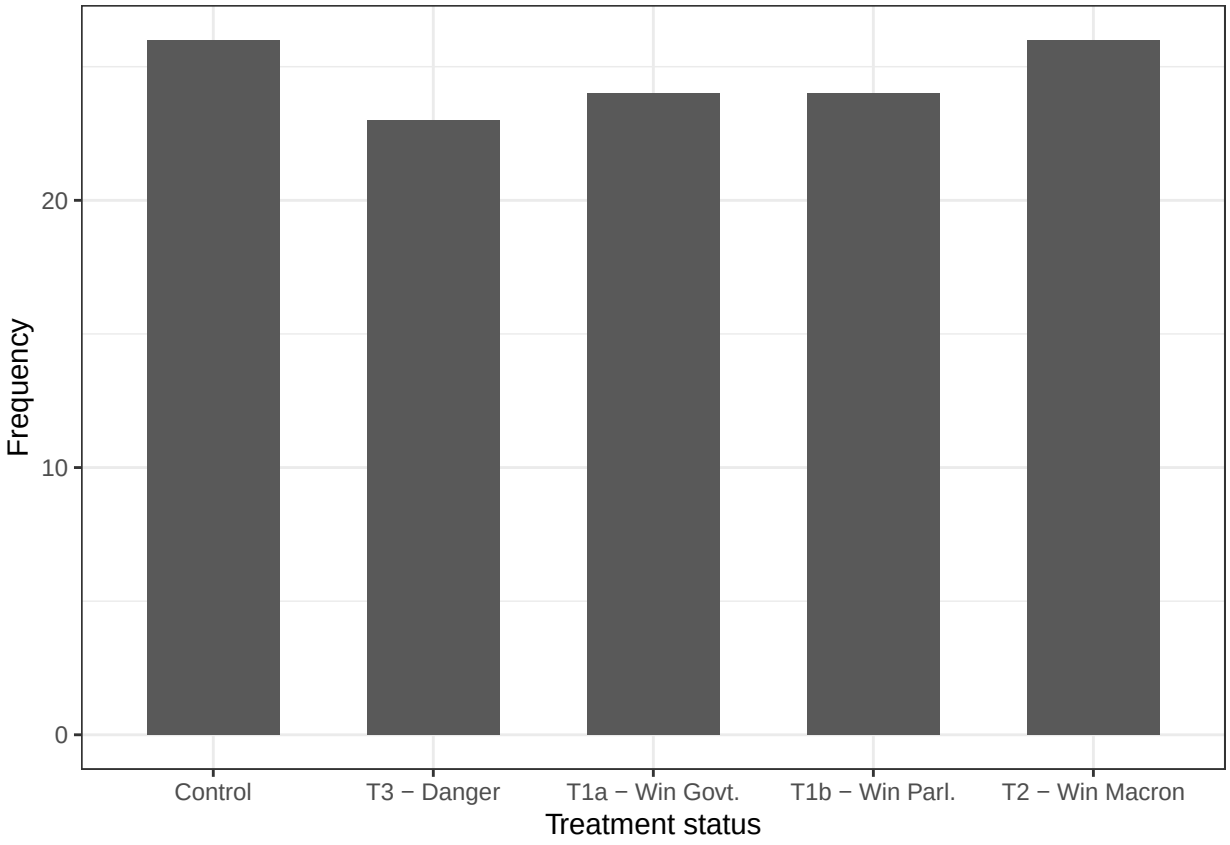


Figure 40: Distribution of the treatment - Zemmour supporters

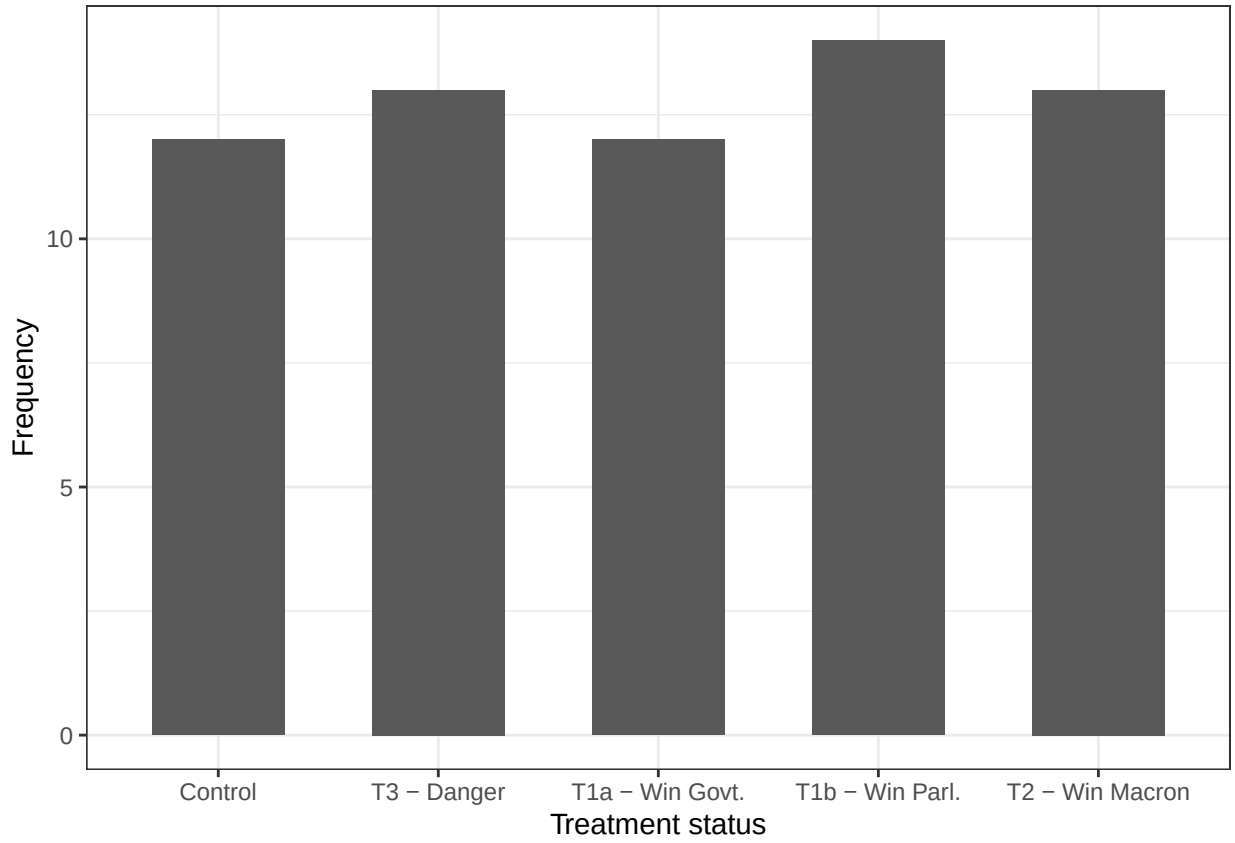


Figure 41: Distribution of the treatment - Le Pen supporters

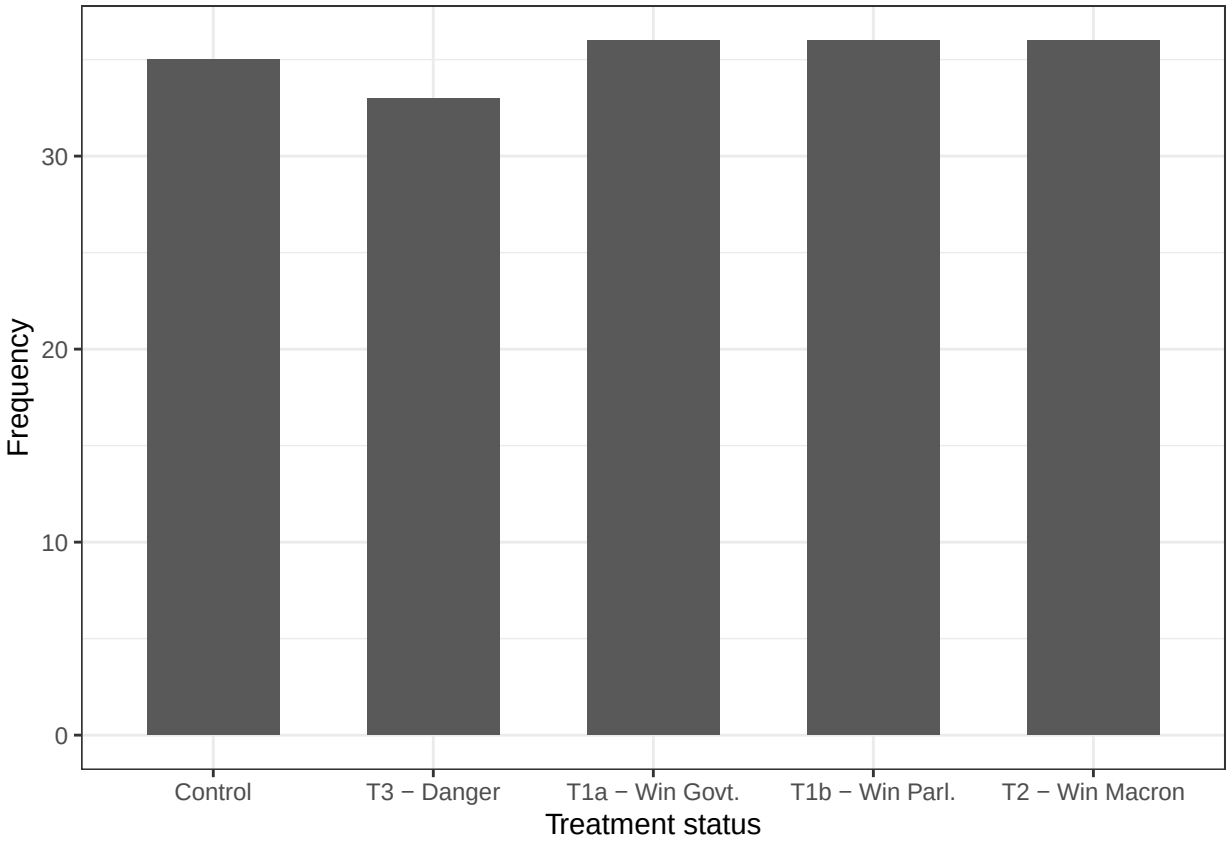


Figure 42: Distribution of the treatment - Others

### C4.2. Covariate balance


Figure 43: Covariate balance plot block I

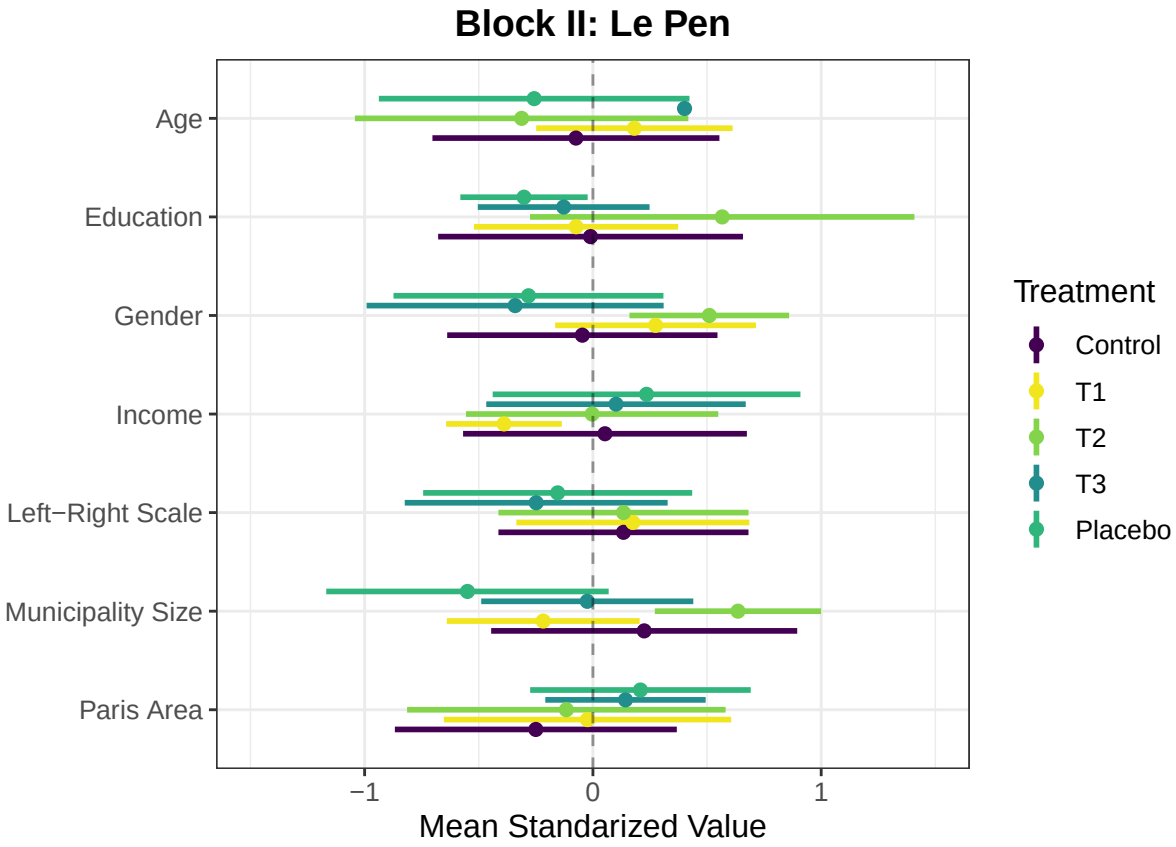


Figure 44: Covariate balance plot block II

