Essays on the Dynamics of Policymaking and Policy Preference Reversal

Unan, Asli

Awarding institution:
King's College London

KING'S COLLEGE LONDON

Essays on the Dynamics of Policymaking and Policy Preference Reversal

by

Aslı Unan

A Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Political Economy

in the Department of Political Economy
King's College London

July 2022

Declaration of Authorship

I, Aslı Unan, confirm that the research included within this thesis is my own work or, where it has been carried out in collaboration with or supported by others, that this is duly acknowledged below and my contribution indicated.

The third chapter is joint work with Dr. Kristin Fabbe, Dr. Konstantinos Matakos and Dr. Eleni Kyrkopoulou. My contribution to the paper was the following: contributing to the framing of the research question and the mechanisms driving it, building and running the experiment, preparing the dataset, developing the research design and running the empirical analysis. Dr. Kristin Fabbe and Dr. Konstantinos Matakos identified the research question and the initial research design idea placed the research question in an extensive overview of the existing literature and its approach to theoretical mechanisms. Dr. Eleni Kyrkopoulou provided information on the Greek context and handled qualitative fieldwork.

The fifth chapter of the thesis is joint work with Dr. Shaun P. Hargreaves Heap, Dr. Konstantinos Matakos, Dr. Christel Koop and Nina Weber. My contribution to the paper was the following: contributing to the framing of the research question and to the theoretical framework, building the conjoint experiment, preparing the datasets and running the analysis. Dr. Shaun P. Hargreaves Heap, Dr. Konstantinos Matakos, Dr. Christel Koop identified the broad research question and elaborated the main hypotheses and motivated the research with an overview of the literature. Nina Weber provided expertise with metadata and some of the variables we use in the paper. In many discussions around both the empirical and theoretical framing, we specifically also jointly decided on the relevant subsample to test the hypotheses, chose the adequate robustness tests and worked on struc-

turing the links between the theoretical argument and the empirical findings.

I attest that I have exercised reasonable care to ensure that the work is original and does not, to the best of my knowledge, break any UK law, infringe any third party's copyright or other Intellectual Property Right, or contain any confidential material. I confirm that this thesis has not been previously submitted for the award of a degree by this or any other university.

Abstract

Why and how do politicians and citizens reverse their policy preferences? To what extent do external circumstances, compared to ideological dispositions and changes in interest, drive reversals in policy preferences? Despite numerous instances of policy reversals –most recently, COVID-19 policies as governments react to new information– and human preferences for consistency, questions on why policy (preference) reversals occur, the mechanisms leading to reversals and the different types of policy reversals remain obscure. In this thesis, I explore three factors in driving reversals in policymaking and policy preferences: (i) ideology and political polarisation, (ii) trade-offs in policymaking and (iii) information provision. The first chapter of this thesis highlights the importance and relevance of reversals in policymaking, institutions and economic growth. The chapter describes and discusses gaps in the literature in relation to the different types of policy reversals. Using a simple formal model, Chapter 2 proposes a theory of policy reversals that argues that political polarisation and uncertainty over policy preferences are critical factors in policy reversals. Chapter 3 delves into the impact and experience of a political crisis, i.e., the European refugee crisis, on the policy preferences of local politicians. It examines the multidimensional policy preferences of local politicians and their willingness to support resettlement processes by conducting a conjoint experiment with 586 locally elected councillors in Greece. It uncovers that local leaders are more likely to support it if they are involved in the process and can control the frequency and intensity of local-refugee interactions. Contrary to the earlier literature, it also finds that local politicians in more exposed

municipalities are no more likely to oppose hosting refugees. This finding adds important nuance to the existing theories on contact. Chapter 4 tests when local politicians are more likely to reverse their policy preferences through a survey experiment – and find that (i) ideological distance from party peers and (ii) multidimensional policy trade-offs in policy-making play an important role in generating policy reversals in the short-run. This finding has important political implications for intraparty politics. Chapter 5 investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis with economic and health consequences, on the policy preferences of citizens using a survey experiment in the US. It also looks into the impact of information provision in shifting these preferences. It finds that information provision can lead to preference reversals regardless of partisan affiliation. This finding has important policy implications for policymaking in times of crisis. Finally, Chapter 6 summarises the five chapters, their individual and collective findings and implications, and concludes. Overall, this thesis makes essential contributions to the literature on the political economy of public policy and policy opinion by exploring the drivers of multidimensional policy preferences.

Acknowledgements

It is my pleasure to thank my supervisors, Konstantinos Matakos and Christel Koop, for their tremendous support and encouragement throughout all of my research endeavors, many of which are not even mentioned in this thesis, as well as for their sharp, precise, and inspiring feedback. Their supervision has greatly benefited this dissertation, and I feel incredibly honoured to have been one of their students. I treasured our discussions and conversations, and I have thoroughly loved all of our thought-provoking and interesting interactions, especially in the last and most difficult months of completing this dissertation. I want to sincerely thank them for being such fantastic and friendly supervisors over the years.

Being surrounded by enthusiastic, dedicated, and creative people during this endeavour makes me feel tremendously fortunate. I want to thank everyone at King's College London's Quantitative Political Economy Research Group, especially Damien Bol, who has devoted a significant amount of his time to enhancing the Ph.D. students' experiences. I am pleased to have had the opportunity to study in such a setting and being exposed to the amazing intellectual community. Additionally, I want to convey my sincere gratitude to Florian Foos and Peter John for being such inspirational colleagues and mentors. For comments, exchanges, and discussions related to the various parts of this dissertation, I am also indebted to my co-authors Nina Weber and Shaun Hargreaves Heap. I wish to thank Amrita Dhillon, Marco Giani, Mehmet Ismail, Ian Levely, Matia Vannoni, Rubén Ruiz-Rufino, Pierre-Louis Vezina, Elisa Cavatorta, Vera E. Tröger, Daniel Rubenson, Jean Guillaume Forand, Cevat G. Aksoy and Karen Jeffrey for their valuable ideas.

I am grateful for the lifelong friendships I have developed through this Ph.D. project. I'm so grateful to my friends Vanessa, Kalina, Mike, Andrew, Aurelia, Chris, Manuel, Stuart, Charlie, Otto and Emil and so

many others for all the love and laughs. Without them, this experience would not have been the same. I owe special thanks to my partner, Emre, for his love, patience, and encouragement throughout the years. Beyond this, I am indebted to my family for their unending support in my academic pursuits.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

1. Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

The world has witnessed numerous policy reversals in recent years. A few days before Donald Trump's 2016 election to the presidency, he boldly promised his voters: "Once we win on November 8th and elect a Republican Congress, we will be able to repeal Obamacare immediately." (Scott 2021). As negotiations gathered steam, Trump admittedly suggested, "I have to tell you, nobody knew healthcare could be so complicated" (Smith 2017). Theresa May reversed her Brexit position from supporting to remain in the EU during the referendum campaign to supporting to leave the EU when she was in government (Editorial 2019). Donald Trump initiated a travel ban for Muslims, which he later described as a ban that excluded citizens and members of the U.S. military. Meanwhile, his campaign has maintained that the policy has not changed at all (Siddiqui 2018). In 2004, Democratic nominee John Kerry was cast as a "flip-flopper" on the war in Iraq. In 2008, Hillary Clinton was harshly criticised for her vote to go to war in Iraq. While she said she would have voted differently "knowing what we know now," she would not call it a mistake – and later lost the nomination. During her second presidential run, Clinton made sure to emphasise her apology: "I made it very clear that I made a mistake, plain and simple". Angela Merkel reversed her policy position on the nuclear policy after the incident in Fukushima, from being a supporter of the policy to arguing to phasing it out as soon as possible. The media has reported her policy reversal as "gambling credibility with nuclear U-turn" (Editorial 2011). Imran Khan famously said, "A leader who does not take U-turns is not a real leader" (Editorial 2018).

Given the increased focus on policy reversals and the political costs associated with them, and considering humans' natural preference

for consistency, why do politicians (and citizens) reverse their policy positions? Through which mechanisms do position reversals occur? Can there be functional forms of reversals as well? This thesis works through a simple formal model and uses two survey experiments - with elites and citizens - to answer these questions. But it is necessary to first define reversals in policy and preferences. There are two main definitions of policy reversals in the political science and economics literature. Cukierman and Tommasi (1998) describe policy reversal as a situation where the 'unlikely' party implements certain policies. Given their definition, one of the best-known examples of a policy reversal was Richard Nixon unexpectedly opening the doors to China in the early 1970s. Hood (1994, 4-16), on the other hand, defines policy reversals as a change of direction in policy due to internal decay or external pressure. In this thesis, I employ Hood (1994)'s definition of policy reversal as it provides a broader understanding of policy reversal and takes into account changes in ideas, interests and environments. However, I extend his definition to incorporate position/preference reversals by setting the unit of analysis as individuals. Studying individual positions rather than policies as a unit of analysis, this study empirically explores how political and non-political factors can influence the origin and evolution of policy preferences of elites and citizens whilst shedding light on policy reversals resulting from key players changing their positions.[1]

To extend Hood (1994)'s definition to incorporate position/preference reversals into the understanding of policy reversals, it is important to define policy preferences. A policy preference could be described as a comparative valuation of (i.e., a ranking over) a set of policies (Druckman & Lupia 2000). Both politicians and citizens have a ranking over a set of policy options where they rank a policy as best for each

[1]Throughout this essay, I refer to elites and politicians interchangeably. My observations apply to elected officials.

policy area, which eventually becomes their 'policy preference' in that specific policy area. Consider, for instance, the universal basic income (UBI), a guaranteed cash benefit that the government provides to all citizens. A politician and a citizen might in principle be in favour of basic income, appreciating that it empowers traditionally unpaid roles such as caregiving. They may, however, also be concerned about its impact on the economy because of the reduced incentive to work. Their decision to support or not support this policy would then be their 'policy preference'. This decision may not be final, however. Under certain circumstances, such as when they learn new information, when they discover new policy opportunities or when there is an upcoming election (which may provide contrasting incentives for politicians and citizens), politicians, as well as citizens, might 'reverse' this policy preference that they have initially formed because their ranking of policies now has changed.

1.2. Relevance

There are three main reasons why it is worthwhile to study policy/position reversals. First, whilst some policy reversals are beneficial from a public interest perspective (for instance, Boris Johnson's policy reversal on universal credit benefit cuts or free school meals campaign), many other policy reversals have been shown to be quite detrimental (for instance, in monetary policy). Policy (preference) reversals are caused by different factors, such as exogenous shifts and external crisis (Greener 2001; Hood 1994), ideology (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017), elections (Fouirnaies et al. 2018; Prato & Wolton 2017), voter satisfaction (Prato & Wolton 2017) and trade-offs in policymaking. Policy reversals caused by exogenous shifts could have other welfare effects than reversals caused by ideology and elections (see, Baker et al. 2013, for welfare effects of policy). Still, most of the literature so far treats

policy reversals as inefficient because some take place due to re-election or reputational concerns (M. Bernhardt & Ingerman 1985; Carlson & Dolan 1985; Tomz & Houweling 2010). Therefore, it is essential to distinguish the causes of policy reversals because they might have contrasting welfare implications.

Second, policy reversals have institutional relevance. On the one hand, reversals are a normal institutional process of revisiting the policies a nation governs. On the other hand, however, a high number of policy reversals could hurt the credibility of an institution or the existence of an institution. As political systems determine political capacities by shaping the menu of options, policies may hardly be reversible in some settings due to the institutional constraints and decentralised policymaking. The complexity of the procedure makes the reversal harder too. Arguments of path dependence from political science and increasing returns from economics assume that once a country has started down a track, the cost of reversals is very high (Pierson 2000). The 'credibility hypothesis' (Majone 2001), claiming that governments delegate powers to enhance the credibility of their policies, also assumes that reversals are costly. However, essential policy packages that led to the formation of policies, new bodies and agencies were reversible even though their creation has been long and detailed. An example of this could be the independent regulatory agencies, where the triggers and timing of agentification processes have been more or less similar in many countries but resulted in significant variation in agency independence (Hanretty & Koop 2012; Ozel & Unan 2021). A large portion of the literature focuses on creating policies, but policies may have a life of their own. They might have dynamics that require more nuanced theories of policymaking. In this way, studying policy reversals may provide fresh insights into policymakers' operations.

Third, policy reversals affect public opinion. There is a renewed interest in the media to distinguish between 'malign' U-turns, as they call them, and the beneficial ones that aim to revise a proposal that found no good reception. Malik (2017) refers to U-turn as 'anti-politics', arguing that "...it ostensibly shows that there is no coherent plan being followed, no stewardship, just a series of slapdash decisions that are then reversed when it becomes apparent that they do not work. However, what if changing your mind was,.., not only fine but a good thing?". J. Kelly (2020) adds that the action of a policy reversal needs to be destigmatised as it could be a demonstration that a government is willing to listen and that the media, opposition parties and general public have the power to hold their leaders to account. While not all policy reversals occur due to policy feedback from the public and opposition, it is vital to identify the differences between policy/position reversals caused by different factors because these differences might matter for public opinion. Furthermore, if the reasons behind elites' policy reversals are communicated to the public, it may reduce the incentives to stick with mistakes since policy adjustments may be perceived positively. Taken together, these three reasons indicate the need to uncover the mechanisms of policy reversals because they have public relevance and may have contrasting political, institutional and welfare implications.

Two main works of literature deal with policy reversals. The first strand of the literature focuses on *the causes of policy reversals*. Political polarisation (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017), electoral uncertainty (Prato & Wolton 2017), re-election concerns (Fouirnaies et al. 2018), divided government (Ragusa 2010) and policy feedback (E. Patashnik 2003) are detected as causes of policy reversals in the literature. The second strand of the literature deals with *the consequences of policy reversals*. This literature tests whether policy reversals cause voter dissatisfaction. The empirical evidence is mixed. One strand of the literature finds that policy reversals get punished by voters because politicians who

change policy positions might be perceived unfavourable (Tomz & Houweling 2010), unreliable (M. Bernhardt & Ingerman 1985; Carlson & Dolan 1985) and indecisive or incompetent (Fearon 1994; Poole & Rosenthal 1997). Another strand of this literature does not find a strong relationship or finds that several factors condition the relationship. McDonald, Croco, and Turitto (2019) and Croco (2016) find that policy reversals do not matter for citizens when there is a motivated bias, i.e. when the politician currently supports the citizen's preferred policy.

Questions on the origin and evolution of different policy/preference reversals by elites and citizens with differential welfare consequences remain understudied in the literature. Therefore, this thesis employs online conjoint survey experiments to study elites and citizens' multi-dimensional policy preferences and reversal behaviour.

1.3. Research questions

Previous empirical studies of policy reversals have focused mainly on policies that get reversed and operationalised policies as the unit of analysis (Ragusa 2010; Ragusa & Birkhead 2015, 2020; Thrower 2017). While it is useful to observe the type of policy issues that get reversed, this does not necessarily explain the mechanisms through which a policy (preference) reversal occurs, especially when there is an exogenous event or individual differences in reversal behaviour. This thesis sets out individuals as the unit of analysis and takes an experimental survey approach to policy change, focusing on politicians and citizens. Elite preferences have not been studied with a focus on their preference reversal behaviour so far. In fact, there are very few studies that use conjoint survey experiments to study multidimensional preferences of elites (see, Doherty, Dowling, & Miller 2019; Shaffer, Pinson, Chu, & Simmons 2020). To my knowledge, this thesis is the very first study to

focus on the reversal behaviour of elites (and citizens) using a survey experiment.

When focusing on the mechanisms of policy reversals at the individual level, it is possible to find out the factors that lead to reversals for *some* politicians and *some* citizens. This feature allows us to set out the individual differences in reversal behaviour. It is unlikely to discover these differences when the unit of analysis is policies. The importance of setting individuals as the unit of analysis is demonstrated in each chapter of the thesis as different chapters deal with sub-research questions. Whilst different chapters focus on distinct aspects of preference formation and evolution, it is possible to observe how elites and citizens differ in processing information and updating preferences. In specific, the research questions of each chapter are as follows:

Ch1: Despite the heightened focus on policy reversals and their political costs, and given what we know about human preferences for consistency, why do politicians (and citizens) reverse their policy positions/preferences?

Ch2: How do electoral incentives and polarisation lead to policy reversals?

Ch3: How are politicians' multidimensional preferences for policies affected by external political events and their experiences with these events?

Ch4: How does policy framing affect the policy positions of politicians? Could the exposure to policy trade-offs lead to shifts in policy-making?

Ch5: In what ways do citizens' reversal behaviour compare to politicians'? Can information provision shift citizens' (polarised) policy preferences?

Ch6: What are the implications of different types of policy reversals?

Whilst seeking answers to these research questions, the thesis employs state-of-the-art survey experimental methods. The use of survey experiments to capture elites' preferences is not very common in the literature (see, however, Doherty et al. 2019; Shaffer et al. 2020). A large portion of the political science literature that studies political elites use audit experiments, a type of experiment that involves a researcher examining how a subject behaves when they believe they are interacting with another, real person. While these experiments are useful because they allow us to study subjects for whom there is no population substitute, they take up time and are risky in terms of potential political repercussions (Loewen & Rubenson 2021). Similar to the growing literature that relies on survey methods to capture citizen preferences (see, Druckman 2021; Druckman, Greene, Kuklinski, & Lupia 2011, for an overview), survey experiments are potentially useful to study elite preferences because they are (i) less risky and less costly for politicians and (ii) they allow researchers to examine numerous aspects of their decision making. Politicians (and citizens) can fill it out in their spare time, and they are free to drop out whenever they want. Comparatively to current approaches that focus on documents, interviews, or audit experiments to gather data about elites' preferences, the method employed in this thesis captures a broader range of attributes of politicians (and citizens), their decision making, and the policy choices they make.

1.4. Operationalisation

Policymaking does not come to an end once a policy is publicly decided. Instead, policies advance through a series of stages, namely: (1) identification of a problem, (2) agenda-setting (3), policy formulation (4), decision-making (5), implementation, and (6) assessment (Karagiannis

& Radaelli 2007). The focus of this thesis is on decision-making, implementation, and assessment. A policy/position/preference reversal could take place in the fifth or the sixth stage of policymaking.

Since there is little work on policy reversals, there is not much effort in the literature about problems (and solutions) in measuring policy reversal mechanisms. Ragusa and Birkhead (2020) measures repeals by looking into the judgment of experts, i.e., notes by journalists, academics and policy experts. As a starting point, I show Ragusa and Birkhead (2020)'s presentation on the historical coverage of policy reversal (repeal as they call it) efforts in the US (1877–2017) in Fig. 1. This figure shows that the news cover policy reversals in some eras more than others. The spikes in the time-series represent eras that consecutive policy repeals or a discussion of policy repeals took place. The years between 1925-1941, for instance, depicted multiple repeal efforts focused on monetary and macroeconomic policy and had the greatest repeal coverage in history (Ragusa & Birkhead 2020, 5). While this approach is useful, it lacks objective criteria as to what counts as a policy reversal.

Following Mahoney and Thelen (2010) and Streeck and Thelen (2005), it is essential to differentiate between the two main types of reversals: (i) policies that are repealed and replaced with new policies (gradual change) and (ii) policies that are repealed without a replacement (abrupt change). An example for the former would be how the Great Depression-era banking acts were repealed by various acts, most notably the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act of 1999. An example for the latter could be the repeal of laws prohibiting private ownership of gold bullion by U.S. citizens without any replacement.

These two main types of reversals might have different connotations and consequences due to the nature of change and the different types of policy issues they address. A policy changed gradually and replaced

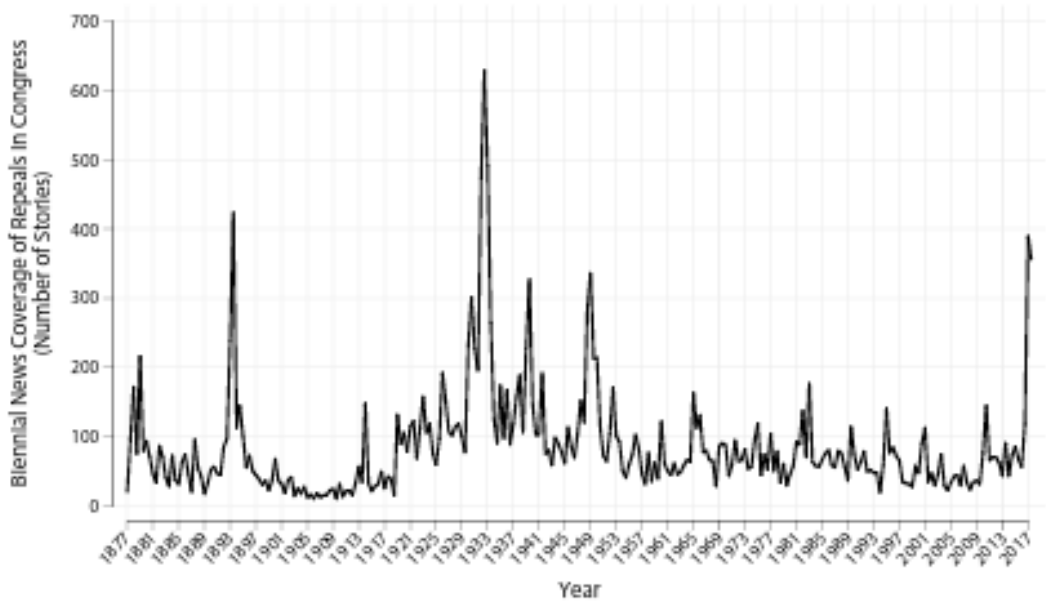


Fig. 1.1. Historical News Coverage of Repeal Efforts (1877–2017)

Figure 1: **Historical coverage of policy repeal efforts in the US (1877–2017), adopted from the book by Ragusa and Birkhead (2020)**

with a new policy might be perceived more positively than a policy that changed abruptly with no replacement policy. Politicians –when they communicate these policy changes– may use different language to inject positive or negative (or neutral) connotations into their words and sentences. In order to illustrate the existence of different types of policy reversals and their connotations, I display the Manifesto Corpus (Volkens et al. 2020) using the platforms of the U.S. Democratic Party and the Republican Party over the years. I randomly select (without replacement) 14 texts from across 28 manifesto documents. Years of these manifestos are as follows: 1964 (2) 1968, 1972, 1976, 1980, 1984, 1988 (2), 1996, 2004, 2008, 2012 (2). I reshape the corpus to be made up of sentences. I then remove numbers, punctuation, symbols, and stopwords. I present summary statistics in Table 1. To measure reversals in a given manifesto, I count the relative number of reversals with and without replacement words from a curated dictionary within each sentence.

Table 1: **Summary statistics**

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Types	14	3,945.000	1,433.710	1,542	3,066.8	5,099.5	6,075
Tokens	14	27,588.500	15,031.930	5,310	18,040	39,919.8	49,837
Sentences	14	755.857	659.681	5	138.5	1,157.2	1,828

Fig. 2 illustrates time-series sentiment analysis of the randomly selected manifestos by sentences with the "Reverse with no replacement" dictionary (first panel) and "Reverse with replacement" dictionary (second panel). In Fig. 3, I take the difference between negative and positive sentiment to show the net sentiment of the two types of reversals. Across years, it appears that reversals without replacement have a negative connotation, while reversals with replacement are associated with positive words in party manifestos. This illustrates the problem in the current understanding of policy reversals and could contribute to the conceptualisation that reversals do not have to be necessarily 'bad' as depicted in the media as flip-flopping or U-turning. Or it may not mean that every time politicians engage in a policy reversal, they will be perceived as non-credible or inconsistent (as documented by Croco 2016; McDonald et al. 2019). This descriptive evidence adds important nuance to the understanding of policy reversals. This conceptual distinction between positive and negative policy reversals will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

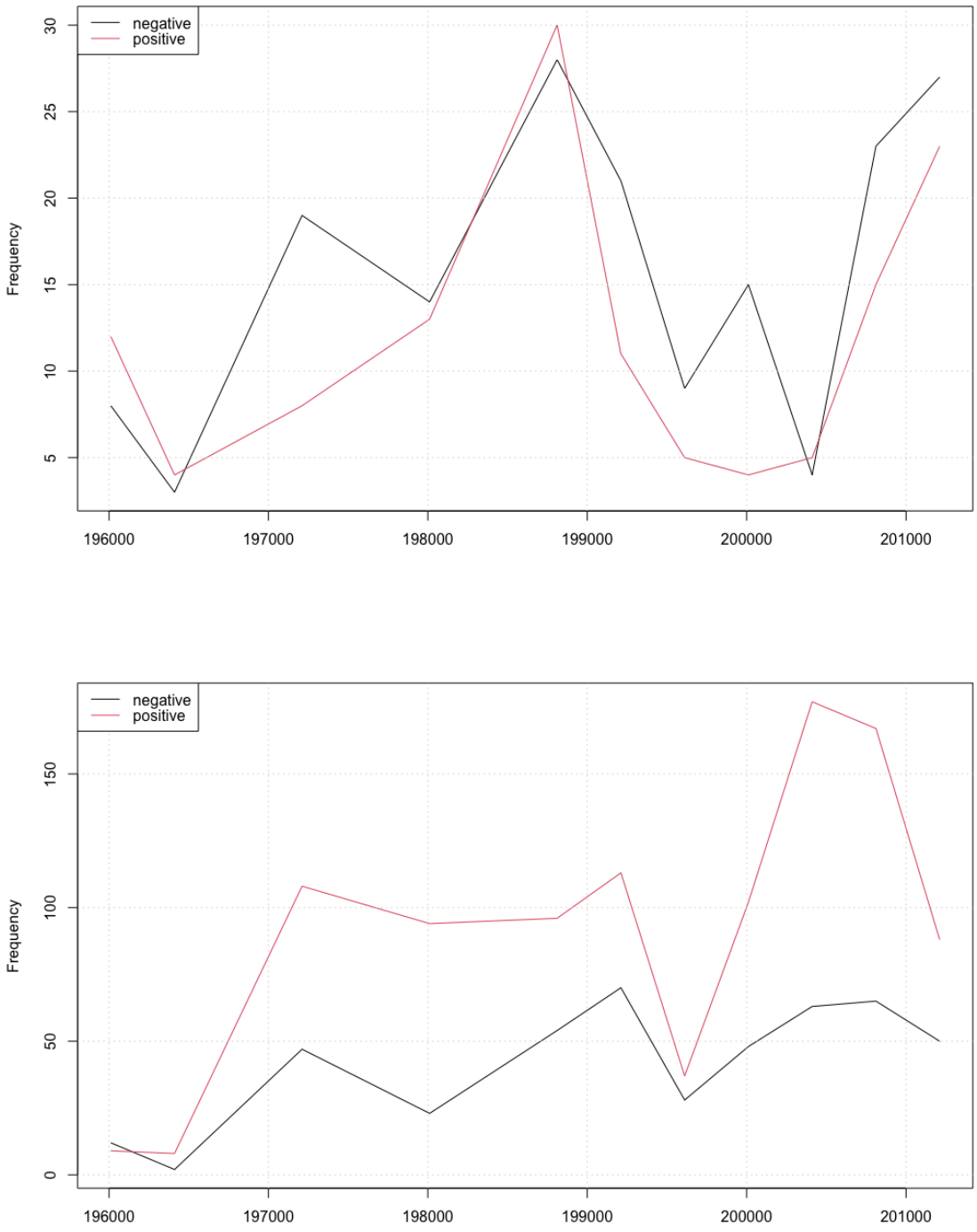


Figure 2: **Reverse with no replacement (first panel) vs. Reverse with replacement (second panel) relative sentiment**

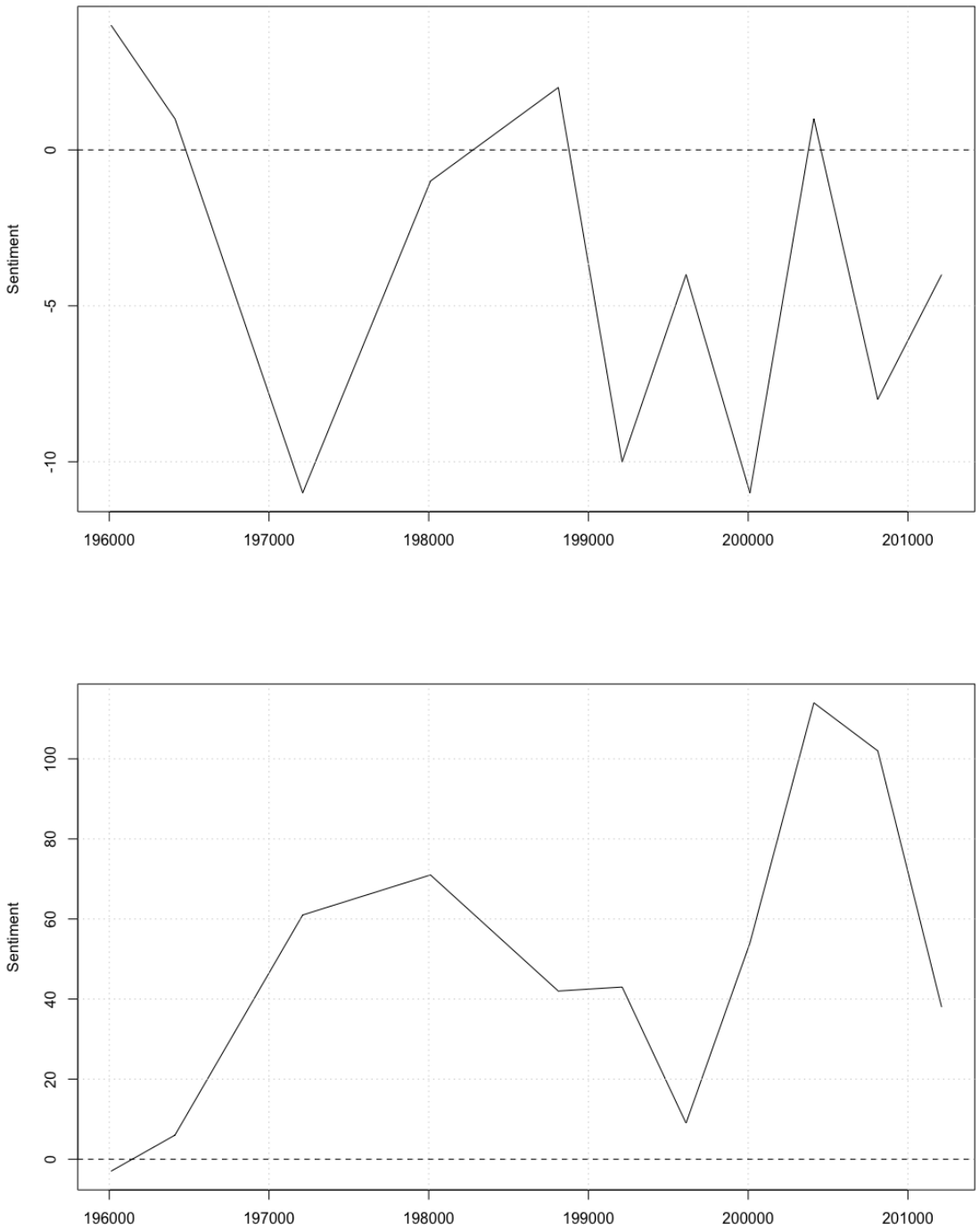


Figure 3: **Reverse with no replacement (first panel) vs. Reverse with replacement (second panel) net sentiment**

1.5. Contributions to the literature

This thesis relates firstly to the literature on the political economy of public policy. It contributes to understanding policymaking by exploring the political factors such as electoral competition, political polarisation, and uncertainty about voter preferences and non-political factors such as policy trade-offs, external events, and information provision. Previous explanations for policy reversals in policymaking focus on the homogeneity of the legislation (Ragusa & Birkhead 2015), change in the ideological preferences of public officials, and policy feedback (E. Patashnik 2003) and prospective future policy gains (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017). Additionally, the literature so far on reversals treats policy reversals as sources of inconsistency (Levendusky & Horowitz 2012; Levy, McKoy, Poast, & Wallace 2015; Tomz & Houweling 2010) where politicians engaging in policy reversals are seen as incompetent (Doherty, Dowling, & Miller 2016; Sorek, Haglin, & Geva 2018) causing audience dissatisfaction (Fearon 1994). However, policy reversals might at times be functional. This thesis contributes to the literature by differentiating between functional and non-functional policy reversals and testing political and non-political motivations behind the reversal behaviour. Its (survey) experimental approach further allows examining the mechanisms behind the reversal behaviour of politicians and citizens whilst capturing individual differences.

Second, it contributes to the literature on policy change. Although policy change has garnered significant attention in the policymaking literature (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Carpenter 2010; Mahoney & Thelen 2010; Tsebelis 1995), instances in which politicians reverse policies or attempt to reverse policies have received little consideration (see, however, Hood 1994). This is surprising given the fact that politicians' short-term and long-term policy decisions may differ, or the status quo can be changed by future governments, especially if opposed

to the previous policy. Scholars have highlighted policy durability resulting from the costs of reversals (Ragusa 2010) and changing status quo (Baumgartner & Jones 1993). Others explain policy durability by describing the uncertainty surrounding a policy given possible shifts in future incumbents (Moe 2012; E. Patashnik 2003; E. M. Patashnik 2008). Scholars have recently started to examine agency termination (Hanretty 2014), continuation of policies such as legislation (Maltzman & Shipan 2008; Ostrander & Sievert 2013; Ragusa 2010; Ragusa & Birkhead 2015) and federal programs (Berry, Burden, & Howell 2010; Corder & Hoffmann 2004). Despite the extensive work on policy stability and policy change (Baumgartner & Jones 1993; Carpenter 2010; Mahoney & Thelen 2010; Tsebelis 1995), this literature has not been linked to the reversals generated in policymaking. The broad policy change literature is also not yet linked to reversals in policymaking resulting from political factors such as electoral incentives of policymakers and non-political factors such as the policy menu available to politicians.[2] Section 1.5.1 discusses this literature and its understanding of and relationship to policy reversals in more detail.

Third, it relates to the literature on electoral competition. The formal work of Chapter 2 follows from a long literature on the representation that builds on Downs (1957)'s argument that two candidate competitions should lead to policy platforms that converge on the preferences of the median voter. This chapter deals with elections with both office and policy motivations, taking a different approach. It builds on the work of Calvert (1985) and Wittman (1983) who argue that policy and office motivated candidates might adopt divergent positions in the face of uncertainty about voter preferences. Contrary to the previous literature on representation, this study looks into the dynamic impact of electoral incentives on the fate of policies implemented. It contributes to the early literature by calling attention to the joint influence of

[2] (see, however, Hood 1994; Mahoney & Thelen 2010; Streeck & Thelen 2005).

uncertainty and polarisation. Section 1.5.2 explains this literature in more detail.

Forth, the thesis contributes to the literature on dynamic policymaking. Time inconsistent preferences for policymaking are first noted by Kydland and Prescott (1977). What is a 'best plan' today for policymakers may not be optimal in the future; therefore, they occasionally reverse their policies. Central to the theoretical model in Chapter 2 is that voters observe the policy implemented by the incumbent when deciding on their votes, and politicians preemptively endogenise voters' preferences when they implement a policy that they can keep or reverse after the elections. However, due to uncertainty about voters' policy preferences, politicians face a trade-off between implementing their ideal policy in the short or the long-run. They base their decision also on the level of polarisation they face. Additionally, in Chapters 3, 4 and 5, I call attention to the role of external events, policy trade-offs and information provision in determining policy reversals. Section 1.5.3 locates policy/preference reversals in this literature.

Finally, this thesis contributes to the literature on the impact of crisis on preferences. In Chapter 3, I explore how a supranational political crisis affects the multidimensional preferences of local politicians. Chapter 5 explores how the COVID-19 pandemic, a crisis that combines both significant economic and health disruptions, affects citizens' fiscal policy preferences. It is known that economic, political and natural crises affect people's preferences. For instance, Gualtieri, Nicolini, and Sabatini (2019) find strengthened policy preferences for redistribution as a result of the L'Aquila earthquake in 2009 by raising the beliefs that luck matters more than merit in determining one's income. Cassar, Healy, and Von Kessler (2017) demonstrate that the 2004 tsunami in Thailand has led to substantial long-lasting changes in preferences by increasing risk aversion. As the European refugee crisis has had uneven

effects on various places depending on the local and refugee population and the contact between them, it is likely to have affected municipalities with higher exposure to the crisis, such as islands, differently than other places (Hangartner, Dinas, Marbach, Matakos, & Xefteris 2019). It is also likely that politicians in these municipalities have different policy preferences due to differential exposure. Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an unequal effect on individuals. Those who are more affected by or concerned about the pandemic might have different preferences than others. Likewise, when individuals are informed about the extent of the pandemic, this information could be likely to affect their policy preferences. Section 1.5.4 makes a detailed discussion of the related literature.

The following four subsections will discuss contributions to the subfields of the literature in detail.

1.5.1. Policy stability and change

Why do we observe much continuity in policies? Baumgartner and Jones (1993) suggest that policies are characterised by long periods of stability, punctuated by large—but less frequent—changes due to large shifts in society or government. While the stickiness of institutional cultures, vested interests, and the bounded rationality of individual decision-makers stabilise policies, a shift in party control of government or changes in public opinion leads to changes in policies. Pierson (2000) argues that once actors have ventured far down a particular path and obtained positive feedback, they may find it very difficult to reverse course. Jacobs and Weaver (2015) add that even policies with very high net costs can survive for quite some time without major reform, either as pressures for change run up against immovable objects in the political system or as repeated tinkering keeps the situation barely tolerable. Finally, Tsebelis (1995) points out the role of veto players

in understanding policy stability and change. He finds that the policy stability of a political system increases when the number of veto players increases. Nevertheless, how does policy change come about?

Five main political science approaches can help explain how changes come about in policymaking (Hood 1994). The first one is habitat change or exogenous shifts. In early institutional and policy theories, change was seen coming from an exogenous shock to the system rather than from within the policy system. This approach asserts that factors external to the political system determine the decisions of public actors and affect policy outputs and outcomes. Examples could be technological improvements, globalisation or the COVID-19 pandemic very recently. Crises are also regularly blamed for destabilising policies. For instance, Greener (2001) argues that exogenous shocks result in new policy paradigms. Recent evidence demonstrates that deep crises are expected to reduce political opposition to reforms by lowering payoffs of obstruction and by increasing payoffs from a policy change (Asatryan et al. 2017).

The second one is the changing ideas-based approach. This view suggests that ideas change, circulate and gain influence independently or prior to interests in the policy process (John 2012). In explaining regulation, deregulation, and reregulation trends, for example, the 'power of ideas' approach attributes regulatory reform to the doctrines of economic rationalism of the 1960s and 1970s and the persuasive power of the New Right (Hood 1994). Similarly, changing macroeconomic policies are explained by changing economic theory fashions (Whiteley 1983). Again, Blyth (2002) points to the role of ideas, arguing that ideas reduce uncertainty (especially in times of crises) which results in subsequent institutional construction taking place. Finally, Hall (1993) argues that, across virtually all fields, policymaking is motivated by a set of ideas that recognise particular social interests as more

legitimate than others and give priority to specific lines of policy more importance.

The institutional approach focuses on the view that political organisations, such as parliaments, legal systems, and bureaucracies, structure public decisions and policy outcomes that determine policy change. Institutions, which include policies as well, shape policy change primarily through how they distribute incentives and learning (Hall & Taylor 1996; Ostrom 1990; Pierson 2000). Historical institutionalism focuses on the impact of long-term institutional legacies on policy processes. Two important streams are present in explaining the role of institutions in policymaking. The first stream focuses on exogenous explanations of institutional change, which they call critical junctures (Baumgartner & Jones 1993), whereas the second explains the change from endogenous developments (Thelen 2004). Béland and Waddan (2015) argues that since ideas and institutions interact in forming public policy, it is essential to distinguish between the core and non-core beliefs of political actors and the types of institutions to see which beliefs and types of institutions interact to bring about a policy change. Eventually, political institutions play a role in providing or restricting possibilities of policymaking and, in specific, reversals. Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson, and Thaicharoen (2003) suggest that the major causes of significant cross-country differences in volatility are institutional. Sirimaneetham (2006), studying the causes of macroeconomic policy reversals, finds that the policy is more volatile in countries where electoral outcomes are less competitive. However, their analysis does not uncover whether the policy remains once the politician is re-elected.

Related to change from endogenous developments, the self-destruction approach mainly deals with the cases where policies and institutions internally self-destruct themselves due to institutional exhaustion in which existing rules undermine social reality. Over the past decade,

several modes of incremental policy change that can come from within a policy regime have been recognised among scholars. Mahoney and Thelen (2010, 9) argue that change and stability are inextricably linked and suggest four modes of institutional change; namely displacement, layering, conversion, and drift. Streeck and Thelen (2005) assert that sometimes, the new and old institutional forms coexist, but with the availability of the former calling into question the primacy and taken-for-grantedness of the latter. In this view, policy change involves high degrees of institutional adaptation to bring institutions inherited from the past into line with changes in the social and political context.

The changing 'interests' (or rational choice) approach claims that changing preferences and bargaining of actors explain decisions and outcomes. The rational choice theory proposes a framework in which actors are rational in the pursuit of their preferences and interact strategically with other actors in the system. For example, Tsebelis (1995)'s veto player theory provides a rational explanation for policy change by combining the importance of policy preferences of political actors with the institutional constraints they face. Similarly, theories of lawmaking use ideological distances between parties to expect policy change (Bawn 1999; Hallerberg & Basinger 1998). Models of change in policy preferences are further discussed in the dynamic policymaking section.

The five policy change approaches discussed primarily provide independent policymaking in countries. However, it is vital to acknowledge the policy diffusion approach to add to these domestic accounts. Examples of policy diffusion include policies on same-sex marriages and free-market policies. This approach pays attention to the question of why and how policymakers react to decisions made elsewhere (Braun & Gilardi 2006). Pointing to the role of politics and political learning, Gi-

lardi (2010) shows that policymakers learn from political (particularly electoral) consequences (not only from policy effects).

In order to better understand the political and non-political causes of policy reversals and observe differences in reversal behaviour of individuals, this thesis employs a rational approach. The simple formal model in Chapter 2 aims to assess the dynamic incentives of politicians in the short and long term. To be more realistic in the formal model of Chapter 2, I assume that politicians are both policy and office-motivated. Further, to account for bounded rationality, I add that politicians have imperfect information about voters' policy preferences. In the empirical chapters of Chapters 3, 4 and 5, its unit of analysis is individuals. The thesis focuses on the multidimensional policy preferences and reversal behaviour of politicians and citizens in separate chapters. It aims to understand how policy preferences of politicians and citizens shift with respect to external events and internal trade-offs.

1.5.2. Electoral competition

The literature on spatial electoral competition is vast. Since the influential papers of Hotelling (1929) and Downs (1957), models of spatial competition have greatly contributed to our understanding of elections and their impact on policy outcomes. Median voter theorem is the central prediction: over a unidimensional policy space, two office-motivated candidates who are perfectly informed about voter preferences should meet at the median voter's preferred policy whose preferences are single-peaked. This insight extends to many variations of the basic model and predicts policy convergence. Wittman (1977) extends the traditional models by assuming that parties also care about policy outcomes (see, also, Calvert 1985; Duggan 2000; Roemer 2006; Wittman 1983). Under this assumption, parties increase their likelihood of winning by moving toward the median voter's preferences

in two-party systems. However, they increase their satisfaction with the policy they implement when they move toward their preferred policy. As a result, policy-motivated parties offer policies that diverge when there is uncertainty about the median voter's preferences.

Allowing for different motivations, electoral competition scholars have followed two streams of literature: Hotelling (1929) with office-motivated candidates and Wittman (1977, 1983) and Calvert (1985) with policy-motivated candidates. Chapter 1 of the thesis mainly builds upon the latter and focuses on models that induce policy divergence. Models that predict policy divergence present policy-motivated candidates with uncertain voter preferences (Calvert 1985; Wittman 1983), office-motivated candidates with asymmetric information about voter preferences (D. Bernhardt, Duggan, & Squintani 2009), platform-motivated candidates (Callander & Davin 2017; Kartik & McAfee 2007), heterogeneity in candidate valence (Aragones, Palfrey, Aragones, & Palfrey 2002; Groseclose 2001) or personality (Gul & Pesendorfer 2006), the threat of entry by a third candidate (Palfrey 1984), or citizen-candidate models where candidates cannot commit to policies (Besley & Coate 1997; Osborne & Slivinski 1996). The assumption of uncertainty about voter preferences has played an important role in the study of policy-making.

There are two main ways of modelling uncertainty in the literature. The first approach deals with probabilistic voting. Because candidates are unlikely in reality to be able to predict election returns with certainty, theoretical literature has treated voting as a random variable where randomness arises from unobserved parameters in the maximisation problem of voters (Banks & Duggan 2007). It is assumed, in this approach, that voters vote probabilistically from the perspective of candidates. More precisely, voters have additively separable preferences over policies and biases. There is a sizeable literature that analyses

candidates' behaviour in the presence of valence advantage (see Ansolabehere & Brady 1989; Aragones et al. 2002; Groseclose 2001). More recent papers analysing elections with advantaged candidates include Kartik and McAfee (2007), Ashworth and de Mesquita (2006) and Iaryczower and Eui (2013), among others.

An alternative way to model uncertainty is to consider that parties either do not know voters' policy preferences (as opposed to their partisan bias) or the distribution of voters' preferences (Calvert 1985; Roemer 2006; Smirnov & Fowler 2007; Wittman 1983). Static models of party competition suggest that uncertainty about voter preferences, i.e., the location of the median voter, increases divergence. Roemer (2006) finds that more volatile elections, where the variance in the distribution of the median voter is higher, yield more significant uncertainty about the location of the median voter triggering both candidates to offer more extreme platforms. Smirnov and Fowler (2007) allow policy-motivated parties to use their experience to estimate the location of the median voter in the present. Decreasing confidence in prior beliefs means parties have more significant prior uncertainty about the median voter's location, which causes both parties to offer more extreme platforms. Chapter 2 of this thesis employs the second approach where parties do not know voters' policy preferences, i.e., the median voter's ideal policy. This approach helps account for bounded rationality, where political actors have imperfect information about others' preferences. It adds a realistic layer to the political calculus of the politicians.