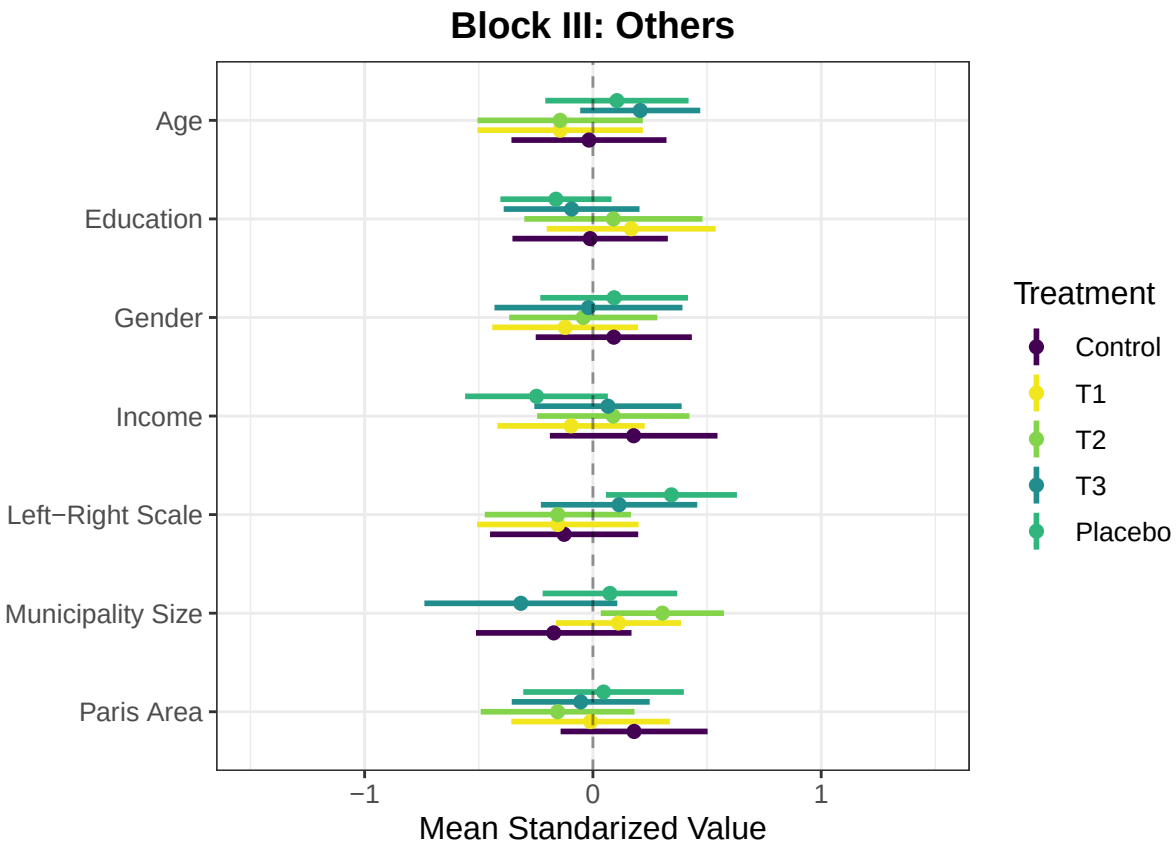


Figure 45: Covariate balance plot block III

### C4.3. Analysis of the manipulation check

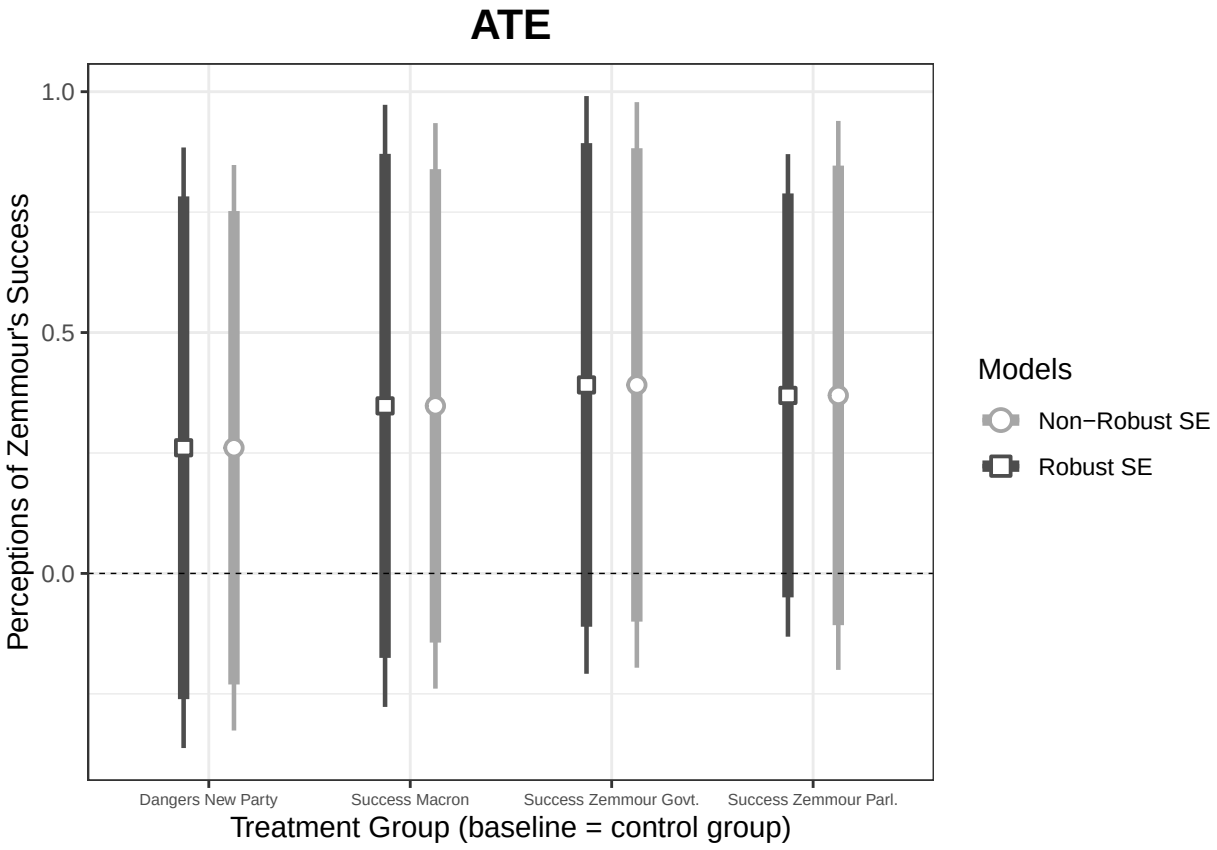


Figure 46: ATE on perceptions of the in-group success (block I)

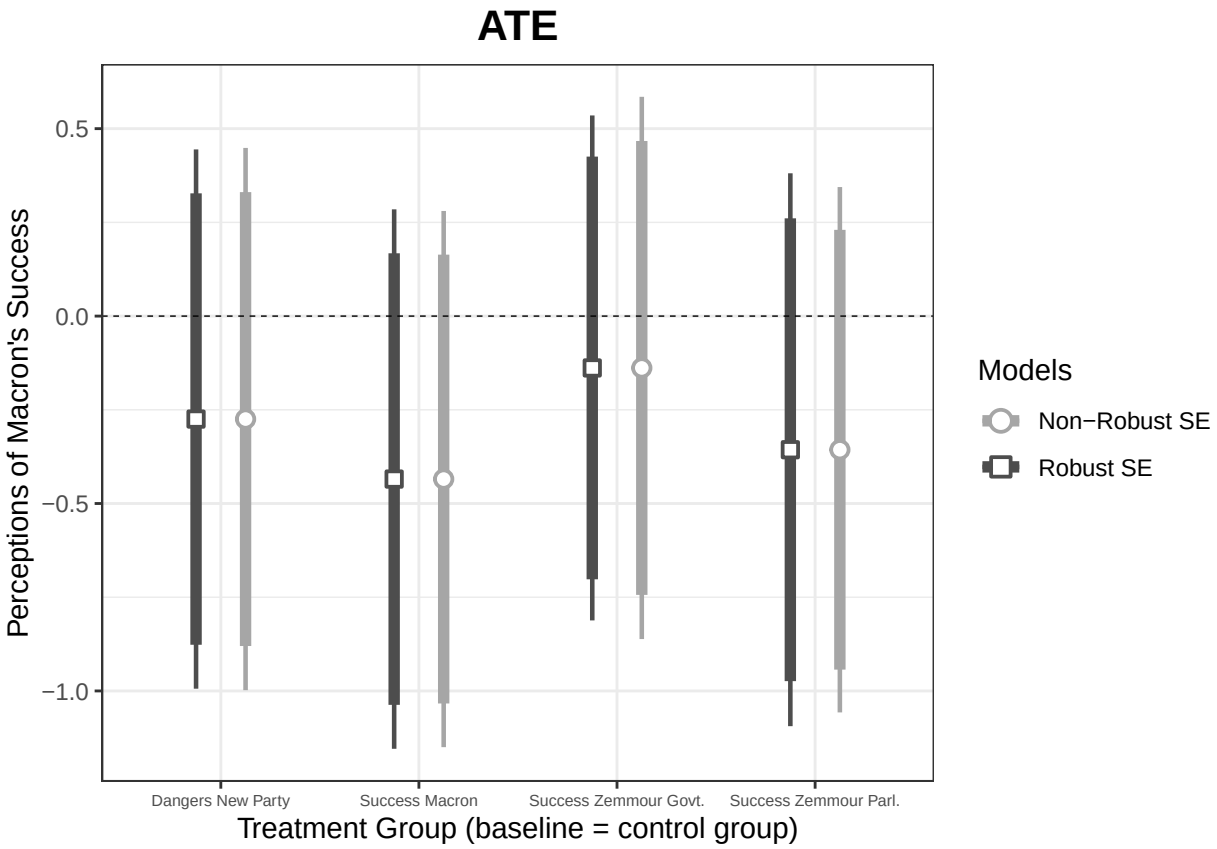


Figure 47: ATE on perceptions of the out-group success (block I)

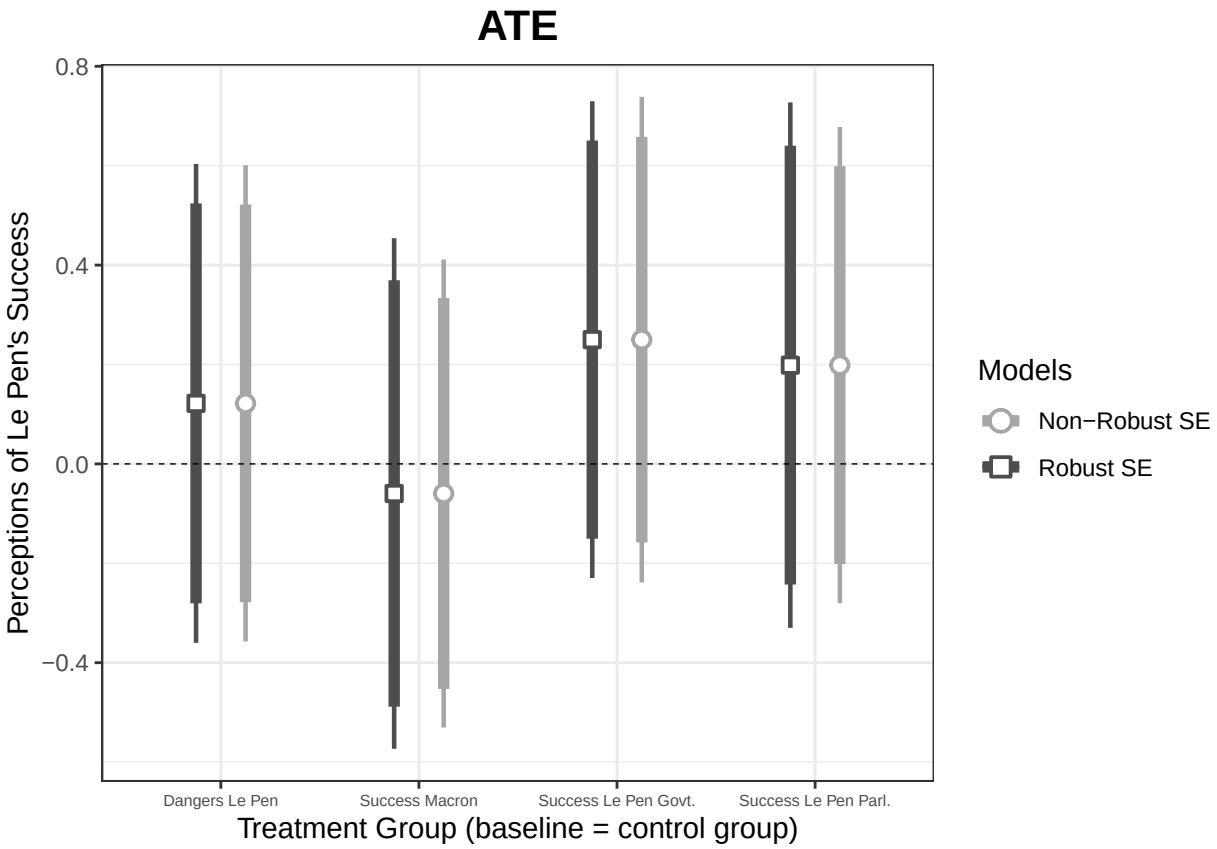


Figure 48: ATE on perceptions of the in-group success (block II)

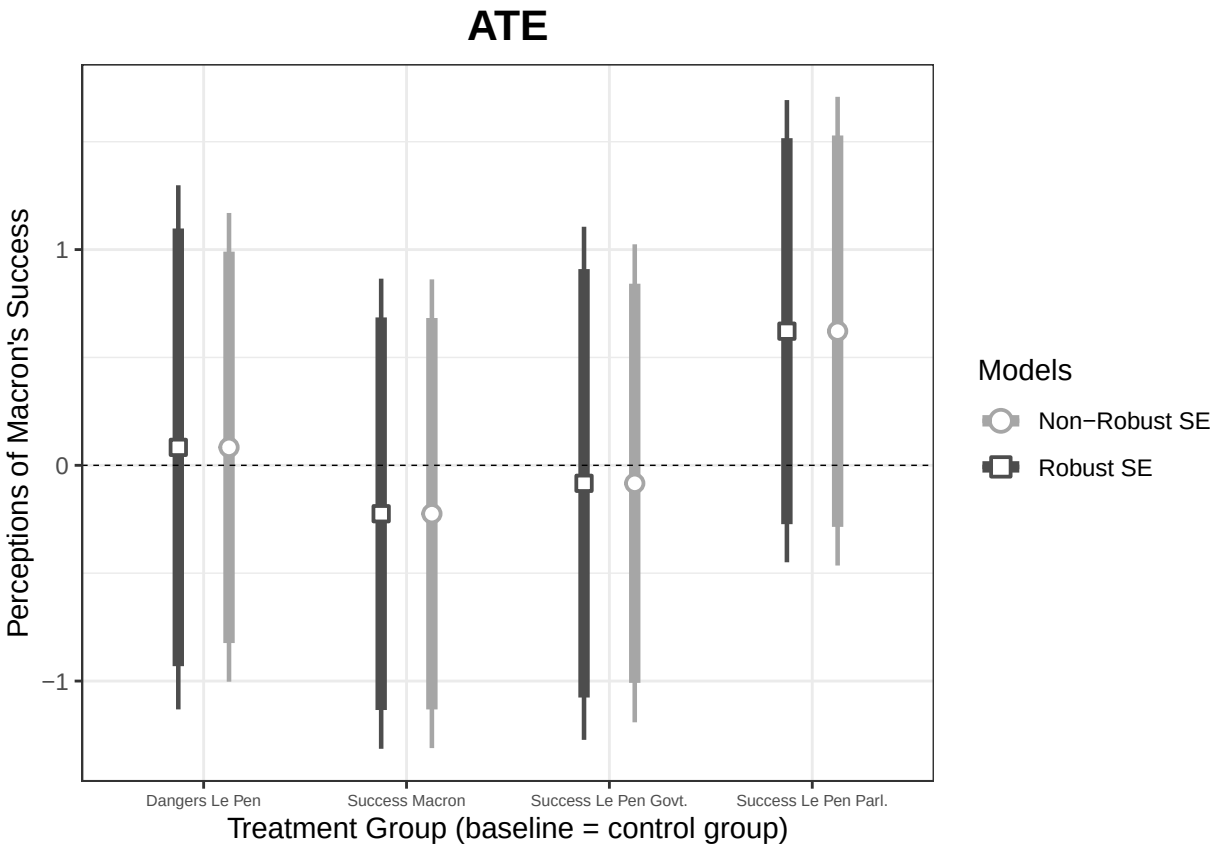


Figure 49: ATE on perceptions of the out-group success (block II)

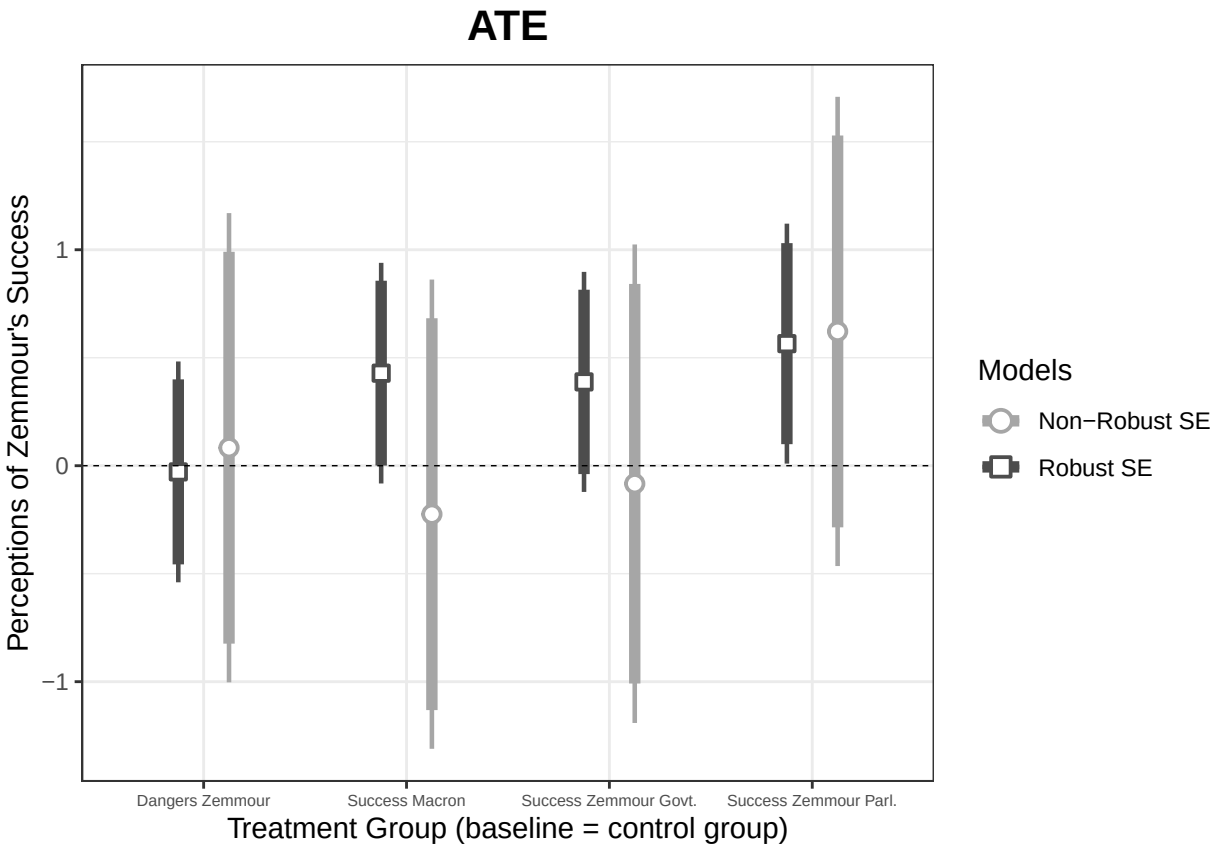


Figure 50: ATE on perceptions of the in-group success (block III)

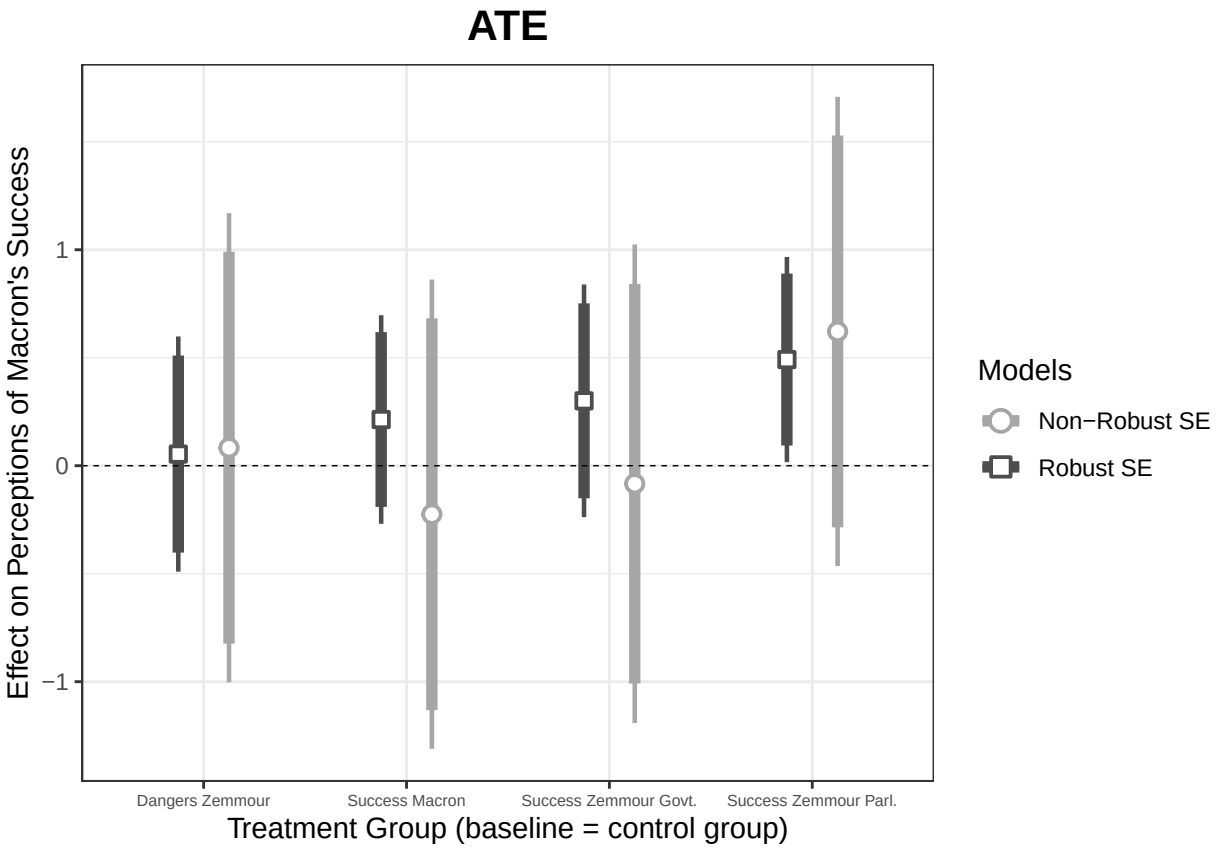


Figure 51: ATE on perceptions of the out-group success (block III)

## C4.4. Analysis of the comprehension check

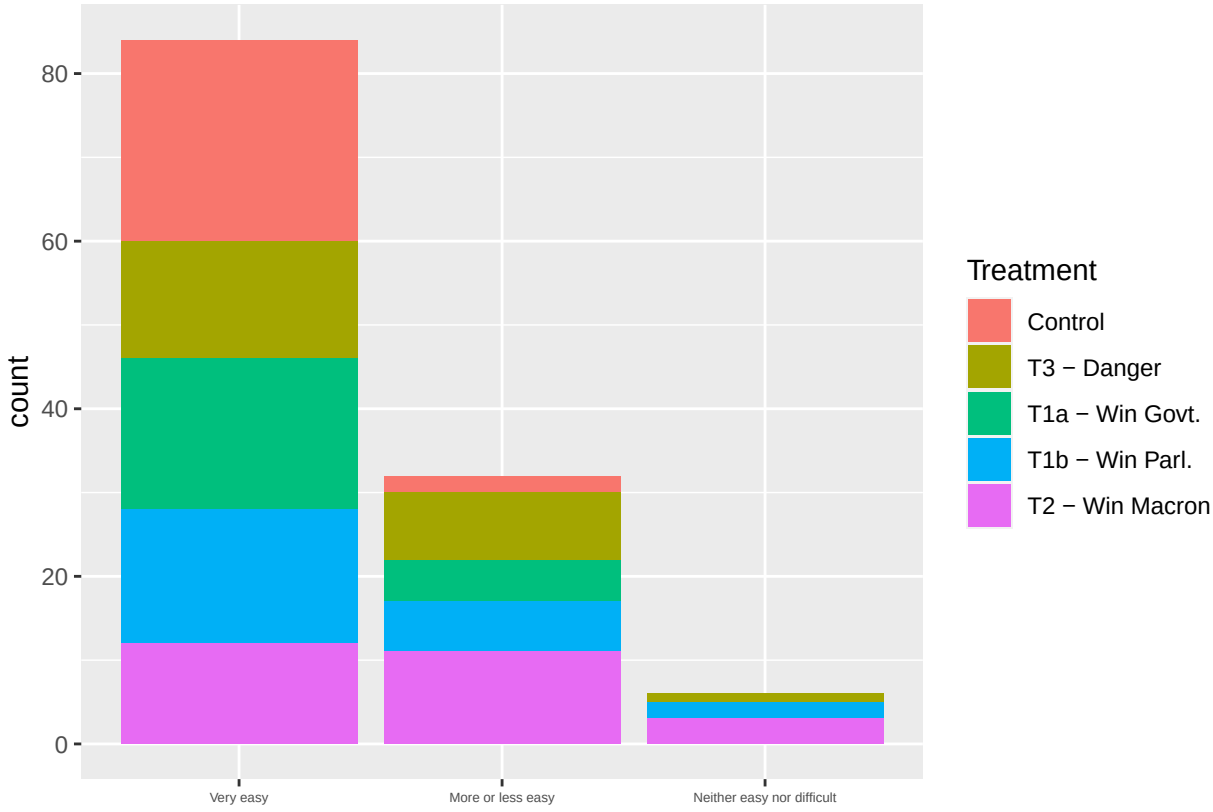


Figure 52: Stacked barplot for the difficulty of each treatment category (block I)