Divided government has often been seen as leading to stalemate (Binder 1999; Edwards III, Barrett, & Peake 1997; Tsebelis 1995) or conversely as neutral on legislative productivity (Mayhew 2005). The veto point approach by Immergut (1992) sees institutional veto points as tools for blocking legislative action as well as barriers for interest groups. Making some courses of action more difficult and facilitating others,

the institutions determined where to find the balance between interest group demands and the executive's programmatic objectives. It is also argued by Tsebelis (1995) that policy stability is more likely in political settings with many veto players with significant ideological distances and a unique internal cohesiveness (divided government). While the conventionally divided government hypothesis suggests that a highly polarised legislature will be prone to gridlock, where neither party is willing to allow the sort of compromises often necessary for governing, empirical evidence has been mixed. For example, Mayhew (2005) finds no evidence of the impact of divided government on legislative productivity in his analysis of significant laws passed in the postwar era. Reexamining Mayhew's data using different criteria for significant laws, S. Q. Kelly (1993) finds that divided government does reduce enactment of these laws. Cameron, Sallot, and Curtin (1997) takes into account the non-stationary nature of time series data and shows that divided government reduces enactment of landmark legislation but increases enactment of less significant legislation. Edwards III et al. (1997) find that failure of legislation opposed by the President increases under divided government. Binder (2003) and Jones (2001) show that ideological divergence between the parties has a stronger negative effect on the government's legislative productivity than does divided party control of the government.

In attempting to understand policy consequences of ideological polarisation, scholars have focused mainly on the influences on elected officials' roll-call decisions. The estimation of spatial models of roll-call voting has been one of the most important developments in the study of U.S. Congress and other legislative institutions. Studies of the Congress find that parties have become highly polarised in Congress in recent years (Layman, Carsey, & Horowitz 2006; McCarty, Poole, & Rosenthal 2006; Theriault 2008). McCarty et al. (2006) demonstrate that Democratic and Republican members of Congress have diverged

in the ideological orientations reflected in their roll-call behaviour since the 1960s, with Democrats moving steadily to the left and Republicans moving to the right. Mccarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2009) argue that the increased polarisation of Congress is a result of the increasing ease of reelection. In an era of declining competition, politicians feel free to pander voters to their base instead of reaching out to moderate and independent voters.

Related to the relationship between the fierceness of competition and polarisation, the relevant strand of literature examines how reelection concerns change the productivity of incumbents. Studying the impact of term-limits on legislative productivity, from when incumbents face reelection incentives to when they no longer face reelection incentives, scholars find that a term-limited incumbent, who cannot derive any benefit from impressing the voter, will no longer be responsive to voters (Besley & Coate 1997; Ferraz & Finan 2011; Fouirnaies et al. 2018; List & Sturm 2006). Ashworth and de Mesquita (2006) explore a similar intuition where they explore the incumbent behaviour in a partisanship context. When incumbents expect to face more competitive elections, they will substitute away from policymaking favouring constituency service, which is more easily observed by voters and thus a more efficient way to affect the voter's vote. Related empirical work studies electoral incentives by comparing incumbent behaviour preelection time to behaviour farther away from election time (Huber & Gordon 2004), or by comparing the behaviour of officials who face election to other similar officials who are instead appointed (Ash & Macleod 2015).

1.5.3. Dynamic policymaking

Models of electoral competition, however, predominantly focus on pre-election politics. In dynamic economies with dynamically sophisticated

agents, policymaking does not end when one of the candidates gets elected. After the elections, a politician who is in her second term, who will not be running for reelection or who is at the end of her career may act to promote her preferred policies (Alesina & Spear 1988). Policies implemented in the first period that facilitated reelection for the incumbent then might end up being drifted (Callander & Krehbiel 2014), kludged (Kawai, Lang, & Li 2018), or reversed (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017) after the elections. Therefore, it is crucial to consider post-election politics and politicians' dynamic incentives when modelling electoral competition.

The literature on dynamic policymaking analyses post-election politics. Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017) study dynamic policymaking in the context of uncertainty about future power. In their model, future political power may evolve favourably or unfavourably from an incumbent's perspective. The opportunity cost of implementing a more powerful reform in the future may hold the incumbent back from implementing their favourite reform in their first term. They provide an interesting result regarding reversals which they call a 'paradoxical' reversal: the proposer of the policy moves it further from her ideal and closer to the radical veto player's ideal than would the radical herself to "leap forward more vigorously" in the future. Elections in their model, however, is a random selection process. Dewan and Hortala-Vallve (2019) takes an agency approach to electoral competition. In their model, the policy implemented by the incumbent provides a rich source of information. However, it may be costly to voters, whereas the opponent's campaign yields less information at no cost. They find that this asymmetric competition creates incentives for the incumbent to over-invest in risky and costly projects, which may end up being reversed. Majumdar and Mukand (2004) explore the opposite case where politicians do not experiment and stick with inefficient policies. They demonstrate that the adverse reputational impact of a policy

reversal gives the incumbent an incentive to ignore useful information produced by experimentation and stick with an inefficient policy.[3]

Another strand of literature deals with post-election politics in electoral competition focuses on the issue of credible commitments. The preelection models of politics assume a credible commitment to policy platforms in the electoral campaign (Persson & Tabellini 2004). In reality, however, politicians might use post-election discretion, deviating from their platform promises. Banks and Duggan (2007) study a two-period model of moral hazard. They find that when voters' vote retrospectively, the reputational mechanism disciplines the incumbent and create an incumbency effect. In a dynamic policymaking setting, the policy implemented by the incumbent becomes the criteria of reelection for the voters in the preelection period. In the theoretical model of this thesis, voters' strategy of reelecting depends on the observed policy outcome by the incumbent relative to the challenger's policy platform. What happens when voters adopt a retrospective voting strategy for the incumbent and the prospective voting strategy for the challenger? Incumbents being aware of this electoral mechanism might over-respond to uncertain voter preferences, resulting in extreme policies or 'botched reforms' (Prato & Wolton 2017).

Reversals might inevitably be related to the timing and adoption of reforms. Kingdon (1984) suggests that policy change comes about when three streams —problems, politics, and policies— connect. When a policy window is recognised and open, there is a potential for policymaking to happen. The conventional wisdom that reforms are more likely in the time of crises (Prati, Onorato, & Papageorgiou 2013; Tommasi & Velasco 1996) is brought into question recently by a few empirical studies that find crises reduce the probability of reforms (Campos, Hsiao, & Nugent 2010; Mian, Rao, & Sufi 2013) and a formal study by

[3]Here, reputation matters mostly because it will limit the policymaking capacity of policymakers in the future.

(Prato & Wolton 2017). Exploring how voters' demand for economic reforms affects the probability that successful or populist reforms are adopted, Prato and Wolton (2017) shows that when reforms are most needed, electoral competition becomes comparatively less effective at protecting the voter from harmful policy changes. Candidates may engage in populism and propose reformist agendas regardless of their ability to carry them out successfully. Eventually, high demand for reform may result in what they call 'a botched reform' by populist reformers. Similarly, suppose the candidates think that voters are in the extremes. In that case, the incumbent might implement a 'botched 'reform that is far too extreme, resulting in a reversal after the election because its implementation is unrealistic or the incumbent is not ideologically committed to it. Dewan and Hortala-Vallve (2019), similarly, find that an incumbent is more likely to make inefficient policy choices when she considers the effect of her opponents' campaigns on voters.

The dynamic linkage between today's and tomorrow's decision may greatly depend on the opposing incentives generated by party polarisation and uncertainty. Implementing ideologically inconsistent policies in the short and long run may be optimal from an incumbent's point of view. Incumbents facing higher levels of party polarisation and lower levels of uncertainty may implement policies further away from their ideal, which they reverse or change in the long run. The short-term policy the incumbent implement may, in the long-term, end up in drifts (Callander & Krehbiel 2014), inaction (Majumdar & Mukand 2004) or reversals (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017).

1.5.4. Crises and policy preferences

This thesis contributes to the literature on how crises impact preferences. The two chapters of the thesis, Chapter 3 and 5, deal with how external events such as political and economic crisis, and the experience of a

crisis, affect policy preferences of politicians and citizens, respectively. Crises are commonly attributed to destabilising policies. According to Greener (2001) for example, exogenous shocks result in new policy paradigms. Hall (1993), on the other hand, suggests that policy legacies influence policymaker's goals and that the influence of the past is more significant for policy than the prevailing social and economic conditions. Research suggests that deep crises are likely to increase the payoff of a policy change and lead to a reduction in political opposition to policy reforms (Asatryan et al. 2017). Hogan and Feeney (2012) argue that new ideas are needed during times of crisis. Various change agents generate these ideas, but only one change agent can enter the institutional environment: the political entrepreneur. Kingdon (1984) and Saurugger and Terpan (2015) add that windows of opportunity– periods of greater receptivity of political actors– are crucial to making a more coherent coalition of policy entrepreneurs in times of crisis. Berman (2020) claims that the critical determinants of whether crises and discontent trigger transformation are planning and power. In Chapter 3, I go into more detail about how crises affect the preferences of politicians who do not have the power to influence the crisis but can formulate policy to deal with the crisis at the local level.

Exogenous shocks such as natural disasters shift citizen preferences on time preferences (Callen 2015; Cassar et al. 2017) and increase support for redistributive policies (Gualtieri et al. 2019). Meanwhile, there seems to be evidence that economic shocks are associated with decreased support for redistributive policies (Brunner, Ross, & Washington 2011), and a move to the right (Colantone & Stanig 2018; Fisman, Jakiela, & Kariv 2015). However, it is unclear how a shock with economic and health consequences affects preferences. In Chapter 5, I study how the COVID-19 pandemic, a natural shock with both an economic and a health dimension, affects citizens' policy preferences.

I also examine how information provision can shift these fiscal policy preferences and lead to informational policy reversals.

1.6. The organisation of thesis

This thesis examines the impact of inter and intra-party polarisation, uncertainty over voters' policy preferences, the presence of policy trade-offs, crisis and (information about) the extent of a crisis on policy preferences and policy reversals.

Chapter 2 proposes a theory on policy reversals based on a simple formal model and argues that political polarisation and uncertainty over policy preferences play a significant, yet puzzling, role in generating policy reversals. The model finds that when Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017)'s model is extended to include electoral competition and uncertainty over voters' policy preferences, the incumbent takes extreme positions in the short-run as a form of insurance against future shifts in power depending on the level of polarisation and uncertainty (also see, Dziuda & Loeper 2018). When there is a lower level of party polarisation, policymakers produce policies closer to their preferred policy in the short-term. Then, a high level of uncertainty over the popular policy leads policymakers to produce policies located between their preferred policy and the median policy. If polarisation is high, a high level of uncertainty over the public opinion will lead policymakers to produce policies far away from their preferred policy and closer to their opponent's preferred policy in the short term. Since policymakers are motivated both by the office and their ideology, they will modify or reverse this policy in the long-run, if reelected.

Chapter 3 uses the European refugee crisis as a case study to explore how local politicians' policy preferences are shaped with respect to exogenous events, i.e., an EU-wide political crisis. Contrary to the

existing literature which uses interviews, documents and field experiments to capture elite preferences, it makes use of an online conjoint survey experiment on a representative sample of locally-elected municipal officials in Greece to capture the multidimensional preferences of politicians. In particular, it focuses on the preferences of local officials on immigration policy and how their local experiences might interact with their policy choices. The conjoint experiment looks into the role of the refugee host sites and the provision of additional municipal funds in shaping politicians' policy preferences. By eliciting elite preferences regarding refugee resettlement into their communities, it finds that local leaders are more likely to support resettlement schemes if they are involved in the process and can control the frequency and intensity of exposure between refugees and locals. It also finds significant heterogeneity: elites' preferred control strategies are highly contingent on ideology, beliefs and values. Finally, it finds one notable difference between elected officials serving in cities that already have refugee hosting sites versus those that do not. Councillors serving in the former are no more opposed to hosting larger sized camps (greater than 1%), possibly demonstrating a more capacious/flexible understanding of fairness. This finding is critical in showing how the past experiences of politicians interact with their policy preferences and adds important nuance to existing theories on contact and policymaking.

Chapter 4 explores a new mechanism through which politicians reverse their policy positions. In particular, it tests how exposure to a different framing/dimensionality of the policy affects policy preferences' reversals using original elite survey data from Greece. This chapter examines the reversal behaviour of politicians by conducting a survey experiment isolating their preferences in different policy environments. It finds that an exposure to the different dimensions of a policy can lead to reversals in policymaking. Furthermore, findings indicated that inter and intra-party polarisation is crucial in determining policy reversal

behaviour of locally elected officials. It supports the proposition of the formal model showing that short-term policy decisions made by ideologically distant party members are likely to be reversed in the long run. While the exposure to policy trade-offs could be a functional form of policy change as politicians learn about new attributes of a policy, the politicians who reversed their initial decision seem to be motivated by ideology and polarisation. This finding helps clarify the interplay between functional and non-functional forms of position/preference reversals.

Until now, the thesis has focused on elite preference reversals as they are critical to understanding policymaking processes, but what about citizens' preferences? Chapter 5 uses the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study to explore how citizens' policy preferences are shaped with respect to exogenous events. It also focuses on another mechanism of preference reversal: information provision. The chapter conducts a conjoint experiment with an information treatment component embedded in a representative survey of more than 2,000 US citizens to investigate citizens' pandemic related fiscal policy preferences. Recent studies have found that the U.S. is dominated by strong partisan polarisation both in reality and policy preferences. This polarisation is so entrenched that factual information cannot alter it. The experiment with embedded information treatments evaluates if the COVID-19 pandemic, which affects citizens unequally, reproduces or disrupts these polarisation patterns in policy preferences. There seems to be more polarisation along partisan lines than traditional socioeconomic cleavages in perceptions of reality regarding the pandemic and preferences for post-COVID-19 fiscal adjustment. The partisan policy polarisation is absent mainly when citizens are exposed to predicted COVID-19 deaths and income losses. We observe informational preference reversals in both partisan groups. Both Democrats and Republicans are moving in the same direction, which helps bridge the partisan gap. Additionally, such information

has the effect of resetting fiscal policy preferences favouring a greater reliance on taxes. These findings indicate that information provision could lead to functional policy preference reversals for citizens.

Chapter 6 evaluates the five chapters, their individual and collective findings and implications, and concludes.

2. Chapter 2: A Theory of Policy Reversals

Recent research suggests that while specific policies per se may not be detrimental to the economy, an increase in the variance of policies can generate grave economic inefficiencies (Fatás & Mihov 2013). Despite evidence on the welfare implications of volatile policymaking, causal mechanisms leading to policy reversals remain obscure. How do electoral incentives generate policy reversals? Why and when do politicians backtrack on policy reforms despite the effort put into their enforcement? This chapter explores these questions by working through a formal model of electoral competition on policy reversals. The formal model investigates the circumstances under which volatile policymaking occurs; and demonstrates that the level of party polarisation, uncertainty over electorate preferences and the presence of upcoming elections might generate reversals in policymaking. Among others, party polarisation appears to be the primary driver of inconsistency. An extreme party polarisation leads the incumbent to implement policies far from her ideal point in the short-run, which she reverses in the long run. Additionally, the skewness of uncertainty over voter preferences alters the policymaking calculus of the incumbents. The findings have broad implications on the policy and welfare consequences of party polarisation and electorate uncertainty.

Keywords: policy reversals, policy reversal, electoral uncertainty, political polarisation, voter preferences

2.1. Introduction

Chapter 1 described the significance of policy reversals, their relevance for politics, institutions, and economic growth, as well as their importance. It stressed its connections to the existing literature on policy stability and change, electoral competition, dynamic policymaking, polarisation, electoral incentives, and policy production. An overview of the literature was provided, outlining gaps in the existing literature and presenting preliminary measurements of different types of reversals. This chapter focuses on the link between electoral incentives, political polarisation, uncertainty over voters' preferences, and policy reversals by working through a simple formal model. Voters want policies that improve their lives, but politicians typically cannot implement their ideal policies immediately; sometimes because they adopt their policy positions in response to other parties' positions (Meguid 2005) or because they are unsure about the preferences of the voters or they lack information about the state of the world (Kollman, Miller, & Page 1997). Hence, they often exhibit the problem of inconsistency. What is a 'best policy' today will not be optimal in a future period, and there is, therefore, an urge to modify or reverse already-planned or implemented policies when that future term arrives. Political choice in the short-term often involves long-term considerations because decisions made today can affect the decisions that are feasible tomorrow (Penn 2009). Policy reversals are generated when unforeseen changes occur between short and long-term policymaking.

The model in this chapter derives how policies are affected by uncertainty over voters' preferences, challengers' policy preferences, and incumbents' relative concern for future policy outcomes. It focuses on incumbents because incumbents are known to possess an electoral advantage. When experimenting with new policies, incumbent politicians typically have preferences and information on policy alternatives,

but they also have concerns over voters' policy choices. If most voters dislike the policy that is implemented, they may not reelect the incumbent. Therefore, incumbents usually try to take into account the policy choice of the electorate preemptively when implementing policies. If the expected voter preferences were more moderate than the incumbent's bliss point, this would indicate that incumbents will factor the expected voting behaviour of the electorate into her policy decisions. It is natural then to expect an incumbent facing an election in the near future to have mixed motivations in the reform they implement: policy and reelection.

In some cases, the policy politicians implement might reflect the electorate's choice more than their ideological position depending on how well they assess the policy choice of the majority. In other cases, where neither the incumbent nor the challenger can assess the majority's policy choice, incumbents might shade their policy toward their opponent's more extreme ideological preferences. The policy decision of politicians with mixed-motivations might produce stable policies or may end up in drifts (Callander & Davin 2017), inaction (Majumdar & Mukand 2004) or reversals (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017).

Observing the electorate responses to the policy, the incumbent may promise to keep investing in the reform implemented, and the challenger may oppose it. Since the policy is just implemented, politicians may not know the electorate responses. If there is uncertainty about voter preferences or if the incumbent believes the voters to be in one of the extremes, she might ponder the policy towards the popular opinion. After the elections, when the pressure has disappeared and voter preferences are revealed, the implemented policy might take a new form or even get reversed. This is consistent with existing evidence that elections 'elect' more moderate candidates but cannot 'affect' their positions (Lee, Moretti, & Butler 2004).

The model extends the Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017) model by emphasising the role of elections and introducing uncertainty over voter preferences. It insulates the effect of political incentives. Other factors that matter for policy reversal is controlled for in the empirical analysis. In Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017), the expectation of a future gridlock makes players use their power to maximum effect today. In contrast, the expectation of a better possible deal in the future makes them wait. When uncertainty over voter preferences is introduced, it alters the policy calculation of the agents. An incumbent's decision depends on the level of ideological polarisation, voter heterogeneity and the presence of upcoming elections (see, also, Dziuda & Loeper 2018).

The model demonstrates that political polarisation is the primary driver of inconsistency in policymaking. An extreme ideological polarisation leads the incumbent to implement policies far away from her ideal point in the short run, which she modifies or reverses in the long run. On the contrary, a higher level of uncertainty, when skewed towards the right side of the spectrum, leads the incumbent to implement policies closer to her ideal point in the short run. When uncertainty is skewed towards the left-side of the spectrum, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point. Additionally, the model shows that policies administered prior to an upcoming election are more likely to represent popular opinion. This finding aligns with the empirical support by Canes-Wrone and de Leon (2014).

There is a renewed interest in policy reversals and their link to political variables in the media and policy reports, possibly due to the salient instances of difficulties in implementing sustainable policies (J. Kelly 2020). This issue might matter even more in the future due to the long-term welfare consequences of inconsistent policymaking. Numerous studies have shown how volatility in macroeconomic policymaking have

consequences for the investment environment, the economic growth of a country, and organisational performance (Acemoglu et al. 2003; Blake & Jandhyala 2019; Fatás & Mihov 2013; Sirimaneetham 2006). This chapter demonstrates, more broadly, how reversals are generated via political variables. It finds that ideological polarisation appears to be the main driver of policy reversals followed by electorate heterogeneity and a presence of upcoming elections.

The dynamic trade-offs that the formal model uncover have general significance due to two main reasons. First, it links how the heterogeneous preferences of the public, the level of uncertainty over the preferences in specific, might change the actions of politicians in short and the long run. Second, it identifies how ideological polarisation interacts with dynamic policymaking. It shows, in specific, that political polarisation creates incentives for the politicians to implement policies far away from their ideal, which they revise or reverse in the long run. The model demonstrates when it is optimal for politicians to reverse a policy they have recently implemented.

The empirical model tests the implications of the model on politicians' incentives to produce more (or less) policies in line with their ideology. It demonstrates the conditions under which politicians produce more policies closer to their ideal policy and how their production is affected by the district-level ideological polarisation and electorate heterogeneity they face. It points out the policy consequences of ideological polarisation, a major source of frustration in American politics.

The rest of the chapter is organised as follows. Section 2.2 sets out the theoretical model. Section 2.3 characterises the unique equilibrium of the model. Section 2.4 discusses the findings, and section 2.5 concludes.

2.2. Theoretical model

I study a model of policymaking with a two-date model where candidates are both office and policy motivated. This model captures a situation where an incumbent in office implements a policy reform which is observed by voters prior to an election. When the election takes place, the incumbent faces a challenger with a preannounced policy platform; and voters decide whether to reelect the incumbent or replace her with the challenger. In the second term, the elected candidate makes a decision on the fate of the policy reform.[4] The incumbent will be term-limited in her second term. Because she cannot derive any benefit from impressing the voter, she focuses on her policy motivation. Candidates are uncertain about voter preferences, i.e., where the median voter's ideal policy is. Voters do not know the ideal point of the candidates but observe their implemented/proposed policies.

I now turn to the formal description of the game. There are two types of players in the game: candidates and voters, which I discuss separately.

The ideology space:

I assume that there are two candidates who have preferences over a single policy dimension. The policy space is continuous, one-dimensional[5] and represented by the interval $[0, 1]$. Let the incumbent (I) and the challenger (C) be the candidates, located in the ideological spectrum where $\mathrm{I} < 1/2 \leq \mathrm{C}$. In the first term, the incumbent chooses a policy reform to implement (y_i), and the challenger chooses a policy platform

[4] Non-commitment mechanisms are common in policy agency approach (see, for instance, Persson & Tabellini 2004) This approach finds equilibrium where candidates decide to propose moderate or extreme policies in the first term and undertake corruption in the second-term.

[5] This model studies policy environments with spatial or distributive interpretations. Also see Przeworski, Stokes, and Manin (1999) for an interpretation of one-dimensional policy space.

(y_c). After the elections, the elected candidate takes a decision on the reform implemented in the first period.

I assume that the ideal policy of the incumbent is I = 0 and of challenger is C = 1. The electorate is made up of a continuum of voters. Voters do not know the ideal policy of the candidates. They can base their votes on the observed implemented (for the incumbent) and proposed (for the challenger) policies. Candidates have uncertainty about voters' preferences.

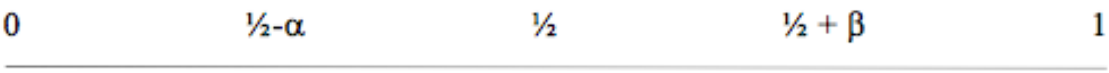


Figure 4: **Ideology space**

Voter preferences:

Voters adopt a retrospective voting strategy for the incumbent and a prospective voting strategy for the challenger. They care about the policy reform implemented by the incumbent and the policy platform challenger proposed in response to it. Each voter votes according to her utility function:

voter J's utility with ideal point j from the policy reform implemented is

$$U_J(y_t) = -(y_i - j)^2 \tag{1}$$

and from challenger's platform is

$$U_J(y_t) = -(y_c - j)^2 \tag{2}$$

Voters vote for the incumbent if

$$-(y_i - j)^2 > -(y_c - j)^2 \tag{3}$$

Voters' utility comes from the policy implemented. The electorate has been made up of a continuum of voters. Observing the policy reform implemented by the incumbent and platform proposed by the challenger, the decisive median voter M decides whether to reelect the incumbent or replace her with the challenger. While the policy reform implemented and challenger's policy platform are known to voters, voters do not know the ideal point of the candidates, and candidates are uncertain about the voters' preferences, i.e., where j is located. The ideal points of voters is distributed according to a uniform probability distribution function F, $F(j), j \in [0, 1] \subset R$.

I assume that the median voter's expected point j is uniformly distributed over [1/2 - α, 1/2 + β] where $0 < \alpha \leq 0.5$ and $0 < \beta \leq 0.5$ measuring the parties' degree of uncertainty as to voters' preferences.

Candidate preferences:

The incumbent cares both about enacted policies, whether it is in line with their ideological position, and winning *per se*. They get spoils from office if they win. Parties' policy utility functions are the same as for voters, except that they are farsighted. The Date t payoff of an agent with ideal policy i from a Date t policy y_t is:

$$U_i(y_t) = -(y_t - i)^2 \tag{4}$$

where $i \in (I, C)$ denotes her preferred policy or ideal point.

Since the incumbent is farsighted, the payoff of an agent with ideal policy i from two periods is

$$U_i(y_i) = (1 - \delta)u_i(y_1) + \delta u_i(y_2) \tag{5}$$

where the weight $\delta \in$ [0,1] captures the degree to which agents value policy made in the next term relative to the current term. An incumbent may place less emphasis on the current term (δ close to 1) if there is a prospective more favourable policy alignment in the future or if an election will soon take place. If incumbents look for long-term policy objectives, it makes sense for them to step back in date-1, to be able to implement the more favourable policy in the future. Similarly, if the elections are close, incumbents start placing more weight on the next term than the current term, in terms of their policy gains.

Incumbents' expected utility at the reform implemented and proposed policies (y_i, y_c) are given by

$$EU_i(y_i) = \pi_w(U_i(y_i) + \chi_i) + (1 - \pi_w)(U_i(y_c)) \tag{6}$$

where χ_i is spoils from holding office, and π_w denotes the probability of winning for the incumbent and 1 - π_w signifies the probability of winning for the challenger.

Candidates' expected utility at the proposed policies (y_i, y_c) in two periods then are

$$EU_i(y_i) = \left[\pi_w[(\delta-1)(y_i-I)^2-\delta(y_w^i-I)^2+\chi_i]-(1-\pi_w)(y_i-C)^2\right. \tag{7}$$

[6]

Information:

Voters perfectly observe candidates' announced/implemented policy positions, but there is uncertainty about voters' preferences and where the median voter's ideal policy is. I assume that the median voter's ideal point j is uniformly distributed over [1/2 - α, 1/2 + β] where $0 < \alpha \leq 0.5$ and $0 < \beta \leq 0.5$ measuring the parties' degree of uncertainty as to voters' preferences. α and β are not necessarily equal. This uncertainty may be due to a change in voters' preferences after observing the implemented policy and challenger's announced platform, as is the case in D. Bernhardt et al. (2009).

Let π_w denote the probability that i wins given the implemented policy and challenger's proposed policy (y_i, y_c) and the uniform distribution of the median ideal policy is given by $H_j(.)$. Then

[6] y_w notifies the winning policy in date-2.

$$H_j(j) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } j \leq 1/2 - \alpha \\ \frac{\beta}{\beta+\alpha} & \text{if } 1/2 - \alpha < j < 1/2 + \beta \\ 0 & \text{if } j \geq 1/2 + \beta \end{cases}$$

Timing:

1. The challenger announces her platform y_c.[7]

2. The incumbent undertakes a policy reform y_i. The policy implemented at Date 1 serves as the status quo at Date 2.

3. Voters observe y_i, the policy implemented in Date 1 and y_c, the proposed policy by the challenger, and elections take place between the incumbent and challenger. Voters re-elect the incumbent or replace her with the challenger based on the policy implemented by the incumbent and the challenger's proposed policy.

4. At Date 2, the elected candidate reconsiders the policy reform and implements y_w. With y_w, she can keep the status quo, move the policy towards one of the extremes or towards the centre.

[7]While it is more common in theoretical models to observe (i) incumbents announcing their platform before the challenger or (ii) both incumbent and the challenger announcing their platforms simultaneously, it is still common for challengers to announce their platform before the incumbents'. In order to improve their chances of winning, the incumbent has the ability to calculate policy proposals strategically and avoid announcing before the challenger or at the same time as the challenger. This happens, for example, when the incumbent wants to avoid blame for unpopular actions (Weaver 1986), has the advantage of announcing early elections (see, for example, Aaskoven 2019) or can implement last-minute policies (Manzoni & Penczynski 2018). In the case of early elections, incumbents would wait until the challenger(s) announced their platform to be able to account for their policy proposal when they announce their own policies and the timing of the election. In the case of blame avoidance and strategic last minute policies, the incumbent has the advantage of using information that their government position brought in order to impact the election outcomes at the last minute. An exemplary case would be Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who called for the challenger parties to announce their policy platform while his party had not announced theirs yet. He might benefit from an early policy announcement from the challengers to be able to plan any last-minute policy changes."

2.3. Equilibrium analysis

I now characterise the unique equilibrium of the model. The equilibrium concept is subgame perfect nash equilibrium. I begin by describing how uncertainty over median voters' ideal policy position affects politicians' incentives to initiate a policy reform in the short term. Let $U_i[u_I, u_j \sim (1/2 - \alpha, 1/2 + \beta)]$ denote the expected utility of an incumbent I who decides whether to initiate a policy reform in the first period (y_i) or keep the status quo (s) in the first period and initiate a policy reform in the second period if re-elected. Voters will re-elect any policy that is closer to their ideal than the challenger's proposed policy y_c. For simplicity I assume challenger only proposes far-right $C = 1$ or centre $C = 1/2$.

When Challenger Proposes Far-Right

Proposition 1: When $s = 1/2$ and $y_c = 1$, the incumbent implements closer to her ideal policy as uncertainty over where the median voter's ideal policy increases around her opponent's ideal point (as β increases). She implements closer to her opponent's ideal policy as α (uncertainty around the incumbent's ideal point) increases (opposite convergence).

Suppose that the status quo is $s = 1/2$ and the challenger proposes $y_c = 1$ (status quo policy is at centre and challenger proposes extreme-right). Incumbent with her far-left ideal policy 0 has to decide whether to move the status quo in the first period or to keep the status quo in the first period at 1/2 and change the policy in the second period if re-elected. The incumbent's utility function reduces to the following:

$$U_i(y_i) = \pi_w y_i^2 \delta - \delta \pi_w y_w^2 + \pi_w X_i - y_i^2 + 2y_i - 1 - 2\pi_w y_i + \pi_w \quad (8)$$

Then;

$$y_i = \frac{\pi_w - 1}{\pi_w \delta - 1} \tag{9}$$

Consider the uncertainty surrounding the voters' policy position j $\sim [1/2 - \alpha, 1/2 + \beta]$.

If $1/2 - \alpha < j < 1/2 + \beta$, the incumbent gets re-elected with probability $\frac{\beta}{\beta+\alpha}$. The incumbent's policy function reduces to the following:

$$y_i = \frac{\alpha}{\alpha + \beta(1 - \delta)} \tag{10}$$

Let's examine the case where she puts equal emphasis on both terms ($\delta = 0.5$). Fig. 5 exemplifies the policy implemented with a low and high α. When α is very low (green line), the incumbent knows with more certainty that the ideal policy point of the median voter is not close to her ideal point. When this is the case, the incumbent implements closer to her ideal as the uncertainty around the right side of the axis (β) increases. When α and β both are very low, however, the incumbent implements her opponent's ideal point.

In contrast, a large α (blue line in Fig. 5) means that there is uncertainty over the location of the median voter around the left-side of the axis. When this is the case, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point. As the uncertainty over the right-side of the axis, i.e., β, increases, she implements closer to her ideal but still around the right-side of the axis.

When there is high uncertainty on the left side of the axis (when α close to 0.5), the incumbent implements a policy closer to her opponent's ideal policy, whereas when the uncertainty is high on the right-axis (when β is close to 0.5), the incumbent implements closer to her ideal policy. See Appendix A for the proof.

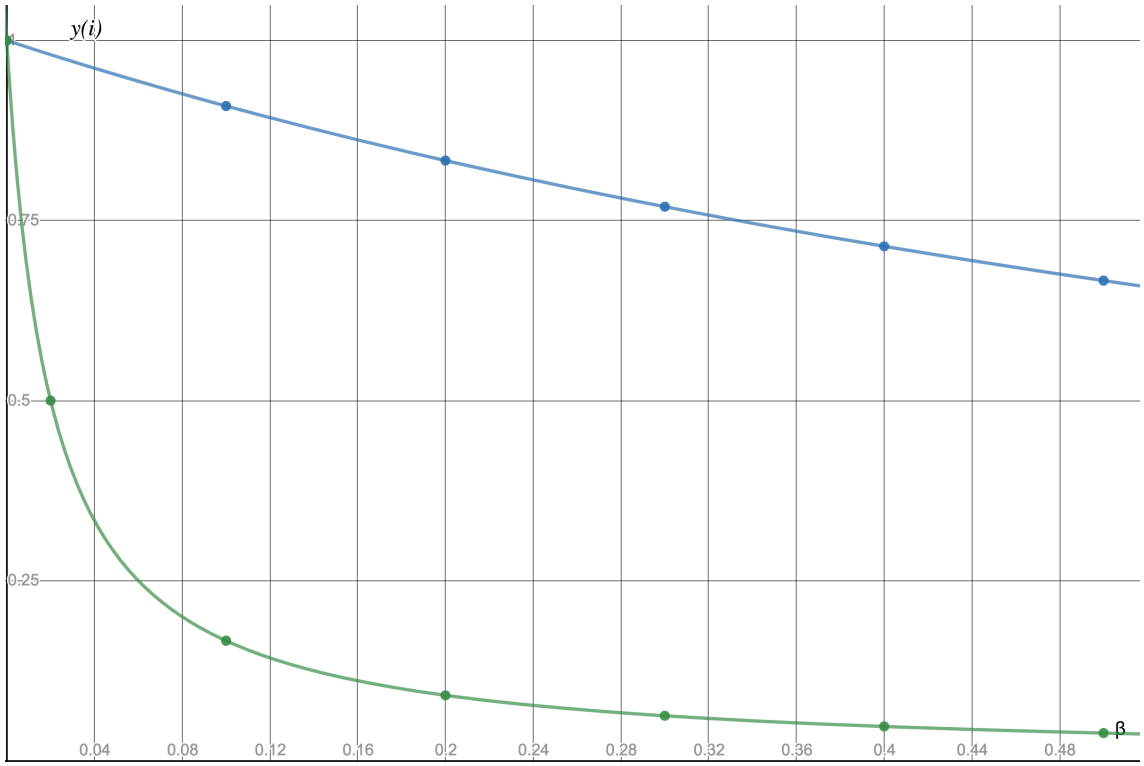


Figure 5: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\alpha = 0.5$ (blue line) and $\alpha = 0.01$ (green line), δ=0.5**

Proposition 2: When $s = 1/2$ and $y_c = 1$, the incumbent implements closer to her ideal policy when she values the current term more than the next term.

Now let's compare what happens as the incumbent's emphasis on this term vis-a-vis the next term changes. Fig. 6 demonstrates three cases where the incumbent places much more emphasis on the current term (δ=0.02), equal weight on both terms (δ=0.5), and places more weight on the second term (δ=0.98). To simplify the figure, I keep β constant at 0.25. The incumbent implements policies away from her ideal point when she places more weight on the second term. The policies she implements are closer to her ideal when she values the current term more than the second. When uncertainty is higher (for example, $\alpha > 0.2$ when δ= 0.02 and $\beta = 0.25$), she implements further away from her ideal policy.

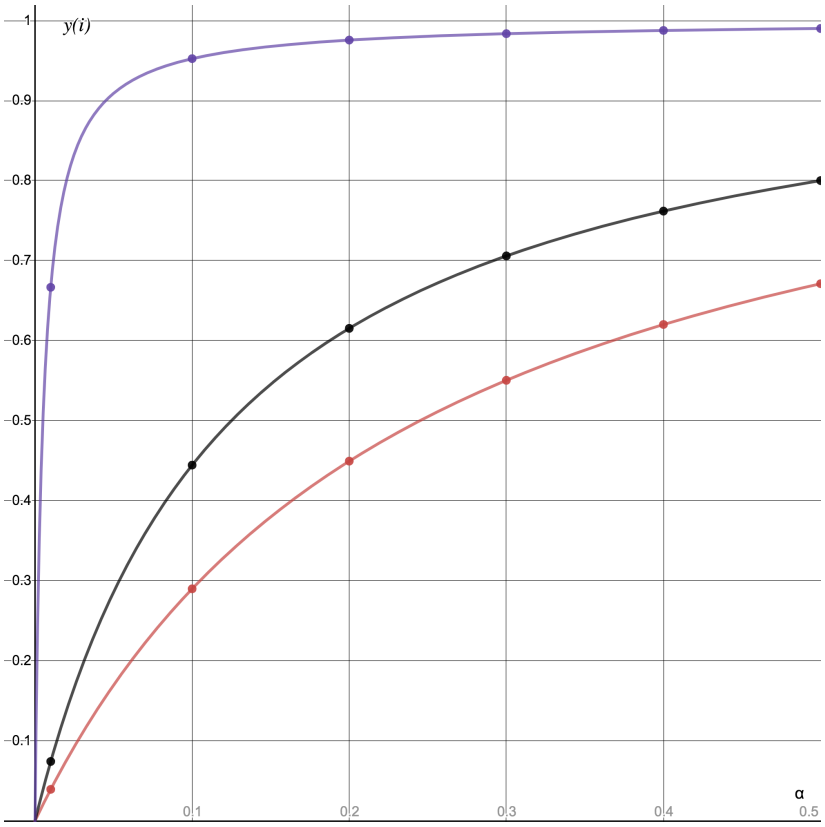


Figure 6: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\delta = 0.98$ (purple line), $\delta = 0.5$ (black line), δ=0.02 (red line), $\beta = 0.25$**

Fig. 7 demonstrates the same with $\beta = 0.5$. In this case, there is high uncertainty over where the median voter's ideal point is on the right-side of the axis. When this is the case, the incumbent implements relatively closer to her ideal point in comparison to the case where uncertainty on the right side of the axis is more moderate ($\beta = 0.25$). When she is uncertain about where the median locates on the right side of the axis, the policy she implements is closer to her ideal point, depending on the level of uncertainty on the left side of the axis.

When Challenger Proposes Centre

Proposition 3: When $s = 1/2$ and $y_c = 1/2$, the incumbent implements closer to her ideal point. Only when she knows with certainty that the median locates at the centre (both α and β close to 0), she implements the centre policy (1/2).

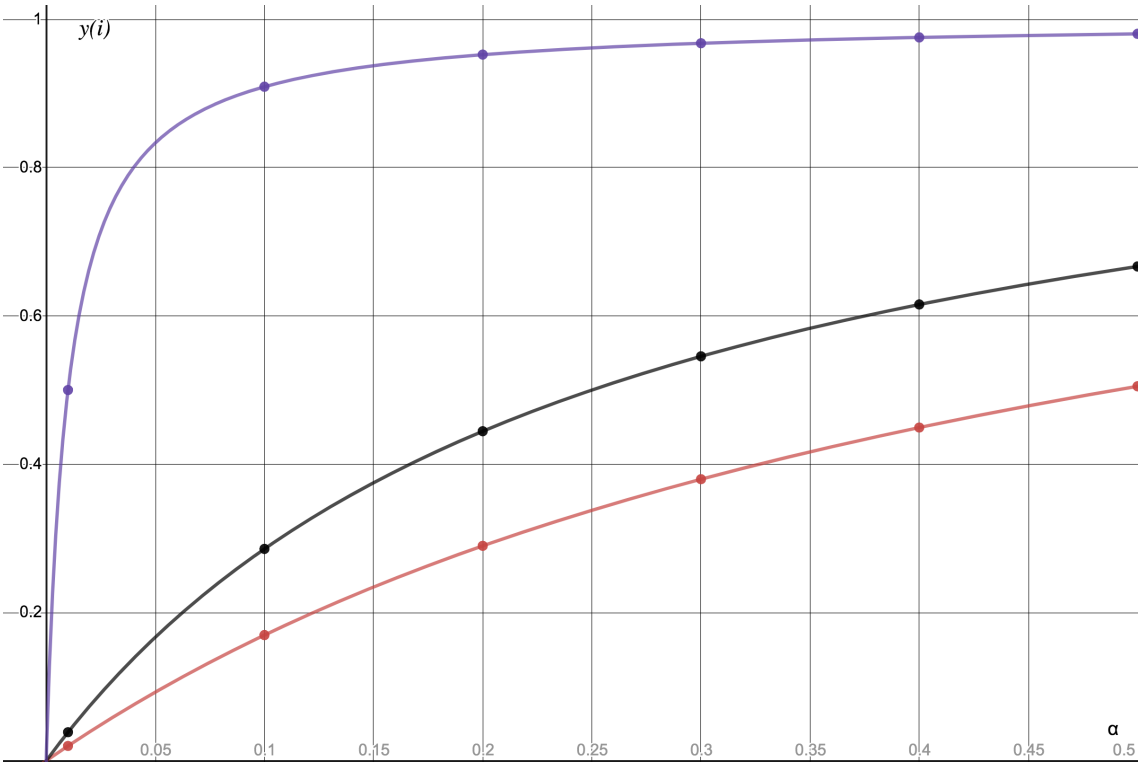


Figure 7: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\delta = 0.98$ (purple line), $\delta = 0.5$ (black line), δ=0.02 (red line), $\beta = 0.5$**

Suppose that $s = y_c = 1/2$ (status quo policy and the challenger's proposed policy are both at the centre). Incumbent with her ideal policy 0 (far-left) has to decide whether to move the status quo in the first period or to keep the status quo in the first period at 1/2 and change the policy in the second period if re-elected.

Since the ideal point of the incumbent is I = 0, and the challenger's proposed policy is $y_c = 1/2$, the incumbent's utility function reduces to the following:

$$U_i(y_i) = [\pi_w[-y_i^2(1-\delta) - \delta y_w^2 + X_i]] - (1-\pi_w)(y_i - 1/2)^2 \qquad (11)$$

$$U_i(y_i) = \pi_w y_i^2 \delta - \delta \pi_w y_w^2 + \pi_w X_i - y_i^2 + y_i - \frac{1}{4} - \pi_w y_i + \frac{\pi_w}{4} \qquad (12)$$

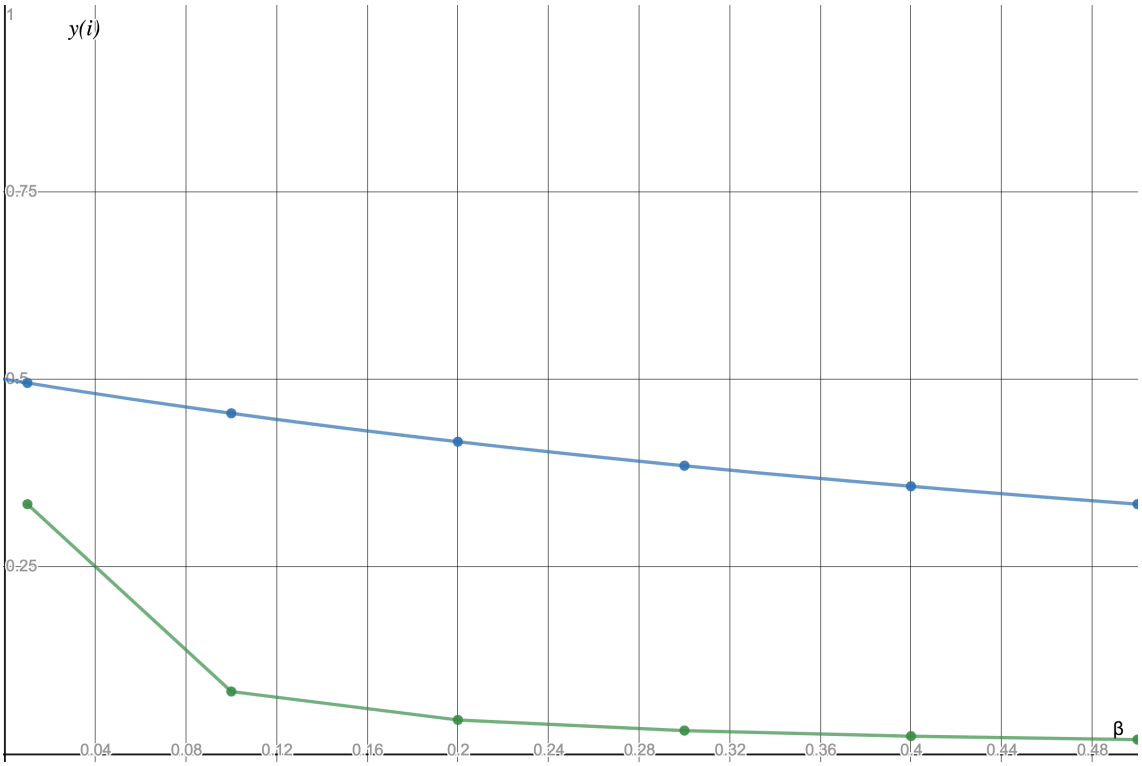


Figure 8: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\alpha = 0.5$ (blue line) and $\alpha = 0.01$ (green line), δ=0.5**

From first-order conditions to maximise U_i with respect to y_i we get

$$y_i = \frac{\pi_w - 1}{2\pi_w\delta - 2} \tag{13}$$

If $1/2-\alpha < j < 1/2+\beta$, the incumbent gets re-elected with probability $\frac{\alpha}{\alpha+\beta}$.