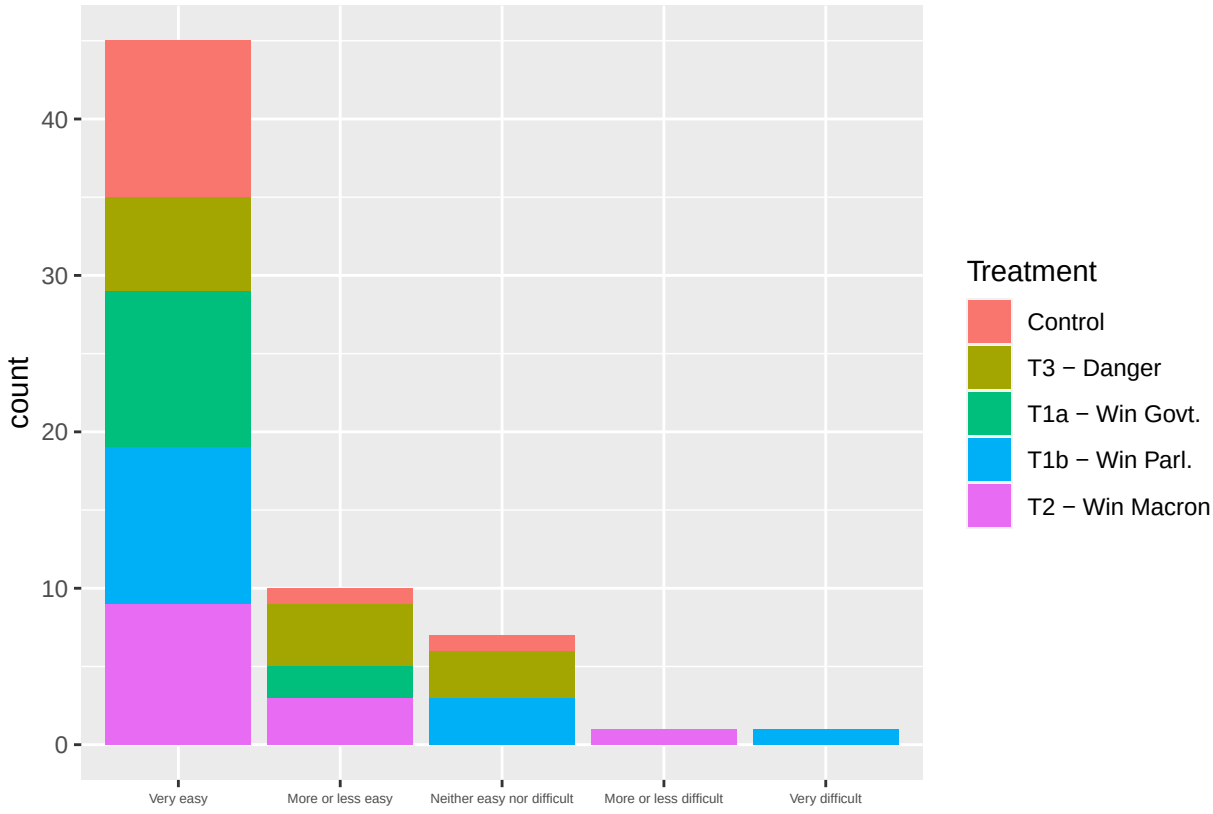


Figure 53: Stacked barplot for the difficulty of each treatment category (block II)

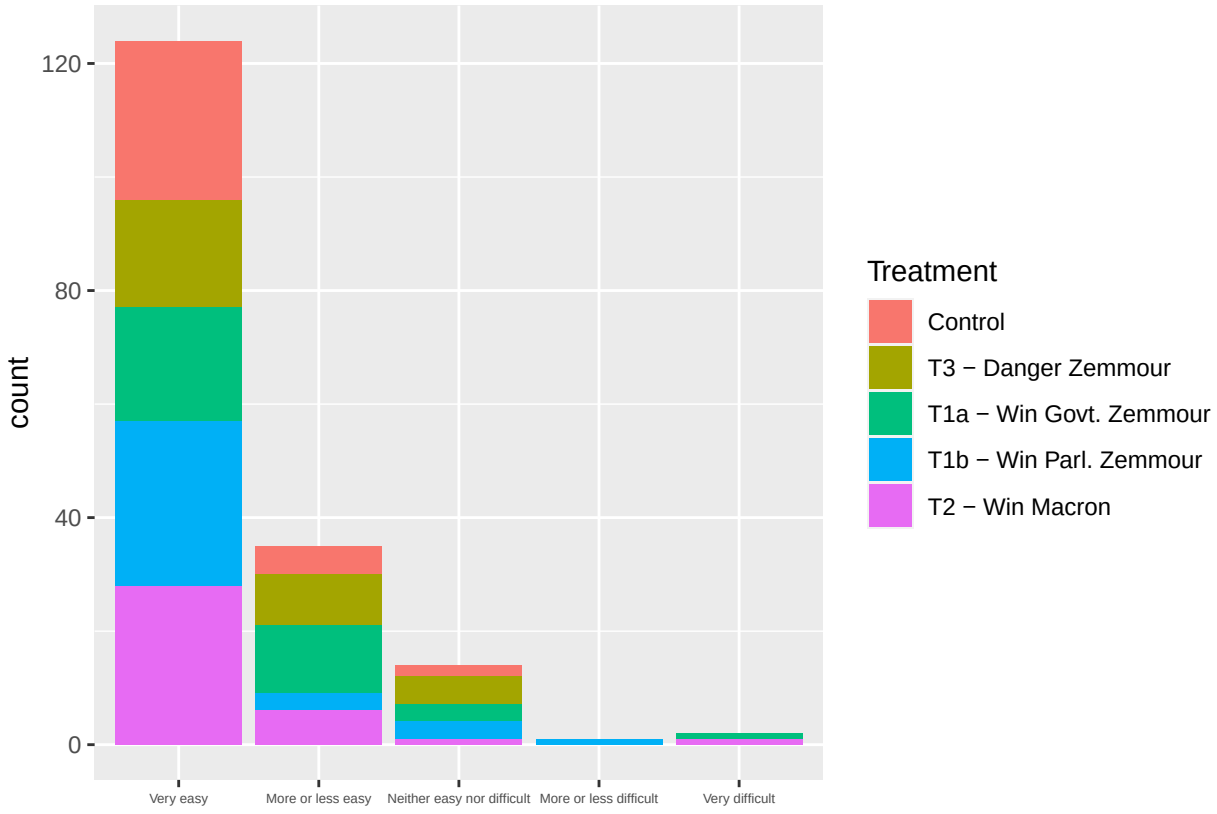


Figure 54: Stacked barplot for the difficulty of each treatment category (block III)

## C4.5. OLS estimation of the ATE

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 1.31** | 1.31* | 1.72 | 1.72 |
| | (0.44) | (0.65) | (2.51) | (1.39) |
| treatmentdanger_contr | −0.61 | −0.61 | −0.96 | −0.96 |
| | (0.64) | (0.69) | (0.63) | (0.69) |
| treatmentwin_govt | −0.64 | −0.64 | −0.35 | −0.35 |
| | (0.63) | (0.79) | (0.62) | (0.66) |
| treatmentwin_mainstream | −1.27* | −1.27· | −1.32* | −1.32· |
| | (0.63) | (0.76) | (0.62) | (0.68) |
| treatmentwin_parl | −0.85 | −0.85 | −0.77 | −0.77 |
| | (0.62) | (0.73) | (0.61) | (0.65) |
| age | | | 0.02 | 0.02 |
| | | | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| gender2 | | | −0.34 | −0.34 |
| | | | (0.50) | (0.51) |
| educ2 | | | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| | | | (2.38) | (1.12) |
| educ3 | | | −0.52 | −0.52 |
| | | | (2.28) | (0.76) |
| educ4 | | | −0.79 | −0.79 |
| | | | (2.28) | (0.76) |
| educ5 | | | 0.39 | 0.39 |
| | | | (2.25) | (0.74) |
| educ7 | | | −0.04 | −0.04 |
| | | | (2.25) | (0.72) |
| income2 | | | −0.54 | −0.54 |
| | | | (0.59) | (0.50) |
| income3 | | | −1.91*** | −1.91*** |
| | | | (0.55) | (0.55) |
| income4 | | | −2.14* | −2.14* |
| | | | (0.88) | (0.93) |
| income5 | | | −0.66 | −0.66 |
| | | | (0.57) | (0.57) |
| Robust Std. Errors | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| $R^2$ | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.21 | 0.21 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.10 | 0.10 |
| Num. obs. | 123 | 123 | 123 | 123 |
| RMSE | | 2.22 | | 2.11 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\cdot}p < 0.1$

Table 50: Block I. OLS Specifications. DV: Change in SWD

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.12 | 0.12 | 0.42 | 0.42 |
| | (0.24) | (0.15) | (1.39) | (0.72) |
| treatmentdanger_contr | −0.03 | −0.03 | −0.20 | −0.20 |
| | (0.34) | (0.23) | (0.35) | (0.27) |
| treatmentwin_govt | −0.08 | −0.08 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| | (0.34) | (0.38) | (0.35) | (0.36) |
| treatmentwin_mainstream | −0.51 | −0.51$^{\cdot}$ | −0.44 | −0.44 |
| | (0.34) | (0.27) | (0.35) | (0.27) |
| treatmentwin_parl | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.06 | 0.06 |
| | (0.33) | (0.30) | (0.34) | (0.31) |
| age | | | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | | | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| gender2 | | | −0.31 | −0.31 |
| | | | (0.27) | (0.23) |
| educ2 | | | 0.49 | 0.49 |
| | | | (1.30) | (0.54) |
| educ3 | | | −0.33 | −0.33 |
| | | | (1.26) | (0.30) |
| educ4 | | | −0.47 | −0.47 |
| | | | (1.26) | (0.53) |
| educ5 | | | 0.19 | 0.19 |
| | | | (1.25) | (0.35) |
| educ7 | | | −0.10 | −0.10 |
| | | | (1.25) | (0.37) |
| Robust Std. Errors | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| $R^2$ | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.09 | 0.09 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | −0.00 | −0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Num. obs. | 120 | 120 | 120 | 120 |
| RMSE | | 1.18 | | 1.18 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\cdot}p < 0.1$

Table 51: Block I. OLS Specifications. DV: Feelings towards LREM

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 0.92 | 0.92$^{\cdot}$ | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| | (0.71) | (0.48) | (1.80) | (1.60) |
| treatmentdanger_contr | −0.76 | −0.76 | −0.89 | −0.89 |
| | (0.99) | (0.75) | (1.08) | (0.97) |
| treatmentwin_govt | 0.17 | 0.17 | −0.22 | −0.22 |
| | (1.01) | (1.07) | (1.06) | (1.01) |
| treatmentwin_mainstream | 1.15 | 1.15 | 0.42 | 0.42 |
| | (0.97) | (0.86) | (1.21) | (0.97) |
| treatmentwin_parl | −0.07 | −0.07 | −1.11 | −1.11 |
| | (0.99) | (0.81) | (1.15) | (1.11) |
| age | | | −0.03 | −0.03 |
| | | | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| gender2 | | | 0.26 | 0.26 |
| | | | (0.84) | (0.78) |
| educ2 | | | 1.25 | 1.25 |
| | | | (2.18) | (2.45) |
| educ3 | | | −0.16 | −0.16 |
| | | | (1.20) | (1.01) |
| educ4 | | | 1.60 | 1.60 |
| | | | (1.26) | (1.06) |
| educ5 | | | 0.83 | 0.83 |
| | | | (1.16) | (1.03) |
| educ7 | | | −1.23 | −1.23 |
| | | | (1.32) | (1.13) |
| income2 | | | 1.31 | 1.31 |
| | | | (1.08) | (1.13) |
| income3 | | | 1.07 | 1.07 |
| | | | (1.22) | (1.13) |
| income4 | | | 0.88 | 0.88 |
| | | | (1.29) | (1.31) |
| income5 | | | 1.21 | 1.21 |
| | | | (1.03) | (1.01) |
| Robust Std. Errors | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| $R^2$ | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0.24 | 0.24 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| Num. obs. | 64 | 64 | 64 | 64 |
| RMSE | | 2.47 | | 2.47 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\cdot}p < 0.1$

Table 52: Block II. OLS Specifications. DV: Change in SWD

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| (Intercept) | 1.11** | 1.11** | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| | (0.35) | (0.37) | (1.34) | (1.17) |
| treatmentdanger_contr | −0.48 | −0.48 | −0.31 | −0.31 |
| | (0.51) | (0.49) | (0.55) | (0.52) |
| treatmentwin_govt | −1.20* | −1.20* | −1.22* | −1.22· |
| | (0.50) | (0.58) | (0.53) | (0.63) |
| treatmentwin_mainstream | −0.00 | −0.00 | 0.14 | 0.14 |
| | (0.50) | (0.49) | (0.53) | (0.52) |
| treatmentwin_parl | −0.59 | −0.59 | −0.55 | −0.55 |
| | (0.50) | (0.46) | (0.53) | (0.47) |
| age | | | −0.01 | −0.01 |
| | | | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| gender2 | | | −0.56 | −0.56 |
| | | | (0.35) | (0.35) |
| gender3 | | | −0.67 | −0.67 |
| | | | (1.61) | (0.53) |
| educ2 | | | 1.43 | 1.43 |
| | | | (1.70) | (1.09) |
| educ3 | | | 1.14 | 1.14 |
| | | | (1.21) | (1.12) |
| educ4 | | | 0.92 | 0.92 |
| | | | (1.24) | (1.03) |
| educ5 | | | 0.70 | 0.70 |
| | | | (1.20) | (1.05) |
| educ7 | | | 0.86 | 0.86 |
| | | | (1.19) | (1.03) |
| income2 | | | 0.04 | 0.04 |
| | | | (0.47) | (0.57) |
| income3 | | | −0.15 | −0.15 |
| | | | (0.51) | (0.49) |
| income4 | | | 0.21 | 0.21 |
| | | | (0.66) | (0.55) |
| income5 | | | 0.05 | 0.05 |
| | | | (0.52) | (0.43) |
| Robust Std. Errors | No | Yes | No | Yes |
| $R^2$ | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0.08 | 0.08 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | 0.02 | 0.02 | −0.01 | −0.01 |
| Num. obs. | 176 | 176 | 173 | 173 |
| RMSE | | 2.09 | | 2.14 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$; $^{\cdot}p < 0.1$

Table 53: Block III. OLS Specifications. DV: Change in SWD

## C4.6. Coefficient plots


Figure 55: ATE on change in SWD - Zemmour supporters

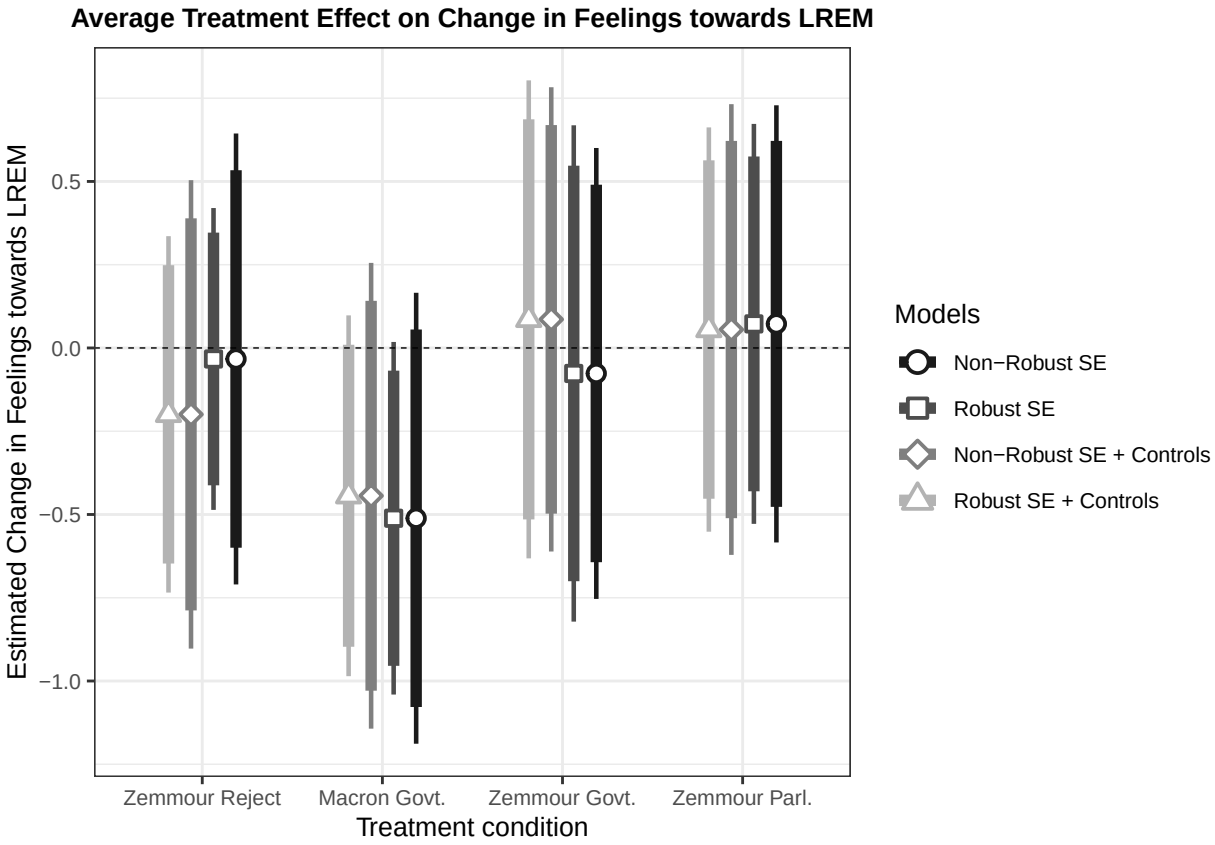


Figure 56: ATE on change in feelings toward LREM - Zemmour supporters

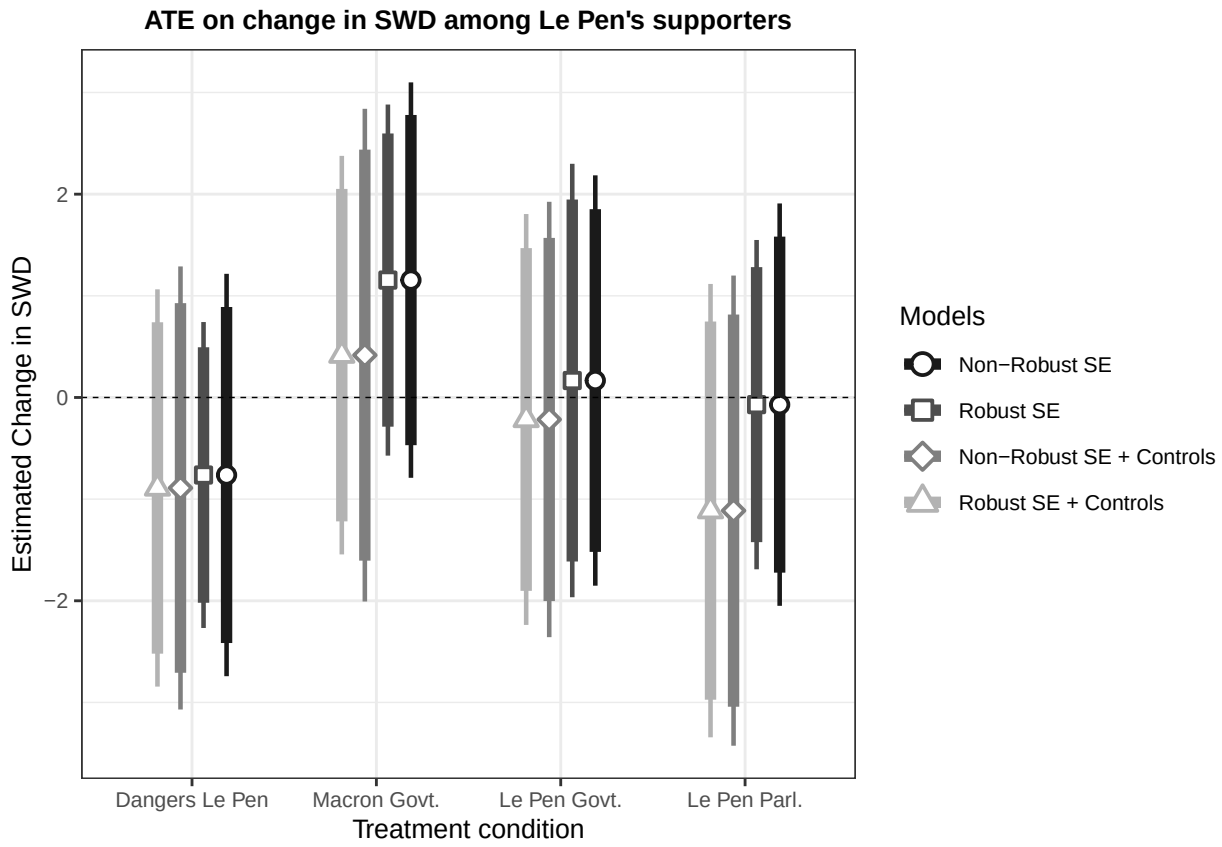


Figure 57: ATE on change in SWD - Le Pen supporters

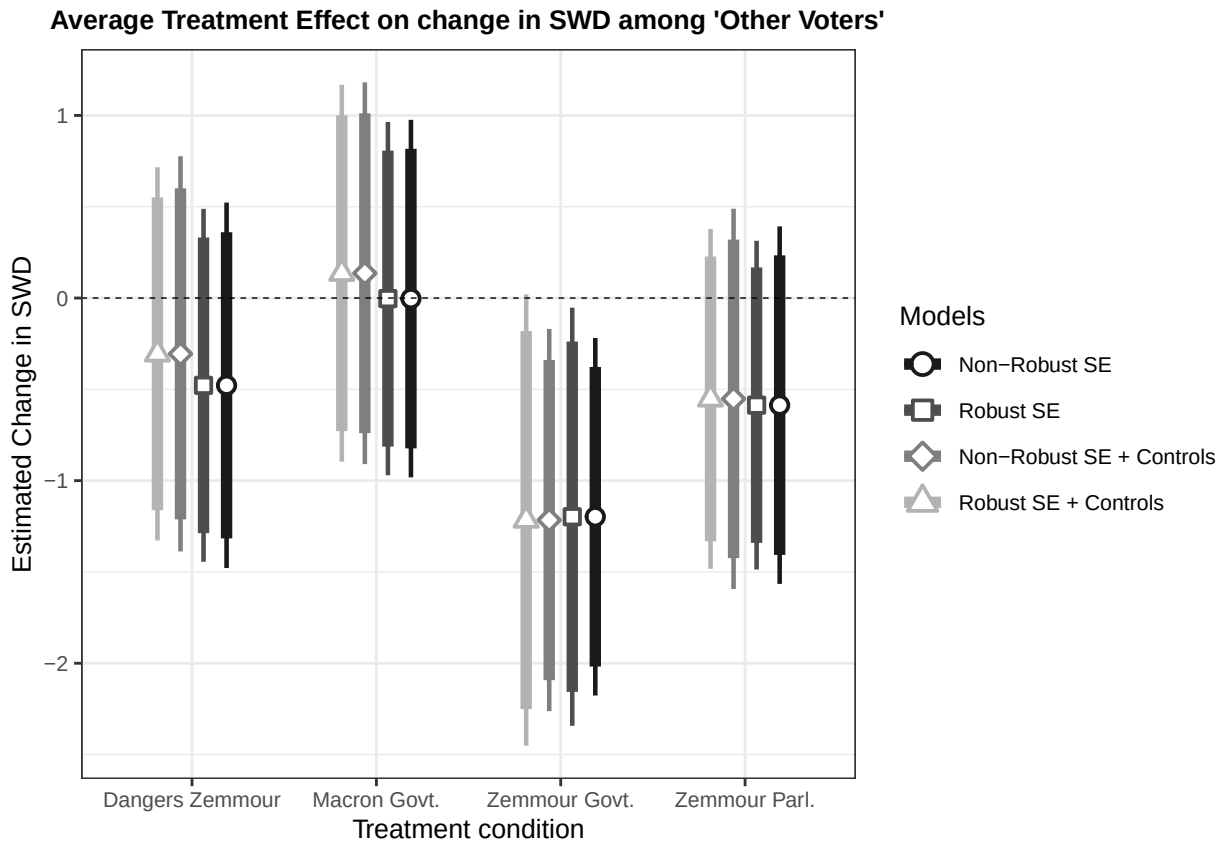


Figure 58: ATE on change in SWD - Others

### C4.7. Multiple hypotheses testing results

Table 54: Comparison of p.values before/after multiple hypotheses testing correction - ATE on channge in SWD

| Coefficient | Original p.values | Bonferroni correction | Holm correction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.02 |
| Treatment 1a | 0.34 | 1.00 | 0.62 |
| Treatment 1b | 0.31 | 1.00 | 0.62 |
| Treatment 2 | 0.05 | 0.23 | 0.18 |
| Treatment 3 | 0.17 | 0.86 | 0.52 |

Table 55: Comparison of p.values before/after multiple hypotheses testing correction - ATE on channge in feelings towards LREM

| Coefficient | Original p.values | Bonferroni correction | Holm correction |
|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | 0.61 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Treatment 1a | 0.92 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Treatment 1b | 0.82 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| Treatment 2 | 0.14 | 0.69 | 0.69 |
| Treatment 3 | 0.83 | 1.00 | 1.00 |

## C5. Pilot study

### C5.1. Pilot study description

To decide on the targeting parameters of our FAM campaign, we first launched a pre-test campaign linked to a pilot survey in Qualtrics. The pre-test campaign was divided into two ad-sets. The first ad set targeted only FB users between 18 and 39 years old, while the second ad set targeted only FB users between 40 and more than 65 years old. In both cases, we included interest in media channels strongly biased towards right and radical right ideology as our main targeting parameters. The sample of the pilot survey confirmed that our strategy was successful. The mean ideology of the sample is 7.4, and the median 8.5 (SD = 3.43). The preference for radical right-wing candidates is over-represented, with 30.45% of the respondents declaring vote intention for Zemmour and 16.25% declaring vote intention for Le Pen. In comparison, vote intention for Macron is only 7.25%. The total number of respondents who completed the whole questionnaire of the pilot study is 578.

The pilot study also included a replication of the experiment. Since the pilot study was fielded before the first round of the presidential elections, we asked respondents to imagine that the elections had been celebrated the day before and that the results emulated those of the average poll predictions. For the rest, the pilot experiment proceeded the same way as the definitive one. There includes only one additional change. It has an additional placebo condition highlighting the lousy state of the economy due to the government management of the COVID-19 crisis instead of the treatment priming respondents with the Zemmour potential to enter the government coalition. The additional placebo condition was too strong due to the high salience of the economy after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, which happened just between designing and launching the pilot study. As a result, we decided to remove it from the final experiment to maximize power while including the potential for government treatment condition.