Her policy calculation reduces to:

$$y_i = \frac{\beta}{2(\alpha + \beta - \delta\alpha)} \tag{14}$$

Let's examine the case where she puts equal emphasis on both terms ($\delta = 0.5$). Fig. 8 replicates the example with a low and high α. When α is very low (green line), the incumbent knows with more certainty that the ideal policy point of the median voter is not close to her ideal point. When this is the case, the incumbent implements closer to her

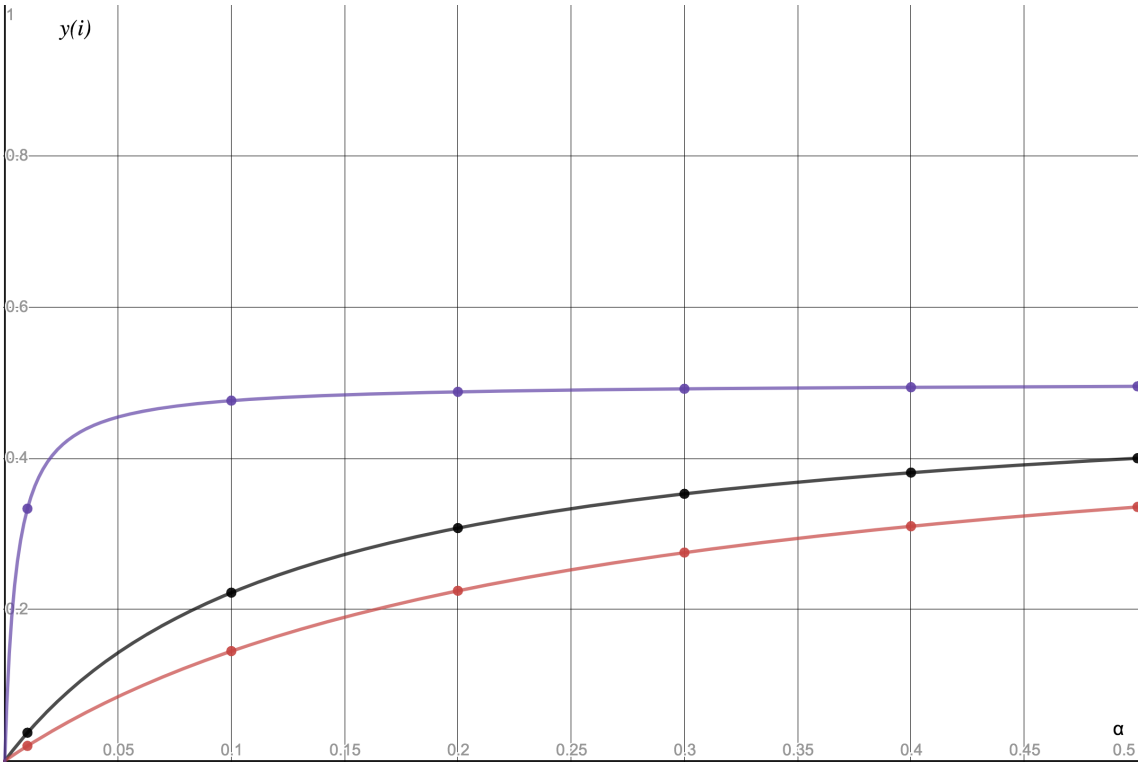


Figure 9: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\delta = 0.98$ (purple line), $\delta = 0.5$ (black line), δ=0.02 (red line), $\beta = 0.25$**

ideal as the uncertainty around the right side of the axis (β) increases. When α and β are both very low (close to 0), however, the incumbent implements closer to the centre, i.e., her opponent's ideal point. This is because the incumbent knows with certainty that the median's ideal point at the centre.

Proposition 4: When $s = 1/2$ and $y_c = 1/2$, the incumbent implements closer to her ideal policy when she values the current term more than the next term.

Fig. 9 replicates three cases where the incumbent places much more emphasis on the current term (δ=0.02), equal weight on both terms (δ=0.5), and places more weight on the second term (δ=0.98). To simplify the figure, I keep β constant at 0.25 for when the challenger proposes centre policy. The incumbent implements policies closer to her ideal point in all three cases in comparison to the case where the challenger proposes far-right. When political polarisation is lower,

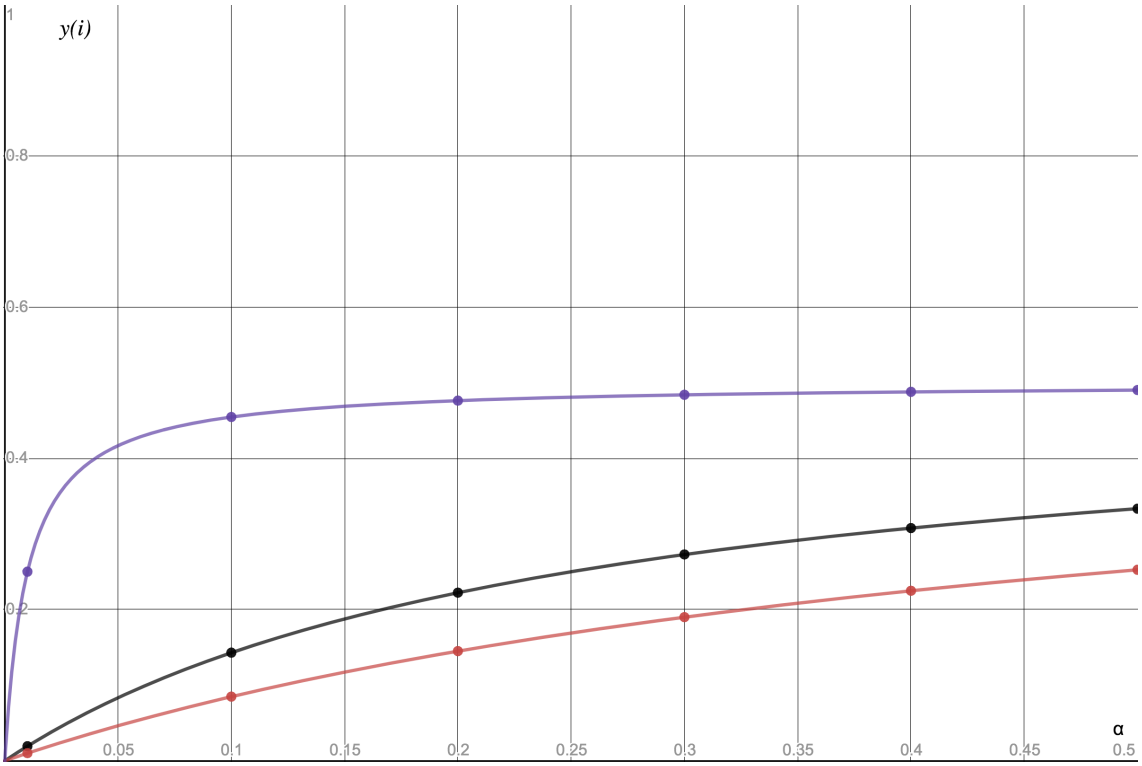


Figure 10: **Policy implemented, y_i, when $\delta = 0.98$ (purple line), $\delta = 0.5$ (black line), $\delta = 0.02$ (red line), $\beta = 0.5$**

the incumbent implements closer to her ideal point, the incumbent proposes the centre-policy when α is almost 0 (when the incumbent is certain that the ideal point of the median voter does not lean towards the left).

When β is 0.5, as seen in Fig. 10, the policy the incumbent implements get closer to her ideal point. When political polarisation is lower, higher uncertainty on the opposite side leads to policy divergence, whereas higher uncertainty on the incumbent's side leads to convergence.

2.4. Discussion

The selection of the future incumbent is not endogenous in this model, similar to Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017). In their paper, the selection of the future incumbent is random. The dynamic link between electoral periods originates from the existence of the status quo veto player,

whose identity is unknown a priori. In their setting, the uncertainty is about the future proposer's and veto player's types, which are selected at random. Suppose that the next election changes the identities of both the proposer and veto player. If both are of the same type, then the impact of more extreme proposals should depend on how close the elections are (δ). If the election is close (δ close to 1), the proposer holds off working on the issue due to either fear of losing or the opportunity of winning in date-2. If the proposer and the veto player are of different types, then it is more likely that the date-1 policy will reflect the bliss-point of the proposer. In the model of Chapter 2, however, the uncertainty is about the bliss-point of the median voter. When an election takes place, voters decide whether to re-elect the incumbent or replace her with a challenger based on the policy reform implemented (y_i) and the policy platform proposed by the challenger (y_c). Since the policy reform is very new, voters would like to see the returns in the next term. Therefore, they would re-elect the incumbent if they like the just implemented policy. For example, consider a case where $\delta = 0.9$. This corresponds to a context in which the date-1 policy is implemented very close to an election, after which there will be an instant opportunity to change the policy. Since the challenger announces policies before the incumbent in the model, the incumbent has the opportunity to observe the challenger's policy and announce a safe policy that is far away from their own bliss-point but closer to the challenger's (so that voters do not observe two diverse policies). Since the incumbent is motivated both by the office and ideology, they will modify or reverse this policy in the long-run, if re-elected. While the source of uncertainty is different in the two models, the conclusions drawn are similar. In the simple model of Chapter 2, the incumbent moderates policy in date-1 because s/he is uncertain about the voter's preferences; in the Buisseret and Bernhardt model, s/he does so because s/he does not know the veto player's

preferences in the future. While an exogenous selection of the future incumbent in Chapter 2 is sufficient to exemplify how mechanisms of policy moderation leads to reversals in the future, future work should endogenise this selection to model these dynamics closer to a real-world setting.

When an incumbent tries to decide whether to reform the status quo policy or not, she has two main considerations: (1) policy implemented and (2) re-election. She wants to implement a policy as close to her ideal policy as possible. At the same time, she considers which policy would get her re-elected. Proposition 2 and 4 from the model have demonstrated that the incumbent implements closer to her ideal policy when she values the current term more than the next term. A policymaker places more emphasis on the current term if an election will not soon take place. She weights the next term more when there is an upcoming election where she might have an opportunity to revise the policy if she is re-elected.

Since a policy administered prior to an election will not be implemented immediately, the incumbent will have an opportunity to revise the policy in the next term if she is re-elected. Therefore, she will have an incentive to pander the policy towards the popular opinion prior to an election.

Hypothesis 1: Policies administered in the pre-election period are more likely to represent popular opinion.

The formal model demonstrates that ideological polarisation is the main driver of inconsistency in policymaking. Proposition 1 and 3 have shown that the policies the incumbent implements are closer to her ideal point when there is a lower level of polarisation (when the challenger proposes a moderate policy). This is perhaps because party polarisation creates an incentive for the policymaker to implement further away

from her ideal policy because moving her policy platform toward her opponent's increases a candidate's vote share. When polarisation is lower, the possibility of policies to implement is closer to the ideal of the incumbent. Thus,

Hypothesis 2: When there is a low level of ideological polarisation, policymakers will propose closer to their ideal policy.

Proposition 1 and 3 have also demonstrated that a higher level of uncertainty, when skewed towards the right side of the spectrum, leads the incumbent to implement policies closer to her ideal point in the short run when uncertainty is skewed towards the left side of the spectrum, on the other hand, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point.

Hypothesis 3: In the case when challenger proposes the far-right policy, a high level of uncertainty over the popular policy will lead policymakers to propose policies closer to their opponent's ideal policy.

Hypothesis 4: In the case when challenger proposes the centre policy, a high level of uncertainty over the popular policy will lead policymakers to propose policies located between their ideal and the centre policy.

The welfare implications of the model could be that even though incumbents, as well as the opponents, might implement policies representing the popular opinion or away from their ideal policy prior to an election, they do not necessarily keep the policy unchanged after the elections. Because incumbents care about clearing a re-election hurdle, they may have incentives to pander to the prior opinion of the median voter (e.g. Canes-Wrone & de Leon 2014). An example of pandering the policy towards the popular opinion before the elections could be the removal of traffic fine charges by Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the summer of 2017 before the election took place in 2018. After the election, his

government has re-implemented a series of tax increases in motorway and bridge charges.

In its extremes, candidates might 'flipflop' or make 'U-turns' in their policymaking once re-elected. Although the theoretical literature has proposed multiple rationales for electoral commitment, most prominently that of re-election concerns (Alesina & Spear 1988), term-limits in the model create an incentive for the incumbents to implement in accordance to the political polarisation and uncertainty in the short-term and closer to their ideal policy in the long-term if they are re-elected. Subsequent work using citizen-candidate models (see, for example, Besley & Coate 1997) assumes that once the candidate is elected, she is most likely to commit to her ideal position. An example of this could be Obamacare, Obama's signature law. He did not reveal any details regarding his health-care plan until he was elected in 2009, and soon after he was elected, he announced the Health Care for America Plan. Even then, there had been numerous changes to Obamacare after it was signed into law in 2010.

Fig. 7 have demonstrated when there is high uncertainty over the location of the median voter around the left-side of the axis and a high level of polarisation, and the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point. An example of this could be left-wing governments privatising state-owned industries or engaging in deficit-cutting and other pro-market reforms. Another example could be that when far-right parties enter the competition, mainstream parties are more likely to propose or implement welfare chauvinist policies (Schumacher & van Kersbergen 2016).

All in all, political polarisation, uncertainty over voter preferences and upcoming elections appear to create an incentive for the incumbents to propose or implement policies far away from their ideal, which they then modify or reverse once they are re-elected. The uncertainty

aspect could be overcome by running district-level opinion polls on certain policies. When political polarisation and uncertainty are low, candidates are more likely to reveal their ideal policy and implement policies closer to their ideal, which are less likely to be modified in the long run if they are re-elected. Policy inconsistencies may create welfare losses because of the initial spending on the short-term policy, which will possibly be revised in the long run.

2.5. Conclusion

The model demonstrates that political polarisation is the main driver of inconsistency in policymaking. It finds that when Buisseret and Bernhardt (2017)'s model is extended to include electoral competition and uncertainty over voters' policy preferences, the incumbent takes more extreme positions in the short-run as a form of insurance against future shifts in power depending on the level of polarisation and uncertainty (also see Dziuda & Loeper 2018). When there is a lower level of party polarisation, policymakers produce policies closer to their bliss-point in the short term. Then, a high level of uncertainty over the popular policy leads policymakers to produce policies located between their bliss-point and the median policy. In the case where polarisation is high, a high level of uncertainty over the public opinion will lead policymakers to produce policies far away from their bliss-point and closer to their opponent's bliss-point in the short term. Since policymakers are motivated both by the office and their ideology, they will modify or reverse this policy in the long-run, if re-elected.

The model also shows that policies administered prior to an upcoming election are more likely to represent popular opinion. This finding aligns with the empirical support by Canes-Wrone and de Leon (2014). One way of pandering the policy towards popular opinion would be a short-term economic expansion in the pre-election period. Bush's

policy reversal on the extension of unemployment benefits in 1991 and 1992 and Reagan's 1983 initiative to implement a standby tax could be examples of pandering the policy in the pre-election period and modifying or reversing once re-elected. In the model, the level of uncertainty alters the policy calculation of the incumbent. When there is a higher level of uncertainty around her ideal point, she implements a moderate policy. As the uncertainty around her opponent's ideal policy increases, the incumbent implements closer to her bliss point.

The model has implications on the impact of political polarisation on policy production. Polarisation, a major source of frustration in politics, might generate inconsistencies in the short and long-term policy choices of the policymakers. While specific policies per se may not be detrimental to the economy, especially when institutions are taken into account, an increase in the variance of policies can generate grave economic inefficiencies. Second, when incumbents face high levels of uncertainty over voter preferences, for instance, in heterogeneous electorate districts, they have weak incentives to adopt moderate platforms, especially when ideological polarisation at the state level is also high. Third, policymakers might pander towards the popular opinion in a pre-election period which they modify in the long term.

The first chapter of the chapter has studied a formal model of policy-making with ideological polarisation, uncertainty over voters' policy preferences and dynamic trade-offs between short and long-term policy decisions. It has demonstrated the conditions under which it is optimal for politicians to be inconsistent in their policy choice of the short and long-term.

The current model assumes that the incumbent is the only dynamically-sophisticated player. Future work might relax this assumption to allow the voters and the challenger to be dynamically-sophisticated as well. Future work might also relax the assumption of uniform distribution

of voters to allow the society to be more inclined toward the left or the right of the policy space. Additionally, the assumption of term limits might be relaxed to see how the policy calculation of the candidates is altered when they do not face term limits.

3. Chapter 3: European Refugee Crisis and Policy Preferences of Local Elites

When it comes to successful refugee reception, the local level matters. Research overwhelmingly examines host communities' attitudes, but an endorsement from local politicians is equally important to resolving conflicts and facilitating harmonious interaction. Yet, the preferences of local leaders and their willingness to support the resettlement process are understudied. We conducted the first-ever conjoint experiment on a representative sample of local elected leaders in Greece, a heavily-impacted country with many active host sites. We elicit elite preferences regarding refugee resettlement and find that local leaders are more likely to support it if they are involved in the process and can control the frequency and intensity of local-refugee interactions. Overall, our results suggest that processes to mitigate early impact and exposure, combined with fair-share allocations, can dampen polarised reactions to future resettlement.[8]

Keywords: refugee resettlement, local elites, contact, values, control, fair-share, conjoint experiment

[8]This paper is coauthored work with Kristin Fabbe (Business, Government & International Economy Unit, Harvard Business School), Eleni Kyrkopoulou (Department of Economics, Athens University of Economics and Business) and Konstantinos Matakos (Department of Political Economy, King's College London). A slightly different version of this paper has been resubmitted to the *Journal of Politics* after receiving a Revise & Resubmit and is currently under review.

3.1. Introduction

A formal model of policymaking has been examined in Chapter 2, which includes ideological polarisation, uncertainty over voters' policy preferences, and dynamic trade-offs between short- and long-term policy options. The study has also demonstrated the conditions under which it is optimal for politicians to reverse their short-term policy choices. In this chapter, we focus on local politicians' policy preferences when there is a political crisis, i.e., the European refugee crisis. Local communities' attitudes and behaviour are among the most important determinants of refugees' successful socio-economic integration into host societies. As evidence suggests, refugees' long-run outcomes (economic, educational, and otherwise) depend on them living in more accepting social environments (for a summary, see OECD 2018). Yet, local communities' receptivity towards refugees –and thus the inclusiveness of the social environment refugees encounter– is also shaped by the rhetoric, actions and policy decisions of local political elites. In the words of the OECD and EU, "[L]ocal authorities play a vital role in this process"(OECD 2018).

What, however, determines local political leaders' attitudes and preferences towards refugee resettlement schemes? What types of policies and processes are they willing to endorse? These questions matter. Local elites are responsible for many aspects of resettlement and integration policy. Without their support, policy implementation can become significantly more challenging (Betts, MemiŞoĞlu, & Ali 2020). Local leaders also act as mediators (or instigators) of conflict. Their resistance –and sometimes outright hostility— to resettlement processes mandated by central governments can stoke popular backlash and violence. The Greek island of Lesbos, where locals opposed to settlement camps fight violently with refugees and the organizations

that serve them and local officials denounce national policies, (Editorial 2017) is a case in point.

Still, little is known about the preferences and attitudes of local political leaders with respect to the issue of refugee resettlement. There are very few studies (Doherty et al. 2019; Shaffer et al. 2020) that focus on local politicians' attitudes and even fewer –if any- that explore their policy preferences with respect to refugee-hosting schemes. Interestingly, this stands in sharp contrast to an abundance of high-quality research on citizens' preferences and attitudes about refugees and migrants (e.g. Adida, Lo, & Platas 2018; Bansak, Hainmueller, & Hangartner 2017; Getmansky, Matakos, & Sınmazdemir 2020; Hangartner et al. 2019). Whereas these papers inform us about the "profiles" of refugees that locals (and in one case) local politicians are willing to host, refugees' identity attributes are not negotiable or changeable. As such, these studies tell us little about actual policy choices or the political feasibility constraints that surround the successful implementation of refugee resettlement.

We address this gap in the literature by fielding a conjoint survey experiment on a representative sample of locally-elected municipal officials in Greece ($N = 586$; AAPOR response rate 44.3%). Greece has been at the forefront of the ongoing European refugee crisis since 2015, and its level of exposure has been intense.[9] Moreover, in Greece, where dozens of active refugee reception facilities and host sites of various types and sizes are scattered across the country, the migration debate often centres around the local issues that arise with the presence of such sites and the challenges they pose for the harmonious interaction between locals and refugees. These challenges extend well beyond the identity characteristics of refugees and include such practical considerations as a settlement location, administrative oversight, funding, and the issue

[9]To put this in perspective, Greece received almost 50,000 new asylum requests in 2019 alone, whereas the USA, with a population 30 times larger, received only 30,000.

of refugee mobility. Local politicians become heavily involved in these debates, and career concerns may factor significantly in shaping their preferences.

The conjoint experiment asked elected local officials to choose between policy proposals (each containing five attributes) that were hypothetically submitted for approval at the municipal council. The proposals focus on the characteristics of the refugee host sites (size, type, geographical location, and administrative authority) and the provision of additional municipal funds to hosting municipalities. Our study design introduces several novelties. Not only are the characteristics of hosting sites both logically and anecdotally critical to the success of integration and harmony, but local politicians also have much more say over these policy elements than they do over the identity of the refugees arriving in their municipalities. This is especially the case in "transit states" like Greece, where many refugees and migrants "got stuck" seeking passage to other parts of Europe as borders closed in response to the 2015 crisis. Indeed, local government officials in Greece have been asked repeatedly by the central government about their preferences and suggestions on the size, type, and location of refugee host sites and facilities (see, e.g. Georgiopoulou 2021). Thus, by explicitly asking local politicians how they would cast their votes should specific resettlement schemes reach the floor of their municipal council, we directly elicit political behaviour that is consequential for policy. This approach also allows us to focus on the *general equilibrium* effects of refugee resettlement schemes for small communities in a realistic way: hosting a refugee site is different from accepting a *single* hypothetical refugee based on their identity characteristics.

On the issue of size, our proposals draw directly on a 'fair-share allocation' approach endorsed by the Greek central government to 'decongest' the municipalities heavily impacted by the 2015 crisis. This

approach spreads hosting obligations across localities in Greece, such that the size of refugee settlements would not exceed 1% of the local population anywhere in the country. Studying this fair-share approach has relevance beyond the case of Greece. Other European states have proposed similar formulas for redistributing refugees across and within nations –the proposal has again been brought to the table in response Afghan crisis– and some evidence suggests that European citizens are in favour of such proportional allocation schemes (Bansak et al. 2017). We lack evidence, however, on whether such perceptions of fairness in sharing refugee-hosting obligations influence local leaders' preferences or calculus. Put simply, *how* the refugee resettlement process is carried out, whether it is incentivized, and whether it is perceived to be *fair* might all be important factors in determining the willingness of local politicians to offer their endorsement.

Finally, focusing on a highly-impacted country with existing sites is not only useful for policy purposes; it also allows us to answer substantive theoretical questions. Namely, how do past exposure to refugees (Enos 2014) and *experience with* the resettlement processes affect local political elites' attitudes and preferences? In this respect, there is hardly a better group of local political elites whose study can provide some answers.

We report two main findings. First, local councillors are mostly willing to approve policies that do not exceed perceived 'fair-share' hosting obligations and that give them authority in the process of hosting refugees. They support policies that allow for more controlled and gradual exposure to refugees: sites that are small in size, geographically distant from the urban centre, and that restricts the mobility of refugees (e.g. partially closed and closed sites) gain their overwhelming support. Taken together, these findings suggest that in order to accept refugee host sites in their municipality, local politicians value fairness and

have a strong preference for controlling the likelihood and frequency with which refugees interact with locals. This implies, in turn, elites' preference for a more gradual process of exposure (and contact) between citizens and refugees. Second, we find only one notable –and surprising given our pre-registered priors– the difference between elected officials serving in municipalities that already have refugee hosting sites versus those that do not: Councillors serving in the former are no more opposed to hosting larger sized camps (greater than 1%), possibly demonstrating a more capacious/flexible understanding of fairness. This adds important nuance to existing theories about contact.

Our work makes several contributions. First, it offers concrete policy recommendations for the design and implementation of refugee resettlement schemes. Second, it points to the fact that much of the opposition to hosting refugees can be addressed, despite lack of control over refugees' identity characteristics, if local communities and their leaders regain some say over the design and implementation of the process. This is a wholly new insight that suggests a possible refocusing of public policies from trying to alter locals' attitudes –which is costly and must be long-run- to engaging local stakeholders in the process of policy design and implementation. Given the extreme overcrowding and atrocious conditions in many hosting sites, resettlement is not just a policy question but also a humanitarian one. Our work also builds on previous studies (Hangartner et al. 2019), which point to the difficulties local communities faced in effectively managing intense migratory flows as the main reasons behind the observed backlash against refugees. In this regard, our experimental design is the first that explores multiple dimensions of the resettlement process that directly affect the nature and intensity of contact between locals and refugees (e.g. host site's location, refugees' freedom of movement etc.). Equally, from a theoretical perspective, our work adds a significant qualifier on how contact with refugees works in practice (Enos 2014).

If resettlement policy is framed within 'fair-share' allocation bounds, political elites in municipalities that already have an active refugee host site are no more opposed to larger sized camps (above 1% of the population) than their peers in municipalities that do not have such sites.

3.2. Design and theoretical mechanisms

We designed our experiment to test a series of mechanisms that can shed light on the determinants of local elites' support for refugee-hosting and integration. Our first mechanism relates to how perceptions of procedural fairness regarding the allocation of refugees condition the response of local elected leaders to refugee resettlement proposals. Evidence at the citizen level shows that opposition to hosting refugees might stem from the perceived 'unfairness' of a process that resulted in some localities shouldering disproportionately more than their fair-share (Hangartner et al. 2019). Preliminary qualitative work for this study revealed similar narratives at the elite level. One local official from a heavily impacted municipality with an active host site told us: "This is not a hostile place. We've had refugees coming here for the last hundred years that are now more local than the locals. . . But this time, we cannot handle it. The question of where to put all these people created huge divisions within our local council. People are asking: Why us? Didn't we already do enough? Shouldn't others do more?"(Author interview, 03/08/2019) In other words, local leaders might be willing to host refugees, but only if they expect to host a number that is framed as fair and *proportional* to the local population. Perceptions of fairness also relate to the increased demands put on public resources in heavily impacted communities. Another councillor from a municipality with 8,000 locals and over 3,5000 refugees told us: "My constituents had a shock, and we were not prepared. Immediately

people were asking me. Where will we find room in the hospitals? How will we run our schools? I had no ready answers." (Author interview, 03/06/2019) One local official from a heavily impacted municipality with an active site told us: "[...] refugees were coming here for the last hundred years that are now more 'local' than the locals [...] But this time, we cannot handle it. The question of where to host all these people created huge divisions. People are asking: Why us? Didn't we already do enough? Shouldn't others do more?"(Author interview, 03/08/2019) In other words, local leaders might be willing to host refugees, but only if they expect to host a number that is framed as fair and *proportional* to the local population. Perceptions of fairness also relate to the increased demands put on public resources in heavily impacted communities. Another councillor from a municipality with 8,000 locals and over 3,5000 refugees told us: "My constituents had a shock, and we were not prepared. Immediately people were asking me. Where will we find room in the hospitals? How will we run our schools? I had no answers." (Author interview, 03/06/2019)

Our second set of mechanisms relates to control. The growing frictions between international and non-governmental actors (e.g. IOM, UNHCR) and local communities may have made local leaders less willing to support hosting refugees, especially if they fear that they will have little say over a process that they find quite 'arbitrary' and ad hoc in terms of planning or if they feel they have been properly consulted. In some areas, locals express more anger at IOs and NGOs than towards refugees, arguing that such organizations lack proper oversight and create pull factors that attract more migrants. As a local official in a municipality designated to receive a new site exclaimed: "Think about it! I got a phone call past midnight with someone telling me they were possibly going to set up a camp in my village. A camp larger than our actual village! Greece is a democracy. Is that democratic? Real democracy doesn't [operate like that]!"(Author interview, 03/11/2019)

Councillors may also want to control the precise location where camps are set-up and the freedom of movement of those in them so that intense and rapid exposure between locals and refugees does not induce backlash, as in the summer 2015 crisis (Hangartner et al. 2019). In the words of another interviewee: "It is one thing to host a refugee camp. It is another thing to turn our whole town centre into a giant refugee camp."(Author interview, 03/10/2019). Thus, the first two sets of our (pre-registered) hypotheses follow:

H.1 (Fairness): Opposition to (support for) hosting refugees increases as the proportion of refugees relative to the local population moves above (below) the perceived fair-share threshold.

H.1a (Fairness): Opposition (support) to hosting refugees decreases (increases) when public goods to the municipality are increased to meet additional demand.

H.2 (Control): Support for hosting refugees increases when the process of resettlement is managed by local authorities compared to IOs, government agencies and other NGOs.

H.2b (Control): Local leaders are more likely to support refugee resettlement if the process guarantees a lower frequency/intensity type of contact.

Our last two hypotheses investigate a more nuanced version of the inter-group contact hypothesis –in fact, one that is closer to the original hypothesis (Allport, Clark, & Pettigrew 1954)– according to which, under *appropriate conditions*, inter-group contact might be one of the most effective ways to reduce prejudice. But, since this is a conditional statement, the nature (e.g., frequency, intensity, or locus) of contact between locals and out-groups should matter a great deal; any type of contact, such as simple exposure to refugees, may not reduce prejudice.

For example, intense, rapid exposure between locals and refugees, as in the summer 2015 crisis, might trigger a significant backlash (Dinas, Matakos, Xefteris, & Hangartner 2019; Hangartner et al. 2019). On the other hand, a more gradual and managed process resulting in meaningful contact might have the opposite effect (Steinmayr 2021). In this regard, our experimental design is the first that explores multiple dimensions of the resettlement process that directly affect the nature and the type of contact between locals and refugees (e.g., location of the host site, refugees' freedom of movement etc.).

H.3a (Nature and type of contact): Local leaders are more likely to support refugee resettlement if the process guarantees a lower frequency/intensity type of contact.

Finally, the impact of all these factors can be further exacerbated by the councillor's past experience of hosting refugees within their municipal boundaries. Since such past experiences usually entailed very intense and badly managed exposure –with little opportunity for meaningful contact– we anticipate that the presence of an active refugee camp within municipal boundaries would make local leaders more hostile to hosting additional refugees. Our final (also pre-registered) hypothesis follows:

H.3b (Past Exposure/Contact): Opposition to hosting large camps (more than 1% of the population) should be stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp.

3.3. Data and methods

We conducted our survey in October 2020 via an email campaign and recruited 586 councillors. Our study was pre-registered with OSF. We presented each councillor with three pairs of alternative policy proposals

with randomly assigned attribute values and randomised the attribute order (between subjects). The policies varied on five attributes: (1) type of public good provision used for municipal compensation, (2) host site size, (3) who is in charge of the daily site administration, (4) site proximity to the urban centre and (5) the type of site. The reasoning behind attribute selection and values is presented in Appendix C. After being shown a pair, councillors were asked to rate each proposal (Likert scale) and choose the one package they would vote for in the council (forced-choice). To identify the causal effects of the different attributes of the council proposals on the preferred proposal, we leverage the difference in attributes between distinct proposals to estimate the following OLS regression (AMCEs and MMs) in Equation 2:

$$Y_{ijk} = a_0 + \gamma_k + \delta \mathbf{T_{ij}} + \epsilon_{ijk} \tag{1}$$

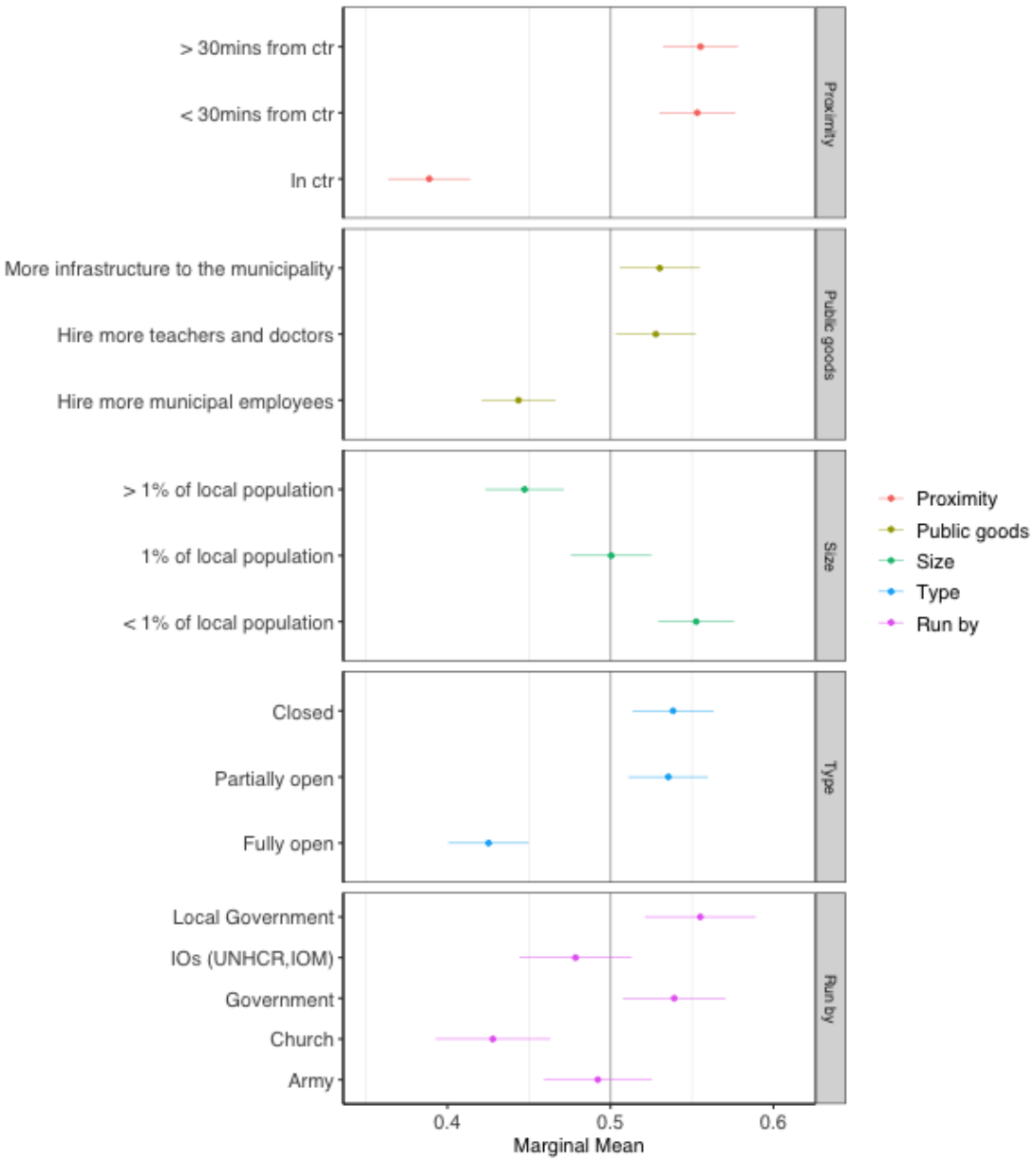
where T_{ij} is a treatment vector (containing five randomly assigned values) that indicates whether (or not) a policy proposal has a particular attribute value and Y_{ijk} is the outcome variable (Likert scale and binary). Respondents were asked to choose between $j = 2$ alternative policy packages in each of their $k = 3$ choice tasks. We cluster the standard errors by respondent i. In some specifications we also use municipal FE and entropy balancing weights (see Appendix Table 13 and Fig. 28). In the Appendix (sections B and C), we also present more details on data collection and methods, including various covariate balance tests (Table 26 and Fig. 26).

3.4. Results and conclusion

Fig. 16 displays marginal means for each attribute value. These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each policy proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized

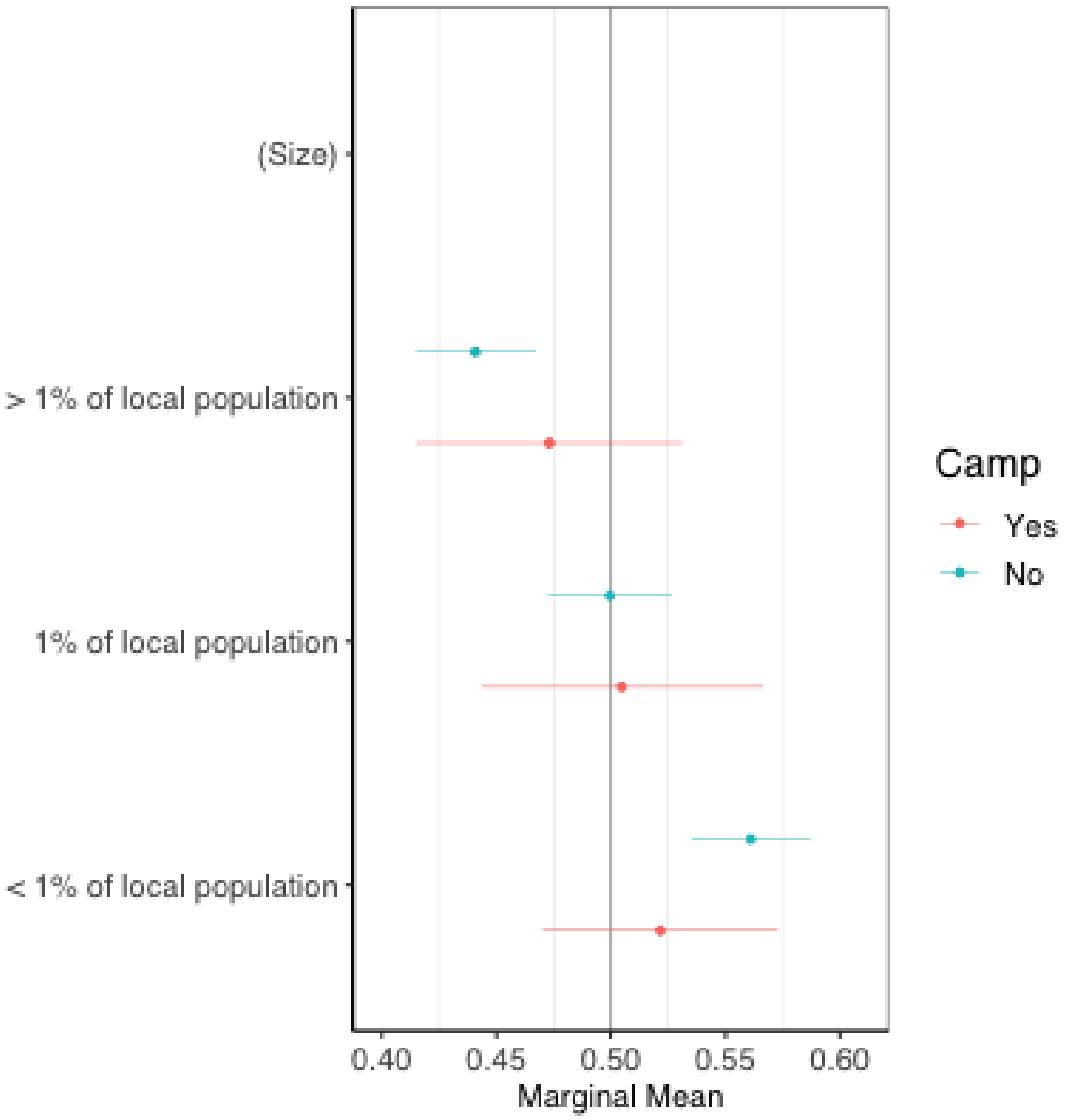
over all other attribute values. Given the wording of our question, forced-choice and marginal means can be directly interpreted as the *expected support* that a policy containing this particular attribute value would receive if it were to come to a vote in the municipal council *ceteris paribus*. In the Appendix, we present alternative specifications and various robustness checks, including AMCEs (see Tables 13 and 23) and the Likert-scale outcome . Results are substantively identical with the ones presented below.

Overall, the aggregate preference of local elected leaders that we identify is one of 'conditional support' towards hosting refugees. Councillors strongly object to any host site being set up in the urban centre of their municipality (but the additional distance from urban centres does not matter), and they clearly prefer small-sized camps and object to hosting more than the proportionally 'fair' 1% –coefficient point estimates are statistically different from each other ($p < .01$). That is, the 'fair-share' allocation rule appears to be a reasonable compromise gaining just about sufficient support, but exceeding it draws strong objections. Councillors also want sites that limit refugee mobility. Mostly clearly, they are likely to support the creation of a site in their municipality if they are responsible for managing its operation. Local elites are also more likely to support the creation of a site when it involves considerable public goods investment in their municipality. Interestingly, and consistent with an emphasis on fairness, the type of municipal investments that elites' prefer are ones that increase management efficacy as opposed to simply extracting political rents through patronage (the latter being a common critique of local Greek elites). Taken together, these results suggest that local politicians are not adamantly opposed to setting up host sites in their municipalities; but they do want a fair process to guarantee an environment of limited, gradual, and mediated interaction between refugees and locals, most importantly, one being controlled and managed by them. Despite this



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 11: **Aggregate marginal means (MMs)**



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). We present subgroup analysis by the presence of an active refugee host site in councillors' municipality. SE's are clustered by respondent.

Figure 12: **MMs based on presence of active host sites**

aggregate pattern, there is also significant preference heterogeneity depending on councillors' ideology. Subgroup analysis presented in the Appendix Section E reveals that two of the attributes related to control–the type of host site and who manages it–show significant divergence from aggregate preferences, while there is no such divergence between councillors on the left vs right when it comes to fairness (camp size and public goods).

In Fig. 12, we examine whether the presence of an active host site in a councillors' municipality alters their attitudes towards the resettlement process. We fail to find support for *H.3*: That is, opposition to hosting large camps (more the 1% of the population) is *not* stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp. We interpret this as an important nuance to existing theories on contact. When refugee-hosting obligations are framed within 'fair-share allocation' bounds, even elites in municipalities that have experience hosting refugees are no more likely to oppose hosting larger-sized camps.[10]

In sum, our results suggest that the way forward resembles a *saddle path*: a more controlled and scaled-down process, which allows for more gradual contact between locals and refugees, will likely get sufficient support and endorsement from local leaders. As municipalities begin to accept host sites, the sustained yet proportional (and, hence, perceived as 'fair') presence of refugees in the community will further dampen, or at the very least will not exacerbate (see Fig. 12), reactions to the continuation of the resettlement process. Moreover, by focusing on the policy aspects of refugee-hosting, our work touches upon an equally important dimension of the issue: the humanitarian one. As many of the problems (e.g. poor sanitation and living conditions, lack of security inside camps) that ascribe to this situation, the characteristics of a severe humanitarian crisis can be (mostly) attributed to policy decisions (and failures), understanding the policy preferences of political elites can (in certain cases) overcome such impasses and alleviate the problem. Our findings, therefore, have clear implications for addressing the pressing humanitarian concerns for overcrowded sites in Greece (e.g. Lesvos) but also elsewhere in Europe (e.g. Mineo, Sicily) and beyond.

[10] We provide a test of H.3. in Appendix Section D.3

4. Chapter 4: Trade-offs and Politicians' Reversals in Policy Preferences

Does the framing of a policy problem affect the policy preferences of elites? Are policy decisions made in a single policy vs multi-dimensional policy environments likely to differ? Are politicians likely to change their positions if they become aware of policy trade-offs? The existing theories on policy reversals ignore the multifaceted nature of policymaking, focusing instead on the costliness of platform switching, pandering before elections, or voter punishment. However, exposure to the trade-offs in policy can also influence the policy positions made by politicians shortly after they are made. To test this claim, I conducted a two-stage experiment where a representative sample of elected local officials in Greece (N=586) are asked single vs multi-dimensional policy questions about a local immigration policy. The multi-dimensional aspect is conducted through a conjoint experiment (N=3,516), where politicians are randomly assigned policy elements and are asked to choose between them. A 2% per cent increase occurs when the same policy question is asked in a multi-dimensional policy environment compared to a single policy environment. I further show that this policy reversal is likely caused by ideology and intra-party polarisation. These findings highlight the need to account for policy trade-offs and the importance of intra-party politics in determining consistent policymaking.
Keywords: policy preferences, policy support, policy reversal, flip-flopping, immigration policy, survey experiment

4.1. Introduction

The previous chapter has explored the multi-dimensional policy preferences of political elites, trade-offs they face and their role in tacking the policy aspects of refugee-hosting. This chapter explores a causal mechanism by which politicians reverse their policy preferences in the short-run: trade-offs in multi-dimensional policymaking. Politicians' judgments of a desirable policy are multi-dimensional, and they consider factors such as ideology, public opinion, party position, and personal appearance. The politics of trade-offs have been analysed on the country level (Hausermann, Pinggera, Ares, & Enggist 2021; Jacques 2021; Stephens, Huber, & Ray 1999) and how trade-offs are perceived by the public are recently studied by Garritzmann, Neimanns, and Busemeyer (2021). The question of how trade-offs affect the policymaking of politicians, however, remains understudied so far in the literature. The way a policy problem is framed could be important to policymakers. When asked a policy question with no alternative policy ideas, they might respond differently than when presented with a whole policy package with different policy combinations. This is true, for instance, for politicians who casually support a policy on an interview for a news channel and reverse their position when they discuss the same policy as part of a new policy package in the city council. Most research until now has linked politicians' position/policy reversals to voters either through audience costs (e.g. Fearon 1994), the value of public approval for the relevant inconsistency (Levendusky & Horowitz 2012; Levy et al. 2015; Tomz & Houweling 2010) or the importance of reputation for competence (Doherty et al. 2016; Sorek et al. 2018). The question then arises is the possibility that politicians could also be reversing their policy positions not to satisfy or dissatisfy voters but because of the multidimensionality of policymaking. For instance, considering local-level immigration policy, a policymaker could

be willing to take over the day-to-day administration of the refugee sites only if the sites are closed or partially open. However, when asked whether they would be willing to take over, they might show support even though their support is conditional. Therefore, evaluating policies in single vs multi-dimensional policy environments could bring out seemingly contradictory policy outcomes for politicians.