### C5.2. Estimated ATE on SWD

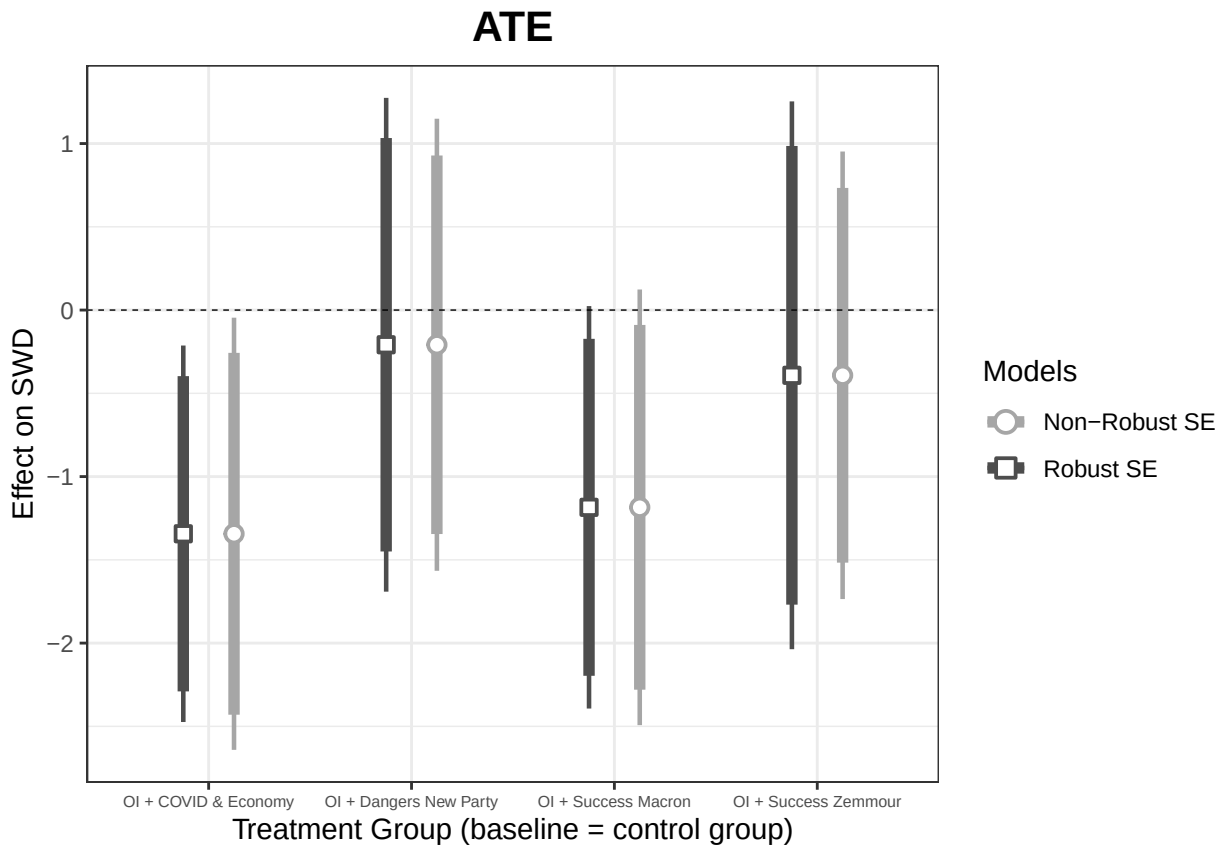


Figure 59: ATE on change in SWD (pilot study)

# Appendix D. Supplementary material for Chapter 5

## D1. Descriptive statistics

### D1.1. Summary of descriptive statistics

Table 56: Summary of descriptive statistics

| Statistic | N | Mean | St. Dev. | Min | Pctl(25) | Pctl(75) | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Year | 21,816 | 2,010.9 | 5.6 | 2,003 | 2,007 | 2,015 | 2,019 |
| Region | 21,816 | 7.9 | 5.1 | 1 | 3 | 12 | 19 |
| Province | 21,816 | 26.8 | 15.4 | 1 | 13 | 41 | 52 |
| Population | 21,816 | 8,042.8 | 56,947.4 | 251 | 520 | 4,063.5 | 3,273,049 |
| Number of Candidatures | 21,816 | 3.5 | 1.8 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 25 |
| Abs. Deviation from Mean Right Vote | 19,493 | 7.4 | 6.8 | 0.0 | 2.3 | 10.6 | 57.7 |
| Electoral Participation (%) | 21,816 | 43.0 | 8.3 | 0.0 | 37.4 | 48.3 | 100.0 |
| At least One New Party in 2015 | 21,816 | 0.1 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Ciudadanos Candidature Alone in 2015 | 21,816 | 0.03 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Podemos Candidature Alone in 2015 | 21,816 | 0.04 | 0.2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Two New Parties Candidature in 2015 | 21,816 | 0.01 | 0.1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

### D1.2. Barplot with the frequency of treated and control observations by each newparty

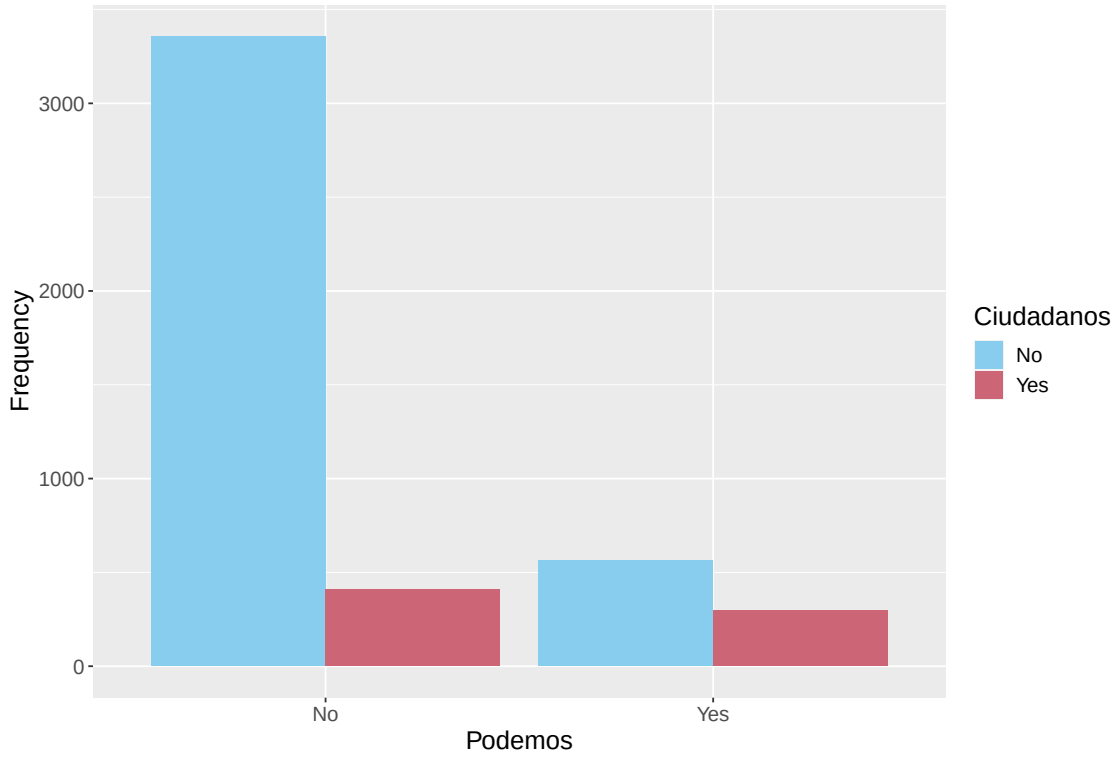


Figure 60: Barplot

**D1.3. Histogram of the distribution of non-treated municipalities compared to those with Ciudadanos candidatures**

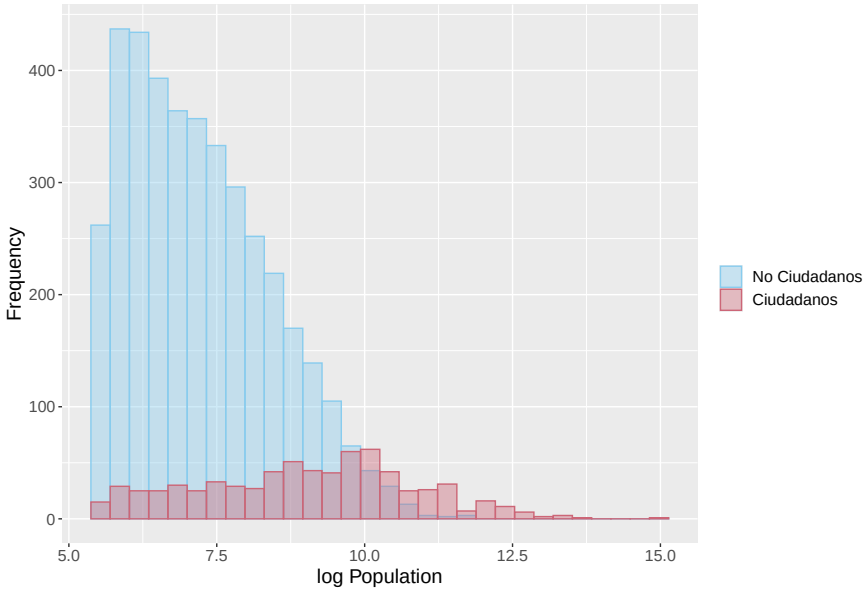


Figure 61: Histogram Ciudadanos vs. Control

**D1.4. Histogram of the distribution of non-treated municipalities compared to those with podemos candidatures**

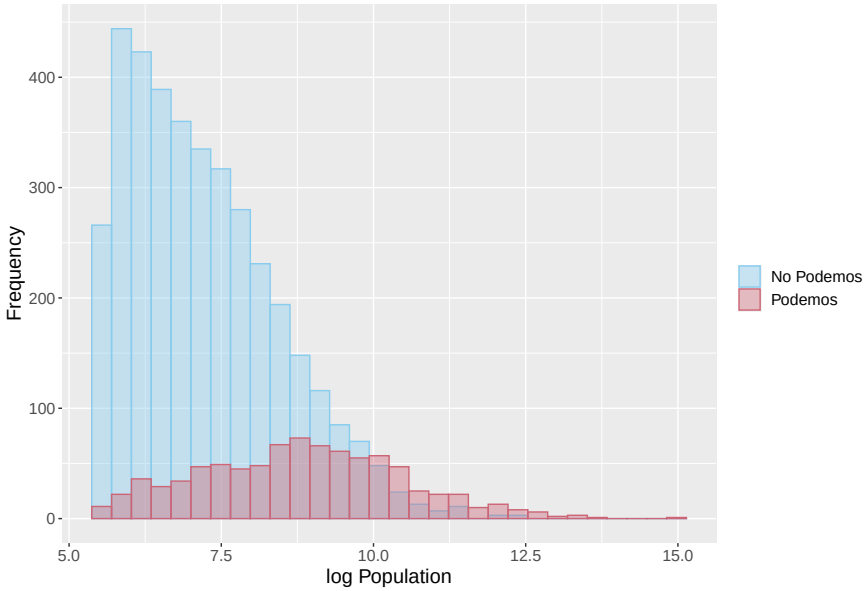


Figure 62: Histogram Podemos vs. Control

## D2. Pre-treatment trends

### D2.1. Electoral participation trends before matching (non standardized)

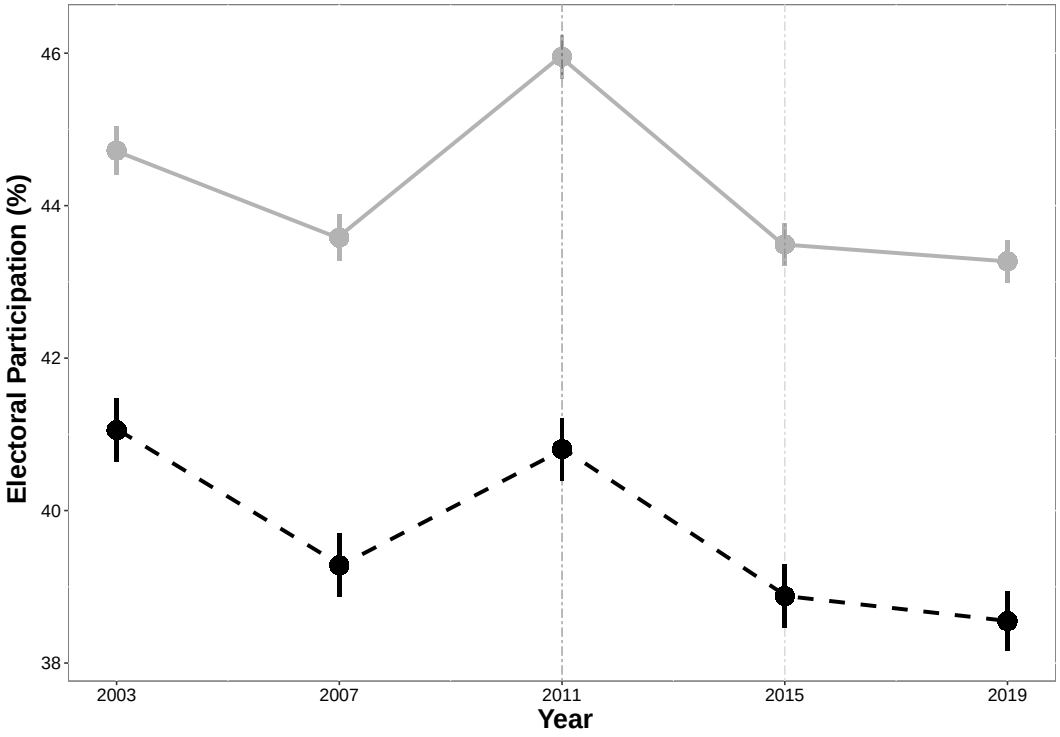


Figure 63: Electoral participation trends between treated and control groups

## D2.2. Electoral participation trends before and after matching by treatment status

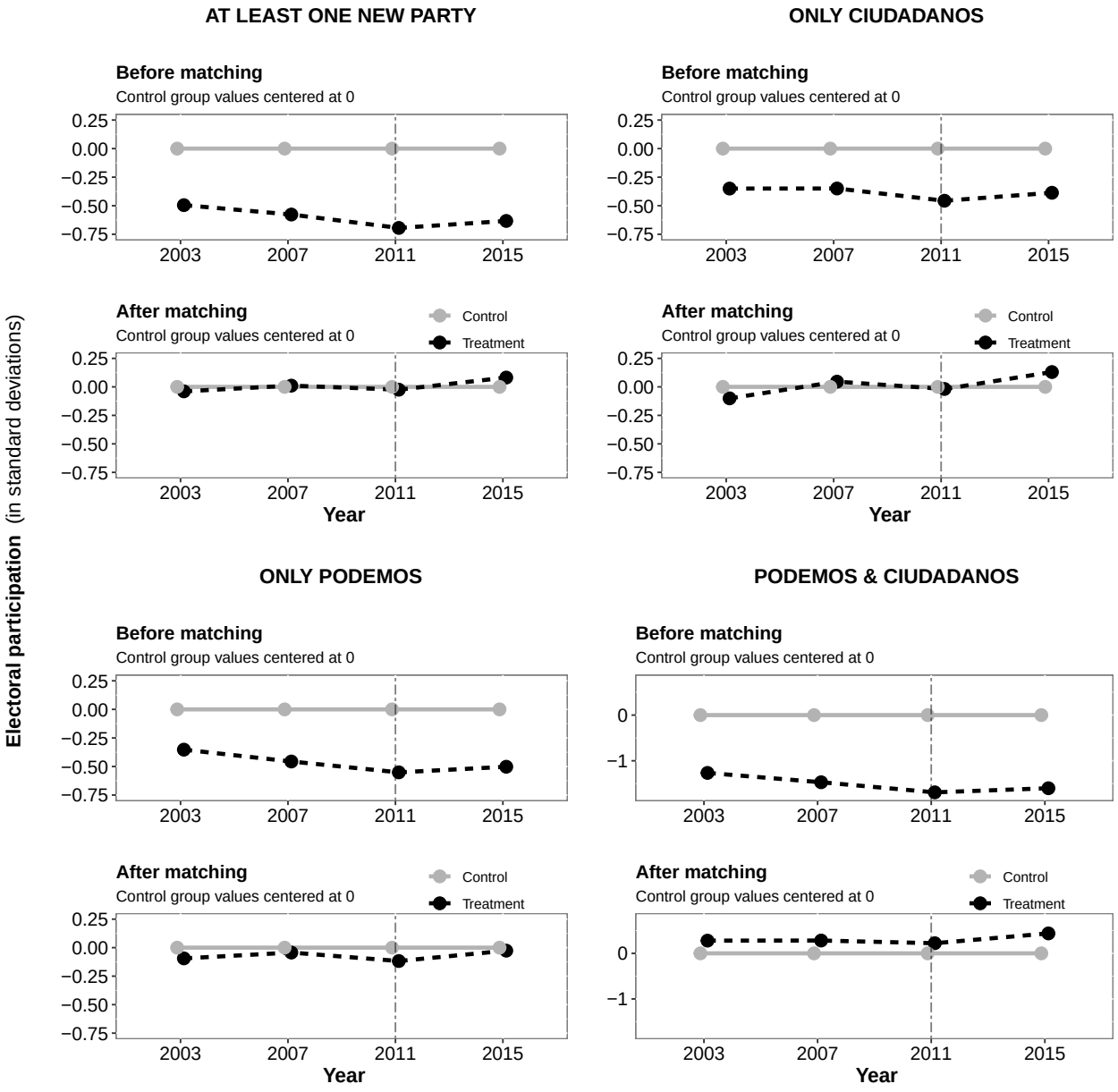


Figure 64: Comparative electoral participation trends by treatment category

# D3. Pre-matching Difference-in-Differences (DiD)

## D3.1. DiD model ouputs

| | Diff-in-diff |
|---|---|
| At Least One New Party in 2015 (=YES) | −0.17 |
| | (0.15) |
| Municipality Fixed Effects | Yes |
| Election-Year Fixed Effects | Yes |
| Clustered Robust Standard Errors | Yes |
| Controls | No |
| $R^2$ | 0.76 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | 0.70 |
| Num. obs. | 21816 |
| RMSE | 4.56 |
| N Clusters | 4616 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table 57: Main DiD model

| | At least One New Party | Only Ciudadanos | Only Podemos | Two New Parties |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dummy Treatment (=YES) | −0.17 | 0.13 | −0.25 | −0.40* |
| | (0.15) | (0.25) | (0.19) | (0.18) |
| Municipality Fixed Effects | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Election-Year Fixed Effects | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Clustered Robust Standard Errors | Yes | Yes | Yes | Yes |
| Controls | No | No | No | No |
| $R^2$ | 0.76 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.74 |
| Adj. $R^2$ | 0.70 | 0.66 | 0.67 | 0.68 |
| Num. obs. | 21816 | 17034 | 17818 | 16539 |
| RMSE | 4.56 | 4.77 | 4.72 | 4.71 |
| N Clusters | 4616 | 3470 | 3626 | 3367 |

$^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table 58: DiD models by treatment status

### D3.2. Treatment vs. placebo effects

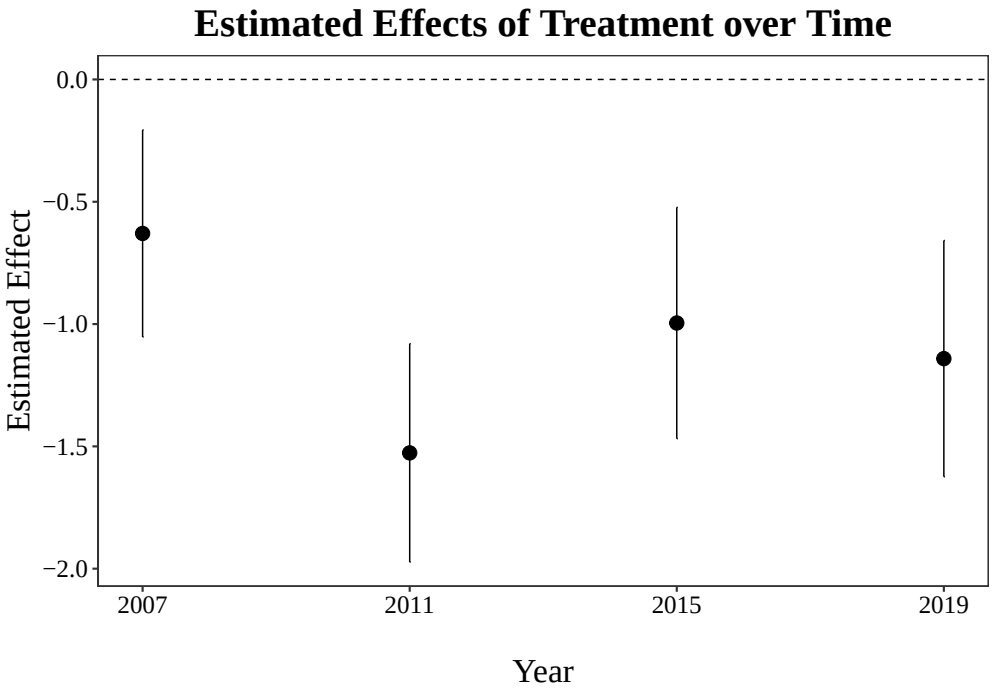


Figure 65: DiD treatment vs. placebo effects

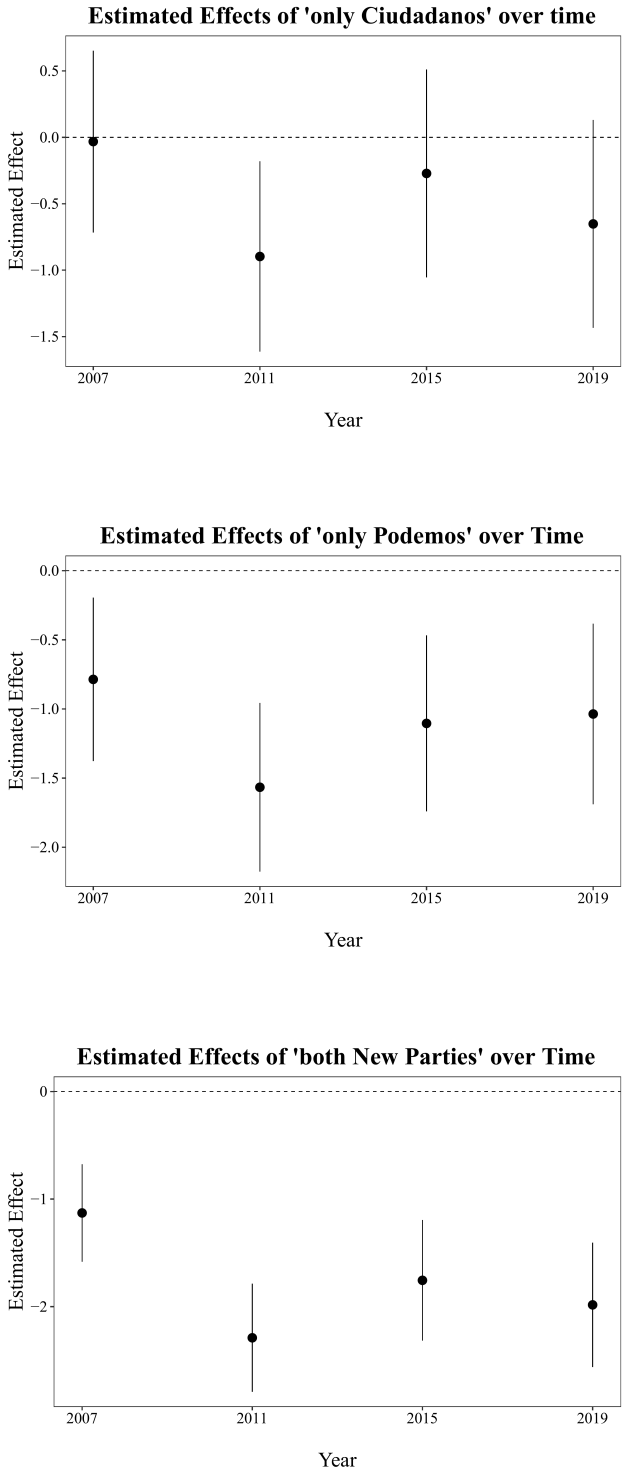


Figure 66: DiD Treatment vs. Placebo Effects by Treatment Status

## D4. Replication of PanelMatch for different subsets of the sample

Table 59: PM Estimates of Average Treatment Effect on the Treated (ATT) by Treatment Category and Period

| Time-period | Estimate | Std. Error | Lower CI | Upper CI |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Only Ciudadanos t-3 | -0.642 | 0.374 | -1.383 | 0.132 |
| Only Ciudadanos t-2 | 0.503 | 0.357 | -0.207 | 1.235 |
| Only Ciudadanos t-1 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| **Only Ciudadanos t+0** | **1.159** | **0.377** | **0.398** | **1.877** |
| Only Ciudadanos t+1 | 0.741 | 0.395 | -0.048 | 1.529 |
| Only Podemos t-3 | 0.177 | 0.282 | -0.390 | 0.713 |
| Only Podemos t-2 | 0.563 | 0.320 | -0.052 | 1.191 |
| Only Podemos t-1 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| **Only Podemos t+0** | **0.690** | **0.265** | **0.213** | **1.231** |
| Only Podemos t+1 | 0.979 | 0.301 | 0.387 | 1.579 |
| Ciudadanos and Podemos t-3 | 0.298 | 0.370 | -0.446 | 0.941 |
| Ciudadanos and Podemos t-2 | 0.311 | 0.569 | -0.824 | 1.271 |
| Ciudadanos and Podemos t-1 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 |
| **Ciudadanos and Podemos t+0** | **1.130** | **0.693** | **-0.237** | **2.305** |
| Ciudadanos and Podemos t+1 | 1.501 | 1.110 | -0.462 | 3.085 |

*Note:*

Weighted Difference-in-Differences with Propensity Score. Matches created with 3 lags. Standard errors computed with 1000 Weighted bootstrap samples.