A widely accepted assumption in social sciences is that an individual cannot have a strict preference for Policy A over Policy B if s/he has a strict preference for Policy B over Policy A (see, for instance, Downs 1957; Kreps 2000). Another assumption is that preferences are invariant, which means that "alternative representations of the same choice issue should yield the same preference" (Kahneman & Tversky 1979). A policy preference could be defined as the comparative valuation of (i.e., a ranking over) a set of policies (Druckman & Lupia 2000). A policy preference reversal could then be "a change in the ranking of a set of policies," and it could occur when one of the above two assumptions does not hold. Experimental evidence has challenged these assumptions showing that changes in question-wording, structure, or location affect people's preferences as indicated in survey experiments (e.g. Ansolabehere & Brady 1989; Chong & Druckman 2010; Zaller 1992). Recent empirical work has further shown that preferences may depend on multiple dimensions of the policy in question (Bechtel, Hainmueller, & Margalit 2012). These examples are frequently used to demonstrate that preferences are neither stable nor invariant (Bartels 1993).

The literature is extensive in describing how information affects the preferences of citizens through cues, competing frames, and identities (e.g. Bullock 2011; Iyengar, Sood, & Lelkes 2012; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, & Prior 2004), but politicians' preferences, their reversals, and their responses to information about the dimensions of a policy are

less explored. Politicians, too, may change or reverse their preferences when they gain insights into the attributes of a policy (Druckman & Lupia 2000). The current literature provides more evidence on citizens' reactions to reversals than causes of reversals themselves. We know less about why and through which mechanisms politicians reverse their policy positions. In this chapter, I evaluate the role of framing and policy trade-offs in determining consistent policy support, drawing on a representative survey focused on immigration policy from Greece, one of the countries most affected by the European refugee crisis. Surveying local Greek officials present an excellent opportunity to explore this question because of the multifaceted nature of immigration policymaking. Local elected officials, along with nationally elected politicians, are involved in immigration policymaking because the challenges posed include practical considerations such as settlement location, administrative oversight, funding, and the issue of refugee mobility. Specifically, I focus on a '1% one quota' policy. Locally elected officials are asked if they would be willing to host asylum-seekers amounting to more than 1% of their local population in exchange for monetary compensation to their municipality. After answering this single-policy question, they move on to a conjoint experiment.

Conjoint experiments are equipped to elicit preferences for multifaceted policy packages and are uniquely suited for eliciting these preferences, which allow for the experimental manipulation of each element of the policy package independently. In the conjoint experiment, local officials were asked to select from two policy proposals (each containing five attributes) that were hypothetically presented to the municipal council for approval. These proposals focus on the characteristics of refugee host sites (size, type, geographical location, and administrative authority) and the provision of additional municipal funds to the hosting municipalities. The '%1 quota policy' is repeated in the conjoint experiment as one of the policy elements randomised in the size dimension.

This design introduces a number of novelties. First, hosting sites are not only important from a logical and anecdotal perspective, but local politicians have much more say over these policy elements than they do over the identity of those refugees they receive. The literature, though, is heavily invested in learning the impact of the identity of refugees on policy outcomes (e.g. Adida et al. 2018; Bansak et al. 2017; Getmansky et al. 2020; Hangartner et al. 2019). Second, the use of a conjoint experiment to analyse the multidimensionality of elite decision making contributes to the limited literature on elite preferences that relies on survey experiments (Doherty et al. 2019; Shaffer et al. 2020). Third, to my knowledge, this experiment is the first to isolate policy decisions made in single vs multi-dimensional policy environments to see the impact of framing, dimensionality and policy trade-offs on policy outcomes.

To preview the results, by isolating policy choices in single vs multi-dimensional policy environments through a survey experiment, I document that local politicians are likely to reverse their policy preferences in policymaking when they are presented with policy trade-offs. I find a 2% per cent increase in the majority support for accepting asylum-seekers amounting to more than 1% of their local population when this decision is made in a multi-dimensional policy environment. When I break down the reversal for the specific repeated policy, I detect that out of 102 councillors who have encountered this policy element, 39.2% have reversed their initial preferences to support this policy (positive reversal), whilst 59.7% who have initially supported it has opposed to it (negative reversal) in the multi-dimensional setting. I also find evidence that ideology and intra-party polarisation are the main determinants of short-term policy reversals.

Policy studies tend to limit measurements to a single dimension, prompting respondents to choose between support or disapproval of one

policy. However, important political decisions are often multifaceted because they contain a set of political characteristics. Conjoint experiment approach used in the paper (see, Hainmueller, Hopkins, & Yamamoto 2014) allows to test how politicians' policy preferences towards immigration in response to changes in different characteristics of policies. This paper's innovative approach repeats the single-dimensional pretreatment policy question in a multi-dimensional conjoint experiment that directly tests if and how politicians' policy preferences reverse when they are presented with trade-offs of the (immigration) policy. This is a mechanism that has not been previously explored in the literature in understanding policy reversals.

4.2. Related literature

Recent studies have investigated how politicians who reverse policies are punished by voters. Politicians who change policy positions might be perceived unfavourable (Tomz & Houweling 2010), unreliable (M. Bernhardt & Ingerman 1985; Carlson & Dolan 1985) and indecisive or incompetent (Fearon 1994; Poole & Rosenthal 1997). Changing policy positions might be more costly for politicians than remaining silent or ambiguous on the policy subject. Holian and Prysby (2016) find that citizens do not like inconsistent politicians. Sorek et al. (2018) argue that the more a leader is seen as competent, the better his reputation is following a policy reversal. Robison (2021) adds that consistency is more appropriate in the absence of direct information on the quality of politicians' actions. Tomz and Houweling (2010) finds that political change is costly not only because of the ambiguity it creates but also because of the negative conclusions that voters draw about the character of the candidate. Another strand of literature, however, finds that policy reversals do not matter for citizens (e.g. McDonald et al. 2019), especially when there is a motivated bias, i.e.,

when the politician currently supports the citizen's preferred policy (see, Croco 2016). Tavits (2007) adds an important nuance to the developing literature: using election data, she shows that party policy shifts are damaging or rewarding depending on whether the shift occurs in the pragmatic or principled issue domain.

There is also theoretical research primarily related to the policy reversal idea: Hummel (2010) examines the choice of campaign platform in a two-stage election with the extrinsic cost of platform switching and finds that the extent to which candidates move closer to the centre is constrained by flip-flopping costs. Similarly, in Agranov (2016), candidates engage in costly voting behaviour, which results in candidates pandering to the party base during the primary and shifting to the centre in the general election. Chapter 2 of this thesis also indicated that policymakers who are motivated both by the office and their ideology might implement policies far away from their ideal point in the short run, which they reverse in the long run if re-elected.

In this paper, I also distinguish between positive and negative reversals. I call a reversal 'positive' when politicians decide to support a policy after initially rejecting it. I call a reversal 'negative' when politicians change their position from supporting a policy to opposing it. This distinction is relevant, as is seen in the exploratory text analysis section of the US party manifestos in Chapter 1. When politicians reverse a policy with no replacement, they tend to express it negatively, whereas a policy with replacement is expressed positively. For politicians, a change from support to the opposition could have the same characteristics of a reversal function with no replacement, and from opposition to support could have the same characteristics of a reversal function where a new policy replaces. I make this distinction and test it empirically in the results section.

This study also complements the literature analysing politicians' preferences on immigration (Doherty et al. 2019; Shaffer et al. 2020). The results allow us to uncover the multi-dimensional nature of politicians' preferences that are usually reduced to a single policy dimension. The experimental approach uncovers the dynamics of local politicians' policy preferences whilst also allowing to test their attitudes towards and trade-offs in immigration policy.[11]

4.3. Policy context

In the aftermath of the European refugee crisis, which brought more than a million asylum seekers to Europe, primarily through Greece and Italy, political elites have increasingly sought to address the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers through a quota-based 'fair share' policy system. In other words, European leaders sought to impose an obligation on EU countries to 'share the burden' faced by Greece and Italy. According to the program, a total of 40,000 people would be relocated from Greece and Italy to other EU member states, using distribution keys that assign resettlement quotas to each member state based on absorption and integration capacity. German Chancellor Angela Merkel recently advocated a new pan-European agreement, under which countries would accept asylum seekers through "fair shares" quotas, including to fund the return of those who have failed. [12] [13] [14]

[11] An alternative mechanism of reversal could be through non-informational preference change (Dietrich & List 2011). A change in politicians' motivationally salient dimensions can be triggered by external experiences or internal psychological or physiological changes. Politicians could have been reminded of their experiences when they saw other policy options in the multi-dimensional. It is rather unlikely that the multi-dimensional environment of the conjoint experiment triggered external experiences or internal changes. However, I cannot rule out this explanation within the realm of this paper.

[12] See: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/MEMO_15_5038

[13] See: https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_15_5039

[14] See: https://curia.europa.eu/jcms/upload/docs/application/pdf/2020-04/cp200040en.pdf

In a way, this proposed European immigration policy framework represented a compromise between the acceptance of asylum seekers and financial incentives. Recently, similar logic has been used in Greece to address the unequal effects of the 2015 refugee crisis. In Greece, thousands of refugees are in straits on a few Aegean islands near Turkey due to migration routes. However, other areas near and within mainland Greece do not accept refugees. As a result, asylum seekers trapped on the island demand relocation, and tensions with the local host community have led to violence. To deal with the crisis, the Greek government turned to a proportional distribution-based policy to resettle asylum seekers on the Greek mainland to mitigate the island‘s hotspots. In November 2019, the Greek government ordered inland relocation so that the number of asylum seekers in all provinces of mainland Greece does not exceed 1% of the province‘s population.

4.4. Data and methods

The participants were contacted through an electronic invitation to complete a Qualtrics survey. Invitations were sent by the Public Opinion Research Unit at the University of Macedonia (PORU UoM), which has conducted many prior surveys in Greece on similar topics. We sent invitations to 4,463 council members based on publicly available information for each of Greece‘s 332 municipalities. 4.71% of invitations were opened in the first round, and 10.22% clicked on the research button. There were then two rounds of reminders followed by a phone call to each municipality. 624 city council members completed the survey at the end of the campaign, and 586 of them completed at least one task in the conjoint experiment. We had a response rate of 44.8%, which is very high when compared to other comparative surveys of political elites (see for example Deschouwer & Depauw

2014).[15] A link provided access to the survey. Those who expressed interest in the research by clicking on the link received a copy of the consent form. The survey proceeded if consent was granted. A 30-35 minute completion time was scheduled for the whole survey. The survey started by asking the three single policy questions and proceeded with the pre-treatment attitudinal questions prior to taking the conjoint experiment. Councillors responded to demographical questions after the experiment. No false information or deception was involved in the survey.

The localities represented by city council members in the sample cover a large portion of Greece. Specifically, the respondents were from 194 municipalities (60% of Greek municipalities), covering 100% of the 52 Greek prefectures and 100% of the 13 Greek peripheries. Quota sampling was used based on three characteristics: gender, party affiliation and periphery. I ran a regression to check for representativeness at the municipal level, regressing the 'participation ratio' on characteristics of councillors in each municipality (gender and party affiliation) and adding a dummy to capture the existence of a camp in each municipality. Table 12 shows there are no imbalances in councillor participation at the municipal level based on gender, party affiliation, or camp presence in the councillor's municipality.

To isolate the effects of trade-offs on politicians' behaviour, I conduct a two-stage experiment. The first stage involves three single policy questions related to immigration policy, acceptance rate and 1% quota policy. The second stage is the conjoint experiment. Before taking the conjoint, councillors were asked the following single policy questions:

[15]Response Rate is calculated by using the following formula: (I+P)/(R+NC+O)+(UH+UO)) where I=Completed Interviews, P=Partial Interviews, R=Refusals and break-offs, NC=Non-Contact, O=Other, UH=Unknown Household, and UO=Unknown Other. We use AAPOR's Standard Definitions, Version 9 (2016), which is the estimated proportion of eligible cases with unknown eligibility.

Table 2: **Sample representativeness**

	DV: Participation ratio
(Intercept)	0.15***
	(0.01)
Golden Dawn	0.01
	(0.02)
New Democracy	0.00
	(0.00)
Kinal	−0.00
	(0.00)
Syriza	0.00
	(0.01)
KKE	−0.00
	(0.00)
Antarsya	0.01
	(0.05)
Female councillor	−0.08
	(0.06)
Existing camp	−0.00
	(0.02)
R^2	0.14
Adj. R^2	0.13
N obs	202

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

1. How many refugees and migrants do you think we should allow coming to Greece? [Allow many, allow some, allow a few, allow none]

2. In 2018, the acceptance rate of asylum seekers in Greece was almost 50%. Which acceptance rate do you think is appropriate? [None, 20%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 80%, All]

3. The Greek government has suggested a 1% quota (with respect to the local population) for hosting asylum-seekers within Greece at the municipal level. Would you be willing to host asylum-seekers amounting to more than 1% of your population in exchange for monetary compensation in your municipality? [Yes, No]

The third policy question is the single policy question that will be repeated as a randomised policy element in the multi-dimensional setting. Specifically, this policy question represents the conjoint experiment's policy element 'More than 1% of the local population'. I preferred not to give the same policy elements of the same attribute of the conjoint experiment as this could have reminded councillors of alternative formulations of the policy. This policy question is therefore prepared as a binary choice. The first two single policy questions are prepared as sanity checks to the third single policy. After responding to three policy questions, local councillors have responded to a few questions on their attitudes towards asylum-seekers regarding socio-cultural, economic, and security concerns before taking the conjoint experiment. Respondents were prompted with the following text prior to taking the conjoint:

"Now we would like you to assess below some aspects of the possible scenarios where your municipality is in a position of deciding on the characteristics of the asylum-seeker host site (camp) and the areas that possible additional funds can be used. We present below two hypothetical proposals (A and B), which have been submitted for approval to the city council. Each of the proposals consists of 5 characteristics. Please consider each proposal (A and B) in its entirety. You will now be invited to choose between the two proposals. We will present you three such pairs."

Each task consisted of a comparison between two randomly generated profiles (policy proposals). Each profile/proposal was populated with a *randomly assigned* value (drawn from the list below) for each one of its five attributes. The five attributes and the possible values that

they could take of the conjoint experiment were as follows:

1. **Type of public goods provision**
    - More infrastructure to the municipality
    - Hire more teachers and doctors
    - Hire more municipal employees
2. **Size of the host site for asylum-seekers**
    - 1% of local population
    - Less than 1% of local population
    - More than 1% of local population
3. **Who is in charge of day-to-day administration of the camp**
    - National Government
    - International Organizations (UNHCR, IOM)
    - Local Government
    - Army
    - Church
4. **Proximity of the camp to the urban center**
    - In the centre
    - 30-minute walk or less from the center
    - More than a 30-minute walk from the center

5. **Type of site**

   - Fully open (site residents have unrestricted mobility)
   - Partially open (site residents must check in and out before leaving)
   - Closed (exit allowed by permission of authorities only for a specified amount of time)

Each councillor received three pairs of proposals with randomly assigned attribute values. The attribute order was also randomised between respondents. Two questions were asked for each pair. The first question asked councillors to rate on a Likert scale how likely it would be for them to vote for each of the two hypothetical proposals. The second question (binary choice) asked them to choose between the two hypothetical proposals. The 'more than 1% quota policy', therefore, was repeated in a multi-dimensional policy setting as one of the policy elements of the size attribute. As mentioned earlier, this policy was asked as a binary policy question pre-treatment rather than as a multiple-choice to avoid reminding councillors of the alternative policy formulations. The assumption is that, in the conjoint experiment, if councillors pick a package including 'more than 1% quota policy' element, they support this single policy element within a multi-dimensional environment.

Estimation

Equation 2 is used to estimate the causal effects of the different attributes of the council proposals on the preferred proposal in the conjoint experiment:

$$Y_{ijk} = a_0 + \gamma_k + \delta \mathbf{T_{ij}} + \epsilon_{ijk} \tag{2}$$

In the model, the treatment vector T_{ij} is composed of random values (containing five values), which indicate whether (or not) a policy proposal has a given attribute value. The outcome variable Y_{ijk} is measured in Likert scale and binary. Each $k = 3$ choice task asked respondents to choose between $j = 2$ alternative policy packages. I clustered standard errors by respondent i.

Equation 3 is used to estimate the effects of the three primary variables on policy reversals:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 P + \delta X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{3}$$

where Y is the reversal outcome where 1 is reversed, and 0 is non-reversed policy, P takes the values of ideology, party affiliation and polarisation in different estimation models. X is controls. I use two types of policy reversals as dependent variables: negative and positive reversals. First, I call it a negative reversal when politicians reverse their position from supporting to opposing the policy and code it 1 if they did, 0 otherwise. Second, I call it a positive reversal when politicians reverse their position from opposing to supporting the policy and code it 1 if they did, 0 otherwise. As indicated in the formal model of Chapter 1, I use ideology, party affiliation, and polarisation as the main determinants of the initial support for 'more than 1% quota policy' and its reversal. Parties councillors indicated being members of are as follows: KKE is the Communist Party of Greece, Mera25, Pleusi Eleutherias, and Syriza are parties associated with the left. Kinal is a centre/left party, and New Democracy is a centre-right/right-wing party. None of the respondents indicated being part of the two right-wing parties, Golden Dawn and Greek Solution.

I construct two different types of polarisation: intra-party polarisation and inter-party polarisation. Intra-party polarisation is calculated as the following: I take the absolute difference between the politician's

ideology and the mean ideological score of everyone else in their party. Inter-party polarisation takes the absolute difference between the politician's ideology and the median of everyone else surveyed. Fig. 38 in the Appendix displays the distribution of these variables. In addition, I control for gender, age, education level, income level, ethnocentric values, and being in a municipality with an existing camp. Ethnocentric values are computed as a polychoric principal component analysis, i.e., PCA, using variables measuring how important it is for politicians that refugees can speak the Greek language, share Greek customs and traditions, are born in Greece, and are an Orthodox Christian. All four variables included a 5-scale outcome ranging from completely agree to completely disagree.

4.5. Results

I start by focusing on the 1% quota single policy question. In Fig. 13, Fig. 14 and Fig. 15, I display councillors' distribution of responses to the three single policy questions. What appears from Fig. 13 is a strong dislike for accepting refugees at a rate of more than 40% whilst most councillors seem fine accepting refugees in general (in Fig. 14). Fig. 15 is the most important one as it is the repeated policy question. The consensus among councillors pre-treatment appears to be opposing the 1% quota policy. Only 42% of the councillors supported hosting refugees accounting for more than 1% of the local population. In general, councillors seem to be open to accepting *some* refugees. However, they do not have a majority to accept the 1% quota policy in exchange for monetary compensation when asked in the single policy environment.

After councillors responded to these three single-policy questions, they responded to the third policy question in a multi-dimensional policy environment, the conjoint experiment. Fig. 16 displays the results of

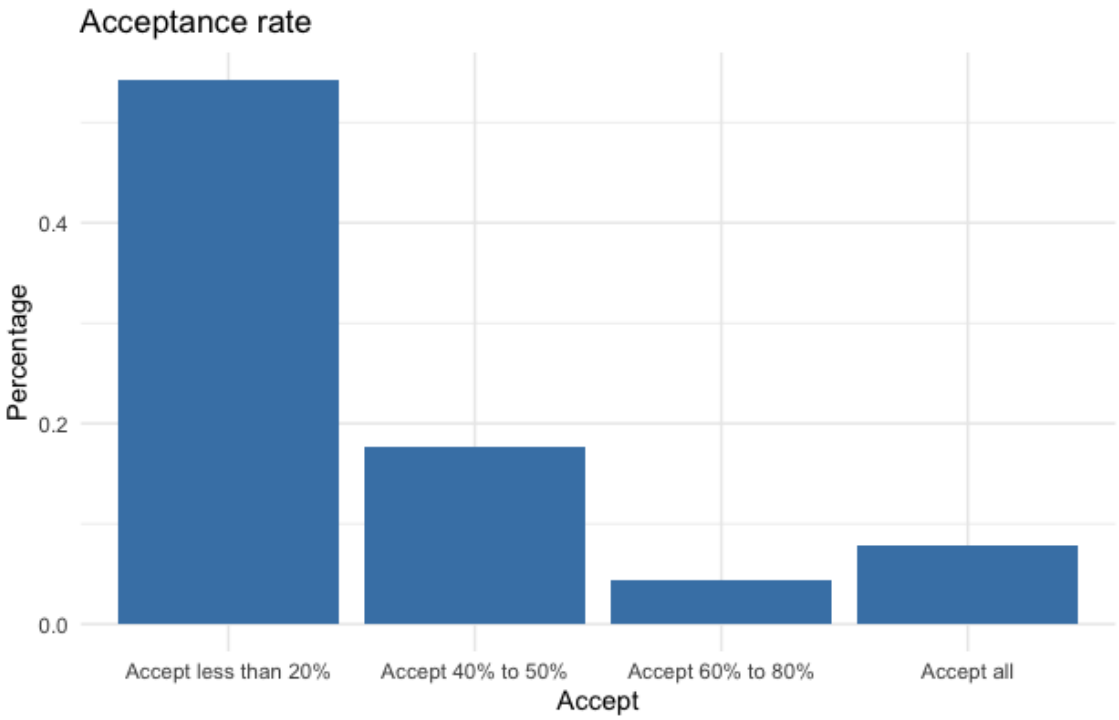


Figure 13: **Single-policy preferences: acceptance rate**

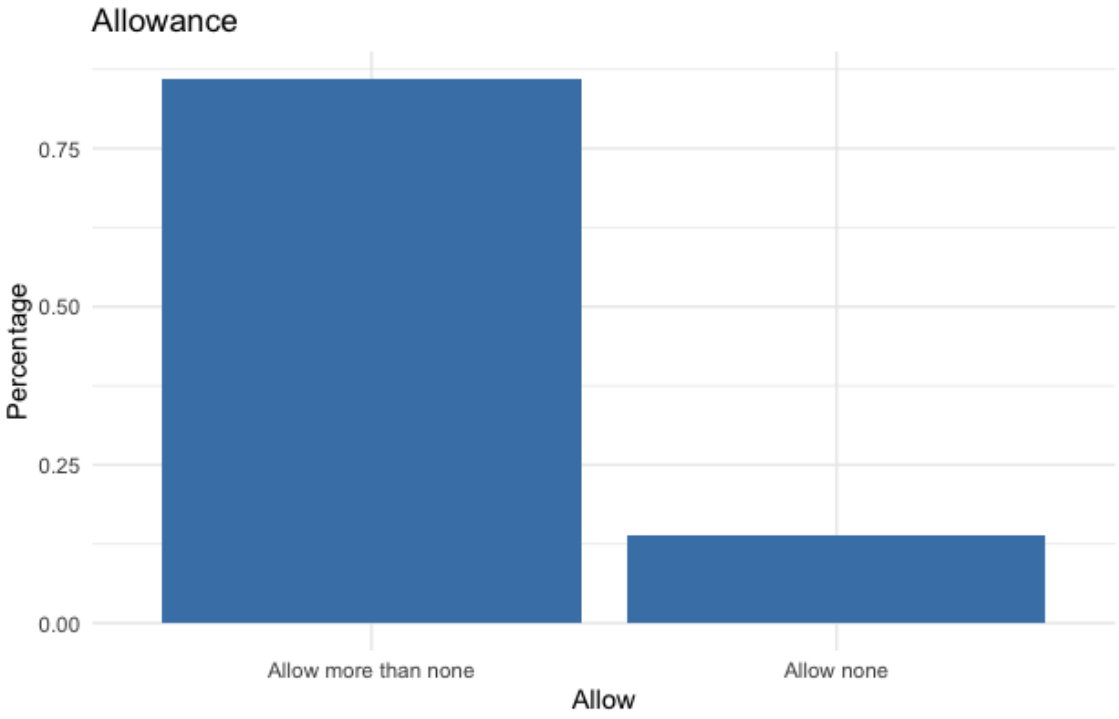


Figure 14: **Single-policy preferences: allowing refugees in general**

this experiment. It shows marginal means for proposal choice (i.e., average choice probabilities given a specific attribute level) across all

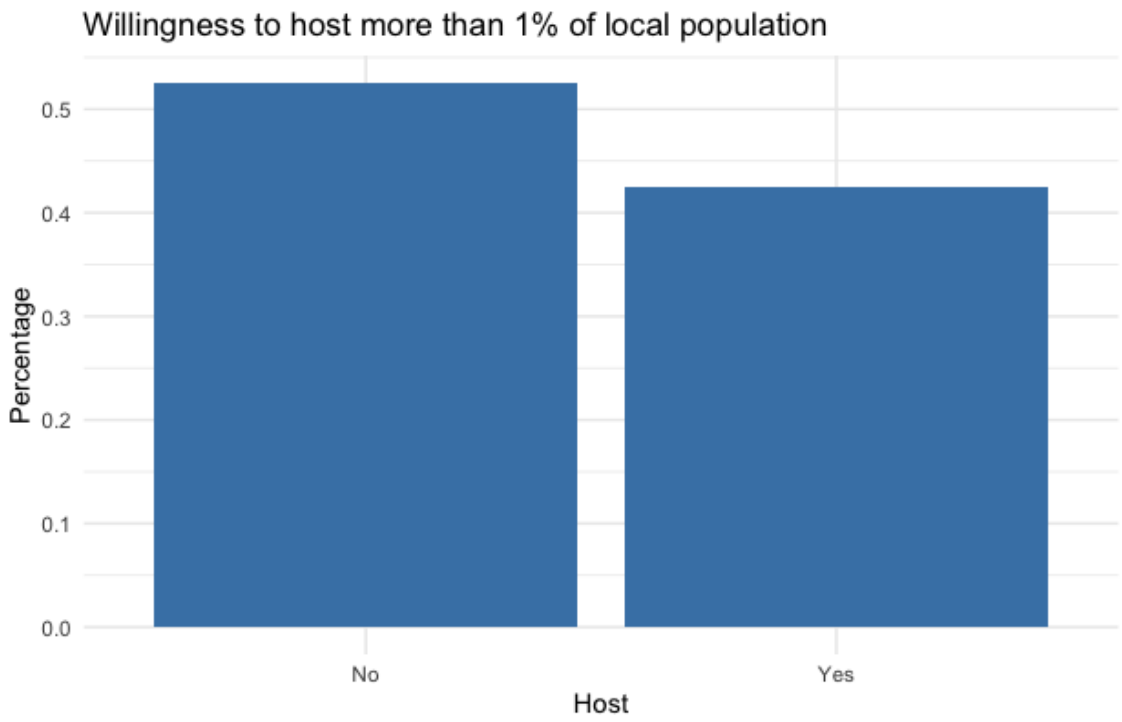
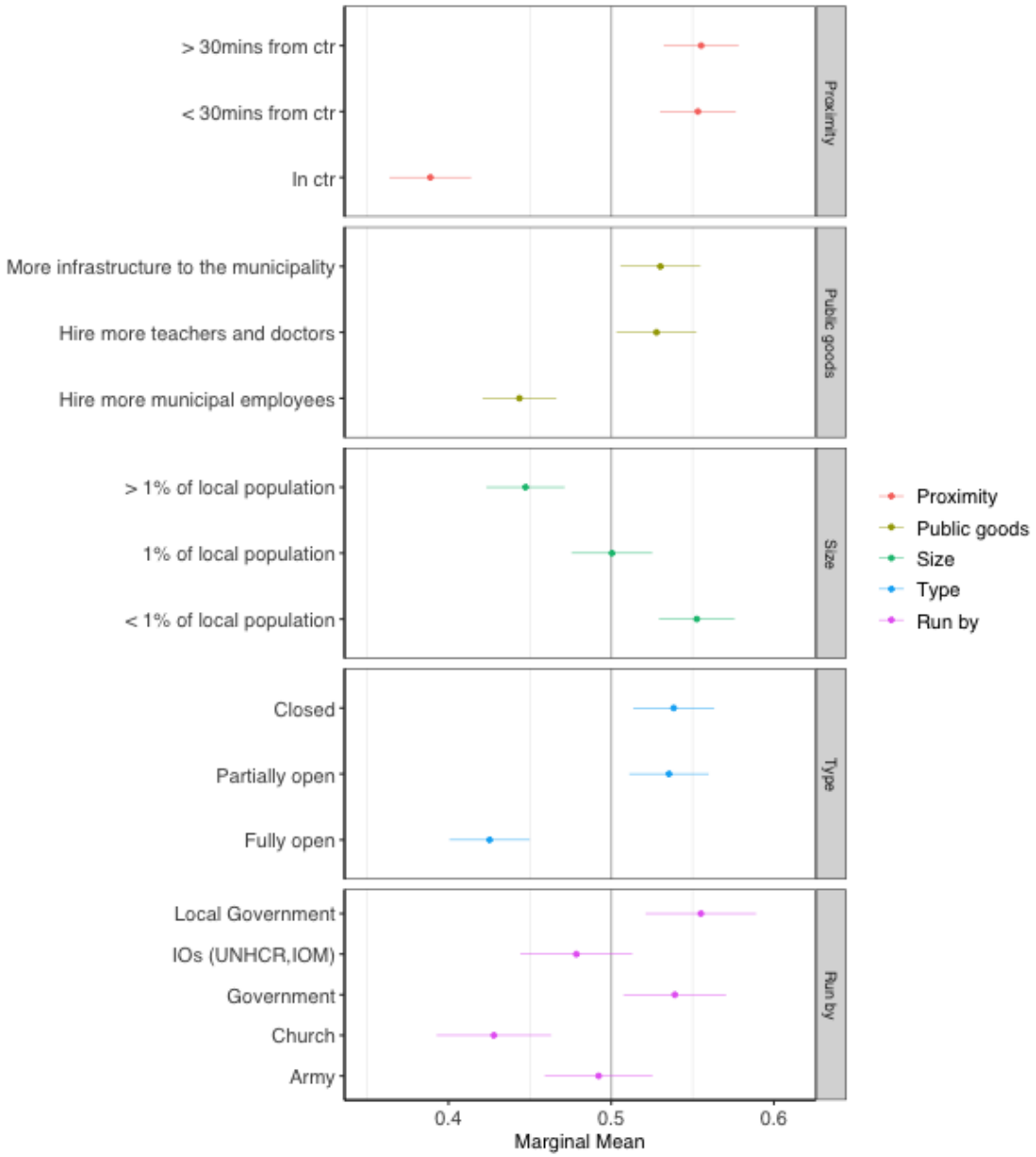


Figure 15: **Single-policy preferences: willingness to host more than 1% of local population**

levels. Marginal means can be directly interpreted as the expected support that a policy containing this particular policy element would receive if it were to come to a vote in the municipal council, all else equal. Eyeballing the results, it appears that firstly, councillors are *still against* allowing refugees approximating to more than 1% of the local population of their municipality, albeit at a higher level of support. However, 44% of the councillors now, as opposed to 42% in the single-policy environment, support 1% quota policy. One might wonder if this 2% increase in majority support could be a new information effect as councillors were prompted with a text prior to taking the conjoint. However, the introduction to this policy has been provided to the councillors *before* they responded to the single-policy in the following way: "The Greek government has suggested a 1% quota (concerning the local population) for hosting asylum-seekers within Greece at the municipal level". Therefore, councillors were equally informed when they responded in single policy vs multi-dimensional

policy environments. This feature of the experimental design makes it more likely that some councillors have switched their preferences because of the framing of the policy problem and the policy trade-offs they have been subject to during the conjoint experiment.

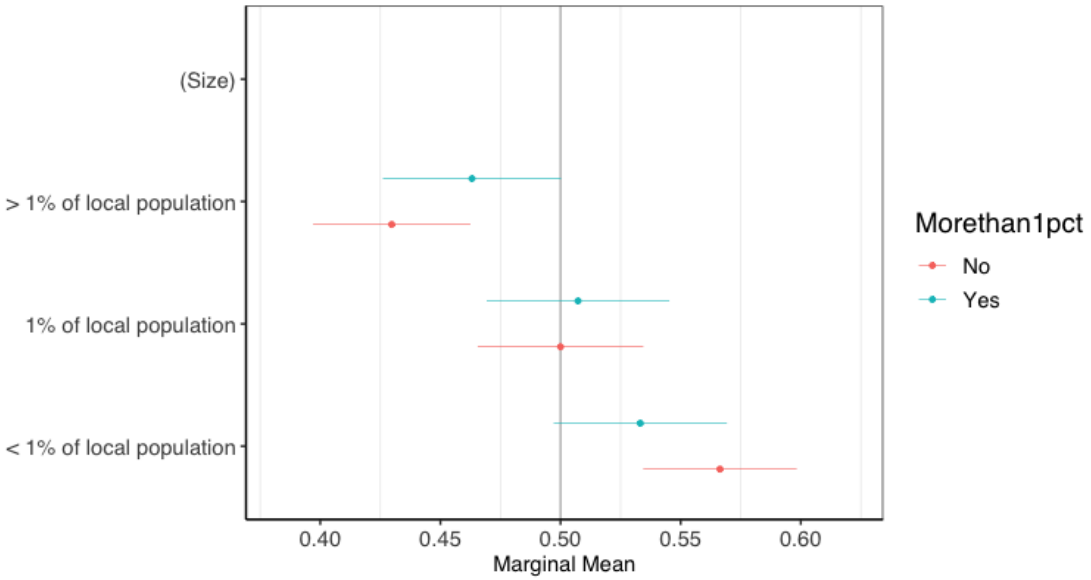


Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 16: **Aggregate marginal means (MMs)**

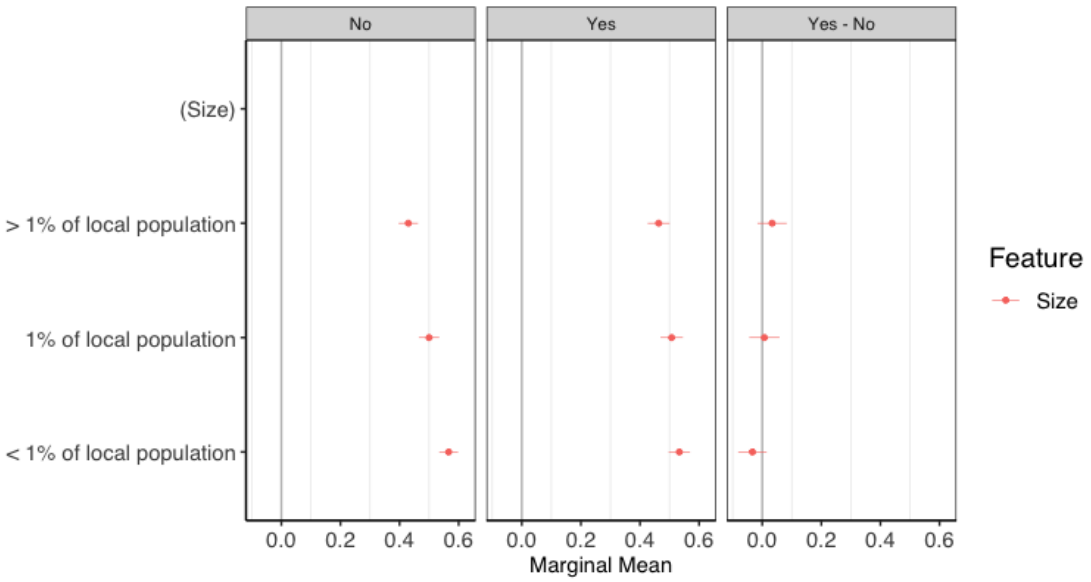
Next, I divide respondents into two subgroups of locally elected officials. The first group is those who have *initially supported* accepting more than 1% of the local population in their municipality in exchange

for monetary compensation. The second group is those who have *initially rejected* accepting more than 1% of the local population in their municipality in exchange for monetary compensation. Fig. 17 shows the marginal means of these two subgroups for the policy attribute 'size' and its three elements. Zooming into the policy of "more than 1% of the local population", one notices that both groups dislike this policy. Therefore, I check if there is a statistically significant difference in the policy position of the two groups. The marginal means of the two groups for this policy element are as follows: 43% for those who initially rejected the policy and 46% for those who initially accepted the policy, all other policy elements taking their average values. There is no statistically significant difference in marginal means between the two subgroups (p=0.18), suggesting that there is no evidence that there are substantial differences in preferences of those people who had initially rejected the policy and those who had initially accepted the policy when they answered the policy question in a multi-dimensional environment. This finding also indicates that those councillors who have rejected the policy in the single policy environment are *no less* likely to accept it in the multi-dimensional environment. This point is further revealed when looking at the differences in marginal means in Fig. 18. The two subgroups do not have a statistically significant difference in any policy elements belonging to the camp size attribute. Therefore, I find direct evidence that politicians are likely to shift their short-termed policy preferences if presented with the trade-offs it entails.



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 17: **Marginal means in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**

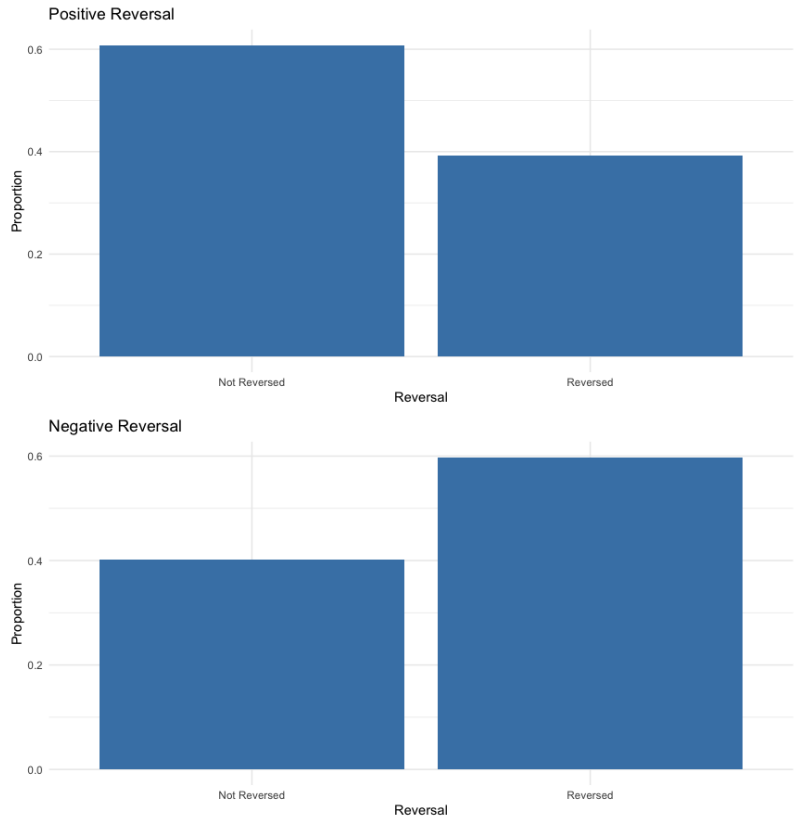


Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 18: **Marginal means differences in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**

4.6. Reversed preferences

Focusing on those councillors who had changed their preferences when they encountered '> 1% of the local population' as one of the conjoint policy elements, I find that out of 586 councillors who have taken the conjoint, only 102 have encountered this policy element. Out of those councillors who have encountered this policy element, 40 reversed their initial position of not accepting '> 1% of local population' to accepting (positive reversal, 39.2%). Out of 87 councillors who have encountered this policy element, 52 reversed their initial position of accepting '> 1% of local population' to not accepting (negative reversal, 59.7%).



Note: Plot shows positive and negative reversals. Positive reversal is defined as reversing the initial position of not accepting '> 1% quota policy' to accepting. Negative reversal is defined as reversing the initial position of accepting '> 1% quota policy' to not accepting.

Figure 19: **Reversals from single to multi-policy environment**

In order to test H1, in Table 3, I look into the determinants of initial support for '1% of local population' policy. As expected, ideology seems to be the primary determinant of supporting this policy. As

values of ideology increase from left to right-wing, politicians become much less likely to support this policy. Among political parties, those councillors who indicated their political party as Syriza (a centre-left to left-wing party) are much more likely to support the policy than those councillors who did not indicate their party (reference category). Politicians from KKE (a far-left party) also seem to support this policy. Party position confirms that those who are members of left-wing parties are more likely to support this policy than those of a right-wing party. Finally, inter-party polarisation seems to be indicative of supporting this policy.

Table 3: **Determinants of initial support for "1% quota" policy**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
(Intercept)	1.13***	0.87***	0.88***	0.99***	0.96***
	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.17)	(0.18)	(0.18)
Ideology	−0.05***				
	(0.01)				
Party-KKE		0.34**			
		(0.14)			
Party-Mera25		0.31			
		(0.19)			
Party-Pleusi		−0.18			
		(0.19)			
Party-Syriza		0.32***			
		(0.07)			
Party-Kinal		0.11*			
		(0.07)			
Party-New Democracy		−0.01			
		(0.05)			
Party Position-Left			0.28***		
			(0.06)		
Party Position-Centre			0.11*		
			(0.06)		
Intra-polarisation				0.01	
				(0.02)	
Inter-polarisation					0.02*
					(0.01)
R^2	0.20	0.19	0.18	0.14	0.15
Adj. R^2	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.14	0.15
N obs.	470	498	498	470	470

$^{***}p < 0.01$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{*}p < 0.1$

Next, I turn to those who reverse their position from opposing to supporting (positive reversal). In Table 4, I zoom into those politicians who changed their preferences from opposing 1% quota policy (in a single-policy environment) to supporting it (in a multi-policy environment). In this table, the dependent variable is a dummy variable: 1 if the politicians positively reversed their position from not accepting 1% quota policy to accepting 1% quota policy and 0 otherwise. Table 4 shows that inter-party polarisation, as measured by the absolute distance from everyone else surveyed, decreases positive reversals.

Table 4: **Positive reversals: Changing from opposing to supporting 1% quota policy**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
(Intercept)	1.30***	1.25***	1.26***	1.36***	1.36***
	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.15)	(0.16)	(0.16)
Ideology	0.01				
	(0.01)				
Party-KKE		0.01			
		(0.13)			
Party-Mera25		0.09			
		(0.58)			
Party-Pleusi		−0.13			
		(0.17)			
Party-Syriza		−0.06			
		(0.07)			
Party-Kinal		0.05			
		(0.07)			
Party-New Democracy		0.08			
		(0.05)			
Party-PositionLeft			−0.09		
			(0.06)		
Party-PositionCentre			0.01		
			(0.06)		
Intra-polarisation				−0.04	
				(0.02)	
Inter-polarisation					−0.02*
					(0.01)
R^2	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adj. R^2	−0.00	−0.00	−0.00	−0.00	0.00
N obs.	303	330	330	303	303

$^{***}p < 0.01$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{*}p < 0.1$

Finally, I examine the determinants of reversal behaviour of those councillors who reversed their position from supporting to opposing 1% quota policy (negative reversal) in Table 5. In contrast to positive reversals that are negatively predicted by inter-party polarisation, negative reversals seem to be positively determined by *intra*-party polarisation. If politicians are far away from their party's (mean) ideology, they are more likely to change from supporting to opposing a policy. Those members of a party positioned as left-wing are less likely to undertake negative reversals.

Table 5: **Negative reversals: Changing from supporting to opposing 1% quota policy**

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
(Intercept)	1.21***	1.29***	1.30***	1.23***	1.23***
	(0.21)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.20)	(0.21)
Ideology	0.01				
	(0.01)				
Party-KKE		−0.02			
		(0.15)			
Party-Mera25		−0.06			
		(0.18)			
Party-Pleusi		−0.27			
		(0.23)			
Party-Syriza		−0.14			
		(0.10)			
Party-Kinal		−0.06			
		(0.08)			
Party-New Democracy		0.05			
		(0.06)			
Party Position-Left			−0.15*		
			(0.08)		
Party Position-Centre			−0.08		
			(0.07)		
Intra-polarisation				0.04*	
				(0.02)	
Inter-polarisation					0.01
					(0.02)
R^2	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.02
Adj. R^2	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
N obs.	278	291	291	278	278

$^{***}p < 0.01$; $^{**}p < 0.05$; $^{*}p < 0.1$

4.7. Conclusion

This chapter has explored a causal mechanism by which politicians reverse their policy preferences in the short-run: trade-offs in multi-dimensional policymaking. Through a survey experiment, it documented how policy choices of the same politician can change when they are made in isolated vs multi-dimensional policy environments. It also attempted at finding out the empirical distinction between negative and positive policy reversals and their determinants. Results indicated that negative policy reversals are predicted by intra-party polarisation. Those members who are distant from their party peers in terms of ideology are more likely to reverse a policy position that they have initially supported. This makes sense, given that those who are more distant could also be more likely to make different statements in the first place. This confirms the proposition that intra-party polarisation might create policy conflict between different groups of the party. It also confirms the simple formal model of Chapter 2, showing that short-term policy decisions made by ideologically distant party members are likely to be reversed in the long run. Positive reversals, on the other hand, are negatively predicted by inter-party polarisation. Councillors who are more distant to the mean ideology of all other locally elected members are less likely to change from opposing to supporting the 1% quota policy. This could partly be explained by the policy generally being supported by the left to centre-wing politicians as seen in Table 3.

These findings contribute to the literature on the causes of policy reversals (Binder 2003; Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017; Fouirnaies et al. 2018; Maltzman & Shipan 2008; E. Patashnik 2003; Prato & Wolton 2017; Ragusa 2010). The chapter finds that the exposure to policy trade-offs, a mechanism that has not been previously explored in the literature, could generate policy reversals. These types of reversals

could be seen as functional types as they are brought about by isolating preferences in single vs multi-dimensional policy environments. An example of policy reversal could be Angela Merkel's as she reversed her policy position on the nuclear policy after the incident in Fukushima. A possible explanation is that the incident in Fukushima have shown her the trade-offs in nuclear policy even though she has already publicly supported it. While the form of reversal is functional, the analysis demonstrated that these functional forms of reversals were motivated by political factors. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that those politicians who have reversed their initial policy decisions seem to be motivated by political factors such as ideology, party affiliation, and intra and interparty polarisation. In the case of Angela Merkel's reversal, the alignment of political factors might have allowed her for this policy reversal.

These findings also speak to the literature on the consequences of policy reversals. While the chapter does not deal with the consequences of reversals per se, the functional form of reversal demonstrated in the chapter could suggest that policy reversals do not have to be intrinsically bad despite public perception (see, Tomz & Houweling 2010). Politicians may reverse their short-termed policy decisions if exposed to the policy trade-offs. If the multidimensional nature of the policymaking were to be transparently communicated to the public, politicians would not be necessarily perceived as unfavourable (Tomz & Houweling 2010), unreliable (M. Bernhardt & Ingerman 1985; Carlson & Dolan 1985) and indecisive or incompetent (Fearon 1994; Poole & Rosenthal 1997).