## D5. Matching sensitivity tests

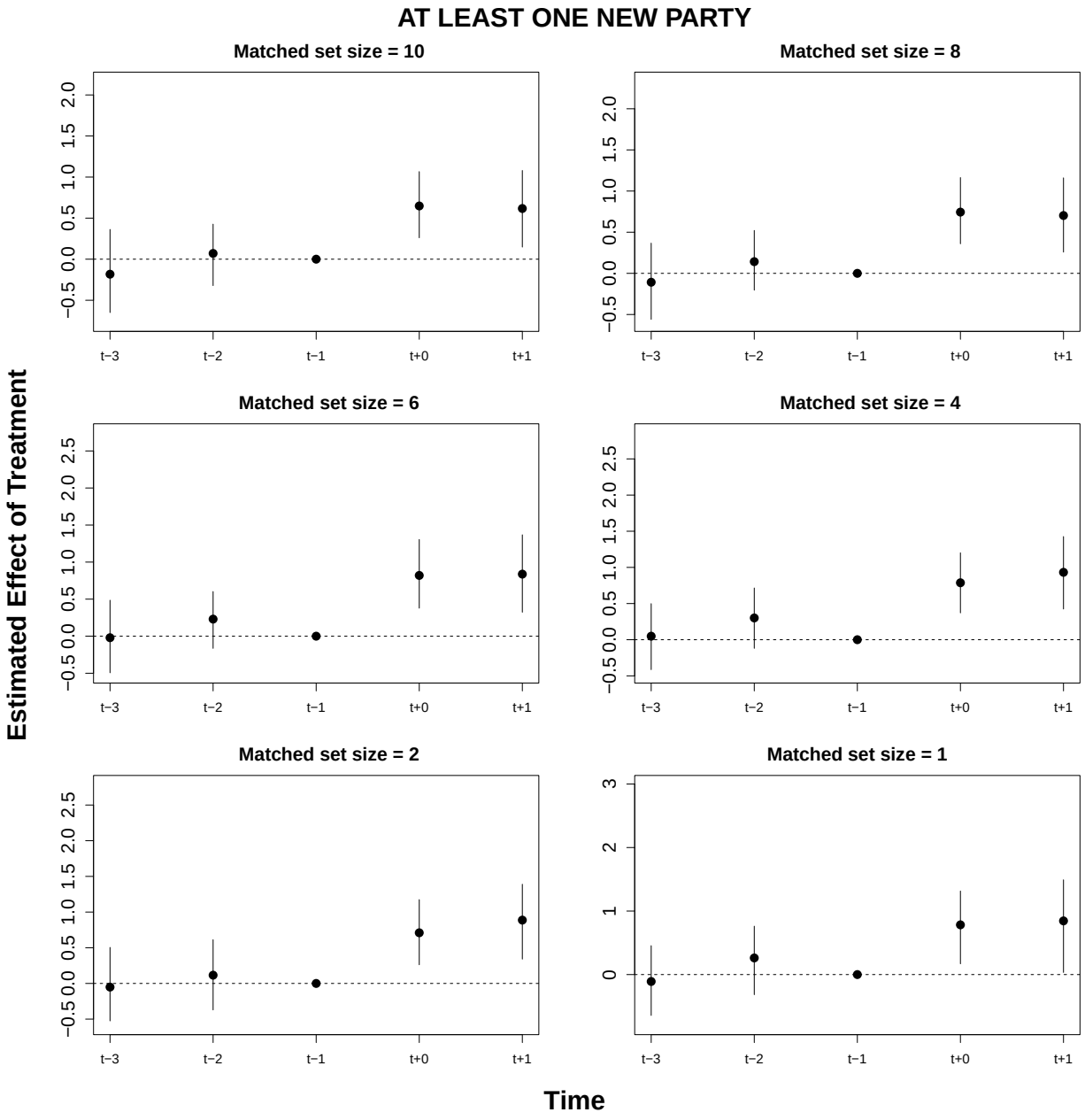


Figure 67: Coefficient plots by changing matching sets size: At least one new party

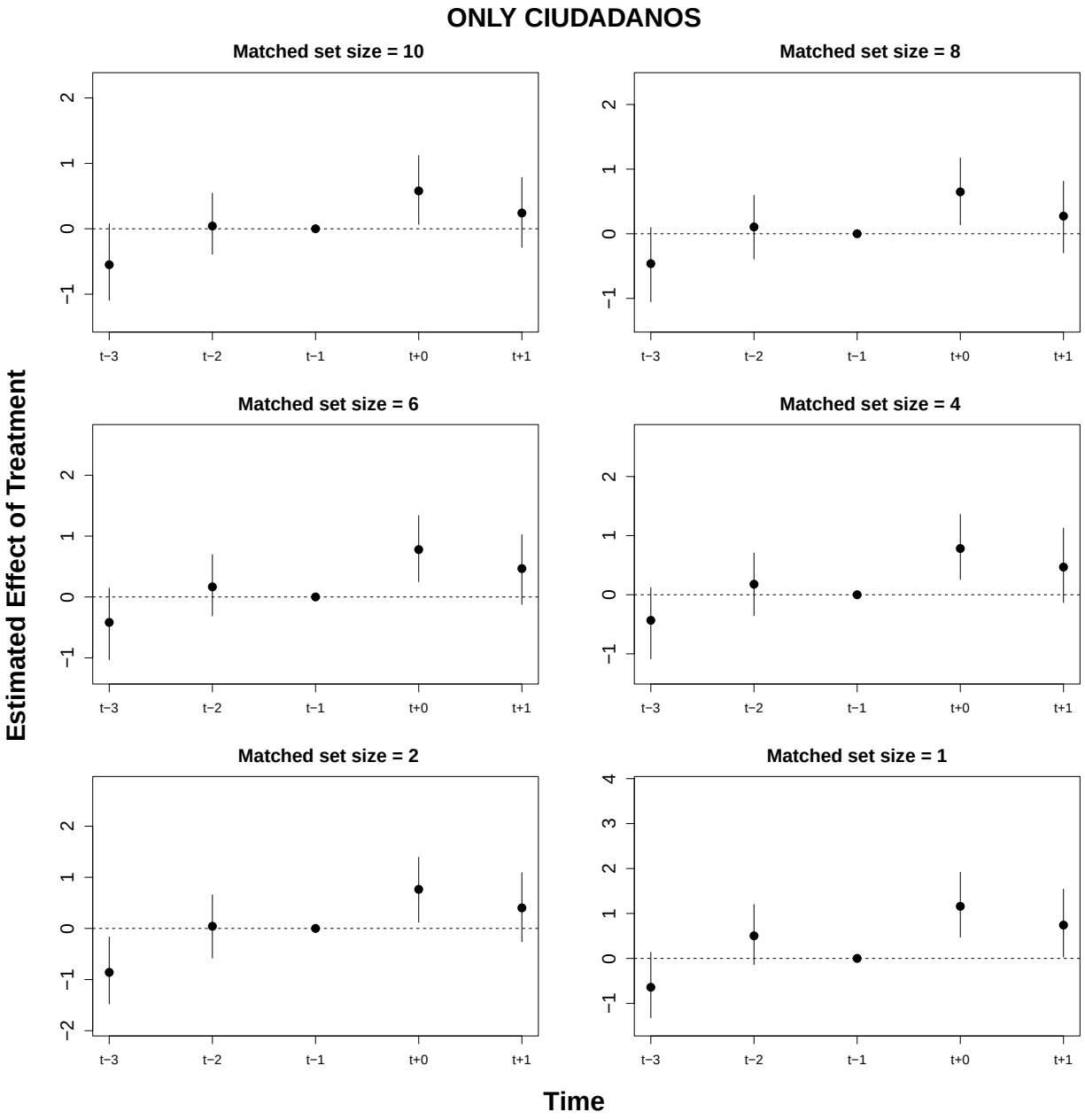


Figure 68: Coefficient plots by changing matching sets size: Only Ciudadanos

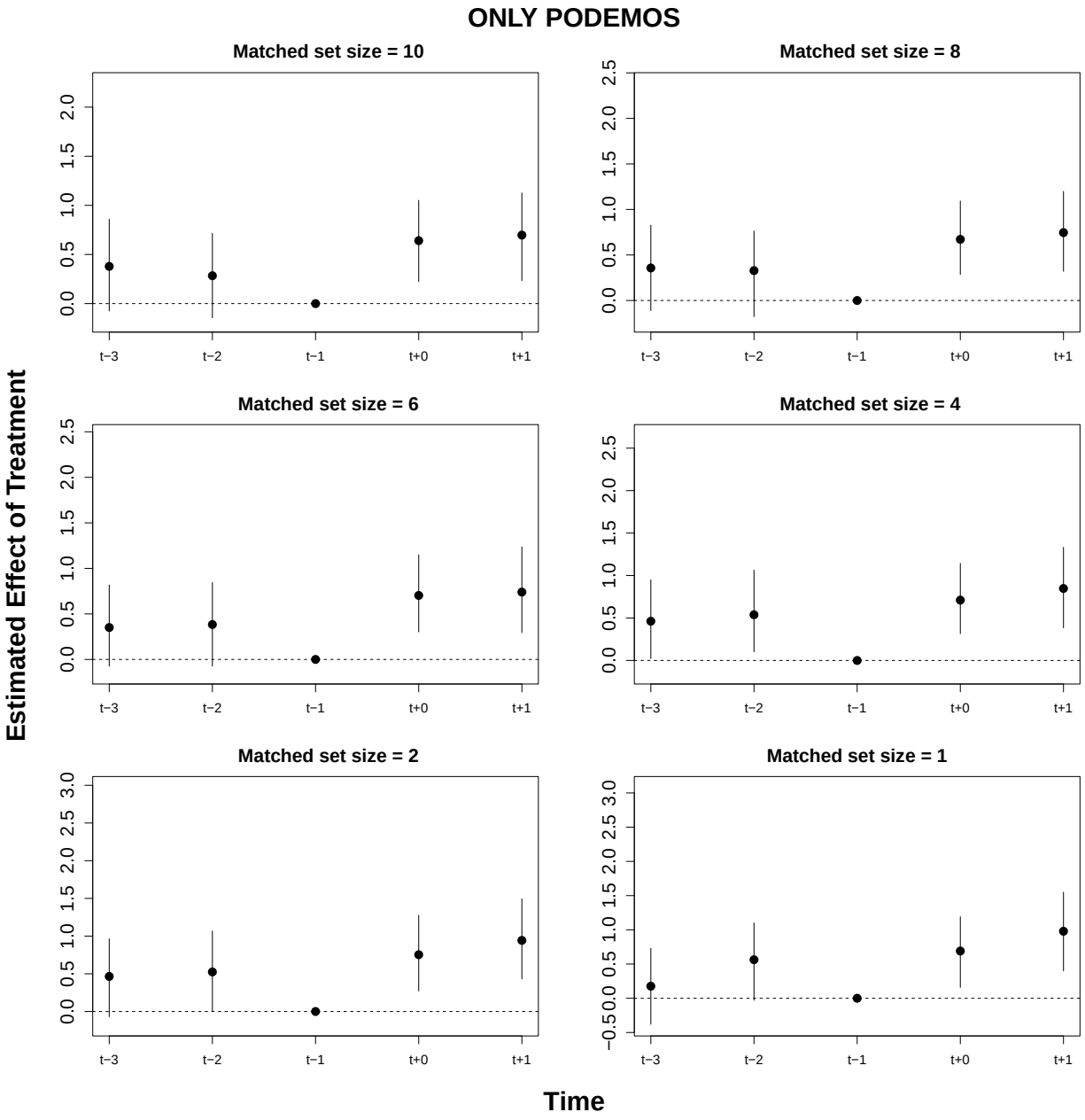


Figure 69: Coefficient plots by changing matching sets size: Only Podemos

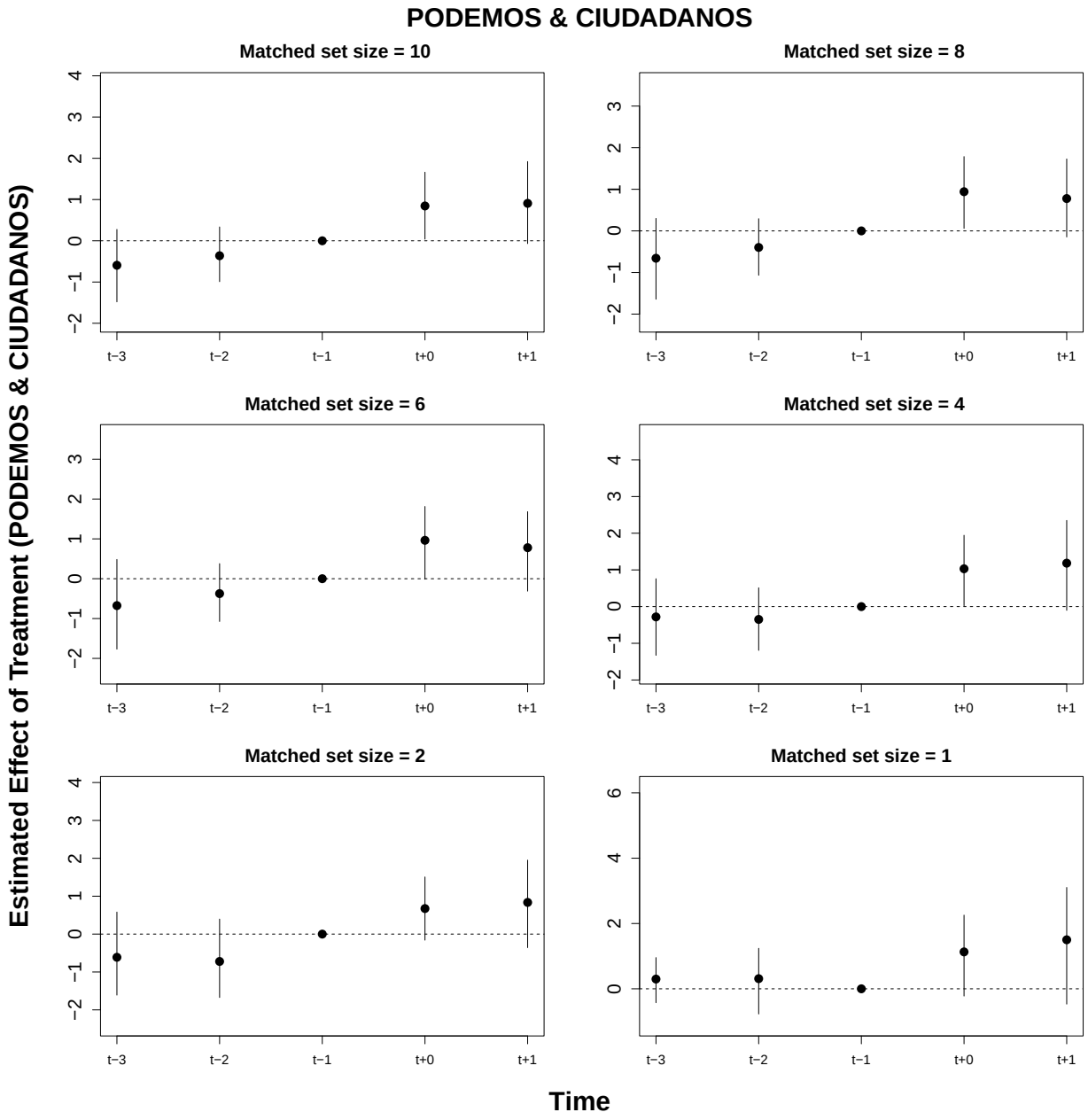


Figure 70: Coefficient plots by changing matching setts: two new parties