This chapter has shown that there could be non-political mechanisms that generate policy reversals in policymaking. A new avenue of research could test the impact of functional and non-functional forms of policy reversals directly.

5. Chapter 5: Covid-19 Pandemic and Policy Preferences of Citizens

Has COVID-19 changed the US's partisan reality and policy preference polarisation and its apparent immunity to factual information? Our answer uses a conjoint survey experiment with information treatments to examine post-pandemic fiscal adjustment policy preferences. COVID-19 reality perceptions are partisanly polarised, as are fiscal policy preferences, but this polarisation disappears with exposure to information about COVID-19 deaths and income losses. Moreover, a cross-party reset in preferences towards tax-based fiscal adjustment occurs in our information treatments: from opposition to endorsement. We conclude by showing that majority support could be mobilized for a post-pandemic New Deal with wealth and corporate tax increases.[16]

Keywords: COVID-19, fiscal preferences, conjoint experiment, polarisation, policy reset, partisanship

[16]This paper is coauthored work with Shaun P. Hargreaves Heap, Christel Koop, Konstantinos Matakos and Nina Weber (Department of Political Economy, King's College London).

> *"[. . .] I don't wear a mask like him [Joe Biden]. Every time you see him, he's got a mask. He could be speaking 200 feet away and he shows up with the biggest mask I've ever seen"* (Donald J. Trump, 2020 presidential debate, 29 September 2020)

> *"I think at some point it would require more [...] to get us back to the point where we at least recognize a common set of facts before we start arguing about what we should do about those facts"* (Barack Obama, BBC interview, 16 November 2020)

5.1. Introduction

The role of exposure to different dimensions of the policy in determining the stability of elite preferences is explored in the previous chapter. Elite preference reversals are fundamental to understanding policymaking processes, but policy support from citizens also contributes to policymaking. Do elites and citizens differ in how they process information and update preferences? In this chapter, I focus on citizens' policy preferences and if and how information provision can affect them.

It is well-known that differences in people's policy preferences tend to map onto their respective party or political affiliations (e.g., Gerber, Huber, & Washington 2010). People typically identify with a party because they agree with its policies.[17] But, in practice, the mapping can be more (or less) strong because people need not agree on all items of a party's policy platform. When it is strong, politics becomes polarised along partisan lines because the differences in policy preferences in the population become reducible to a single dimension of party affiliation or support. Although there is some evidence that such partisan polarisation has become stronger in recent years (e.g., Campbell 2016), a particularly notable, recent feature of this polarisation in the US is

[17] Of course, differences in policy preferences also map onto socio-economic cleavages (e.g., income, age).

its underpinning by a form of 'reality polarisation'. That is, people with different political affiliations also perceive reality in different ways. This has been observed with respect to policy issues like immigration, social mobility, economic inequality and taxation (see Alesina, Miano, & Stantcheva 2018, 2020; Alesina, Stantcheva, & Teso 2018; Kuziemko, Norton, Saez, & Stantcheva 2015; Stantcheva 2020). Even more remarkable, this 'reality polarisation' is such that the partisan polarisation over policies appears to be immune to the provision of factual information on the policy issue (Alesina, Stantcheva, & Teso 2018). In this paper, we examine, with a conjoint survey experiment, whether the political economy of COVID-19 reproduces these patterns. That is, are Americans similarly partisan polarised over COVID-19 and pandemic-related policies? In particular, we ask:

(i) Do differences in the perception of the reality of COVID-19 map onto partisan and/or other socio-economic cleavages? ('reality polarisation')
(ii) Are preferences with respect to post-COVID-19 fiscal policy similarly polarised? ('policy polarisation')
(iii) Is any polarisation in COVID-19 fiscal policy preferences unchanged by the provision of COVID-19 information? ('information immunity')

— These questions are important. It is known, for example, that exposure to major events can reshape redistributive preferences (see, e.g., Alesina, Carloni, & Lecce 2011; Fisman et al. 2015), and so a shock-like COVID-19 could feed through into fiscal policy preferences. But COVID-19 is a wholly new major event. Most of the electorate has no previous pandemic experience and so projecting from past experiences on to post COVID-19 policy preferences may be difficult and potentially unreliable. There are, nevertheless, some pointers in the literature. They are mixed partly because COVID-19 combines

a natural shock with an economic one, and these two types of shock seem to pull in opposite directions. For example, there is evidence that people respond to localized natural disasters by acting more cooperatively (e.g., Cassar et al. 2017; Whitt & Wilson 2007), and by strengthening their preferences for redistribution (Gualtieri et al. 2019). The latter may be due to disasters being perceived as bad luck (Cappelen, Konow, Sørensen, & Tungodden 2013). On the other hand, there is evidence that economic shocks are associated with more selfish responses (e.g., Colantone & Stanig 2018; Fisman et al. 2015; Margalit 2013), decreased support for redistributive policies (Brunner et al. 2011), and moves to the right of the political spectrum (Funke, Schularick, & Trebesch 2016). At the same time, crisis-related attitudes have been shown to polarise easily in response to the politicisation of a crisis (Adida, Dionne, & Platas 2020); and this is what we have already observed in people's responses to guidance on wearing marks and staying at home (e.g., Grossman, Kim, Rexer, & Thirumurthy 2020; Wright, Sonin, Driscoll, & Wilson 2020). Thus, it seems an open question as to whether COVID-19 will reset US politics (e.g. Rodrik & Stantcheva 2020; Schwab 2020) or fit into what seems to have become the 'business as usual' pattern of partisan polarisation.

The fiscal policy focus of these questions on partisan policy preference polarisation and information immunity also contributes to their significance. This is because the fiscal adjustment is likely to be an important and enduring issue in US economic and political debate. The COVID-19 shock has contributed to a large increase in public debt that will create a fiscal COVID-19 legacy. The extra debt will generate either additional interest servicing and/or debt repayment costs.[18] A key policy question, therefore, is how this future COVID-19 fiscal burden will be met. Which groups will bear the brunt of the

[18] Currently, with interest rates being almost zero, the rolling over of debt and the additional interest servicing payments might not look like a hefty burden on government budgets (as long as $r < g$)

burden? Will it be via new taxes or spending cuts? If by spending cuts, where will they fall? These are the specific attributes of the post-COVID-19 fiscal policy preferences that we examine with our conjoint survey experiment.

We focus on fiscal policy preferences for another reason. These preferences are characterised by partisan disputes in normal times, especially around the issues of who should shoulder the bill during a fiscal stabilization (see, e.g., Alesina & Ardagna 2013; Alesina, Ardagna, & Trebbi 2006; Alesina et al. 2011; Alesina & Drazen 1991; Fisman, Gladstone, Kuziemko, & Naidu 2020). For example, higher levels of redistribution are typically favoured by Democratic, young, and less affluent voters (e.g., Lupia, Levine, Menning, & Sin 2007), though the recent advent of inequality has made the picture more complex (Ashok, Kuziemko, & Washington 2015). Similarly, there is an ongoing debate regarding the desirability of higher wealth (and corporate) taxes (e.g., Fisman et al. 2020; Saez & Zucman 2019). Thus, we have relevant reference points for judging whether COVID-19 is at all unusual in provoking fiscal consolidation preferences that depart from 'normal' patterns of fiscal policy polarisation.

To answer our three research questions, we conducted a conjoint experiment with an information treatment component embedded in a representative survey of more than 2,000 Americans. To our knowledge, we are the first to embed a further information treatment in a conjoint survey experiment. Moreover, we believe this is the first conjoint survey experiment to study fiscal adjustment preferences in the US.

Conjoint experiments are uniquely suited to elicit such policy preferences as they can accommodate multi-faceted policy packages, allowing for the experimental manipulation of each policy dimension or attribute. In particular, and unlike conventional survey experiments, conjoint experiments allow us to estimate the effects of randomly assigned

treatments with multiple attributes/dimensions *simultaneously and independently* (Bansak, Hainmueller, Hopkins, & Yamamoto 2021); conventional experiments, by contrast, are typically limited to analysing the average effects of one or two randomly assigned treatments.[19] This *ceteris paribus* feature of conjoint experiments is particularly important when dimensions are co-dependent or co-determined. Moreover, the conjoint design has an additional desirable feature: it allows us to identify experimentally the winning policy (in electoral terms) by varying one policy element at a time, holding all else at their means.

We first asked our subjects three factual questions about COVID-19 to test for 'reality polarisation'. Our subjects were then divided into three groups before moving to the conjoint survey experiment. While the control group proceeded to the conjoint experiment after listening to a piece of instrumental music, the two information treatment groups first received an information prompt. One treatment group was exposed to the number of COVID-19 deaths in the next three months, as predicted by the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME); the other group received the IMF-predicted average income losses by the end of the year 2020.

In the conjoint survey experiment, subjects chose between a sequence of four pairs of policy package options, where each package option had three dimensions (or attributes): (i) who should carry the burden of fiscal adjustment, (ii) what combination of policy tools should be used, and (iii) how any spending cuts should be distributed across policy areas. Each attribute was populated with one policy element that was randomly selected from the pool of such elements. Since the subjects chose between pairs of fiscal adjustment packages – that is, randomly generated combinations of elements on each of these

[19] We provide more details and explanation of the use and interpretation of conjoint experiments in Subsection 5.3.

attributes –, this effectively constituted an experiment with a factorial vector of (conjoint) treatment conditions.

Within this framework, we address our partisan policy polarisation and information immunity questions by estimating the so-called average marginal component effects (AMCEs). These reveal a *ceteris paribus* preference for each policy element *independently*.[20]

In the analysis, we refer to these effects as the 'main conjoint treatment effects' in order to distinguish them from the information treatment effects. We track the latter by comparing our control group with the two information treatment groups of subjects. It is by examining the policy preferences in the control group that we address the second question on policy polarisation; and it is by comparing the preferences in the control group with those in the information treatment groups that we establish whether these patterns of polarisation change in response to the provision of factual information (i.e., the 'immunity' question).

Thus, our contribution is to address, in a methodologically novel way, the important open question of whether the politics of a key COVID-19 legacy are likely to reproduce the patterns of partisan polarisation that we have observed in US politics. In particular, will COVID-19 constitute 'business as usual, or mark in any way a reset of fiscal policy politics away from the previous patterns of polarisation?

We find evidence of partisan reality polarisation with respect to COVID-19. We also find that partisan fiscal policy polarisation. This much is

[20] In practice, as we set out in more detail in the next section, a conjoint survey experiment administers a vector of treatments to each subject, where each vector contains as many elements as attributes (three in our case) and each element is randomly populated by one of the pre-specified policy elements. Thus, the conjoint treatment effects that one can estimate by employing the AMCE-estimator (for its statistical properties, see Hainmueller et al. 2014) are the average treatment effects of each of the marginal components of the vector of treatments (i.e., for each element/attribute value of the vector) on respondents' preferences. Hence, the AMCE identifies the causal effect of changing the value of one element (known as the marginal component) in the treatment vector, *ceteris paribus*.

'business as usual. However, we find no evidence of 'information immunity'. Instead, the provision of both types of information *depolarises*: the partisan polarisation over policy preference largely disappears with our information treatments. This is not the only way in which politics is reset through COVID-19 related information prompts in our experiment: there is a notable move away from disliking the reliance on tax increases as the main 'policy adjustment tool' towards preferring such increases over the baseline of a balanced mix of tax increases and spending cuts.

It is the flip-flop result on the preference for tax increases that prompts us to exploit another feature of conjoint survey experiments. While the AMCEs identify the underlying fiscal policy attribute preferences, they are not directly helpful in assessing whether any change in these attribute preferences could produce a fiscal policy package reset. For this, we need to know how any change in these attribute preferences might combine with other policy attributes to affect overall support for whole policy packages. For this purpose, we need to specify the values of the other attributes in a policy package, and we engage in what is known in the conjoint experiment framework as marginal means estimation. In effect, we use the elicited mean preferences in the analysis of AMCEs for the values of these other attributes and then compare the level of support for whole policy packages that differ in these specific respects from the baseline package that otherwise shares the same elicited mean preferences for the other attributes. In this way, we gauge the effect of changes in a policy attribute on the likely electoral support for the whole policy package as compared with the baseline mean preference policy package that does not have these changes.

We find that after the information prompts a fiscal policy package that combines tax increases on companies and the wealthy commands

more support than a fiscal policy that relies on both tax increases, levied according to income and spending cuts. In short, our experiment provides evidence that COVID-19 could produce the kind of fiscal policy preference changes that would underpin a fiscal 'New Deal' in the US.

The paper proceeds as follows. In the next section, we set out our design of the conjoint survey experiment. Section 5.6 presents and discusses the results, while Section 5.7 discusses the underlying mechanisms. We conclude the paper in Section 5.10.

5.2. Experimental design

Our survey experiment was undertaken online between 17 and 21 April 2020. We recruited 2,245 US subjects via Prolific Academic (full details below), who received a payment based on the time it took to complete the survey.[21] They began by answering three questions related to the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic:

(i) How many people in the US would you estimate will die in total due to coronavirus?
(ii) By what percentage would you estimate average income in the US will be lower in 2020 as compared to 2019?
(iii) How serious do you think COVID-19 is compared to the seasonal flu?

They answered the first two questions by supplying a number and could answer the third question on a scale from 1 to 5. Subsequently, they were divided into three groups. The two information treatment groups received one of two information prompts, while the control group heard a piece of instrumental music. The two information treatments (T1 and

[21] More specifically, the payment they received was based on the average completion time of their survey subgroup. The overall average completion time was 34 minutes.

T2) took the following form: T1 provided information about *projected* COVID-19 deaths –the estimates that we used were retrieved by the Washington-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME); T2 provided information regarding the expected output loss of the US economy in 2020, compared to 2019 –the figures were retrieved from the IMF.[22] We provide more details on the information treatments and our instrument in Section H in the Appendix.

5.3. Conjoint experiment

Conjoint analysis has been used to study citizens' policy preferences in areas such as climate agreements (Bechtel & Scheve 2013), financial bail-outs (Bechtel, Hainmueller, & Margalit 2017), and income tax (Ballard-Rosa, Martin, & Scheve 2017). Their key advantage over other preference elicitation techniques lies in their ability to measure the impact of treatments with multiple dimensions (Hainmueller et al. 2014). Yet, conjoint experiments are not only useful for eliciting preferences over multi-dimensional policies: even when there are few policy elements (and preferences could be elicited using simple survey questions), the conjoint method is superior whenever preferences over policy dimensions are co-determined or co-dependent. In such cases, an ordinary 'elicitation' via simple (i.e., sequential) survey questions cannot identify the causal effect of each element. That is, the estimation of the effect of an individual policy attribute would need to assume a value for the remaining attributes since such values are not experimentally elicited in the survey process. Put simply; we cannot control for policy preferences on the remaining $n-1$ dimensions when we ask subjects to reveal their preference over the n-th dimension. Conjoint survey experiments, by contrast, do include such controls and

[22] At the time of our survey, the IHME and IMF estimates constituted the most informed projections regarding the evolution of the pandemic's death and economic toll and all major media outlets, in the US and elsewhere, relied heavily on them.

are, therefore, the ideal method for eliciting *ceteris paribus* preferences on individual policy elements when a policy has at least two elements.

We introduced our respondents to the post-pandemic fiscal adjustment debate using the following text:[23]

> *"Policies that mitigate the economic dislocation from the measures to reduce Covid-19 transmission – for instance, salary replacement and cheap loans – will initially increase the national debt. This will create future financial burdens: either the new debt will have to be repaid, or interest payments will have to be made on this new debt. We would like you to assess below who should shoulder this future financial burden and what policy tool should be used to raise funds to do this in the future. We combine the various options into financial packages below."*

Our conjoint survey experiment includes a range of commonly discussed fiscal adjustment options. The attributes have three to eight values. Table 6 presents the three attributes and their policy elements. First, we analyse whether older people, the wealthy, or companies should shoulder the burden as compared with everyone sharing the burden in proportion to their income. Second, we assess whether an adjustment should mainly take the form of tax increases or spending cuts, compared with a balanced combination of the two. Third, we include a number of (broad) policy areas that may be affected by any spending cuts, including health, social security, defence and foreign aid.[24] The first

[23] Our introductory statement was carefully phrased so as to avoid imposing on respondents the necessity of enacting a fiscal adjustment plan imminently. Moreover, the use of a 1-7 Likert scale to elicit respondents' preferences allows those individuals who completely reject the need for any fiscal adjustment plan (now or in the future) to simply *assign the same lowest score* of (1) to all packages that are presented. Indeed, this is another reason why we prefer to use the Likert scale when presenting our main findings in Section 5.6.

[24] Including three attributes is well within the limit of what can be included without losing response quality (Bansak, Hainmueller, Hopkins, & Yamamoto 2019).

Table 6: **Policy attributes and attribute values (elements) in the conjoint survey experiment**

Attribute	**Attribute values (treatment elements)**
Who bears the financial burden?	– People contribute in proportion to their income – Older people bear proportionally more of the financial burden – Wealthier people bear proportionally more of the financial burden – Companies bear more of the financial burden
Policy tool to fund the future financial burden	– Mainly increasing taxes, but also some cuts in government spending – An equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases – Mainly cutting spending, but with some tax increases
Cuts on for any spending cuts	– Roads and public transport – Health care – Social security – Pensions – Defence – Foreign aid – Environmental policy – Research and development

and third attributes relate to the redistributive character of citizen preferences in relation to fiscal policy. Thus, preferring that the wealthy shoulder the burden rather than the old is redistributive, as is a preference not to have any cuts fall on the 'equality of opportunity' areas of health and social security. The second attribute relates to preferences over the size of the state. Thus, a preference for tax increases, as opposed to spending cuts, is a preference for a larger role for the state as compared with the market. We focus on people's redistributive and state/market preferences because policies are typically distinguished in this way, and they map onto familiar political differences, with left-wing parties preferring more redistribution and a bigger role for the state than right-wing parties.

The policy elements were chosen to reflect the alternatives discussed in actual policy debates across advanced economies, which facilitates

respondents' understanding of the options (Gallego & Marx 2017). For instance, in April 2020, when we fielded our survey, the role of multinational companies in post-pandemic fiscal adjustment was already discussed (e.g., Turner 2020), and broader reform of fiscal policy was called for. In fact, even the editors of the Financial Times (2020) argued that "[p]olicies until recently considered eccentric, such as basic income and wealth taxes, will have to be in the mix." Our elements on 'policy areas for any spending cuts' resemble those included in questions about federal budget spending in the American National Election Study (ANES) and represent areas that were singled out during the pandemic – some for reasons of fiscal protection (health, environmental policy), others as areas for economic stimulus (roads and public transport), and again others in the context of potential cuts (e.g., defence, foreign aid).

In the survey, we presented each respondent with four pairs of alternatives with randomly assigned attribute elements. We also randomised the attribute order (between subjects).[25] After being shown a pair of policy packages, respondents were asked to perform two tasks, with the answers serving as outcome variables. First, for each package, respondents were asked to rate on a Likert scale from 1 to 7 how supportive they would be of the policy package being implemented. These data were used to construct a rating outcome variable.[26] Second, still considering the same pair of packages, respondents were asked to choose the one package they would prefer ('forced-choice'). This resulted in a choice outcome variable, which was coded as 1 for the preferred packages and 0 for the rejected ones. Fig. 45 in the Appendix

[25] The order of the attributes is also randomised, but respondents always observe the full range of attributes, while each time, *only one element* from the full list of attribute elements is *randomly assigned to each of the attributes*, with respondents observing two 'packages' of values at any one time.

[26] The distribution of this variable is presented in Fig. 46 in the Appendix. In the analyses, the 1-7 Likert scale was recoded to range from 0 (fully oppose) to 1 (fully support) for ease of interpretation of the results. We use the Likert-based outcome variable as our main DV in the analyses presented in Section 5.6 because it contains finer information and allows for ties. We replicate all our main results using the binary outcome variable in the Appendix.

displays an example pair of packages, along with the two outcome variables of the conjoint experiment.

To identify the causal effects of the fiscal adjustment attribute values (policy elements) on the likelihood that they are preferred, we leveraged the difference in attributes between distinct policy package preferences. We estimated average marginal component effects (AMCEs) using the following OLS regression:

$$Y_{ijk} = a_0 + \gamma_k + \delta \mathbf{T_{ij}} + \upsilon_{ijk} \tag{4}$$

where $\mathbf{T_{ij}}$ is a treatment vector (containing three randomly assigned values, one for each of the policy's attributes) that indicates whether (or not) a policy package has a particular attribute value, and Y_{ijk} is the outcome variable (Likert scale and binary choice). As respondents were asked to express their preferences in relation to four pairs of policy packages, we clustered the standard errors by respondent i. We also used quota-based and (manually targeted) entropy balancing weights in our preferred specifications to further ensure that our estimates are representative of the US general (adult) population. In additional specifications, we used US state fixed effects as a robustness check (we report these results in Table 31 in the Appendix). In our experiment, respondents were asked to choose between $j = 2$ alternative policy packages in each of their $k = 4$ choice tasks. Our experiment randomly generated a total of 18,116 policy profiles.

Interpreting the average marginal component and marginal means effects

The average marginal component effects (AMCEs) represent subjects' elicited relative preference (as compared to the base category) for each of the individual attributes, while holding constant – that is, at their

mean – their preferences on the other dimensions (a *ceteris paribus* argument). For example, a preference for placing the burden on the wealthy is expressed relative to distributing it proportionally among all members of society, *while holding constant* subjects' preferences on the fiscal policy instrument to be used (i.e., spending cuts, tax increases, or an equal mix). This is another reason to use a conjoint experiment: it allows us to elicit multi-dimensional preferences when dimensions are co-dependent and thus correlated. The implication is that an AMCE preference for, for instance, reliance on tax increases (as compared to a balanced mix of cuts and taxes) is not incompatible with a preference for allocating the burden proportionally among all as compared to placing it mostly on the rich. This is appropriate because taxes can be imposed on all in proportion to their income; this would still imply that the wealthier Americans pay more in absolute terms.

Similarly, the estimation of the marginal means (MMs) to gauge levels of policy support (Subsection 5.9) is an exercise in analysing *conditional preferences*. It allows us to identify which combination of policy attributes can command majority support among the electorate, conditional on the policy has a certain attribute (e.g., relying on tax increases as the key fiscal adjustment tool), and with other attributes being evaluated at their respective means. This is another advantage of the conjoint elicitation as we would not have been able to calculate these estimates based on three standards, successive survey questions; that is, the latter would have made it impossible to *identify experimentally* the winning policy by varying one attribute at a time while holding other elements at their means.

5.4. Information treatment

The COVID-19 death estimates were taken from the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME 2020).[27] The income loss estimates for 2020 came from the IMF (2020). Both sets of estimates were published in the week preceding our fieldwork.

To identify the causal effects of the information treatments on respondents' preferences over the different attributes of the fiscal adjustment packages, we ran the following regression:

$$Y_{ijk} = a_0 + \gamma_k + \delta I * T_{ij} + \upsilon_{ijk} \tag{5}$$

where I indicates whether subjects were assigned to one of the two treatment groups or the control group, T_{ij} is the treatment vector indicating whether a policy package has a particular attribute element, and Y_{ijk} is the outcome; δ's capture the causal estimates of our treatment effects. We made similar decisions as before regarding clustering, the use of weights and fixed effects in our preferred specifications. To check that the randomisation worked, we conducted two balance tests, which are presented in Tables 26 and 27. Table 26 reports the balance of the observable characteristics of respondents across treatment and control groups; Table 27 shows the balance of the conjoint policy elements across the groups. We did not detect any major imbalances in covariates or policy dimensions across treatments and control that were randomly shown to respondents.

[27] We now know that the numbers were hugely underestimated for the US, which leads us to expect that the information effects would have been (still) stronger had the estimates been closer to the actual number.

5.5. Survey data and sampling

Our subjects were representative in terms of age, gender, region and work status in the US.[28] We recruited participants via Prolific Academic, a web-based panel with over 40,000 active participants (and well over 100,000 participants in total), primarily in the US and the UK. Our quota-based sample was recruited between 17 and 21 April 2020. This was at the end of the week in which the US was predicted to hit peak deaths (IHME 2020). To generate samples, we used the US Current Population Survey (US Census Bureau & ONS 2011). We created a total of 170 subgroups weighted based on age, gender, region and work status. By 21 April, 2,245 respondents had participated. This was close to our target of 2,500.[29] Further details on the survey are included in Section H of the Appendix.

5.6. Results

5.6.1. Reality polarisation in perceptions

Table 7 reports mean values by subgroups for the three reality questions. We compare perceptions across Trump and Clinton voters, Democrats and Republicans, as well as across income and age categories. We added the latter two for comparison because they reflect, respectively, a traditional class-based source of political difference and an inter-generational one, with the latter having become salient during the pandemic as there is evidence that the young are more likely to suffer economic losses from COVID-19, whereas the old are more likely to

[28] The survey was pre-registered via the EGAP Pre-Analysis Registry (20200416AB) and registered as a minimal risk study by the King's Research Ethics Committee under REC ref. MRSP-19/20-18237.

[29] There were a few subgroups for which we did not completely fill our quotas; see Tables 43 and 44 in the Appendix. This was due to not enough participants over the age of 60 being registered on Prolific. In the main analyses, we use weights to ensure representativeness on these four dimensions. We also used entropy balancing to ensure representativeness in other dimensions (see Section H for more detail).

experience the health risks of COVID-19. Overall, we find strong evidence of reality polarisation across the political variables and less evidence across income and age groups.

In particular, the Democrats and Clinton voters have estimates of COVID deaths that are, on average, double those of, respectively, Republicans and Trump voters; and these differences are statistically significant. There are similarly significant differences in their perception of the seriousness of COVID-19 compared with seasonal flu: Trump and Republican voters are more inclined than Clinton and Democratic voters to think that COVID-19 is no more serious than seasonal flu. The high and low-income earners do not exhibit any difference in this perception of the relative seriousness of COVID-19. Yet, they share a difference in their estimates of COVID-19 deaths that is significant, although the difference is smaller in magnitude than in the case of the political variables.

Unlike the political variables, there are significant differences in estimated income losses between high and low-income earners. This may be because low-income recipients have actually suffered proportionately larger personal income losses than high-income ones, and they have projected their own experience onto estimates for national average loss. In this sense, the difference in perception may be associated with people's different points of view.

It also points to the possibility of people on lower incomes experiencing higher levels of economic anxiety and fear – a feature that is consistent with the unequal economic impact of the pandemic across income groups. For this reason, and the fact that the difference in COVID-19 death estimates is smaller, we conclude that reality is marginally more polarised for the political variables than for income groups.

This difference is clearer when we compare perceptions across ages. The COVID-19 death estimates are weakly significantly different between the old and the young, but there are no other significant differences in the perception of COVID-19 reality. Taken together, the findings suggest that reality polarisation is more likely to ensure when politics become unhinged from traditional socio-economic cleavages.[30]

Result 1 then follows:

RESULT 1 (in support of 'reality polarisation'): Reality polarisation exists for the political variables. This reality polarisation is, respectively, marginally and clearly stronger for the political variables than for the income and age variables.

[30] We note the interesting implication that, if these differences survived a change to political differences that mapped more closely either onto the traditional source of party allegiance in class or the putative new inter-generational source of politics, this would mean 'reality polarisation' diminished. Or to put this round the other way, it is possible that it is the decline of class-based politics and the failure of a generation-based politics to emerge that has contributed to 'reality polarisation' in the US.

Table 7: **Polarisation of reality**

	Party			2016 Vote		
	Rep	Dem	T-statistic	Trump	Clinton	T-statistic
Death estimate	151,487	352,614	6.48***	156,169	342,193	5.57***
	(320,982)	(688,099)	(1,141)	(322,365)	(655,376)	(954)
Income loss estimate	25.63%	26.62%	0.90	26.82%	26.51%	-0.27
	(19.08%)	(19.12%)	(1,615)	(19.89%)	(18.95%)	(1,330)
Seriousness	2.473	2.894	11.31***	2.430	2.905	12.00***
	(0.714)	(0.347)	(1,705)	(0.744)	(0.341)	(1,400)
Observations	475	1,246	-	444	973	-
	Income			Age		
	High	Low	T-statistic	Below 25	Above 65	T-statistic
Death estimate	243,301	424,842	3.02***	430,868	281,486	1.95*
	(493,341)	(728,111)	(472)	(863,532)	(623,611)	(352)
Income loss estimate	24.14%	32.73%	5.56***	24.39%	25.76%	-0.90
	(16.78%)	(21.48%)	(667)	(20.24%)	(15.92%)	(541)
Seriousness	2.696	2.762	1.48	2.792	2.756	0.80
	(0.598)	(0.531)	(707)	(0.534)	(0.525)	(573)
Observations	389	327	-	662	686	-

Notes: The table reports the mean values for each subgroup. Seriousness ranges from 0-4, with higher values indicating more concern and seriousness. High-income respondents are those with an annual household income above $100,000, low-income respondents are those with an annual household income below $30,000. Asterisks indicate significant differences in mean values between two groups from a Wald test of significance. Standard deviations are in parenthesis. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05 , * p<0.1.

5.6.2. Conjoint analysis: Policy polarisation in the control group

A conjoint is essentially a fully randomised, factorial experiment involving a large number of factors and factor levels. As our design relied on randomisation of values for attributes, we can estimate treatment effects because the variation in one attribute is orthogonal to that of other attributes. Here we follow Hainmueller et al. (2014) by identifying the AMCEs. In our case, this means the average change in the probability of a fiscal adjustment policy being preferred by US subjects when we compare an attribute value to the reference value (e.g., pension cuts versus health care cuts), assuming the other attributes take their average values (i.e., the policies have identical attributes except for the marginal one where the value changes).[31]

To test for the existence of partisan policy polarisation, we analyse whether the estimated AMCEs for Republicans and Democrats are statistically different from one another. This happens in the first three columns of Tables 8 and 9, where we present the estimated AMCE coefficients for these two groups (columns 1 and 2) and check whether they differ in a statistical sense (column 3).[32] This allows us to see whether the two groups have statistically distinguishable preferences from one another for each policy element. A first inspection of column 3 (in both Tables 8 and 9), reveals that they do across all three attributes.

Two significant differences are revealed with respect to the first attribute of 'who carries the burden'. Democrats are more likely to prefer a policy when 'companies' and the 'wealthy' shoulder the burden (as compared with sharing being proportionate to income) than are Republicans. Note that this revealed preference on 'who should carry

[31] Unless otherwise noted, all regression models employ the Likert scale re-coded to range from 0 to 1 as the dependent variable.

[32] The full results from the corresponding regressions are presented in Appendix Table 33 and Fig. 48. We present similar results for Trump and Clinton voters in Appendix Table 34 and Fig. 49.

the burden' *holds constant* respondents' preferences over the other two dimensions (they are evaluated at mean support). That is, whatever their preferred policy mix is (e.g., mostly spending cuts for Republicans or a balanced mix between cuts and taxes for Democrats), they want to foot the bill on that particular group *ceteris paribus*.[33]

As regards the second attribute of 'policy tool', there is a significant difference between Republicans, who prefer a package of tools weighted towards spending cuts (as compared with a balance of tax increases and spending cuts) and Democrats, who do not (i.e., they dislike this weighting to spending cuts).[34] Finally, with respect to where spending cuts should fall (the third attribute), Democrats have a significantly stronger preference than Republicans for these cuts to fall on defence and pensions.

Looking at Table 9 a very similar pattern appears, across all three attributes, when we contrast the fiscal preferences of Trump and Clinton 2016 voters. Again a significant difference on who should carry the burden, as well as in their preferred policy tool, is revealed (see column 3 for the relevant t-tests). In brief, the heterogeneity (subgroup) analysis based on party affiliation demonstrates stark partisan differences in fiscal adjustment preferences. Moreover, these differences are familiar ones: as expected, Democrats (and Clinton voters) prefer those policy features that are more redistributive and that attribute a bigger role to the state (e.g., aversion to spending cuts).

Nonetheless, these differences have not prevented some aggregate preferences from emerging. Unsurprisingly, opposition to health spending cuts and passing the burden on the elderly is a strong preference for all. Perhaps somewhat unexpectedly, but certainly in line with the

[33] Also note that the coefficients of the first attribute for Democrats are not only statistically different from the respective ones for Republicans (see Table 8, column 3), but they are also statistically different from zero (see column 1 for the estimated confidence intervals.)

[34] Again, notice that the coefficient for Democrats is not only statistically different from that for Republicans but also from zero (see CIs in column 1, Table 8).

fiscal policy discourse in the US (see e.g. Jeffrey & Matakos 2020; Stantcheva 2020), both Republicans (Trump voters) and Democrats (Clinton voters) agree in their opposition to tax-financed fiscal adjustments –both coefficients are negative (significant at the 5% level, see Tables 8-9, columns 1 and 2, line 7; and Appendix figures 48 and 49) and statistically indistinguishable from one another (see Tables 8-9, column 3, line 7).

Table 8: **Polarisation and informational (de)polarisation between Democrats and Republicans**

Policy elements	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Difference**	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Difference**	**Dem.**	**Rep.**	**Difference**
	Control			Treatment 1			Treatment 2		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Burden on									
Companies	0.07	0.02	0.05**	-0.00	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.01	-0.03
	[0.04; 0.10]	[-0.03; 0.06]	(2.29)	[-0.04; 0.04]	[-0.08; 0.05]	(0.37)	[-0.06; 0.02]	[-0.05; 0.08]	(-1.18)
Older people	-0.14	-0.15	0.01	0.02	0.02	-0.00	-0.00	0.07	-0.07*
	[-0.17; -0.11]	[-0.20; -0.11]	(0.54)	[-0.02; 0.06]	[-0.04; 0.10]	(-0.13)	[-0.04; 0.04]	[0.00; 0.15]	(-1.85)
Wealthy	0.10	0.02	0.08***	0.01	0.01	-0.00	0.00	0.05	-0.05
	[0.07; 0.13]	[-0.02; 0.06]	(3.46)	[-0.03; 0.05]	[-0.05; 0.07]	(-0.16)	[-0.04; 0.04]	[-0.01; 0.12]	(-1.30)
Policy tool									
Mostly spending cuts	-0.02	0.03	-0.05**	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.02	-0.01	0.03
	[-0.05; -0.00]	[-0.02; 0.06]	(-2.12)	[-0.01; 0.05]	[-0.08; 0.03]	(1.36)	[-0.01; 0.05]	[-0.06; 0.04]	(1.02)
Mostly tax increases	-0.03	-0.05	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.00
	[-0.05; -0.00]	[-0.09; -0.02]	(1.31)	[-0.01; 0.05]	[-0.03; 0.07]	(-0.02)	[-0.00; 0.06]	[-0.02; 0.08]	(0.00)
Cuts on									
Defence	0.23	0.05	0.18***	-0.07	-0.10	0.03	-0.05	-0.03	0.02
	[0.19; 0.28]	[-0.02; 0.11]	(4.82)	[-0.13; -0.01]	[-0.20; 0.01]	(0.39)	[-0.11; 0.00]	[-0.11; 0.06]	(-0.47)
Environment	0.07	0.09	-0.02	-0.03	-0.08	0.05	-0.06	-0.05	-0.01
	[0.03; 0.11]	[0.02; 0.16]	(-0.47)	[-0.08; 0.03]	[-0.18; 0.01]	(0.95)	[-0.11; 0.00]	[-0.14; 0.05]	(-0.18)
Foreign aid	0.18	0.16	0.02	-0.06	-0.12	0.06	-0.03	-0.04	0.01
	[0.14; 0.22]	[0.09; 0.23]	(0.54)	[-0.12; 0.00]	[-0.22; -0.02]	(1.00)	[-0.09; 0.03]	[-0.14; 0.05]	(0.24)
R&D	0.11	0.11	0.00	-0.02	-0.10	0.08	-0.03	-0.07	0.04
	[0.07; 0.15]	[0.06; 0.17]	(-0.17)	[-0.08; 0.04]	[-0.18; -0.01]	(1.49)	[-0.08; 0.02]	[-0.14; 0.01]	(0.83)
Pensions	0.07	0.00	0.07**	-0.05	-0.02	-0.03	-0.02	-0.06	0.04
	[0.03; 0.11]	[-0.06; 0.05]	(1.99)	[-0.11; 0.01]	[-0.11; 0.08]	(-0.54)	[-0.08; 0.04]	[-0.14; 0.03]	(0.74)
Social security	0.01	-0.06	0.07*	-0.02	-0.06	0.04	-0.04	-0.02	-0.02
	[-0.03; 0.05]	[-0.13; 0.01]	(1.72)	[-0.08; 0.04]	[-0.16; 0.04]	(0.67)	[-0.10; 0.02]	[-0.12; 0.08]	(0.29)
Public transport	0.13	0.08	0.05	-0.05	-0.08	0.03	-0.05	-0.02	-0.03
	[0.09; 0.17]	[0.03; 0.14]	(1.24)	[-0.11; 0.01]	[-0.17; 0.01]	(0.57)	[-0.10; 0.01]	[-0.10; 0.07]	(-0.60)

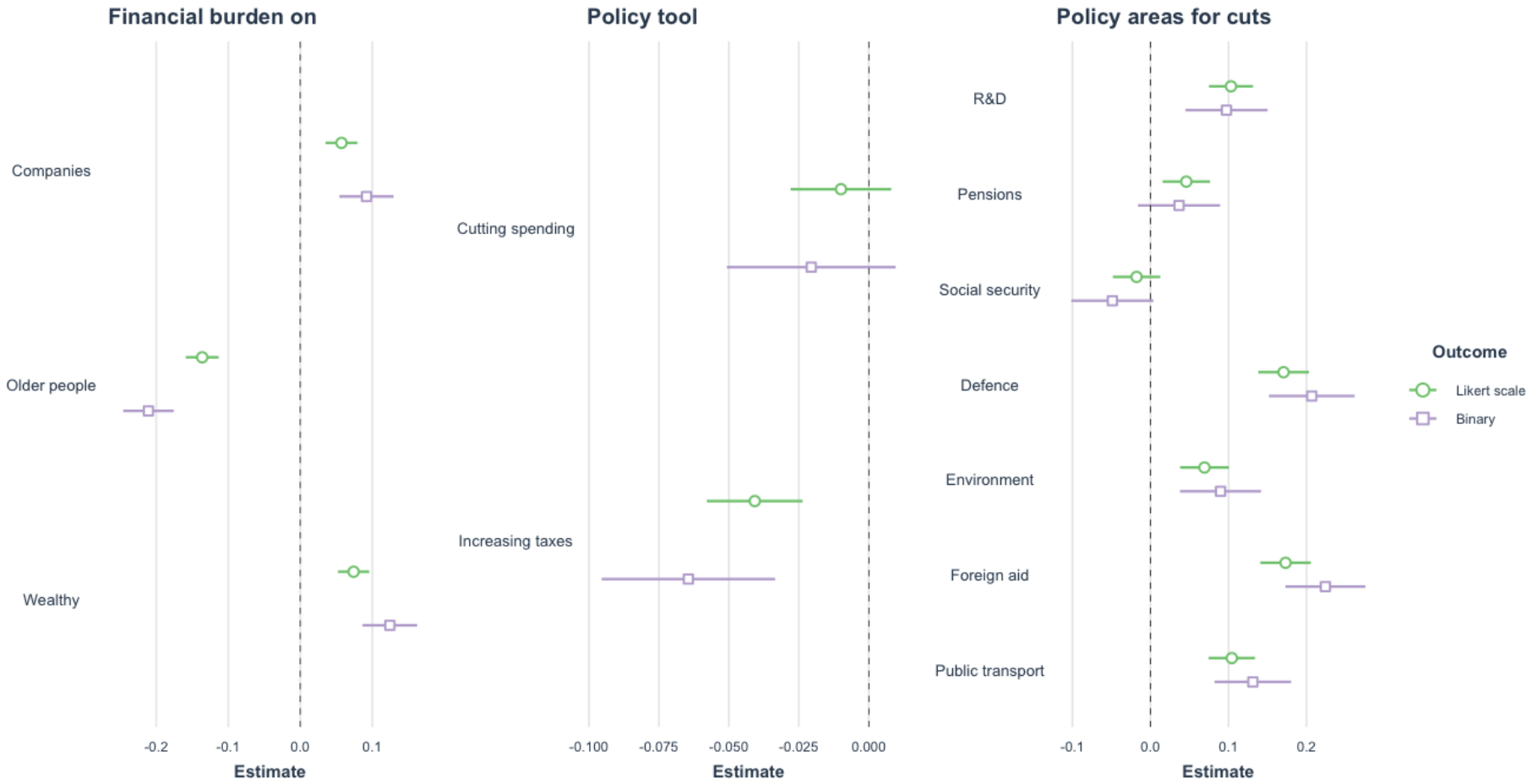
Notes: Columns 1-2, 4-5 and 7-8 show estimated AMCEs for each policy element for Democrats (columns 1,4,7) and Republicans (columns 2,5,8). Confidence intervals are presented below in parenthesis. Columns 3, 6 and 9 display the differences in the coefficient estimates (with t-statistics reported below in parenthesis); asterisks indicating significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.
The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 33 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

Table 9: **Polarisation and informational (de)polarisation between Clinton and Trump voters (2016)**

Policy elements	**Clinton**	**Trump**	**Difference**	**Clinton**	**Trump**	**Difference**	**Clinton**	**Trump**	**Difference**
	Control			Treatment 1			Treatment 2		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
Burden on									
Companies	0.08	0.02	0.06**	-0.01	-0.01	0.00	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02
	[0.05; 0.11]	[-0.02; 0.07]	(2.06)	[-0.06; 0.04]	[-0.08; 0.06]	(0.08)	[-0.07; 0.01]	[-0.08; 0.06]	(-0.50)
Older people	-0.15	-0.15	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.00
	[-0.18; -0.11]	[-0.21; -0.10]	0.26	[-0.01; 0.09]	[-0.04; 0.11]	(0.11)	[-0.03; 0.06]	[-0.06; 0.10]	(0.00)
Wealthy	0.10	0.02	0.08***	0.02	0.03	-0.01	0.01	0.02	-0.01
	[0.07; 0.14]	[-0.03; 0.07]	(2.88)	[-0.03; 0.06]	[-0.04; 0.10]	(-0.44)	[-0.04; 0.05]	[-0.05; 0.09]	(-0.40)
Policy tool									
Mostly spending cuts	-0.02	0.04	-0.06**	0.00	-0.03	0.03	0.01	-0.01	0.02
	[-0.04; 0.01]	[-0.01; 0.08]	(-2.14)	[-0.04; 0.04]	[-0.09; 0.03]	(0.91)	[-0.02; 0.05]	[-0.07; 0.05]	(0.70)
Mostly tax increases	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	0.03	0.00	-0.03	0.02	0.01	0.01
	[-0.05; -0.00]	[-0.07; -0.00]	(0.38)	[-0.01; 0.06]	[-0.05; 0.05]	(0.83)	[-0.02; 0.05]	[-0.04; 0.07]	(0.16)
Cuts on									
Defence	0.22	0.05	0.17***	-0.05	-0.07	0.02	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02
	[0.17; 0.27]	[-0.02; 0.13]	(3.74)	[-0.12; 0.02]	[-0.12; 0.02]	(0.20)	[-0.10; 0.03]	[-0.11; 0.08]	(-0.34)
Environment	0.04	0.10	-0.06	0.01	-0.10	0.11	-0.02	-0.06	0.04
	[-0.01; 0.09]	[0.02; 0.18]	(-1.36)	[-0.06; 0.07]	[-0.21; 0.00]	(1.93)	[-0.09; 0.05]	[-0.16; 0.04]	(0.62)
Foreign aid	0.15	0.16	-0.01	-0.03	-0.10	0.07	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02
	[0.10; 0.20]	[0.09; 0.24]	(-0.25)	[-0.10; 0.04]	[-0.21; 0.01]	(1.26)	[-0.09; 0.04]	[-0.10; 0.09]	(-0.38)
R&D	0.10	0.12	-0.02	-0.01	-0.07	0.06	-0.01	-0.09	0.08
	[0.06; 0.15]	[0.06; 0.19]	(-0.50)	[-0.08; 0.05]	[-0.17; 0.02]	(1.18)	[-0.07; 0.06]	[-0.18; -0.00]	(1.82)
Pensions	0.05	0.01	0.03	-0.04	-0.03	-0.01	-0.03	-0.05	0.025
	[0.00; 0.10]	[-0.05; 0.08]	(0.92)	[-0.11; 0.02]	[-0.13; 0.08]	(-0.30)	[-0.09; 0.03]	[-0.14; 0.03]	(0.48)
Social security	-0.04	-0.05	0.012	0.01	-0.04	-0.05	-0.02	-0.04	0.02
	[-0.08; 0.01]	[-0.13; 0.03]	(0.27)	[-0.06; 0.07]	[-0.14; 0.07]	(0.89)	[-0.08; 0.05]	[-0.14; 0.06]	(0.41)
Public transport	0.11	0.07	0.03	-0.03	-0.03	0.00	-0.03	-0.00	-0.03
	[0.06; 0.15]	[0.00; 0.14]	(0.79)	[-0.09; 0.03]	[-0.13; 0.06]	(0.08)	[-0.09; 0.03]	[-0.10; 0.09]	(-0.50)

Notes: Table shows estimated AMCEs for each policy element for Clinton voters (columns 1,5,9) and Trump voters (columns 2,6,10). Confidence intervals are presented below in parenthesis. Columns 4, 8 and 12 display the t-statistics indicating significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. *** $p<0.01$, ** $p<0.05$, * $p<0.1$.
The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 34 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

Figure 20: **Aggregate average marginal component effects at the baseline (no-info group)**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Each panel represents an attribute. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 30 displays the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

This bi-partisan agreement on fiscal adjustments that oppose relying on tax increases (and putting the burden on the elderly) is so pronounced that it is visible when we consider aggregate preferences at the baseline (no-info group) in Fig. 20 (see also Table 30), which also include independents and non-affiliated voters.[35] This documented aversion to reliance on tax increases (relative to a balanced policy mix of both taxes and cuts), in particular, most likely reflect the widespread policy consensus in the US over the last decades, with tax increases being portrayed as key obstacles to growth and employment.

Finally, we do not observe any significant polarisation of fiscal preferences across income groups; as far as age is concerned, we see that older people (above 65 years) are less likely to support policies when these put the burden on them (all groups dislike this option) and when social security is cut. This limited policy polarisation echoes Result 1 for these groups (limited reality polarisation across income and age groups). Result 2 is, therefore, the following:

RESULT 2 (in support of 'partisan policy polarisation'): There is partisan polarisation over the COVID-19 fiscal adjustment preferences with respect to a) who should carry the burden of fiscal adjustment, b) the policy tool (i.e. over whether greater reliance should be placed on spending cuts) and c) where cuts should fall. This COVID-19 polarisation reproduces the normal patterns of partisan fiscal policy preference polarisation. The fiscal policy adjustment preferences are notably less polarised across income and age groups.

[35] As a robustness check, we also implemented entropy balancing to fully balance our sample in terms of partisan affiliation. We do not observe any major differences in the aggregate preferences when we use entropy-adjusted weights. Section H provides more detail to this method. Fig. 47 and Table 32 report regression results with partisanship-adjusted weights.

5.6.3. Information immunity: Information treatments versus control

To test for the influence of information provision on policy polarisation, we compare the (polarised) preferences in the control group with the same preferences in our information treatment groups; that is, we contrast the differences in column 3 with the estimates presented in columns 6 and 9 (in Tables 8 and 9). The most striking result is that almost all of the partisan-specific policy polarisation disappears; nothing is significant in columns 6 and 9 at the 5% level. In other words, information appears to have a depolarising effect on partisan differences, and, in this respect, COVID-19 politics mark a departure from 'business as usual'.

We reproduce the control group analysis of AMCEs for the information treatments groups. To explore whether the policy preference polarisation (among Democrat/Clinton voters and Republican/Trump voters) that we found in the control group is still present, we check whether statistically significant differences between the estimated AMCEs (for Democrats and Republicans) persist when information if provided (Treatments 1 and 2). In Tables 8 and 9 we present those results in columns 4-6 (Treatment 1) and 7-9 (Treatment 2). In other words, we conduct a pairwise comparison of those coefficients (between Democrats and Republicans) for each information treatment in order to examine what polarities survive. As we can observe, those partisan differences are no longer statistically different in the two treatment groups (see columns 6 and 9 in Tables 8-9). In other words, the polarised preferences (along partisan lines) that we identified in the control group now depolarise with the provision of factual information; in practice, not a single difference survives. This is true for both treatments, suggesting that information about the (economic and health) aspects of COVID-19 has the effect of sensitising the public about the true proportions of the pandemic's consequences to lives and livelihoods alike.

Tables 8 and 9 (in previous subsection 5.6.2), further examine whether there are any heterogeneity in the depolarising effect of information between Democrats and Republicans and between Trump and Clinton voters, respectively (for the underlying regression results, see Tables 33 and 34). The significant differences between the control and the information treatments typically arise in both information treatments. It is worth noting, however, that both Democrats and Republicans shift their preferences with respect to whether older people should shoulder the burden. With the COVID-19 deaths prompt, both partisan groups shift towards supporting policies where older people pay more. The same is the case for Republicans with the income loss information, but Democrats move marginally in the opposite direction in this case. Both Democrats and (particularly) Republicans also notably shift towards tax increases as the policy tool after the income loss information. Finally, while both Democrats and Republicans become less likely to want to cut most categories of spending, the turnaround is most marked in the case of Democrats over defence spending.

Therefore, Result 3 reads as follows:

RESULT 3 (against 'information immunity'): Partisan policy polarisation in control disappears in both information treatments. There is no attribute over which partisan polarisation remains.

It is apparent from Tables 8 (and Table 33) and 9 (and Table 34) that the information not only had a partisan depolarising effect but also shifted preferences with respect to some attributes in the same direction for both Republicans and Democrats (and the same is true for Trump and Clinton voters). To bring out these aggregate effects of information provision on policy preferences, we compare the revealed aggregate policy preferences in control with those in the information treatments (see Fig. 21 and Table 30).

With respect to the first attribute of 'who shoulders the fiscal burden', there was a clear aggregate preference for companies and the wealthy to do so, relative to people sharing the burden *in proportion to their income*; the preferences disappears in both information treatments. With respect to the second attribute of 'policy tool', there is a notable information effect in the aggregate as individuals shift from disliking the predominant use of 'tax increases' to actually preferring it. Finally, with respect to the third attribute of 'where spending cuts should fall', the information reverses the clear preferences that existed in the control group for almost all categories of expenditure to be cut. Under the information treatments, there is no such hierarchy as all spending areas are equally preferred for cuts relative to health care. What is also notable is that in the control group, there was a clear ordering in terms of where cuts should fall. By contrast, under both information treatments, there is no such hierarchy as all spending areas are equally preferred for cuts relative to the baseline. This is another testament to the depolarising effect that information provision had because the clear ordering that we found in control was mostly driven by partisan differences.

The wholesale switch, however, from disliking a predominant reliance on tax increases to actually preferring such reliance, cannot be accounted for by de-polarisation. We show this in Tables 10 and 11, where we look at informational reversals not between but within groups this time –that is, comparing coefficients of control and treatments within Democrats and Republicans.[36] The switch is all the more remarkable because fiscal policy preferences in 'normal times' tend to be what we found in the control group: Both Democrats and Republicans expressed a clear aversion to tax hikes in the control group (both coefficients were negative and significantly different from zero, see line 7 in columns 1 and 2, in both Tables 8 and 9); this is now reversed

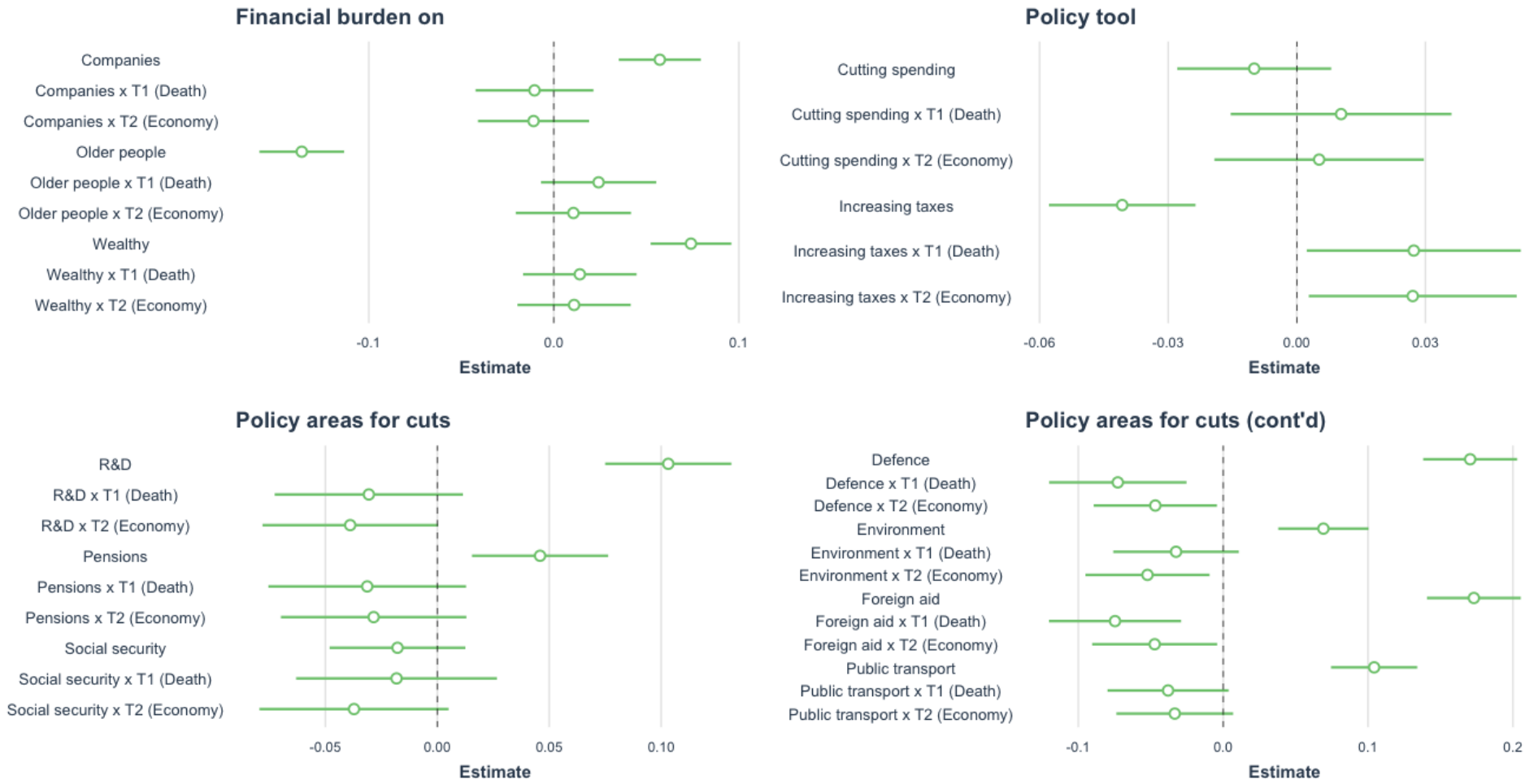
[36] Also see Tables 28 and 29 for Clinton and Trump voters, respectively.

as both groups support/do not oppose tax increases (the difference of coefficients between treatments and the control for both groups (within-group comparison) is statistically significant indicating a shift in preferences; see Tables 10 and 11, line 7 in columns 4 and 5). In this sense, information provision not only depolarises it also resets the normal presumption against tax increases that have been a long-standing feature of US politics.

Note that this fiscal policy preference reset does not contradict our previous finding on the depolarising effects of information (Result 3) due to the *relative nature* of elicited preferences. That is, the aggregate preference for relying mostly on taxes for fiscal adjustment purposes is not incompatible with the fact that now there is no relative preference for placing a *disproportionately higher* burden on the wealthy (or companies). This is because the baseline attribute (all contribute proportionally to their income) would still have the rich paying more (in absolute terms) when additional taxes are levied.[37]

[37] In fact, in the case of the US, even the baseline preference of 'everyone should carry a fiscal burden proportional to their income', which is *progressive*, already represents a *relative worsening of terms* for wealthy Americans and corporations compared to the current status quo.

Figure 21: **Aggregate information treatment effects on the conjoint experiment (AMCEs)**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Each panel represents an attribute. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 30 displays the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

Table 10: **Informational reversals among Democrats**

	Estimates			**Differences in estimates**	
	Control	T1	T2	Control-T1	Control-T2
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Burden on					
Companies	0.07	-0.00	-0.02	0.07**	0.09***
Older people	-0.14	0.02	-0.00	-0.16***	-0.14***
Wealthy	0.10	0.01	0.00	0.09***	0.10***
Policy tool					
Mostly spending cuts	-0.03	0.02	0.02	-0.05*	-0.05*
Mostly tax increases	-0.03	0.02	0.03	-0.05*	-0.06**
Cuts on					
Defence	0.23	-0.07	-0.05	0.30***	0.28***
Environment	0.07	-0.03	-0.06	0.10**	0.13***
Foreign aid	0.18	-0.06	-0.03	0.24***	0.21***
R&D	0.11	-0.02	-0.03	0.13***	0.14***
Pension	0.07	-0.05	-0.02	0.12**	0.09*
Social security	0.01	-0.02	-0.04	0.03	0.05
Public transport	0.13	-0.05	-0.05	0.18***	0.18***

Notes: Columns 1-3 report estimated AMCEs for each policy element within Democrats across control and treatment groups (reproducing the results already presented in columns 1, 4, and 7 in Table 8; CI's omitted for brevity but are otherwise identical). Columns 4 and 5 present the differences in estimates (within Democrats) between the two treatments and the control. Asterisks indicate significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. $***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1$.
The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 33 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

Table 11: **Informational reversals among Republicans**

	Estimates			**Differences in estimates**	
	Control	T1	T2	Control-T1	Control-T2
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Burden on					
Companies	0.02	-0.01	0.01	0.03	0.01
Older people	-0.15	0.03	0.08	-0.18***	-0.22***
Wealthy	0.02	0.01	0.05	0.01	-0.03
Policy tool					
Mostly spending cuts	0.02	-0.02	-0.01	0.04	0.03
Mostly tax increases	-0.05	0.02	0.03	-0.07*	-0.08**
Cuts on					
Defence	0.05	-0.10	-0.03	0.15*	0.08
Environment	0.09	-0.08	-0.05	0.17**	0.14*
Foreign aid	0.16	-0.12	-0.04	0.28***	0.20***
R&D	0.11	-0.10	-0.07	0.21***	0.18***
Pension	-0.00	-0.02	-0.06	0.02	0.06
Social security	-0.06	-0.06	-0.02	0.00	-0.04
Public transport	0.08	-0.08	-0.02	0.16**	0.10

Notes: Columns 1-3 report estimated AMCEs for each policy element within Republicans across control and treatment groups (reproducing the results already presented in columns 2, 5, and 8 in Table 8; CI's omitted for brevity but are otherwise identical). Columns 4 and 5 present the differences in estimates (within Republicans) between the two treatments and the control. Asterisks indicate significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. $***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1$.
The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 33 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

This cross-partisan reset in favour of taxation-based fiscal adjustment is strong enough that it is even borne out in the aggregate results (see again Fig. 21). In fact, it is among the very few clear fiscal policy preferences that emerge in the aggregate post-information treatment. Thus our fourth result follows:

RESULT 4 (post-pandemic fiscal policy reset): COVID-19-related information provision shifts citizens' preferences from opposing the predominant use of tax increases in fiscal consolidation towards supporting it.

This result deserves further comment. The fact that information depolarises partisan policy differences is perhaps not so surprising since we began by finding partisan 'reality polarisation' and information provision could plausibly address this possible source of partisan policy polarisation even if, in this respect, it represents a reset of politics from the 'information immunity' that has recently been observed in US politics. However, the reset of politics with respect to the preference for relying on tax increases is somewhat surprising. But why should information provision also reset politics with respect to the use of tax increases, and will such a reset prove enduring?

We turn, albeit more speculatively, to these questions in the next section, where we attempt to delve a bit deeper into the mechanism that might explain this reset that we found. In that section, we also draw some implications for the policy debate about the fiscal legacy that COVID-19 leaves behind – a debate that is bound to ensue, and define politics in the aftermath of the pandemic.

5.7. Discussion

Taken at face value, Result 4 suggests that COVID-19 information has the potential to tilt US politics in the direction of a 'European equilibrium' (Alesina & Angeletos 2005; Benabou & Tirole 2006) – or a kind of fiscal 'New Deal'. Our subjects are sensitised separately to the health and economic effects of COVID-19 by our information treatments. This is what causes the reset of their preferences in our experiment as compared with the control.[38] There is some evidence consistent with this effect from the prominence of COVID-19 in the 2020 Presidential campaign and the election of Joe Biden. But even if Result 4 were in play in the short run due to the prominence of COVID-19 in that campaign, a natural question arises: will such a preference reset prove enduring. And how likely is it that it maps onto fiscal policy outcomes?

One part of the answer to these questions depends, given the logic of Result 4, on whether people are likely, in practice, to continue to be sensitised to the COVID-19 health and economic information over the medium term. Once the new vaccines and other pharmaceutical treatments lower the death rate, the health effects of COVID-19 will depend on memory. For this reason, people are likely to become less sensitised to the health effects of COVID-19 over time. However, we have argued the economic effects are likely to prove more enduring because there is a large fiscal legacy: US government debt has grown by at least 20% of GDP through COVID, setting a fiscal adjustment agenda for the medium term. Since the economic information is enough by itself in our experiment to cause a reset in policy preferences, this gives a reason to suppose the reset may also endure.

[38] An alternative conjecture that we explored in the appendix is that the reset might have arisen from individuals typically under/over-estimating the health and/or economic costs of COVID-19. We performed this analysis (see Fig. 52), but we did not find any evidence that this effect is driven by people updating upwards (or downwards) their initially more optimistic (pessimistic) cost estimates.

The other part of our answer to whether the reset will endure comes from considering what might underpin these information effects. In particular, is this some 'shock' effect from COVID-19 information, or has the information triggered an engagement of people's fundamental values? In the one case, the 'shock' effect will likely disappear as people adapt to the fact of COVID-19: people are known to adapt to such shocks, and so its 'shock-value' will decline. On the other hand, people's fundamental values are enduring, and if they have been mobilised by COVID-19 information, then the effects are likely to be more enduring.

5.8. Mechanisms

Our first test of whether fundamental values have been triggered by the COVID-19 comes from considering whether those who put a high value on life were the ones that particularly adjusted to the preferences for raising taxes in our information treatments. We elicit the value of a statistical life (VSL) saved through COVID-19 behavioural interventions in our survey in a manner that is designed to capture not only selfish preferences but also pro-social preferences. In particular, our subjects make a sequence of Holt and Laury (2002) like binary choices between outcomes that contain a pair of deaths per 1m and average household income losses in the US. The switch point in this sequence allows us to infer the boundary values for that person's COVID VSL. However, unlike the usual way of eliciting VSL that focuses on how the subject's *personal* chances of death change through their choice of option, our Holt and Laury (2002) questions focus on how each option affects the chances of death in society as a whole. A selfish person will infer from this that their personal chances have changed with society's and answer accordingly, but a pro-social person will, in addition, take account of how not only their but also other

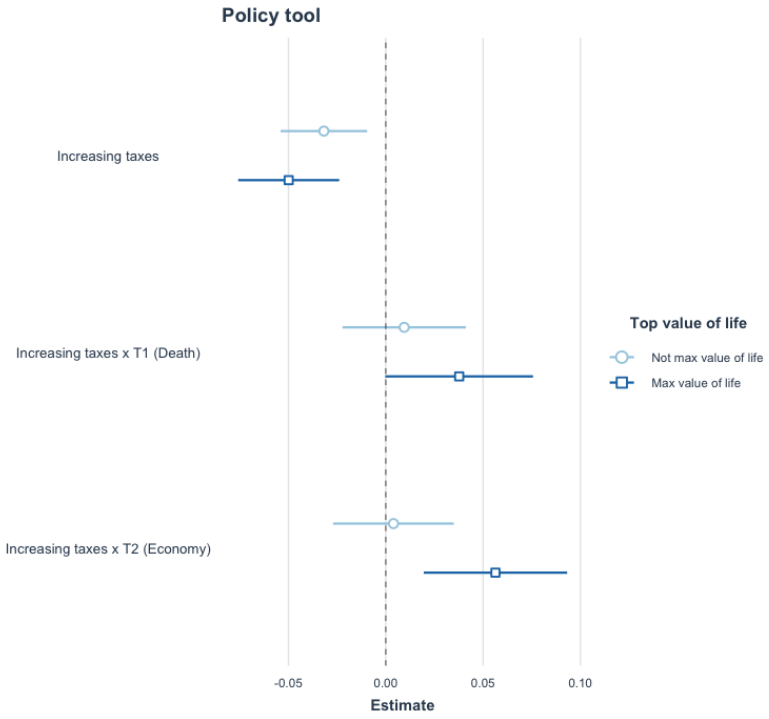
people's chances of death have also changed with each option. We find that the elicited VSLs are much higher than those generated by the usual *personal* chances question, and we interpret this difference as signalling the influence of pro-social preferences in their elicited VSLs.[39] In particular, we infer that those who have a high VSL have significant pro-social preferences. Thus, when we ask do those who put a high VSL adjust more to the information prompt, we are asking: is there evidence that the COVID-19 information prompt engaged with people's pro-sociality and so could explain why this prompt shifted their preferences towards tax increases?

Fig. 22 presents conjoint control and information treatment effects for the sub-sample of those subjects who revealed the highest valuations of life (above $45.5 million), (see also Table 35 in the Appendix). We compared the estimates for this subgroup (N=986) with those for the rest of the pool of subjects (N=1259). It is clear that for those high VSL individuals, the effect of both treatments is positive. In other words, they are more likely to support fiscal packages that rely mostly on increasing taxes, a sizable 5 percentage point difference compared to the control.

Our second test of whether fundamental values have been engaged by the information prompt relates to redistributive preferences. It is well known that COVID-19 has exacerbated inequality (see, e.g. Adams-Prassl, Boneva, Golin, & Rauh 2020) and the resulting labour market shock might have challenged (some of) Americans' long-held beliefs about inequality and fairness (Jeffrey & Matakos 2020). Thus, an additional possible mechanism through which the COVID-19 informa-

[39] There may be other reasons for the difference between the usual and our estimates of COVID-19 value of statistical life (VSL). For example, it is well known that people's VSL is sensitive to whether the event in question is hypothetical or real and present. The average COVID-related VSL estimate was $36 million –about three times higher than the value that the Environmental Protection Agency attaches to life–, and the highest possible VSL was above $45.5 million (see Hargreaves Heap, Koop, Matakos, Unan, & Weber 2020). We estimated the VSL using the usual personal-odds focused question and found that VSLs were also high, probably for the reason of immediacy above. The uplift from the pro-social inclusive form of the question was about 50%.

Figure 22: **Information effects on value of life and fiscal consensus.**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Table 35 displays the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

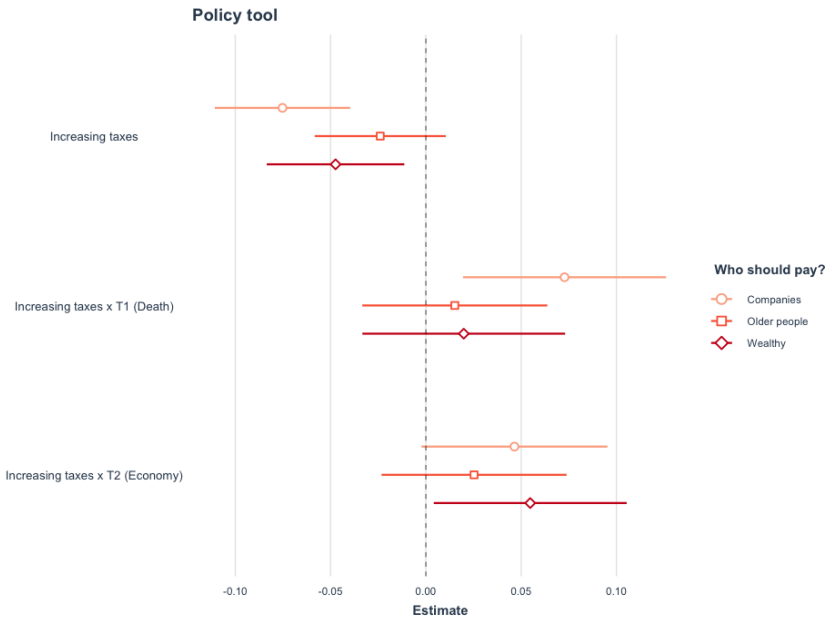
tion might have shifted tax preferences is through the way COVID-19 information engages people's redistributive preferences. This might be particularly marked among those with strong redistributive preferences and/or among those who have been particularly adversely affected economically by the pandemic (see Fig. 22). Thus, we find evidence that is consistent with the COVID-19 information prompts engaging people's fundamental values. Taken together with the likely long-lived nature of the economic effects of COVID-19, this leads us cautiously to expect that the fiscal preference reset may also endure.

With this in mind, we next turn our attention to the substantive interpretation of our results in terms of actual policy outcomes in an election and hence the political feasibility of this reset.

5.9. Policy implications

While the AMCEs are useful for the identification of causal effects on preferences over multi-dimensional policies – thus helping us detect significant de-polarisation (and the possibility of a fiscal policy reset), they come with an important caveat. Their substantive interpretation is not straightforward for political contests. To put it differently, they do not tell us how particular policy packages might fare in an actual ballot. In particular, there may be a shift in preferences towards tax increases, but does this mean a policy of tax increases would actually win an election? Or, in other words, is the post-pandemic fiscal 'New Deal' politically feasible?

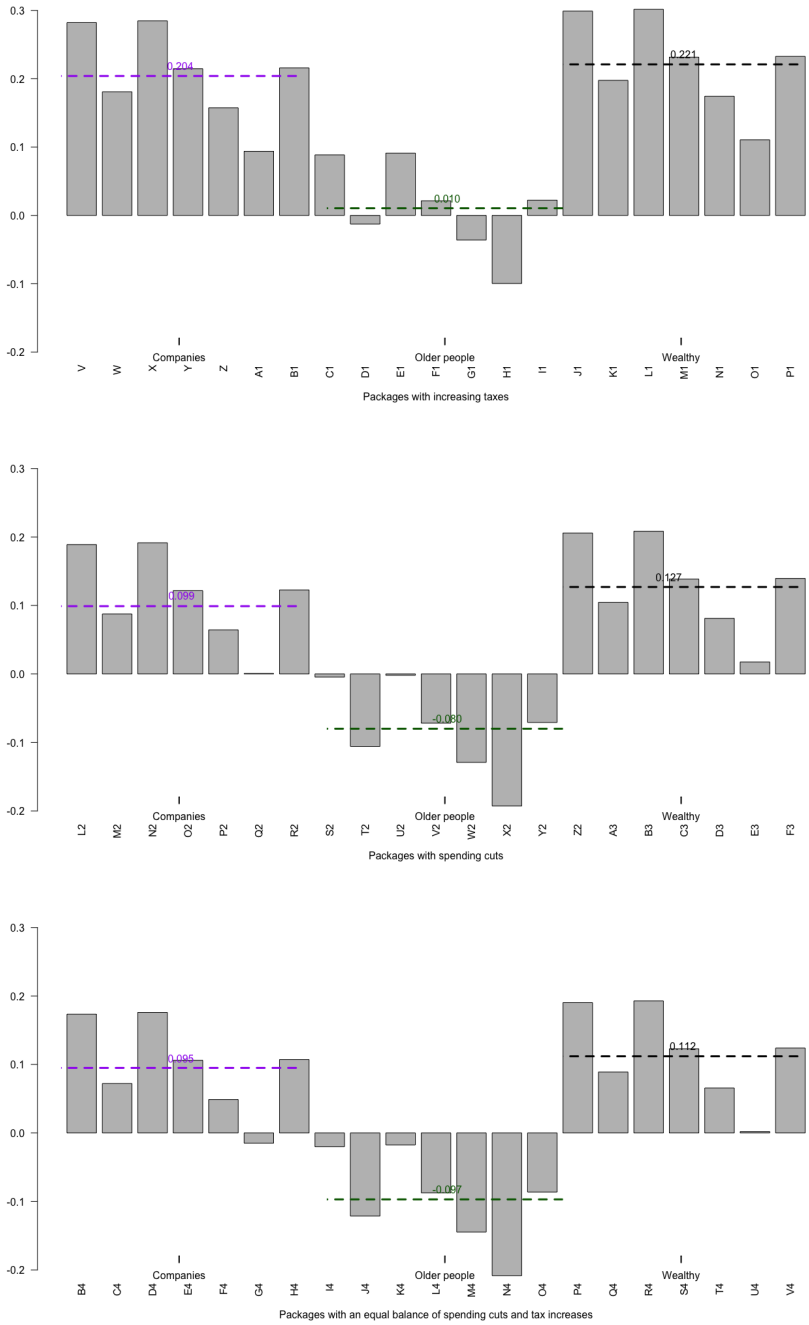
Figure 23: **Aggregate preference for tax burden allocation ("Who should pay?")**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Table 36 displays the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

The next set of exercises helps address this question by providing a key substantive interpretation of our findings. First, in Fig. 23, we

Figure 24: **Support for fiscal adjustment policy packages (marginal means)**



Notes: Three panels demonstrate policy combinations with increasing taxes (first panel: packages V to P1), spending cuts (second panel: packages L2 to F3) and a balance between the two (third panel: packages B4 to V4). Each bar demonstrates linear estimates for a particular policy package –these also include the estimates for the baseline (no-info) group which are not depicted here. Each dashed line depicts mean estimates from groups of policy combinations when policy areas for cuts are averaged across.

condition a tax-based fiscal adjustment policy on the 'who should pay?' question (see also Table 36). If Americans seem to support increases in taxes (after receiving information), whom do they wish to see carrying

the burden? The answer is clear: a tax levied on companies and the wealthy are preferred by 5 to 7 percentage points compared to the baseline (everyone carries the burden proportionally).[40] Moreover, this effect is relatively stronger after people receive the economic loss information.

Would this translate into policy outcomes, given the complexity of fiscal policy –with its multiple dimensions? We take up this task next by identifying whether there is any tax-based fiscal policy package that can garner sufficient support. This effectively amounts to the computation of the marginal mean support of such a tax-based plan: that is, we estimate its popularity against the baseline (equal mix of taxes and spending cuts), varying one element at a time and evaluating all other attributes on their mean support. The purpose of this exercise is to identify whether there is a clear policy winner (preferred by a majority) among possible fiscal adjustment packages (combinations of policy elements).

Fig. 24 presents estimates of popular support over a series of plans. This is again a conditional exercise; given the preference, we have identified (*ceteris paribus*) in favour of tax-based fiscal adjustment policies, which particular policy package is *most popular* among them? This is done in the first panel of Fig. 24, where we display those estimates that are based on tax increases (the only clear preference we identified post-information treatment) against the baseline (an equal mix of taxes and spending cuts) while varying the identity of those who should carry the tax burden. In the second and third panels, we show estimates of policy packages based on spending cuts and an equal mix of taxes and spending cuts, respectively.

[40] Note that, as we have shown in Fig. 21, *any* tax-based fiscal adjustment is preferred irrespective of who will shoulder the burden. Our point here is a conditional one: among those in the majority who support policies that rely mostly on raising taxes, whom do they wish to see carrying the burden relative to the baseline of 'everyone paying in proportion to their incomes' –which notably is still *progressive* in a sense.

These sets of columns in each panel (purple, green and black dashed lines) refer to the two information treatments (combined). Considering all possible fiscal consolidation packages, the most favourable ones appear to be those that rely on increasing taxes (post-treatment); and among them, those putting the burden either on wealthy Americans or on companies, with an *average 20 percentage points more support* compared to the baseline. These are the policy combinations with the highest average support (dashed black and purple lines, in the top panel of Fig. 24). In other words, compared with the status quo of an equal mix of fiscal policy tools with the burden spread across everyone, a policy of tax increases with the burden falling on the wealthy or companies is preferred by a margin of (at least) 60 to 40%.

To see how much of this 20 percentage point margin is due to tax increases and how much is due to the burden falling on companies or the wealthy, we now compare this policy with a status quo where again there is a balance of tax and increases and spending cuts, but this time the burden falls on either the wealthy or companies. This amounts to comparing (primarily) tax-based fiscal adjustment plans with other options while always conditioning on either richer Americans or companies carrying more of the fiscal burden. Put differently, is this reset really centred around increasing taxes?

Again in Fig. 24, we compare the averages of those policy packages that put the burden on companies and richer Americans (purple and black dashed lines, respectively) across the three panels. It is obvious that tax-based plans (*ceteris paribus*) muster *at least a 10 percentage point more support* compared to the other two options (averaged over all other remaining policy elements). Hence, tax-based plans would carry a 55-45% majority of the American public, *ceteris paribus*.[41]

[41] In fact, support for tax-based fiscal adjustment plans is so strong that it manages to stay (marginally) on the positive when compared to the other two options (see the green dashed lines), even if the elderly are to carry the burden –the least liked option by all.

In sum, our findings suggest not only that information on COVID-19 produces a policy preference reset, but this reset also creates a politically feasible outcome with tax increases, in the sense that such a policy package with tax increases could command an electoral majority, and this fiscal 'new Deal' could be long lasting.

5.10. Conclusion

In this study, we find that citizens' responses to COVID-19 in many respects fit with earlier patterns in US politics. There is reality polarisation, and there is partisan fiscal policy preference polarisation along familiar lines in our control group. Furthermore, there is one conspicuous area of partisan agreement, the one that most clearly distinguishes the US from social-democratic politics in Europe: the size of the state. Neither Democrats nor Republicans in our control group have an appetite for fiscal adjustment policies that predominantly rely on tax increases.

However, compared with pre-COVID-19 politics, there is one key difference that is potentially highly significant: the provision of COVID-19 information has a dramatic effect on policy preferences. First, the partisan fiscal policy polarisation disappears. Second, the distinguishing consensus against tax increases is reversed: both Democrats and Republicans now swing behind reliance on tax increases. This is an important result in its own right: the pre-COVID-19 characteristic of 'information immunity' disappears in our experiment. Importantly, this could signal a turn towards a more consensual and social-democratic type of politics in the US as information on the COVID-19 and its health and economic implications accumulates.

In our experiment, COVID-19 information had this protean effect on US politics at the height of the first wave of the pandemic in April

2020. As a result, a wholly new question arises. Will the effect persist as COVID-19 information accumulates? In other words, will this consensual and social-democratic turn prove enduring?

Although our experiment cannot directly answer this question, it does contain some indirect pointers. In particular, we find evidence that these information induced changes are underpinned by key values and beliefs as well as socio-economic fundamentals. Key values and beliefs are typically more robust and so, once engaged, are likely to prove to endure in their influence. Likewise, socio-economic fundamentals only move slowly in the medium term. But these are just pointers. Another pointer, of course, is the election of Joe Biden. What our study suggests in this respect is that Biden's COVID-19 campaign messages played into what, with these campaign COVID-19 triggers, was likely to be a new and more sympathetic political audience at the height of the first wave of the pandemic. This plausibly contributed to his success in the election, and so is one indication that these COVID-19 information effects may have continued, at the very least as far as November 2020.

6. Chapter 6: Conclusion

This thesis has contributed to the literature on the origins and evolution of policy preferences. It has taken the challenge to explore (i) the different types of policy (preference) reversals and their determinants and (ii) the impact of external events on policy preferences. In doing so, it contributed mainly to the political economy of public policy literature and the political science and economics literature on policy change, electoral competition, political polarisation, and preferences in times of crisis. These fields already encompass an extensive range of publications. However, this thesis has two distinctive features that distinguish it from prior work. First, this thesis has primarily examined reversals differentiating between the functional and non-functional types. This differentiation has enabled a better understanding of how policy reversal processes occur and how different types of policy (preference) reversals come about. Second, in contrast to most existing works, this thesis has made use of state-of-the-art survey methods to tackle the question of the origin and evolution of preferences, especially in terms of the preferences of policy actors. Whilst there is a growing literature that relies on survey methods to capture citizen preferences (see, Druckman 2021; Druckman et al. 2011, for an overview), the use of survey experiments to capture policy makers' preferences is not very common (see, however, Doherty et al. 2019; Shaffer et al. 2020). To my knowledge, this thesis is the first study that uses conjoint survey experiments to observe reversal behaviour of elites and citizens. The survey methodological approach of this thesis allows to capture and examine how political actors act when they face policy decisions in different policy environments. The reassessment of policies under different policy environments can lead to changes in the policy actions of politicians. The survey approaches further allowed to find components of this action with its link to polarisation in the party and in the

ideological space. In comparison to existing approaches that mainly use documents (e.g., Lewis et al. 2021), interviews (e.g., Peabody et al. 1990) and field experiments (e.g., Loewen, Rubenson, & McAndrews 2021; Turnball-Dugarte, Townsley, Foos, & Baron 2021) to measure politicians' preferences, the approach adopted in this thesis allows to capture a greater variety of attributes of politicians' (and citizens'), their decision making and political and policy choices.

This chapter will discuss the findings related to these themes and consider the broader implications of this research.

6.0.1. The determinants of different types of policy reversals

Aiming to understand the origins and evolution of policy preferences, the first objective of the thesis was to understand the different types of policy reversals and their determinants. The issues analysed in the preceding chapters represented significant areas in which policy (preference) reversals have occurred. This subsection will summarise the findings of Chapters 1,2, and 4 and parts of Chapter 5, whilst Chapter 3 and the remaining aspects of Chapter 5 will be summarised in the following subsection.

Chapter 1 laid down the analytical framework for this thesis. It departed from the observation that policy (preference) reversals occur as part of the inconsistent behaviour of politicians and citizens, suggesting that there could be different types of policy reversals. Using descriptive evidence through sentiment analysis of the US party manifestos, it identified the different kinds of policy reversals and their connotations. It specified that policies that are reversed with no replacement have a negative connotation, whilst those reversed and replaced with new ones have a more positive association over the years. This distinction was not made before in the literature. To understand the specific character

of policy reversals as part of policymaking processes, Chapter 1 situated the puzzle in the political science and economics literature on policy change, dynamic policymaking, electoral competition and the impact of external events on preferences. Situating this policymaking process in the broader context of policy change, Chapter 1 made a case that the mechanisms through which policy reversals take place condition their impact on the economy and the public perception. The different types of policy reversals have been mainly neglected by existing accounts that have primarily been concerned to understand the political causes of policy reversals and their impact on public opinion. Synthesising these arguments, Chapter 1 provided the analytical framework for studying the functional and non-functional determinants of policy preference reversals. Building on this analytical framework, Chapter 2 worked through a simple formal model to understand the political factors that are less studied in the literature. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 offered empirical accounts for understanding the origin and evolution of policy preferences and their different types.

Chapter 2 examined how political factors, such as political polarisation and electoral uncertainty, can influence the policy decisions of politicians facing an election. It argued that when polarisation is high, a high level of uncertainty over public opinion can lead policymakers to produce policies far away from their ideal point and closer to their opponent's ideal point in the short term. Policymakers are motivated by both office and ideology, so if re-elected, they may modify or reverse this policy in the future. This finding speaks to the literature on the dynamics of policymaking which identified kludges, gridlocks, drifts and pandering and inefficiencies as possible outcomes of policymaking processes in the face of elections (Buisseret & Bernhardt 2017; Callander & Krehbiel 2014; Canes-Wrone & de Leon 2014; Dewan & Hortala-Vallve 2019; Dziuda & Loeper 2018; Kawai et al. 2018; Majumdar & Mukand 2004). By extending the model by Buisseret

and Bernhardt (2017) –through the role of elections and introducing uncertainty over voter preferences– it insulates the opposing incentives faced by policymakers. It observes the changes in their policymaking calculations. The simple formal model allows us to see how the political calculus of agents could lead to political policy reversals in the long term. It also fills the gaps in the literature on the opposing incentives introduced by party polarisation and electoral uncertainty in understanding policy change. The model's findings indicate that when there is a high degree of polarisation and uncertainty, politicians may implement a policy far from their ideal, which they may reverse in the long term.

Motivated by the idea that not all policy reversals have to be intrinsically bad, Chapters 4 and 5 used survey experiments –with politicians and citizens – to understand how non-political mechanisms, i.e., exposure to policy trade-offs and exposure to information about the extent of a crisis, could lead to reversals in policy preferences —differentiating between functional and non-functional and electoral and non-electoral motivations of policymaking matters because the consequences of diversely motivated actions might differ. Chapter 4 evaluated the impact of policy environment on policy choices of local politicians. Specifically, it forced politicians to make a policy decision exclusively with binary options [Support/No Support] vs in a multidimensional policy package with other policy combinations. The mechanism of reversal by itself can be defined as non-political or non-electoral, as the politicians do not carry any political responsibility to implement these policy reversals outside of the survey experiment environment. The methodology also allowed for a conceptual distinction between negative policy reversals (taking back support) and positive policy reversals (starting to support) and empirically tested their particular defining factors.

Chapter 4 indicated that negative policy reversals are predicted by intra-party polarisation. Those members who are distant from their party peers in terms of ideology are more likely to reverse a policy position they initially supported. This makes sense, given that those who are more distant could also be more likely to make different statements in the first place. This confirms the proposition that intra-party polarisation might create policy conflict between party subgroups agreeing with the literature on intra-party polarisation (Groenendyk, Sances, & Zhirkov 2020). It also supports the implication of the formal model of Chapter 2 by showing that short-term policy decisions made by ideologically distant party members are likely to be reversed in the long run. On the other hand, positive reversals are negatively predicted by inter-party polarisation. For example, councillors who are more distant from the mean ideology of all other locally elected members are less likely to change from opposing to supporting the 1% quota policy. This finding could complement the literature on how polarisation could lead to policy or legislative gridlock when there is a policy proposal on the floor (Jones 2001).

Chapter 5 explored a second non-political reversal mechanism. It tested the role of information provision on the stability of citizens' policy preferences. It found that the provision of COVID-19 information on the extent of the crisis dramatically affects policy preferences. First, the partisan fiscal policy polarisation in the control group disappeared with both information treatments. Second, the distinguishing consensus against tax increases changed: Democrats and Republicans reversed their opposition to tax increases in the two treatment groups. These findings implied information provision as a second non-political mechanism of policy preference reversals (the first one being the exposure to policy trade-offs). In addition to contributing to the literature by identifying information provision as a mechanism of policy reversals, it also explored the individual differences between people who have

reversed their opposition to taxes in the two information groups. The analysis has demonstrated that people who value human life more than others are the ones who switch their policy preferences in both partisan groups. This finding implies that values, as opposed to ideological dispositions, could also lead to functional preference reversals for citizens. These findings contribute to the literature on the determinants of policy reversals by identifying new sources of reversals and differentiating between the types of reversals (Ragusa 2010; Ragusa & Birkhead 2015, 2020). They also contribute to the literature on policy change following the seminal work of Hood (1994) by calling attention to the functional mechanisms of policy (preference) change.

6.0.2. The impact of external events on policy preferences

The second objective of the thesis was to understand how different types of external events affect the origin and the evolution of policy preferences of politicians and citizens. The two external events selected were (i) a political crisis: the European refugee crisis, and (ii) a crisis that combines a health and economic shock: the COVID-19 pandemic. The thesis examined the impact of the European refugee crisis on the policy preferences of politicians in Chapter 3 and the effect of the pandemic on citizens' policy preferences in Chapter 5.

Using a conjoint survey experiment carried out among a representative sample of locally-elected municipal officials in Greece, Chapter 3 examined the policy preferences of elected local officials in light of a political crisis, namely, the European refugee crisis. This chapter looked at the impact of a supranational political crisis on the policy preferences of local-level politicians and how the personal experience of the crisis influenced those preferences. Based on the chapter findings, local councillors are generally comfortable approving policies that do not exceed their perceived hosting duties and give them authority to host refugees.

Local politicians also prefer a controllable likelihood and frequency of refugees interacting with locals when accepting refugee host sites in their municipalities. In turn, this implies elites' preference for a more gradual exposure (and contact) between citizens and refugees. Notably, evaluating the impact of the experience of a crisis on policy preferences, the chapter also found that councillors who already host refugees in their municipalities are no more likely to oppose hosting refugees than those councillors in municipalities with no refugees hosted. This finding makes an essential contribution to the literature on how crisis experiences affect policy decisions (Hangartner et al. 2019). It also moves the literature by contributing to the understanding of how political and economic crises shape policy preferences (Margalit 2013) and by showing how experiencing a crisis affects politicians' policy choices (Enos 2014). It sets a new agenda on the understanding of the attitudes towards refugees by demonstrating that politicians experiencing the crisis do not have different policy positions than those without any local experience of the crisis. This finding adds a significant qualifier on how contact with refugees works in practice (Enos 2014). If policies are framed within 'fair-share' bounds, political elites in municipalities with refugee sites are *no less* willing to accept proposals that increase their hosting obligations.

Chapter 5 used the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study to examine how a crisis that combines a health and economic shock affects citizens' policy preferences. COVID-19 pandemic was an interesting case study as its two intertwined shocks were expected to pull in opposite directions in terms of behavioural incentives. The chapter found that fiscal policy preferences were polarised along the partisan dimension but not along the socioeconomic dimension during the pandemic. Therefore the typical patterns of partisan fiscal policy preference polarisation were reproduced in the COVID-19 fiscal adjustment preferences. In the control group that received no information about the extent of the crisis,

a partisan polarisation was observed in two policy attributes. Firstly, the Democrats were more likely to prefer policies when 'companies' and the 'wealthy' shoulder the burden (compared with sharing being proportionate to income) than Republicans. Secondly, there was a significant difference between Republicans, who prefer a package of tools weighted towards spending cuts and Democrats, who do not. These findings make an essential contribution to the literature on policy preferences during a crisis. The preferences seem to reproduce the existing pre-pandemic patterns of partisan polarisation. This finding implies that in the face of partisan polarisation, a shock that combines an economic and health aspect does not by itself change citizens' policy preferences. This finding adds a critical nuance to the research on the impact of exogenous events on citizen preferences (Cassar et al. 2017; Colantone & Stanig 2018; Fisman et al. 2015; Gualtieri et al. 2019; Whitt & Wilson 2007) by uncovering the role of partisan polarisation in determining the relationship.

6.0.3. Wider implications

In synthesis, the thesis provides a conceptual distinction and empirical approach to the determinants of policy (preference) reversals, aiding the understanding of the interplay between political and non-political factors through the lenses of political science, political behaviour and economics. Although the empirical part of the thesis focuses exclusively on policy preferences and policy (preference) reversals of citizens in the US and local politicians in Greece, the relevance of the findings is believed to go beyond that context, particularly as formation and evolution of policy preferences are natural processes in policymaking. Therefore, this thesis has wider significance beyond providing answers to the research aims originally set out.

First, the thesis has differentiated between different types of policy reversals. The introduction chapter of Chapter 1 made a conceptual distinction between reversals with policy replacement and reversals without replacement, as it found that the former has a more positive connotation. A political implication of this distinction could be for politicians who are thinking of engaging in policy reversals. The public perception is likely to be positive if they propose new policies to replace the repealed policy. The thesis also made a conceptual and empirical distinction between functional and political forms of policy reversals. It has suggested that reversals brought about by electoral incentives and political polarisation are more likely to be politically motivated policy reversals, whilst the exposure to policy trade-offs and factual information provision are identified as functional policy preference reversals. This makes an essential contribution to the literature on the causes and consequences of policy reversals. It also contributes to the literature on policy change, identifying new mechanisms for policy change. Additionally, it encourages scholarship, practitioners and the media to pay attention to detecting the varying (functional and non-functional) causes of policy reversals.

Second, the finding on the types of policy reversals might indicate that functional and non-functional policy reversals might have differential welfare implications. A functional policy reversal –for instance, one that happens through exposure to new information– may not have the same effect on the market as a politically motivated policy reversal. Politicians could engage in policy reversals as one of the procedures of policymaking. This thesis has demonstrated that policy reversals are not always bad despite how they are perceived by the public (Tomz & Houweling 2010). Sometimes, they could be functional. While the thesis has documented a new functional mechanism by which politicians reverse their initial policy choices when exposed to alternative policy calculations, it has also demonstrated that the most ideologically

distant politicians are those who changed their policy preferences after being shown alternative policy combinations. This finding calls attention to the attributes of politicians and the polarisation in the party space in understanding the different policy reversals. Politically motivated politicians could be the ones who are more likely to consider the policy trade-offs and alternative policy calculations.

Third, the thesis has re-evaluated the relationship between polarisation and policymaking through the findings of Chapters 2 and 4. Chapter 2 has demonstrated that when there is a high level of ideological polarisation, policymakers will propose far away from their ideal policy, which they might reverse in the long run once re-elected. The polarisation-related reversals are likely to be non-functional forms as politicians do not, in fact, update their preferences. However, what could be possible is that politicians end up not reversing them in the end. Since policy reversals are often costly, politicians who have implemented a policy that they do not favour may not prioritise this policy reversal in their agenda. Empirical evidence from Chapter 4 suggested that negative policy reversals are predicted by intra-party polarisation. Those distant members from their party peers in ideology are more likely to reverse a policy position they initially supported. This finding is complemented in Chapter 2, that policymakers will support policies far from their ideal policy in the face of polarisation, which they might reverse in the long run. This finding has direct implications for party politics. It shows that ideologically distant party members are likely to make differential policy statements in the short run, which they might reverse in the long run. This finding could provide insight into how political parties coordinate policy support among party members. Inter-party polarisation, on the other hand, negatively predicts positive reversals. Politicians who are more polarised from the mean of the ideological space stick to their initial policy position. These members are less likely to change from opposing to supporting a policy. This finding

also explains how policy conflict occurs in the ideological space, leading to legislative gridlock.

Finally, the thesis has re-assessed how exogenous events affect the policy preferences of citizens and politicians. It demonstrated the role of partisan polarisation in understanding citizens' preferences during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings give us more insight into policy-making during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. Because partisan gaps result from polarisation (see, Druckman, Klar, Krupnikov, Levendusky, & Ryan 2021), policymakers need to develop more creative strategies to bring the two sides together on these issues. Chapter 5 demonstrated a new mechanism through which policymakers could achieve this: information provision on the extent of the crisis. Albeit at different levels, informational preference reversals occurred in supporters of both parties. Additionally, the chapter revealed that these reversals were influenced by how the health and economic implications of the pandemic were perceived. Informational preference reversals were influenced by perceptions of the pandemic and the value of human life relative to the economy. This finding opens up new avenues of research on the relationship between crisis perceptions and policy preferences.

In summary, the thesis provided:

- A conceptual distinction between the different types of preference/position reversals.
- The intuitive basis for understanding politically motivated preference/position reversals.
- A unique empirical approach to capture multidimensional policy (preference) reversals, through the use of conjoint survey experiments.

- An examination of the interplay between political and non-political factors through the lenses of political science, political behaviour, and economics.

6.0.4. Limitations and avenues for future research

Since the formation and evolution of policy preferences are natural processes in policymaking, the findings are relevant beyond their context. The thesis contributed to the literature and pointed out new research areas with insights into the origin and evolution of policy preferences. Nevertheless, it had its limitations. Future research could use the suggestions below to uncover the remaining aspects of policy preference reversals.

To begin with, the formal model of Chapter 2 made three assumptions: that the incumbent is the only dynamically sophisticated player, that voters' ideologies are uniform and that candidates have term limits. However, in future research, one of these assumptions might be relaxed to see how it affects the policy calculations of candidates. A dynamically sophisticated challenger, for instance, would internalise the policy shift of the incumbent before announcing their policy position in t_1. This would potentially alter the policy outcome pre-and post-election for the incumbent. Moreover, not being term-limited would also alter the pre-and post-election period behaviour of the incumbent (for instance, see, Fouirnaies et al. 2018).

Second, Chapters 3 and 4 dealt with politicians' policy preferences using an experimental survey methodology. Although the conjoint experiment is a powerful tool to study multidimensional preferences because it presents random policy packages in random policy tasks, resulting in thousands of profiles shown, the number of respondents was still small to conclude the reversal behaviour of politicians who

have faced trade-offs. In Chapter 4, for instance, only 102 out of 586 of the locally elected politicians encountered the repeated policy element, making it harder to make inferences about the subgroups of this sample. For this reason, the chapter has fixed the alpha level at 10% in its hypotheses testing even though the typical approach would be to fix it at 5%. Future research might increase the number of respondents to capture the subgroup differences better in conjoint experiments.

Third, Chapter 5 identified a non-political factor, information provision about the extent of a crisis, to shift citizens' policy preferences. Whilst it is interesting to capture how citizens engage in preference reversals when they learn more about the crisis they are experiencing, it would be equally interesting to test the impact of information provision on politicians' preferences. Politicians' policy decisions are also likely to be affected by the provision of information. While it was not the same information provision method, Chapter 4 hinted at the mechanism through which politicians learn policy trade-offs resulting in a re-evaluation of their policy preferences. Existing work also shows this by focusing on whether politicians seek out more information about an issue when they are farther offside the average opinion in their constituency (Loewen et al. 2021). Whilst there are fieldwork experiments with politicians within the context of election campaigns (see, for instance, Neuenschwander & Foos 2021), survey experiments, conjoint experiments in specific, are very well suited to study and capture the decision making and policymaking processes of politicians. Future research could test how politicians can use the information provided when it comes to policy decisions and evaluation.

Forth, the thesis captured the different types of policy reversals and their connotations descriptively through sentiment analysis in Chapter 1 and empirical work in Chapter 4. Future work may extend these findings by focusing solely on measuring the different types of policy

reversals through political speeches. The preliminary evidence has shown that reversed policies with no replacement have a more negative connotation than policies replaced with new ones. Future research could break down the policies and policy issues likely to be reversed with or without replacement policies. Whilst the thesis has identified the political and non-political mechanisms through which reversals take place; it did not directly measure the different facets of policymaking leading to these outcomes. Future research could use observational data on policymakers to directly capture the different types of policy reversals they engage in. Future survey experiments with politicians could directly isolate the functional and political mechanisms through which policy reversals occur and test the different mechanisms.

Last but not least, the thesis has argued that policy reversals can have different welfare implications depending on the motivations behind them. For example, politically motivated policy reversals could have differential welfare effects than functional policy reversals, given the differential nature and processes of the decision making. Future research could directly test the impact of the different kinds of policy reversals on welfare and economic growth. Policy volatility literature (see, Acemoglu, Johnson, Robinson, & Thaicharoen 2002; Aghion, Bacchetta, Ranciere, & Rogoff 2009; Blake & Jandhyala 2019) could prove helpful for future research that wants to analyse the impact of such types of policy processes on economic growth and welfare.

References

Aaskoven, L. (2019). The electoral cycle in political contributions: the incumbency advantage of early elections. *Acta Politica*, *55*(4), 670-691. doi: 10.1057/s41269-019-00138-3

Abramson, S. F., Kocak, K., & Magazinnik, A. (2019). What Do We Learn About Voter Preferences From Conjoint Experiments? *Working Paper*.

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., Robinson, J., & Thaicharoen, Y. (2002, August). *Institutional Causes, Macroeconomic Symptoms: Volatility, Crises and Growth* (Tech. Rep.). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w9124.pdf doi: 10.3386/w9124

Acemoglu, D., Johnson, S., Robinson, J., & Thaicharoen, Y. (2003). Institutional causes, macroeconomic symptoms: volatility, crises and growth. *Journal of Monetary Economics*, *50*, 49–123.

Adams-Prassl, A., Boneva, T., Golin, M., & Rauh, C. (2020). Inequality in the Impact of the Coronavirus Shock: Evidence from Real Time Surveys. *Journal of Public Economics*, *189*, 104245. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpubeco.2020.104245

Adida, C. L., Dionne, K. Y., & Platas, M. R. (2020). Ebola, Elections, and Immigration: How Politicizing an Epidemic Can Shape Public Attitudes. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, *8*(3), 488–514.

Adida, C. L., Lo, A., & Platas, M. R. (2018, September). Perspective taking can promote short-term inclusionary behavior toward Syrian refugees. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *115*(38), 9521–9526. Retrieved 2021-01-22, from https://www.pnas.org/content/115/38/9521 doi: 10.1073/pnas.1804002115

Aghion, P., Bacchetta, P., Ranciere, R., & Rogoff, K. (2009). Exchange Rate Volatility and Productivity Growth: The Role of Financial Development. Retrieved from http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:12490419 doi: 10.1016/j.jmoneco.2009.03.015

Agranov, M. (2016). Flip-Flopping, Primary Visibility, and the Selection of Candidates. *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics*, *8*, 61–85. Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/52b3fa5ccef659f68b5a3877314df9dd32d14d6b doi: 10.1257/MIC.20130036

Alesina, A., & Angeletos, G.-M. (2005). Fairness and Redistribution. *American Economic Review*, *95*(4), 960–980.

Alesina, A., & Ardagna, S. (2013). The Design of Fiscal Adjustments. In J. R. Brown (Ed.), *Tax Policy and the Economy* (pp. 19–67). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

Alesina, A., Ardagna, S., & Trebbi, F. (2006). Who Adjusts and When? The Political Economy of Reforms. *IMF Staff Papers*, *53*, 1–29.

Alesina, A., Carloni, D., & Lecce, G. (2011). *The Electoral Consequences of Large Fiscal Adjustments* (Working Paper No. 17655). National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w17655 (Series: Working Paper Series) doi: 10.3386/w17655

Alesina, A., & Drazen, A. (1991). Why are Stabilizations Delayed? *American Economic Review*, *81*(5), 1170–1188.

Alesina, A., Miano, A., & Stantcheva, S. (2018). *Immigration and Redistribution* (Working Paper No. 24733). National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w24733 (Series: Working Paper Series) doi: 10.3386/w24733

Alesina, A., Miano, A., & Stantcheva, S. (2020, May). The Polarization of Reality. *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, *110*, 324–328. Retrieved from https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/pandp.20201072 doi: 10.1257/pandp.20201072

Alesina, A., & Spear, S. (1988). *Journal of public economics.* (Vol. 37) (No. 3). North-Holland Pub. Co. Retrieved from https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeepubeco/v{_}3a37{_}3ay{_}3a1988{_}3ai{_}3a3{_}3ap{_}3a359-379.htm (ISSN: 0047-2727 Publication Title: Journal of Public Economics)

Alesina, A., Stantcheva, S., & Teso, E. (2018). Intergenerational Mobility and Preferences for Redistribution. *American Economic Review*, *108*(2), 521–554. Retrieved from https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.20162015 doi: 10.1257/aer.20162015

Allport, G. W., Clark, K., & Pettigrew, T. (1954). The nature of prejudice. *Addison-Wesley Reading, MA*.

Ansolabehere, S., & Brady, H. E. (1989). The nature of utility functions in mass politics. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev*, *83*, 795–798.

Aragones, E., Palfrey, T. R., Aragones, E., & Palfrey, T. (2002). *Journal of economic theory.* (Vol. 103) (No. 1). Academic Press. Retrieved from https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeejetheo/v{_}3a103{_}3ay{_}3a2002{_}3ai{_}3a1{_}3ap{_}3a131-161.htm (ISSN: 0022-0531 Publication Title: Journal of Economic Theory)

Asatryan, Z., Debrun, X., Heinemann, F., Horvath, M., Ódor, , & Yeter, M. (2017). *Making the Most of the European Fiscal Board* (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from http://hdl.handle.net/10419/157383

Ash, E., & Macleod, W. B. (2015). *The Performance of Elected Officials: Evidence from State Supreme Courts* (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from http://www.law.nyu.edu/sites/default/files/

MacLeod{_}and{_}Ash{_}The{_}Performance{_}of{_}Elected{_}Officials.pdf

Ashok, V., Kuziemko, I., & Washington, E. (2015). Support for Redistribution in an Age of Rising Inequality: New Stylized Facts and Some Tentative Explanations. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, 367. (Publisher: The Brookings Institution)

Ashworth, S., & de Mesquita, E. B. (2006, February). Delivering the Goods: Legislative Particularism in Different Electoral and Institutional Settings. *The Journal of Politics*, *68*(1), 168–179. Retrieved from https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/10.1111/j.1468-2508.2006.00378.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2508.2006.00378.x

Baker, S. R., Bloom, N., Davis, S. J., Hassett, K., Ip, G., Makin, J., ... Sims, E. (2013). *Measuring Economic Policy Uncertainty Sloan Foundation and the Initiative on Global Markets and the Stigler Center at Chicago for financial support. We thank Matt Gentzkow* (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from www.policyuncertainty.com

Ballard-Rosa, C., Martin, L., & Scheve, K. (2017). The Structure of American Income Tax Policy Preferences. *Journal of Politics*, *79*(1), 1–16.

Banks, J. S., & Duggan, J. (2007). *Probabilistic Voting in the Spatial Model of Elections: The Theory of Office-motivated Candidates. In: Austen-Smith D., Duggan J. (eds) Social Choice and Strategic Decisions. Studies in Choice and Welfare.* Springer.

Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., & Hangartner, D. (2017). Europeans support a proportional allocation of asylum seekers. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *1*(7), 1–6. (Publisher: Nature Publishing Group)

Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D. J., & Yamamoto, T. (2019). Beyond the Breaking Point? Survey Satisficing in Conjoint Experiments. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 1–19. doi: 10.1017/psrm.2019.13

Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D. J., & Yamamoto, T. (2020). Using Conjoint Experiments to Analyze Elections: The Essential Role of the Average Marginal Component Effect (AMCE). *Working Paper*.

Bansak, K., Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D. J., & Yamamoto, T. (2021). Conjoint Survey Experiments. In J. Druckman & D. P. Green (Eds.), *Advances in Experimental Political Science* (pp. 19–41). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/9781108777919.004

Bartels, L. M. (1993). Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev*, *87*(2), 267–285.

Baumgartner, F. R., & Jones, B. D. (1993). *Agendas and instability in American politics.* University of Chicago Press.

Retrieved from https://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Agendas{_}and{_}Instability{_}in{_}American{_}Poli.html?id=NZOtRwwYbN8C{&}redir{_}esc=y

Bawn, K. (1999). *Money and Majorities in the Federal Republic of Germany: Evidence for a Veto Players Model of Government Spending* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2991832.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3A2aeae05083481e73c2b69b93c1460ad5 (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 43)

Bechtel, M. M., Hainmueller, J., & Margalit, Y. (2012). *Studying Public Opinion on Multidimensional Policies: The Case of the Eurozone Bailouts* (Working Paper). Arbeitspapier. Retrieved from https://www.alexandria.unisg.ch/222427/

Bechtel, M. M., Hainmueller, J., & Margalit, Y. (2017). Policy Design and Domestic Support for International Bailouts. *European Journal of Political Research*, *56*(4), 864–886. doi: 10.1111/1475-6765.12210

Bechtel, M. M., & Scheve, K. F. (2013). Mass Support for Global Climate Agreements Depends on Institutional Design. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *110*(34), 13763–13768. doi: 10.1073/pnas.1306374110

Benabou, R., & Tirole, J. (2006). Belief in a Just World and Redistributive Politics. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *121*(2), 699–746. (Publisher: MIT Press)

Berman, S. (2020). *Crises only sometimes lead to change. here's why.* Retrieved 2020-04-07, from https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/07/04/coronavirus-crisis-turning-point-change/

Bernhardt, D., Duggan, J., & Squintani, F. (2009). The case for responsible parties. *American Political Science Review*, *103*(4), 570–587. (ISBN: 0003-0554) doi: 10.1017/S0003055409990232

Bernhardt, M., & Ingerman, D. E. (1985). Candidate reputations and the 'incumbency effect'. *Journal of Public Economics*, *27*(1), 47–67. doi: 10.1016/0047-2727(85)90028-3

Berry, C. R., Burden, B. C., & Howell, W. G. (2010). After enactment: The lives and deaths of federal programs. *American Journal of Political Science*, *54*(1), 1–17. (ISBN: 0092-5853) doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2009.00414.x

Besley, T., & Coate, S. (1997). *An Economic Model of Representative Democracy* (Tech. Rep. No. 1). Retrieved from https://about.jstor.org/terms (Publication Title: Source: The Quarterly Journal of Economics Volume: 112)

Betts, A., MemiŞoĞlu, F., & Ali, A. (2020). What difference do mayors make? The role of municipal authorities in Turkey and Lebanon's response to Syrian refugees. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, *forthcoming*.

Binder, S. A. (1999). *The Dynamics of Legislative Gridlock, 1947-9* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). Retrieved from https://about.jstor.org/terms (Publication Title: American Political Science Review Volume: 93)

Binder, S. A. (2003). *Stalemate : causes and consequences of legislative gridlock*. Brookings Institution Press.

Blake, D. J., & Jandhyala, S. (2019). Managing policy reversals: Consequences for firm performance. *Strategy Science*, *4*(2), 111-128. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1287/stsc.2019.0083 doi: 10.1287/stsc.2019.0083

Blyth, M. (2002). *Great transformations : economic ideas and institutional change in the twentieth century*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Great{_}Transformations.html?id=sNXT0rpJuDkC{&}redir{_}esc=y

Braun, D., & Gilardi, F. (2006, July). Taking 'Galton's Problem' Seriously. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, *18*(3), 298–322. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0951629806064351 (Publisher: Sage PublicationsLondon, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi) doi: 10.1177/0951629806064351

Brunner, E., Ross, S. L., & Washington, E. (2011). Economics and policy preferences: causal evidence of the impact of economic conditions on support for redistribution and other ballot proposals. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *93*(3), 888–906. (Publisher: MIT Press)

Buisseret, P., & Bernhardt, D. (2017). Dynamics of Policymaking: Stepping Back to Leap Forward, Stepping Forward to Keep Back. *American Journal of Political Science*, *61*(4), 820–835. doi: 10.1111/ajps.12301

Bullock, J. G. (2011). Elite influence on public opinion in an informed electorate. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev*, *105*, 496–515.

Béland, D., & Waddan, A. (2015). Breaking down ideas and institutions: the politics of tax policy in the usa and the uk. *Policy Studies*, *36*(2), 176-195. Retrieved from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01442872.2014.1000845 doi: 10.1080/01442872.2014.1000845

Callander, S., & Davin, R. (2017). Durable Policy, Political Accountability, and Active Waste. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, *12*(1), 59–97. Retrieved from http://www.nowpublishers.com/article/Details/QJPS-16120 doi: 10.1561/100.00016120

Callander, S., & Krehbiel, K. (2014). Gridlock and delegation in a changing world. *American Journal of Political Science*, *58*(4), 819–834. (ISBN: 1540-5907) doi: 10.1111/ajps.12105

Callen, M. (2015). Catastrophes and time preference: Evidence from the indian ocean earthquake. *Journal of Economic Behavior Organization*, *118*, 199-

214. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0167268115000621 (Economic Experiments in Developing Countries) doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jebo.2015.02.019

Calvert, R. L. (1985). *Robustness of the Multidimensional Voting Model: Candidate Motivations, Uncertainty, and Convergence* (Tech. Rep. No. 1). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2111212.pdf (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 29)

Cameron, G. T., Sallot, L. M., & Curtin, P. A. (1997, January). Public Relations and the Production of News: A Critical Review and Theoretical Framework. *Annals of the International Communication Association*, *20*(1), 111–155. Retrieved from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23808985.1997.11678940 (Publisher: Routledge) doi: 10.1080/23808985.1997.11678940

Campbell, J. E. (2016). *Polarized: Making Sense of a Divided America*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Campos, N. F., Hsiao, C., & Nugent, J. B. (2010). *Crises, What Crises? New Evidence on the Relative Roles of Political and Economic Crises in Begetting Reforms** (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from http://www.naurocampos.net/Papers/crises.pdf

Canes-Wrone, B., & de Leon, C. P. (2014). Elections, Uncertainty, and Economic Outcomes. (April). Retrieved from http://www.stanford.edu/group/sssl/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/conferencepost.pdf{%}5Cnpapers3://publication/uuid/8F8D57E9-856A-4455-8C94-48383FA325C4

Cappelen, A. W., Konow, J., Sørensen, E. , & Tungodden, B. (2013, June). Just Luck: An Experimental Study of Risk-Taking and Fairness. *American Economic Review*, *103*(4), 1398–1413. Retrieved from https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/aer.103.4.1398 doi: 10.1257/aer.103.4.1398

Carlson, J. M., & Dolan, K. (1985). The Waffle Phenomenon and Candidates' Image. *Psychological Reports*, *57*, 795 – 798. Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/72b400d7b38cf572f89763595bb3d5aa1ccdd98e doi: 10.2466/pr0.1985.57.3.795

Carpenter, D. P. (2010). *Reputation and power : organizational image and pharmaceutical regulation at the FDA*. Princeton University Press. Retrieved from https://press.princeton.edu/titles/9205.html

Cassar, A., Healy, A., & Von Kessler, C. (2017). Trust, Risk, and Time Preferences After a Natural Disaster: Experimental Evidence from Thailand. *World*

Development, *94*, 90–105. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.worlddev.2016.12.042

Chong, D., & Druckman, J. N. (2010). Dynamic Public Opinion: Communciation Effects over Time. *American Political Science Review*, *104*(4), 663–680.

Chortareas, G., Logothetis, V. E., & Papandreou, A. A. (2017). Political cycles in Greece's municipal employment. *Journal of Economic Policy Reform*, *20*(4), 321–342. (Publisher: Taylor & Francis)

Colantone, I., & Stanig, P. (2018). The Trade Origins of Economic Nationalism: Import Competition and Voting Behavior in Western Europe. *American Journal of Political Science*, *62*(4), 936–953. doi: 10.1111/ajps.12358

Corder, J. K., & Hoffmann, S. M. (2004, March). Privatizing Federal Credit Programs: Why Sallie Mae? *Public Administration Review*, *64*(2), 180–191. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1540-6210.2004.00359.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6210.2004.00359.x

Croco, S. E. (2016). The Flipside of Flip-Flopping: Leader Inconsistency, Citizen Preferences, and the War in Iraq. *Foreign Policy Analysis*, *12*, 237–257. Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/3f0a10f408cd3ce073006fbccd4fcfe19a10ee27 doi: 10.1093/FPA/ORW006

Cukierman, A., & Tommasi, M. (1998). When does it take a nixon to go to china? *The American Economic Review*, *88*(1), 180–197. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/116824

Deschouwer, K., & Depauw, S. (Eds.). (2014). *Representing the People: A Survey Among Members of Statewide and Substate Parliaments*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Dewan, T., & Hortala-Vallve, R. (2019). Electoral competition, control and learning. *British Journal of Political Science*, *49*(3), 923–939. doi: 10.1017/S0007123416000764

Dietrich, F., & List, C. (2011). A model of non-informational preference change. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, *23*(2), 145–164.

Dinas, E., Matakos, K., Xefteris, D., & Hangartner, D. (2019). Waking Up the Golden Dawn: Does Exposure to the Refugee Crisis Increase Support for Extreme-Right Parties? *Political Analysis*, *27*(2), 244–254. (Publisher: Cambridge University Press) doi: 10.1017/pan.2018.48

Doherty, D., Dowling, C. M., & Miller, M. G. (2016). When is changing policy positions costly for politicians? Experimental evidence. *Political Behavior*, *38*(2), 455–484.

Doherty, D., Dowling, C. M., & Miller, M. G. (2019). Do Local Party Chairs Think Women and Minority Candidates Can Win? Evidence from a Conjoint Experiment. *The Journal of Politics*, *81*(4), 1282–1297. doi: 10.1086/704698

Downs, A. (1957). *An Economic Theory of Political Action in Democracy* (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from https://about.jstor.org/terms

Druckman, J. N. (2021). *Advances in experimental political science*. Cambridge University Press.

Druckman, J. N., Greene, D. P., Kuklinski, J. H., & Lupia, A. (2011). *Cambridge handbook of experimental political science*. Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511921452

Druckman, J. N., Klar, S., Krupnikov, Y., Levendusky, M., & Ryan, J. B. (2021). Affective polarization, local contexts and public opinion in america. *Nature Human Behaviour*, *5*, 28–38. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-020-01012-5

Druckman, J. N., & Lupia, A. (2000). Preference Formation. *Annu. Rev. Polit. Sci.*, *3*, 1–24.

Duggan, J. (2000, July). Repeated Elections with Asymmetric Information. *Economics and Politics*, *12*(2), 109–135. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/1468-0343.00071 (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/1468-0343.00071

Dziuda, W., & Loeper, A. (2018, August). Dynamic Pivotal Politics. *American Political Science Review*, *112*(03), 580–601. Retrieved from https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/S0003055418000187/type/journal{_}article (Publisher: Cambridge University Press) doi: 10.1017/S0003055418000187

Editorial. (2011). Out of control: Merkel gambles credibility with nuclear u-turn. *der Spiegel*, *21 March*. Retrieved from https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/out-of-control-merkel-gambles-credibility-with-nuclear-u-turn-a-752163.html

Editorial. (2017, December). Lesvos mayor files suit over conditions at Moria migrant camp. *Kathimerini*. Retrieved from https://www.ekathimerini.com/224330/article/ekathimerini/news/lesvos-mayor-files-suit-over-conditions-at-moria-migrant-camp

Editorial. (2018). A leader who doesn't take u-turns is not a real leader: Pm imran khan. *The News*, *16 November*. Retrieved from https://www.thenews.com.pk/latest/394544-a-leader-who-doesnt-take-u-turns-is-not-a-real-leader

Editorial. (2019). Five times theresa may has changed her mind on brexit. *The Week*, *29 February*. Retrieved from https://www.theweek.co.uk/99868/five-times-theresa-may-has-changed-her-mind-on-brexit

Edwards III, G. C., Barrett, A., & Peake, J. (1997). *The Legislative Impact of Divided Government* (Tech. Rep. No. 2). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2111776.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3A41ef01987aa9ebd7e5d5f9e168624f79 (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 41)

Enos, R. D. (2014, March). Causal effect of intergroup contact on exclusionary attitudes. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *111*(10), 3699–3704. Retrieved 2021-01-22, from https://www.pnas.org/content/111/10/3699 doi: 10.1073/pnas.1317670111

Fatás, A., & Mihov, I. (2013). Policy Volatility, Institutions, and Economic Growth. *The MIT Press Journals*, *95*(2), 362–376. Retrieved from https://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/pdf/10.1162/REST{_}a{_}00265 doi: 10.1162/REST_A_00265

Fearon, J. D. (1994). Domestic political audiences and the escalation of international disputes. *American Political Science Review*, *88*(3), 577–592. doi: 10.2307/2944796

Ferraz, C., & Finan, F. (2011, June). Electoral Accountability and Corruption: Evidence from the Audits of Local Governments. *American Economic Review*, *101*(4), 1274–1311. Retrieved from http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/10.1257/aer.101.4.1274 doi: 10.1257/aer.101.4.1274

Financial Times. (2020). Virus Lays Bare the Frailty of the Social Contract. *Financial Times*, *3 April*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/7eff769a-74dd-11ea-95fe-fcd274e920ca

Fisman, R., Gladstone, K., Kuziemko, I., & Naidu, S. (2020). Do Americans Want to Tax Wealth? Evidence from Online Surveys. *Journal of Public Economics*, *188*, 104207. (Publisher: Elsevier)

Fisman, R., Jakiela, P., & Kariv, S. (2015). How did Distributional Preferences Change During the Great Recession? *Journal of Public Economics*, *128*, 8495. (Publisher: Elsevier)

Fouirnaies, A., Hall, A. B., Acharya, A., Ashworth, S., Berry, C., Bonica, A., ... Wolton, S. (2018). *How Do Electoral Incentives Affect Legislator Behavior? ** (Tech. Rep.). Retrieved from http://www.andrewbenjaminhall.com/Fouirnaies{_}Hall{_}Electoral{_}Incentives.pdf

Funke, M., Schularick, M., & Trebesch, C. (2016). Going to Extremes: Politics After Financial Crises, 1870-2014. *European Economic Review*, *88*, 227–260. doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2016.03.006

Gallego, A., & Marx, P. (2017). Multi-dimensional Preferences for Labour Market Reforms: A Conjoint Experiment. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *24*(7), 1027–1047.

Garritzmann, J. L., Neimanns, E., & Busemeyer, M. R. (2021). Public opinion towards welfare state reform: The role of political trust and government satisfaction. *European Journal of Political Research*, *n/a*(n/a). Retrieved from https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1475-6765.12501 doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12501

Georgiopoulou, T. (2021, January). Opposition to structures on Leros and at Evros. *Kathimerini*. Retrieved from https://www.ekathimerini.com/260934/article/ekathimerini/news/opposition-to-structures-on-leros-and-at-evros

Gerber, A. S., Huber, G. A., & Washington, E. (2010). Party Affiliation, Partisanship, and Political Beliefs: A Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review*, *104*(4), 720–744. (Publisher: Cambridge University Press)

Getmansky, A., Matakos, K., & Sınmazdemir, T. (2020). *Diversity without adversity? Refugees' efforts to integrate can partially offset identity-based biases* (Tech. Rep. No. 16). Empirical Studies of Conflict WP Series.

Gilardi, F. (2010, June). Who Learns from What in Policy Diffusion Processes? *American Journal of Political Science*, *54*(3), 650–666. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00452.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2010.00452.x

Greener, I. (2001). Social Learning and Macroeconomic Policy in Britain. *Journal of Public Policy*, *21*(2), 133–152.

Groenendyk, E., Sances, M. W., & Zhirkov, K. (2020). Intraparty polarization in american politics. *The Journal of Politics*, *82*(4), 1616-1620. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1086/708780 doi: 10.1086/708780

Groseclose, T. (2001). *A Model of Candidate Location When One Candidate Has a Valence Advantage* (Tech. Rep. No. 4). Retrieved from http://www.its.caltech.edu/{~}magranov/documents/groseclose2001.pdf (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 45)

Grossman, G., Kim, S., Rexer, J. M., & Thirumurthy, H. (2020). Political Partisanship Influences Behavioral Responses to Governors' Recommendations for COVID-19 Prevention in the United States. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *117*(39), 24144–24153. Retrieved from https://www.pnas.org/content/117/39/24144 (Publisher: National Academy of Sciences _eprint: https://www.pnas.org/content/117/39/24144.full.pdf) doi: 10.1073/pnas.2007835117

Gualtieri, G., Nicolini, M., & Sabatini, F. (2019). Repeated Shocks and Preferences for Redistribution. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, *167*, 53–71.

Gul, F., & Pesendorfer, W. (2006, January). Random Expected Utility. *Econometrica*, *74*(1), 121–146. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1468-0262.2006.00651.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1468-0262.2006.00651.x

Hainmueller, J., Hopkins, D. J., & Yamamoto, T. (2014). Causal Inference in Conjoint Analysis: Understanding Multidimensional Choices via Stated Preference Experiments. *Political Analysis*, *22*(1), 1–30. doi: 10.1093/pan/mpt024

Hainmueller, J., & Xu, Y. (2011). Ebalance: A Stata Package for Entropy Balancing. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. doi: 10.2139/ssrn.1943090

Hall, P. A. (1993). Policy paradigms, social learning, and the state: The case of economic policymaking in britain. *Comparative Politics*, *25*(3), 275-296. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/422246?seq=18#metadata_info_tab_contents doi: https://doi.org/10.2307/422246

Hall, P. A., & Taylor, R. C. R. (1996, December). Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms. *Political Studies*, *44*(5), 936–957. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1996.tb00343.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9248.1996.tb00343.x

Hallerberg, M., & Basinger, S. (1998, June). Internationalization and Changes in Tax Policy in OECD Countries. *Comparative Political Studies*, *31*(3), 321–352. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0010414098031003003 (Publisher: SAGE Publications, Inc.) doi: 10.1177/0010414098031003003

Hangartner, D., Dinas, E., Marbach, M., Matakos, K., & Xefteris, D. (2019). Does exposure to the refugee crisis make natives more hostile? *American Political Science Review*, *113*(2), 442–455. (Publisher: Cambridge University Press)

Hanretty, C. (2014, June). Media outlets and their moguls: Why concentrated individual or family ownership is bad for editorial independence. *European Journal of Communication*, *29*(3), 335–350. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0267323114523150 (Publisher: SAGE PublicationsSage UK: London, England) doi: 10.1177/0267323114523150

Hanretty, C., & Koop, C. (2012). Measuring the formal independence of regulatory agencies. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *19*(2), 198-216. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2011.607357 doi: 10.1080/13501763.2011.607357

Hargreaves Heap, S. P., Koop, C., Matakos, K., Unan, A., & Weber, N. (2020, May). COVID-19 and People's Health-Wealth Preferences: Information Effects and Policy Implications. *CEPR Press Covid Economics*, *26 May 2020*(22), 59–116. Retrieved from https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3605003

Hausermann, S., Pinggera, M., Ares, M., & Enggist, M. (2021). Class and social policy in the knowledge economy. *European Journal of Political Research*, *n/a*(n/a). Retrieved from https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1475-6765.12463 doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12463

Hogan, J., & Feeney, S. (2012). Crisis and policy change: The role of the political entrepreneur. *Risk, Hazards Crisis in Public Policy*, *3*(2). Retrieved from https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1128&context=buschmarart

Holian, D. B., & Prysby, C. L. (2016). *Candidate character traits in presidential elections*. Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Holt, C. A., & Laury, S. K. (2002). Risk Aversion and Incentive Effects. *American Economic Review*, *92*(5), 1644–1655.

Hood, C. (Ed.). (1994). *Explaining Economic Policy Reversals*. Open University Press.

Hotelling, H. (1929). *Stability in Competition* (Tech. Rep. No. 153). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2224214.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3Af510f2d1f66528c3ac020771aa2abada (Publication Title: Source: The Economic Journal Volume: 39)

Huber, G. A., & Gordon, S. C. (2004). Accountability and Coercion: Is Justice Blind when It Runs for Office? *American Journal of Political Science*, *48*(2), 247–263.

Hummel, P. (2010). Flip-flopping from primaries to general elections. *Journal of Public Economics*, *94*, 1020–1027.

Iaryczower, M., & Eui, A. M. (2013). On the Nature of Competition in Alternative Electoral Systems. *Southern Political Science Association*, *75*(3), 743–756. Retrieved from www.journals.cambridge.org/jop. (Publisher: Green and Krasno) doi: 10.1017/S0022381613000583

IHME. (2020). *New COVID-19 Forecasts for Europe: Italy and Spain Have Passed the Peak of Their Epidemics; UK, Early in Its Epidemic, Faces a Fast-Mounting Death Toll*. Institute for Health Metrics & Evaluation. Retrieved from http://www.healthdata.org/news-release/new-covid-19-forecasts-europe-italy-spain-have-passed-peak-their--uk-early-its

IMF. (2020). *World Economic Outlook, April 2020: The Great Lockdown*. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Immergut, E. M. (1992). *Health politics, interests and institutions in western europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Iyengar, S., Sood, G., & Lelkes, Y. (2012). Affect, not ideology: a social identity perspective on polarization. *Public Opinion*, *76*, 405–431.

Jacobs, A. M., & Weaver, R. K. (2015). When Policies Undo Themselves: Self-Undermining Feedback as a Source of Policy Change. *Governance*, *28*(4), 441–457.

Jacques, O. (2021). Austerity and the path of least resistance: how fiscal consolidations crowd out long-term investments. *Journal of European Public Policy*, *28*(4), 551-570. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2020.1737957 doi: 10.1080/13501763.2020.1737957

Jeffrey, K., & Matakos, K. (2020). Automation and the American Dream: How Will Redistributive Preferences Evolve as Work is Automated? *unpublished manuscript, King's College London*.

John, P. (2012). *Analyzing public policy*. Routledge.

Jones, D. R. (2001, March). Party Polarization and Legislative Gridlock. *Political Research Quarterly*, *54*(1), 125–141. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/106591290105400107 (Publisher: University of Utah260 SO. Central Campus Drive, RM. 252, Salt Lake City, Utah 84112-9153, USA) doi: 10.1177/106591290105400107

Kahneman, D., & Tversky, A. (1979). Prospect theory: an analysis of decision under risk. *Econometrica*, *47*, 263–291.

Karagiannis, Y., & Radaelli, C. M. (2007). *Policy-Making in Comparative Politics*. Oxford.

Kartik, N., & McAfee, R. P. (2007, May). Signaling Character in Electoral Competition. *American Economic Review*, *97*(3), 852–870. Retrieved from http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/10.1257/aer.97.3.852 doi: 10.1257/aer.97.3.852

Kawai, K., Lang, R., & Li, H. (2018). Political kludges. *American Economic Journal: Microeconomics*, *10*(4), 131–58. doi: 10.1257/mic.20150242

Kelly, J. (2020). In defence of the u-turn – in politics and life. *Financial Times*, *2 July*. Retrieved from https://www.ft.com/content/f34fbf9e-81ee-4a0d-ae12-c236828b5c91

Kelly, S. Q. (1993). *Divided We Govern? A Reassessment* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). Retrieved from http://www.uvm.edu/{~}dguber/POLS125/articles/kelly.pdf (Volume: 25)

Kingdon, J. V. (1984). *Agendas, alternatives and public policies*. TBS The Book Service Ltd.

Kollman, K., Miller, J. H., & Page, S. E. (1997, August). Landscape formation in a spatial voting model. *Economics Letters*, *55*(1), 121–130. Retrieved from http://linkinghub.elsevier.com/retrieve/pii/S0165176597000414 doi: 10.1016/S0165-1765(97)00041-4

Kreps, D. M. (2000). *A Course in Microeconomic Theory*. Princeton University Press.

Kuziemko, I., Norton, M. I., Saez, E., & Stantcheva, S. (2015). How Elastic Are Preferences for Redistribution? Evidence from Randomized Survey Experiments. *American Economic Review*, *105*(4), 1478–1508. doi: 10.1257/aer.20130360

Kydland, F. E., & Prescott, E. C. (1977). *Rules Rather than Discretion: The Inconsistency of Optimal Plans* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). Retrieved from https://about.jstor.org/terms (Publication Title: Source: Journal of Political Economy Volume: 85)

Layman, G. C., Carsey, T. M., & Horowitz, J. M. (2006, June). Party Polarization in American Politics: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences. *Annual Review of Political Science*, *9*(1), 83–110. Retrieved from http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev.polisci.9.070204.105138 (Publisher: Annual Reviews) doi: 10.1146/annurev.polisci.9.070204.105138

Lee, D. S., Moretti, E., & Butler, M. J. (2004, August). Do Voters Affect or Elect Policies? Evidence from the U. S. House. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *119*(3), 807–859. Retrieved from https://academic.oup.com/qje/article-lookup/doi/10.1162/0033553041502153 (Publisher: Oxford University Press) doi: 10.1162/0033553041502153

Leeper, T. J., Hobolt, S., & Tilley, J. (2020). Measuring Subgroup Preferences in Conjoint Experiments. *Political Analysis*, *28*(2), 207–221.

Levendusky, M. S., & Horowitz, M. C. (2012). When Backing Down Is the Right Decision: Partisanship, New Information, and Audience Costs. *Journal of Politics*, *74*(2), 323–338.

Levy, J. S., McKoy, M. K., Poast, P., & Wallace, G. P. (2015). Backing Out or Backing In? Commitment and Consistency in Audience Costs Theory. *American Journal of Political Science*, *59*(4), 988–1001.

Lewis, J. B., Poole, K., Rosenthal, H., Boche, A., Rudkin, A., , & Sonnet, L. (2021). Voteview: Congressional roll-call votes database. *Addison-Wesley Reading, MA*. Retrieved from https://voteview.com/

List, J. A., & Sturm, D. M. (2006, November). How Elections Matter: Theory and Evidence from Environmental Policy. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *121*(4), 1249–1281. Retrieved from https://academic.oup.com/qje/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/qje/121.4.1249 (Publisher: Oxford University Press) doi: 10.1093/qje/121.4.1249

Loewen, P. J., & Rubenson, D. (2021). Value-added and transparent experiments. *Political Studies Review*, –. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1177/14789299211059428 doi: 10.1177/14789299211059428

Loewen, P. J., Rubenson, D., & McAndrews, J. R. (2021). When do politicians pursue more policy information? *Journal of Experimental Political Science*, 1–9. doi: 10.1017/XPS.2020.42

Lupia, A., Levine, A. S., Menning, J. O., & Sin, G. (2007). Were Bush Tax Cut Supporters 'Simply Ignorant'? A Second Look at Conservatives and Liberals in 'Homer Gets a Tax Cut'. *Perspectives on Politics*, *5*(4), 773–784.

Mahoney, J., & Thelen, K. A. (2010). *Explaining institutional change : ambiguity, agency, and power*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Explaining{_}Institutional{_}Change.html?id=PACmgwrYeRMC{&}redir{_}esc=y

Majone, G. (2001). *Nonmajoritarian Institutions and the Limits of Democratic Governance: A Political Transaction-Cost Approach* (Tech. Rep. No. 1). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/40752249.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3Afc815baaaa348bdcdbad7605dc955616 (Publication Title: gesamte Staatswissenschaft Volume: 157)

Majumdar, S., & Mukand, S. W. (2004). Policy Gambles. *American Economic Review*, *94*(4), 1207–1222. Retrieved from http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/10.1257/0002828042002624 (ISBN: 00028282) doi: 10.1257/0002828042002624

Malik, N. (2017). We should stop maligning u-turns. they can avert disaster. *the Guardian*, *11 September*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/sep/11/stop-maligning-u-turns-disaster

Maltzman, F., & Shipan, C. R. (2008, April). Change, Continuity, and the Evolution of the Law. *American Journal of Political Science*, *52*(2), 252–267. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00311.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00311.x

Manzoni, E., & Penczynski, S. P. (2018). Last minute policies and the incumbency advantage. *German Economic Review*, *19*(3), 280-308. doi: 10.1111/geer.12130

Margalit, Y. (2013). Explaining Social Policy Preferences: Evidence from the Great Recession. *American Political Science Review*, *107*(1), 80–103. doi: 10.1017/S0003055412000603

Mayhew, D. R. (2005). *Divided we govern : party control, lawmaking and investigations, 1946-2002*. Yale University Press. Retrieved from https://yalebooks.yale.edu/book/9780300102888/divided-we-govern

Mccarty, N., Poole, K. T., & Rosenthal, H. (2009). *Does Gerrymandering Cause Polarization?* (Tech. Rep. No. 3). Retrieved from https://q-aps.princeton.edu/sites/default/files/Gerrymandering{_}0.pdf (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 53)

McCarty, N. M., Poole, K. T., & Rosenthal, H. (2006). *Polarized America : the dance of ideology and unequal riches*. MIT Press.

McDonald, J., Croco, S. E., & Turitto, C. (2019). Teflon Don or politics as usual? An examination of foreign Policy flip-flops in the age of Trump. *The Journal of Politics*, *81*(2), 757–766. doi: 10.1086/702234

Meguid, B. M. (2005, August). Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *American Political Science Review*, *99*(03), 347–359. Retrieved from http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract{_}S0003055405051701 (Publisher: Cambridge University Press) doi: 10.1017/S0003055405051701

Mian, A., Rao, K., & Sufi, A. (2013, November). Household Balance Sheets, Consumption, and the Economic Slump*. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *128*(4), 1687–1726. Retrieved from https://academic.oup.com/qje/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/qje/qjt020 (Publisher: Oxford University Press) doi: 10.1093/qje/qjt020

Moe, T. M. (2012, January). Delegation, Control, and the Study of Public Bureaucracy. *The Forum*, *10*(2). Retrieved from https://www.degruyter.com/view/j/for.2012.10.issue-2/1540-8884.1508/1540-8884.1508.xml doi: 10.1515/1540-8884.1508

Neuenschwander, G., & Foos, F. (2021). Mobilizing party activism: A field experiment with party members and sympathizers. *Electoral Studies*, *72*, 102341. Retrieved from https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0261379421000615 doi: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2021.102341

OECD. (2018). Working Together for Local Integration of Migrants and Refugees. *OECD Publishing*. Retrieved 2021-01-15, from https://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/sources/docgener/studies/pdf/local_integration.pdf doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264085350-en

Osborne, M. J., & Slivinski, A. (1996, February). A Model of Political Competition with Citizen-Candidates. *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, *111*(1), 65–96. Retrieved from https://academic.oup.com/qje/article-lookup/doi/10.2307/2946658 doi: 10.2307/2946658

Ostrander, I., & Sievert, J. (2013, March). The Logic of Presidential Signing Statements. *Political Research Quarterly*, *66*(1), 141–153. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1065912911434357 (Pub-

lisher: SAGE PublicationsSage CA: Los Angeles, CA) doi: 10.1177/1065912911434357

Ostrom, E. (1990). *Governing the commons : the evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.tr/books/about/Governing{_}the{_}Commons.html?id=4xg6oUobMz4C{&}redir{_}esc=y

Ozel, I., & Unan, A. (2021). Decoupling trends: Drivers of agency independence in telecommunications: An analysis of high and middle-income countries. *Regulation Governance*, *15*, 32-62.

Palfrey, T. R. (1984). Spatial Equilibrium with Entry. *The Review of Economic Studies*, *51*(1), 139–156.

Patashnik, E. (2003, April). After the Public Interest Prevails: The Political Sustainability of Policy Reform. *Governance*, *16*(2), 203–234. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/1468-0491.00214 (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/1468-0491.00214

Patashnik, E. M. (2008). *Reforms at risk : what happens after major policy changes are enacted*. Princeton University Press. Retrieved from https://press.princeton.edu/titles/8773.html

Peabody, R. L., Hammond, S. W., Torcom, J., Brown, L. P., Thompson, C., & Kolodny, R. (1990). Interviewing political elites. *PS: Political Science amp; Politics*, *23*(3), 451–455. doi: 10.2307/419807

Penn, E. M. (2009). *A Model of Farsighted Voting* (Tech. Rep. No. 1). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/25193866.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3A6edf029b657836e55e37bd6890282fd4 (Publication Title: Source: American Journal of Political Science Volume: 53)

Persson, T., & Tabellini, G. (2004, February). Constitutional Rules and Fiscal Policy Outcomes. *American Economic Review*, *94*(1), 25–45. Retrieved from http://pubs.aeaweb.org/doi/10.1257/000282804322970689 doi: 10.1257/000282804322970689

Pierson, P. (2000). *Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics* (Tech. Rep. No. 2). Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/2586011.pdf?refreqid=excelsior{%}3Ac4f629ebf36acc42b2405f6b0b19db63 (Publication Title: Source: The American Political Science Review Volume: 94)

Poole, K. T., & Rosenthal, H. (1997). *Congress: A political-economic history of roll call voting*. Oxford University Press.

Prati, A., Onorato, M. G., & Papageorgiou, C. (2013, July). Which Reforms Work and under What Institutional Environment? Evidence from a New Data Set on Structural Reforms. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *95*(3),

946–968. Retrieved from http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/10.1162/REST{_}a{_}00307 (Publisher: The MIT Press) doi: 10.1162/REST_a_00307

Prato, C., & Wolton, S. (2017). Rational ignorance, populism, and reform. *European Journal of Political Economy*(September), 1–17. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2017.11.006 (Publisher: Elsevier) doi: 10.1016/j.ejpoleco.2017.11.006

Przeworski, A., Stokes, S. C., & Manin, B. (1999). *Democracy, accountability, and representation*. Cambridge University Press.

Ragusa, J. M. (2010, November). The Lifecycle of Public Policy: An Event History Analysis of Repeals to Landmark Legislative Enactments, 1951-2006. *American Politics Research*, *38*(6), 1015–1051. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1532673X10374170 (Publisher: SAGE PublicationsSage CA: Los Angeles, CA) doi: 10.1177/1532673X10374170

Ragusa, J. M., & Birkhead, N. A. (2015, December). Parties, Preferences, and Congressional Organization. *Political Research Quarterly*, *68*(4), 745–759. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1065912915604052 (Publisher: SAGE PublicationsSage CA: Los Angeles, CA) doi: 10.1177/1065912915604052

Ragusa, J. M., & Birkhead, N. A. (Eds.). (2020). *Congress in reverse: Repeals from reconstruction to the present*. The University Chicago Press, Chicago and London.

Robison, J. (2021, February). Can Elites Escape Blame by Explaining Themselves? Suspicion and the Limits of Elite Explanations. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1–20. Retrieved 2022-03-22, from https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/british-journal-of-political-science/article/can-elites-escape-blame-by-explaining-themselves-suspicion-and-the-limits-of-elite-explanations/491AED536795BE092829A33B16D23B57 (Publisher: Cambridge University Press) doi: 10.1017/S000712342000071X

Rodrik, D., & Stantcheva, S. (2020). The Post-Pandemic Social Contract. *Project Syndicate*, *11 June*. Retrieved from https://www.project-syndicate.org/commentary/new-social-contract-must-target-good-job-creation-by-dani-rodrik-and-stefanie-stantcheva-2020-06?barrier=accesspaylog

Roemer, J. E. (2006). *Political competition : theory and applications*. Harvard University Press. Retrieved from http://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674021051

Saez, E., & Zucman, G. (2019). Progressive Wealth Taxation. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity*, *Fall 2019*, 437533. (Publisher: Brookings)

Saurugger, S., & Terpan, F. (2015). Do crises lead to policy change? the multiple streams framework and the european union's economic governance instruments. *Policy Sciences*, *49*, 35–53. Retrieved from https://arrow.tudublin.ie/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1128&context=buschmarart

Schumacher, G., & van Kersbergen, K. (2016, May). Do mainstream parties adapt to the welfare chauvinism of populist parties? *Party Politics*, *22*(3), 300–312. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1354068814549345 (Publisher: SAGE PublicationsSage UK: London, England) doi: 10.1177/1354068814549345

Schwab, K. (2020). *Now Is the Time for a 'Great Reset'.* (Published: 3 June, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/now-is-the-time-for-a-great-reset/)

Scott, D. (2021). The trump presidency is over, and obamacare is still alive. *Vox*, *19 January*. Retrieved from https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/22238505/donald-trump-obamacare-joe-biden

Shaffer, R., Pinson, L. E., Chu, J. A., & Simmons, B. A. (2020, December). Local elected officials' receptivity to refugee resettlement in the United States. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *117*(50), 31722–31728. Retrieved 2021-01-13, from http://www.pnas.org/lookup/doi/10.1073/pnas.2015637117 doi: 10.1073/pnas.2015637117

Siddiqui, S. (2018). *'Era of Trump': how Republicans are banking on the president to drive midterm gains | US news | The Guardian.* Retrieved 2019-01-05, from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2018/aug/18/era-of-trump-republicans-democrats-midterms-blue-wave

Sirimaneetham, V. (2006). Explaining policy volatility in developing countries. *Bristol Economics Discussion Papers*. Retrieved from https://ideas.repec.org/p/bri/uobdis/06-583.html (Publisher: Department of Economics, University of Bristol, UK)

Smirnov, O., & Fowler, J. H. (2007, January). Policy-Motivated Parties in Dynamic Political Competition. *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, *19*(1), 9–31. Retrieved from http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0951629807071014 (Publisher: Sage PublicationsLondon, Thousand Oaks, CA and New Delhi) doi: 10.1177/0951629807071014

Smith, D. (2017). Move fast and break things': Trump's obamacare failure and the backlash ahead. *the Guardian*, *25 March*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/mar/25/donald-trump-healthcare-deal-republicans-obamacare

Sniderman, P. M., Hagendoorn, L., & Prior, M. (2004). Predisposing factors and situational triggers: Exclusionary reactions to immigrant minorities. *American Political Science Review*, 35–49. (Publisher: JSTOR)

Sorek, A. Y., Haglin, K., & Geva, N. (2018). In Capable Hands: An Experimental Study of the Effects of Competence and Consistency on Leadership Approva. *Political Behavior*, *40*(3), 659–679.

Stantcheva, S. (2020). *Understanding Tax Policy: How Do People Reason?* (Working Paper No. 27699). National Bureau of Economic Research. Retrieved from http://www.nber.org/papers/w27699 (Series: Working Paper Series) doi: 10.3386/w27699

Steinmayr, A. (2021). Contact versus Exposure: Refugee Presence and Voting for the Far Right. *Review of Economics and Statistics*, *103*(2), 310–327. (Publisher: MIT Press One Rogers Street, Cambridge, MA 02142-1209, USA journals-info)

Stephens, J. D., Huber, E., & Ray, L. (1999). The welfare state in hard times. In H. Kitschelt, P. Lange, G. Marks, & J. D. Stephens (Eds.), *Continuity and change in contemporary capitalism* (p. 164–193). Cambridge University Press. doi: 10.1017/CBO9781139175050.008

Streeck, W., & Thelen, K. A. (2005). *Beyond continuity : institutional change in advanced political economies*. Oxford University Press.

Tavits, M. (2007). Principle vs. Pragmatism: Policy Shifts and Political Competition. *American Journal of Political Science*, *51*, 151–165. Retrieved from https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/84cd752590f238874afbe74df754123fc93d8b47 doi: 10.1111/J.1540-5907.2007.00243.X

Thelen, K. (2004). *How Institutions Evolve*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://ebooks.cambridge.org/ref/id/CBO9780511790997 doi: 10.1017/CBO9780511790997

Theriault, S. M. (2008). *Party polarization in Congress*. Cambridge University Press.

Thrower, S. (2017). To revoke or not revoke? the political determinantsof executive order longevity. *American Journal of Political Science*, *61*(3), 642–656.

Tommasi, M., & Velasco, A. (1996, January). Where are we in the political economy of reform? *The Journal of Policy Reform*, *1*(2), 187–238. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13841289608523362 doi: 10.1080/13841289608523362

Tomz, M., & Houweling, R. P. V. (2010). Candidate Repositioning. *Working Paper*. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228467728_Candidate_Repositioning/stats

Tsebelis, G. (1995). Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism. *British Journal of Political Science*, *25*(03), 289–325. Retrieved from https://econpapers.repec.org/article/cupbjposi/v{_}3a25{_}3ay{_}3a1995{_}3ai{_}3a03{_}3ap{_}3a289-325{_}5f00.htm (Publisher: Cambridge University Press)

Turnball-Dugarte, S. J., Townsley, J., Foos, F., & Baron, D. (2021). Mobilising support when the stakes are high: Mass emails affect constituent-to-legislator lobbying. *European Journal of Political Research*. Retrieved from https://ejpr.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/1475-6765.12483 doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/1475-6765.12483

Turner, G. (2020). Tax Avoiders Will Receive Coronavirus Bailouts – We Must Redress This Injustice. *The Guardian*, *27 March*. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/commentisfree/2020/mar/27/tax-avoiders-coronavirus-bailouts

US Census Bureau, & ONS. (2011). *$CT0486_2011$ Census - Sex by Age by Ethnic Group by Economic Activity – National to Region and London Boroughs.* Office for National Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.ons.gov.uk

Volkens, A., Burst, T., Krause, W., Lehmann, P., MatthieÃŸ, T., Merz, N., ... Zehnter, L. (2020). *The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2020b.* Wissenschaftszentrum Berlin fÃ¼r Sozialforschung. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.25522/manifesto.mpds.2020b (Place: Berlin) doi: 10.25522/manifesto.mpds.2020b

Weaver, R. K. (1986). The politics of blame avoidance. *Journal of Public Policy*, *6*(4), 371–398. Retrieved 2022-07-06, from http://www.jstor.org/stable/4007281

Whiteley, P. F. (1983, June). The Political Economy of Economic Growth. *European Journal of Political Research*, *11*(2), 197–213. Retrieved from http://doi.wiley.com/10.1111/j.1475-6765.1983.tb00056.x (Publisher: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd (10.1111)) doi: 10.1111/j.1475-6765.1983.tb00056.x

Whitt, S., & Wilson, R. K. (2007). The Dictator Game, Fairness and Ethnicity in Postwar Bosnia. *American Journal of Political Science*, *51*(3), 655–668. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2007.00273.x

Wittman, D. (1977). *Journal of economic theory.* (Vol. 14) (No. 1). Academic Press. Retrieved from https://econpapers.repec.org/article/eeejetheo/v{_}3a14{_}3ay{_}3a1977{_}3ai{_}3a1{_}3ap{_}3a180-189.htm (ISSN: 0022-0531 Publication Title: Journal of Economic Theory)

Wittman, D. (1983, March). Candidate Motivation: A Synthesis of Alternative Theories. *American Political Science Review*,

77(01), 142–157. Retrieved from http://www.journals.cambridge.org/abstract{_}S0003055400246248 doi: 10.2307/1956016

Wright, A. L., Sonin, K., Driscoll, J., & Wilson, J. (2020). *Poverty and Economic Dislocation Reduce Compliance with COVID-19 Shelter-in-Place Protocols* (Working Paper No. 2020-40). Becker Friedman Institute. (Series: Working Paper Series)

Zaller, J. R. (1992). *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Appendix A Extension Propositions

A dynamically sophisticated voter

In the current model, voters vote retrospectively and are not forward-looking. One could extend the analysis by setting a scenario in which a date-1 voter internalises date-2 outcomes when deciding whether to re-elect the incumbent or replace her with the challenger.

Voters' utility from the policy implemented would then change to:

$$u_v(y_v) = (1 - \delta_v)u_v(y_1) + \delta_v u_v(y_2) \tag{1}$$

This would equal to:

$$u_v(y_v) = -(1 - \delta_v)(y_i - j)^2 - \delta_v(y_w - j)^2 \tag{2}$$

A dynamically sophisticated challenger

Similarly, if a date-1 challenger internalises date-2 outcomes when deciding to propose policies, s/he would have a similar policy calculation to the incumbent.

$$u_c(y_c) = \pi_w(u_c(y_c)) + (1 - \pi_w)(u_w(y_w) + \chi_c) \tag{3}$$

where χ_c is spoils from holding office and π_w denotes the probability of winning for the incumbent and 1 - π_w signifies the probability of winning for the challenger.

The challenger's expected utility at the proposed policies (y_i, y_c) in two periods would then be

$$U_i(y_c) = \pi_{_w}[(\delta_i - 1)(y_c - I)^2 - \delta_i(y_w - I)^2] - (1 - \pi_w)[(\delta_c - 1)(y_c - C)^2 - \delta_c(y_w - C)^2 + \chi_c] \quad (4)$$

where I represents the ideal policy of the incumbent and C represents the ideal policy of the challenger, y_c is the proposed policy of the challenger, y_w is the winning policy and δ_i, and δ_c represents the policy calculation of the incumbent and the challenger between two periods, respectively.

More general voter distributions

Instead of uniform distribution of voters, one may not require the distribution to be symmetric and allow the society to be more inclined toward the left or the right of the policy space.

The ideal points of voters would be distributed according to a cumulative probability distribution function F, and would assume that $F(j), j \in [0, 1] \subset R$, is common knowledge. The density function is denoted by by f. F is continuous, strictly increasing, and differentiable on [0, 1].

The incumbent would then be re-elected if

$$-(y_i - j)^2 > -(y_c - j)^2. \quad (5)$$

The sum of the proportions of votes would be expected to be received by the incumbent and the challenger would give an estimate of the cdf.

Comparative statics with no term-limits

One could also remove the term-limits and extend the model to an indefinitely repeated game.

$$\delta u_i(.) + \delta^2 u_i(.) + ... + \delta^{t+1} u_i(.), t = (1, ..., t) \tag{6}$$

Then,

$$\sum^{\infty} = \left[\frac{u_i(.)}{1-\delta}\right] \tag{7}$$

When challenger proposes far-right:

$y_i = \frac{\pi_w - 1}{\pi_w \delta - 1}$ is immediate from the first-order condition of the incumbent.

Considering the uncertainty surrounding the voters' policy position j $\sim [1/2 - \alpha, 1/2 + \beta]$, y_i reduces to the following:

$y_i = \frac{\alpha}{\alpha + \beta(1-\delta)}$

The decision of the incumbent depends on the level of uncertainty and how much the incumbent values the future. When $\delta = 0.5$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values both terms equally, y_i is as the following in Table 1 depending on the level of α, i.e., the level of uncertainty around the left-side of the axis. Higher the α the more uncertainty. The incumbent proposes the centre policy (0.5) when $\beta > \alpha$ meaning that there is more uncertainty on the right-side of the axis, where $\alpha = 0.125$ and $\beta = 0.25$ or when $\alpha = 0.0625$ and $\beta = 0.125$. When both α and β are 0.125, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point. The incumbent, therefore, implements closer to her ideal point when there is more uncertainty on the right-side of the axis $\beta > \alpha$ and the cut-off points are $\alpha = 0.125$ and $\beta = 0.25$ or when $\alpha = 0.0625$ and $\beta = 0.125$.

If $\alpha > 0.0625$ and $\beta = 0.125$ or $\alpha = 0.0625$ and $\beta < 0.125$, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point in the short-term and reverses in the second-term.

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.007
0.1	0.25	0.44
0.125	0.25	*0.5*
0.2	0.25	0.61
0.3	0.25	0.70
0.4	0.25	0.76
0.5	0.25	0.8
0.125	0.125	0.66
0.0625	0.125	*0.5*

When $\delta = 0.02$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values the current term much more than the next (possibly there are no upcoming elections), y_i is as the following:

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.039
0.1	0.25	0.28
0.2	0.25	0.44
0.245	0.25	*0.5*
0.3	0.25	0.55
0.4	0.25	0.62
0.5	0.25	0.67
0.5	0.25	0.67
0.01225	0.125	*0.5*

If $\alpha > 0.245$ and $\beta = 0.25$ or $\alpha = 0.01225$ and $\beta < 0.125$, the incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point in the short-term and reverses in the second-term. In comparison to the previous case where the incumbent values both terms equally, the incumbent implements

policies closer to her ideal in the short-term, meaning that there are fewer ideological reversals in the long-term.

When $\delta = 0.98$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values the next term much more than the current one (possibly because there are upcoming elections), y_i is as the following:

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.66
0.1	0.25	0.95
0.2	0.25	0.97
0.3	0.25	0.983
0.4	0.25	0.987
0.5	0.25	0.99
0.01	0.5	*0.5*
0.00012	0.006	*0.5*

The incumbent implements closer to her opponent's ideal point in the short-term and reverses in the second-term unless there is very little uncertainty on both sides ($\alpha = 0.00012$ and $\beta = 0.006$) or very high uncertainty on the right-side of the axis ($\alpha = 0.01$ and $\beta = 0.5$). In comparison to the previous two cases, the incumbent implements policies much closer to her opponent's ideal in the short-term, meaning that there are more ideological reversals in the long-term.

When challenger proposes centre:

$y_i = \frac{\pi_w - 1}{2\pi_w \delta - 2}$ is immediate from the first-order condition of the incumbent.

Considering the uncertainty surrounding the voters' policy position j $\sim [1/2 - \alpha, 1/2 + \beta]$, y_i reduces to the following:

$y_i = \frac{\alpha}{2(\alpha + \beta - \beta\delta)}$

The decision of the incumbent depends on the level of uncertainty and how much the incumbent values the future. When $\delta = 0.5$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values both terms equally, y_i is as the following depending on the level of α, i.e., the level of uncertainty around the left-side of the axis. Higher the α, the more uncertainty.

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.03
0.1	0.25	0.22
0.2	0.25	0.30
0.3	0.25	0.35
0.4	0.25	0.38
0.5	0.25	0.4

The incumbent always implements in between her ideal point and her opponent's ideal point. When uncertainty is skewed towards the left-side of the axis, she implements closer to her opponent's proposed policy (0.5).

When $\delta = 0.02$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values the current term much more than the next, y_i is as the follows:

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.01
0.1	0.25	0.14
0.2	0.25	0.22
0.3	0.25	0.27
0.4	0.25	0.31
0.5	0.25	0.33

The incumbent still implements in between her ideal point and her opponent's ideal point. When uncertainty is skewed towards the left-side of the axis, she implements closer to her opponent's proposed policy (0.5).

When $\delta = 0.98$ and $\beta = 0.25$, meaning that the incumbent values the next term much more than the current one, y_i is as the following:

α	β	y_i
0.01	0.25	0.33
0.1	0.25	0.47
0.2	0.25	0.48
0.3	0.25	0.491
0.4	0.25	0.493
0.5	0.25	0.495

The incumbent still implements in between her ideal point and her opponent's ideal point. When uncertainty is skewed towards the left-side of the axis, she implements closer to her opponent's proposed policy (0.5).

Appendix B Survey procedure and sampling process

B.1 Fieldwork

Prior to launching the survey, we conducted six months of fieldwork, including meetings with government officials (local and national), workers in health and education, and citizens. Furthermore, we visited refugee reception and host sites throughout Greece and interviewed members of the administrative staff as well as citizens residing nearby to help perfect our survey materials. We also spoke to numerous municipal officials in heavily impacted, moderately impacted and non-impacted localities. Before being fielded, the instrument of the survey was approved by the Harvard IRB. "We note that we use the term refugees for all persons being hosted in refugee reception and host sites during their asylum application process. Refugee reception facilities are meant to host refugees temporarily until their application has been reviewed."

B.2 Recruitment, survey distribution and response rates

Interaction with research participants was through a Qualtrics survey distributed by electronic invitation. Invitations were sent with the help of the research organization Public Opinion Research Unit at the University of Macedonia (PORU UoM), which has performed a large number of prior surveys in Greece on similar topics. Working from publicly available contact information for all of Greece's 332 municipalities, we contacted 4,463 council members with invitations. Participants were able to access the survey from a link, and if they expressed interest in the research by clicking the link, a written copy of the consent form was made available to the prospective participant. If consent was given, the survey proceeded. The anticipated completion

time for this survey was 30-35 minutes. Also, we should note that the survey did not involve the use of deception or false information.

In the first round, 41.71% of invitations were opened, and 10.22% clicked to proceed to the research. There were then two reminder rounds, which were accompanied by reminder phone calls to all municipalities (49.47% opened and 8.12% clicked and 25% opened and 5.76% clicked in these two subsequent rounds). To put this in perspective, according to PORU UoM, the average campaign statistics on the category of "Education Training" are 23.43% opens and 2.90% clicks, while in the "Government" category are 28.77% opens and 3.99% clicks.

Our response rate is 44.8%, which is very good compared to other comparative political elite surveys, (see for example Deschouwer & Depauw 2014) with reported response rates varying between 13% (France) and 43% (Netherlands) with an average response rate of 25%.[42] At the end of the campaign, 624 city council members completed the survey, with 586 out of them completing at least one task of the conjoint experiment.

B.3 Sample representativeness

The localities represented by city council members in our sample cover a large portion of Greece. Specifically, we have respondents from 194 municipalities (60% of Greek municipalities), covering 100% of the 52 Greek prefectures and 100% of the 13 Greek peripheries. We used quota sampling based on three characteristics: gender, periphery

[42]We calculate the Response Rate based on the following formula: Response Rate= I/((I+P)+(R+NC+O)+(UH+UO)) where I=Complete Interviews, P=Partial Interviews, R=Refusal and break off, NC=Non-Contact, O=Other, UH=Unknown Household and UO=Unknown other. To calculate the outcome rates based on AAPOR's Standard Definitions, Version 9 (2016) and e, which is the estimated proportion of cases of unknown eligibility that are eligible. This estimate is based on the proportion of eligible units among all units in the sample for which a definitive determination of status was obtained (a conservative estimate). For more, see AAPOR's 2009 Eligibility Estimates. We use the AAPOR Outcome Rate Calculator for Internet/ specifically named persons, Version 4.1 (web), March 2018.

and party affiliation. Gender-wise, we perfectly matched the actual distribution of elected councillors following the last election of 2019 (81% men to 19% women) with a ratio of 8:2. In terms of administrative/geographical distribution, we got responses from councillors from all the 13 peripheries of Greece. Our sample of councillors is proportional to the numbers of elected council members across each of the 13 peripheries.[43] Regarding party affiliation, 55% of our respondents did not share their party affiliation. From those who indicated their affiliation, we had respondents from all eight parties represented in municipal councils across Greece and in proportions that closely match the actual distribution of seats in the municipal council across parties –the distribution of seats is not proportional to the actual distribution of vote-shares as Greece applies a party-list formula that is distorting.

During our fieldwork, we collected data on refugee reception centres and host sites from each municipality. To measure the effect of a presence of an active camp on policy preferences, we created a binary variable where 1 indicates that there is a refugee reception and host site in the relevant municipality with a capacity of *at least 100* people, and 0 otherwise (there are 38 such sites in Greece distributed across 36 municipalities; the number of councillors in our sample, representing 27 out of these 36 municipalities, is 97 (or 16.6% of total respondents)).

Because of IRB restrictions, we were unable to collect any identifiable data at the individual level on the respondents. Thus, we cannot check for representativeness using an individual level regression. We can, however, do the next best thing, which is checking for representativeness more systematically at the municipal level.

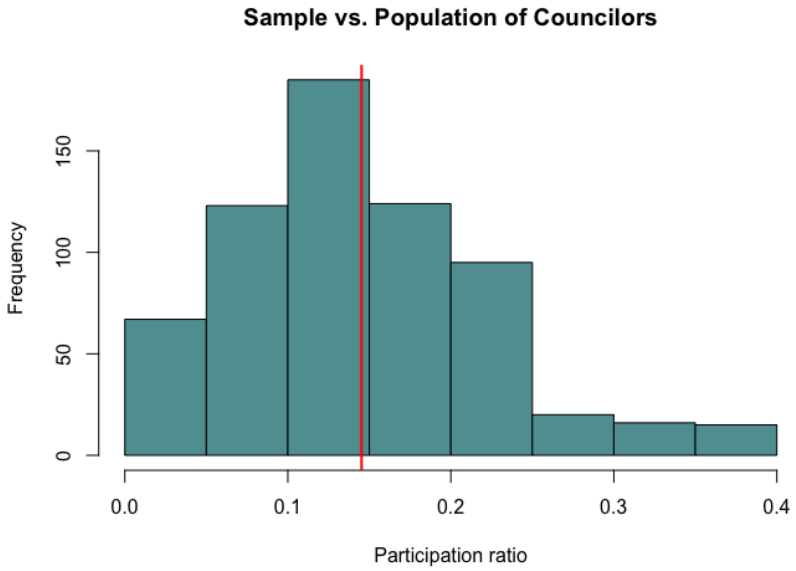
To do this, we create a municipal level "participation ratio" variable, which measures the percentage of councillors that responded to us in

[43]There are two peripheries (Thessaly and Peloponnese) where the number of councillors we managed to recruit was slightly below the proportional threshold, but the differences were marginal.

each municipality. We present a histogram of this variable in Fig. 25, which shows the distribution of participation across municipalities. On average, 15% of councillors participated from a given municipality.

Next, we accessed the names of the entire universe of 9,857 councillors from the Greek Ministry of Interior. We then manually coded the gender of the entire universe of 9,857 councillors based on their first and last names. We also collected data on and coded the party affiliation for those councillors that publicly declared it from the Greek Ministry of Interior. Finally, we create a dummy variable to measure whether or not each councillor serves in a municipality with an active host site.

To check for municipal level representativeness, we then run a regression where we regress "participation ratio" on ratios of the characteristics of councillors in each municipality (gender and party affiliation) as well as a dummy variable to capture the existence of a camp in each municipality. The regression results in Table 12 show that there are no imbalances at the municipal level in councillor participation in our study based on gender, party affiliation or camp presence in the councillor's municipality.



Note: Red line depicts the average participation rate.

Figure 25: **Councilor survey participation**

Table 12: **Sample representativeness**

	DV: Participation ratio
(Intercept)	0.15***
	(0.01)
Golden Dawn	0.01
	(0.02)
New Democracy	0.00
	(0.00)
Kinal	−0.00
	(0.00)
Syriza	0.00
	(0.01)
KKE	−0.00
	(0.00)
Antarsya	0.01
	(0.05)
Female councillor	−0.08
	(0.06)
Existing camp	−0.00
	(0.02)
R^2	0.14
Adj. R^2	0.13
Num. obs.	645
RMSE	0.07
N Clusters	202

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

Appendix C The conjoint experiment

C.1 The survey instrument

We present here some key elements of our survey questionnaire. The full questionnaire instrument is included in the PAP and is available online.

Before taking the conjoint, respondents were prompted with the following text:

"Now we would like you to assess below some aspects of the possible scenarios where your municipality is in a position of deciding on the characteristics of the asylum-seeker host site (camp) and the areas that possible additional funds can be used. We present below two hypothetical proposals (A and B), which have been submitted for approval to the city council. Each of the proposals consists of 5 characteristics. Please consider each proposal (A and B) in its entirety. You will now be invited to choose between the two proposals. We will present you three such pairs."

Each task consisted of a comparison between two randomly generated profiles (policy proposals). Each profile/proposal was populated with a *randomly assigned* value (drawn from the list below) for each one of its five attributes. The five attributes and the possible values that they could take were as follows:

1. **Type of public goods provision**
    - More infrastructure to the municipality
    - Hire more teachers and doctors
    - Hire more municipal employees

2. **Size of the host site for asylum-seekers**

    - 1% of local population
    - Less than 1% of local population
    - More than 1% of local population

3. **Who is in charge of day-to-day administration of the camp**

    - National Government
    - International Organizations (UNHCR, IOM)
    - Local Government
    - Army
    - Church

4. **Proximity of the camp to the urban center**

    - In the centre
    - 30-minute walk or less from the center
    - More than a 30-minute walk from the center

5. **Type of site**

    - Fully open (site residents have unrestricted mobility)
    - Partially open (site residents must check in and out before leaving)
    - Closed (exit allowed by permission of authorities only for a specified amount of time)

We chose these three types of public goods based on extensive qualitative work with municipal officials both in Greece and in other refugee host communities in the developed and developing world. Our objective was to strike a balance between contextual relevance in the Greek case and generalizability. We also sought to engage with ongoing theoretical debates in our selection of the type of municipal compensation. Our logic was as follows:

1)More infrastructure: We note in the survey as deployed in Greek, the term we use for "additional infrastructure" (Περισσοτερες υποδομες), which relates to a broad set of infrastructural public goods that fall under municipal purview. In the Greek case, this includes roads, water, energy, trash collection, sports centres, parks, playgrounds, and cultural centres.

2)Teachers and doctors: Doctors and teachers were selected for two reasons. First, these were exactly the shortages and bottlenecks found repeatedly in our qualitative work with citizens and municipal officials, especially in municipalities with large hosting. Second, this type of public goods provision (at least in the Greek case) requires inputs from the central government. To elaborate, teachers and doctors in Greece do not originate from the municipalities in which they serve. After finishing their credentials, they apply for positions through the central government, which then distributes them to municipalities across the country based on a needs assessment of municipalities and local negotiations with mayors and councils. In other words, these are a type of public goods that are appointed and funded by the central government and then distributed to the municipalities. There are huge backlogs (επετηριδα) of teachers and doctors waiting for jobs, and the central government must create and fund the positions and

then allocate them to a respective municipality. As we see it, this form of public goods both allays concerns about resource competition in key institutions at the municipal level and is akin to recognition from the central government that a given municipality has an increased or heightened need (important given our interest in the role of fairness).

3)Municipal employees: Municipal employees were selected because of the contextual significance–namely an association with patronage/corruption–and thus their relevance to broader debates about rent-seeking in the context of refugee crises. Municipal employment is the institutional public good most associated with patronage politics, clientelism and corruption in Greece. Scholars have shown that local officials—sometimes in collusion with their national-level counterparts—use the three types of municipal employment (permanent, temporary/contract and day-labour) to increase their own popularity and chances for reelection, even if the positions hired are unnecessary or redundant (Chortareas, Logothetis, & Papandreou 2017). Notably, the municipal employee is distinct from other public professions (doctors, teachers, police) in that they are hired by the municipality itself and not subjected to needs assessments, credential verifications, and budgetary scrutiny that accompany national-level public employment allocation schemes. By including municipal employees, we, therefore, sought to tap ongoing theoretical discussions in the literature about elite capture of crisis-related funding, namely public goods allocation that is biased towards local elite interests.

Regarding camp administration, we selected these organizations to examine preferences about current day-to-day administrators of reception facilities in Greece (National Government, UNHCR/IOM, Army) and two other possible types of day-to-day administrators (Local Government, Church).

The local government was selected given the nature of our respondent pool—local councillors. Put simply; we could see if local officials preferred to take over day-to-day administrative responsibilities themselves, and therefore maintain control over them instead of delegating control upwards (to the National Government, Army or Church) or outwards to international bodies (UNHCR/IOM). UNHCR/IOM most recognizable international bodies were participating in the response in Greece.

The church was selected for reasons that are contextually relevant to the Greek case and also linked to broader debates about how religion shapes the debate of refugee reception and resettlement. Like elsewhere in Europe, Muslim refugees face discrimination and persecution in Greece. This is exacerbated further in the Greek case because of the country's contentious history with its Muslim-majority neighbour Turkey as well as its state-building legacy. Nominal allegiance to the Greek Orthodox Church—that is, being Greek Orthodox—has been viewed as the sine-qua-non of "Greekness" for centuries. This belief still persists today, even among many Greeks who consider themselves secular. Greek assimilation and immigration policies have consistently categorized Greek Orthodox groups as deserving members of the community. Even groups that do not necessarily speak the Greek language, but are Greek Orthodox, have been privileged. A historical case in point is Albanians: Christian Orthodox Albanians that thus have "Greek names" have been given preference over Muslim Albanians. By including Church, we could therefore see if cultural concerns were translated into a preference for having one of the primary torch-bearers of Greek cultural heritage take on an administrative role. Overall, we recognize the value in breaking things down further to include specific types of infrastructure, additional types of personnel to hires, etc. Ultimately, we limited ourselves to these three carefully considered categories for purely practical and based on two factors:

simplicity of the experiment and concerns about the power given the difficulties in obtaining responses from local officials, especially in a non-face to face survey.

C.2 Further details to the conjoint design

In total, we had (2 profiles × 3 tasks × 586 respondents) 3,516 profiles shown. Given the number of attributes (five) and the possible levels/values for each one, we had a total of 405 unique profile combinations. This implies that each of these 405 *unique* profiles was shown (on average) about 8-9 times. The frequencies of the randomly displayed attribute levels for each of the five attributes are as follows (percentages in parentheses):

- *Proximity of the camp to the urban center:* (i) in the center: 1156 (32.9%) (ii) 30-min walk or less from center: 1162 (33%) (iii) more than 30-min walk from center: 1198 (34.1%)

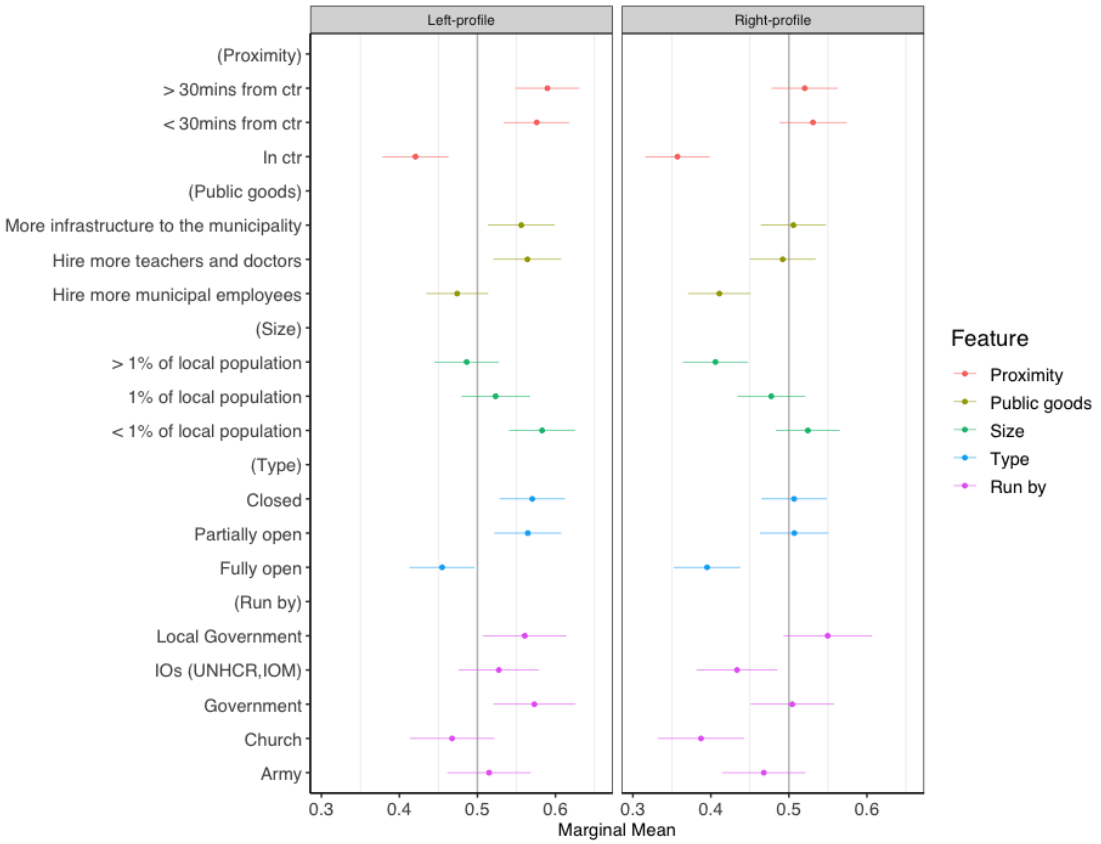
- *Type of public goods provision:* (i) hire more municipal employees: 1192 (34%) (ii) hire more teachers and doctors: 1140 (32.3%) (iii) more infrastructure to municipality: 1184 (33.7%)

- *Size of the host site:* (i) less than 1% of local population: 1193 (33.9%) (ii) 1% of local population: 1122 (31.9%) (iii) more than 1% of local population: 1201 (34.2%)

- *Type of site:* (i) fully open: 1168 (33.3%) (ii) partially open: 1147 (32.6%) (iii) closed: 1201 (34.1%)

- *Who is in charge of day-to-day administration:* (i) army: 716 (20.4%) (ii) church: 643 (18.3%) (iii) national government: 719 (20.4%) (iv) international organizations (UNHCR, IOM): 728 (20.7%) (v) local government: 710 (20.2%)

We also examined whether there is any preference for the left-hand or right-hand profile in our pair design. We did not observe any overall trends or any significant imbalances in the ordering of preferences after performing this diagnostic test. In Fig. 26 we show those results.



Note: The plot illustrates the marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent. N= 3,516; unique N = 586.

Figure 26: **Aggregate marginal means showing profile placement diagnostics**

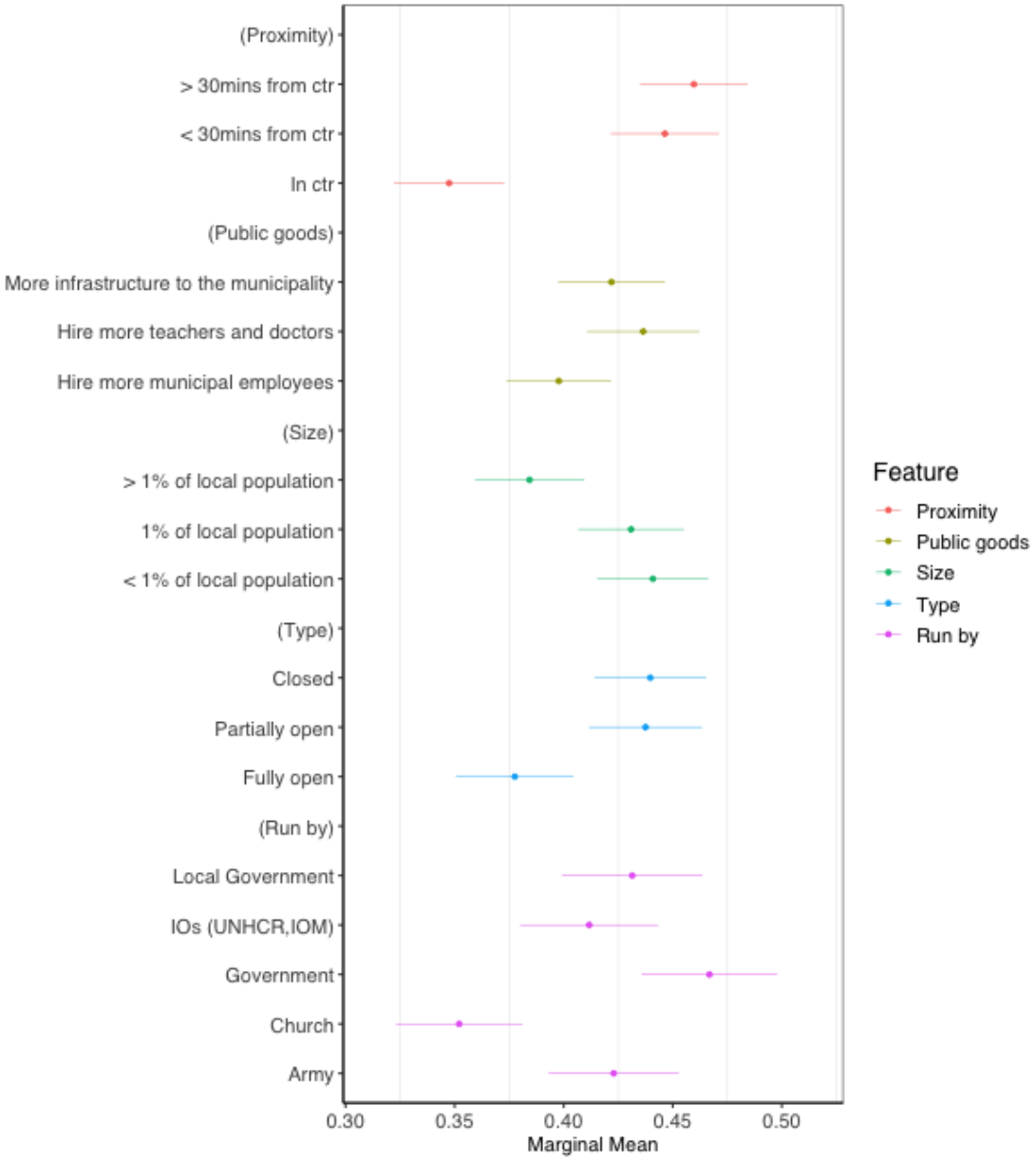
C.3 Randomisation and outcome variables

Each respondent received three pairs of proposals with randomly assigned attribute values. We also randomised the attribute order (between respondents). Two questions were asked for each pair. The first question asked respondents to rate on a Likert scale how likely it would be for them to vote for each of the two hypothetical proposals.

Specifically, the question was:
"On a scale from 0 to 7, where 0 indicates that you definitely will not vote for that proposal and 7 indicates that you will definitely vote for that proposal, how likely is it for you to vote for it?".

The second question (binary choice) asked them to choose between the two hypothetical proposals:
"Now, imagine if you had to choose between these two proposals, which one of two would you vote for if it reached the municipal council?".

We report forced-choice results in the main text because we would like to know councillors' vote (Yes or No), should a similar proposal reach the floor of a municipal council (for a detailed presentation of the conjoint experiment methodology, see Hainmueller et al. 2014). Nevertheless, we get substantively identical results when using the Likert scale-based variable. Fig. 27 displays those results (with the outcome being rescaled to vary between 0 and 1 for ease of interpretation).



Note: The plot illustrates the marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. Likert scale outcome is rescaled to vary between 0 and 1 for ease of interpretation. SE's are clustered by the respondent. N= 3,516; unique N = 586.

Figure 27: **Aggregate marginal means with Likert scale outcome**

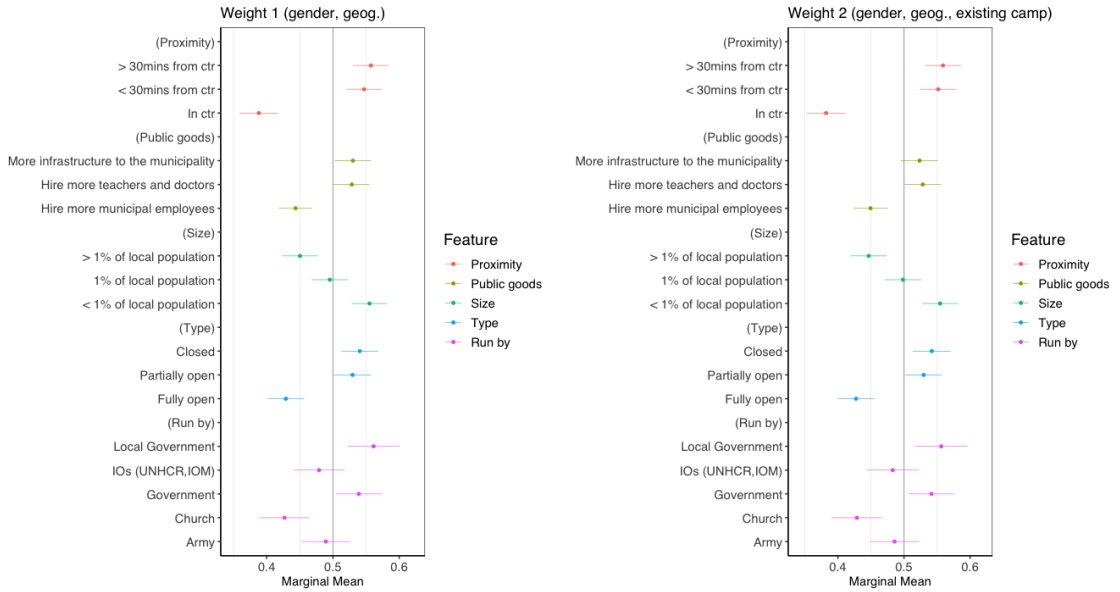
C.4 Methodology

We estimated average marginal component effects (for a discussion of AMCEs, see Abramson, Kocak, & Magazinnik 2019; Hainmueller et al. 2014) and marginal means (see, Leeper, Hobolt, & Tilley 2020) to analyze the data recorded in the three choice tasks.[44] We display marginal means (MMs) in the main text (also see Tables 14 and 15). We report estimated average marginal component effects in Tables 13 and 23. In our forced-choice conjoint design with two policy profiles per choice task, MMs represent the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. The AMCE coefficients represent the average effect of a change from the omitted attribute level on the probability of a proposal being chosen. We report MMs and differences in MMs in the main text so as to be able to show inferences on the absolute preference. We also employ this approach to demonstrate respondents' preferences in subgroups (for a detailed presentation of the methods, see Leeper et al. 2020). We report AMCEs in sections D and E.

C.5 Robustness to analysis

In additional specifications, we used (i) municipality fixed effects (see Table 13 column 3) and (ii) (manually targeted) entropy balancing weights (see Table 13 column 2 and Fig. 28) to further ensure that our estimates are representative of the councillor population (for a detailed presentation of the methods, see Hainmueller & Xu 2011). Specifically, on the left panel of Fig. 28, we used entropy balancing to re-weight

[44] Abramson et al. (2019) make a critique of common practices employed in conjoint experiments using AMCEs to interpret majority vote shares. Bansak, Hainmueller, Hopkins, and Yamamoto (2020) differentiate the interpretation of effects of attributes on vote shares from the fraction of voters who prefer a specific attribute. Leeper et al. (2020) recommend focusing on marginal means because it conveys the absolute level of favorability of respondents toward all levels of each proposal attribute.



Note: The plot illustrates the marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent. geog=geography. N= 3,516; unique N = 586.

Figure 28: **Aggregate marginal means with entropy balancing weights**

our survey sample to known characteristics of the Greek councillor population using gender and geographical distribution of councillors. On the right panel, in addition to gender and geography, we include the existence of a camp in the entropy weight. Our results remain robust in both specifications.

Appendix D Aggregate results

Tables 13 and 14 report aggregate average marginal component effects (AMCEs) and aggregate marginal means (MMs), respectively. In AMCEs, the omitted categories on each attribute are the following: (1) in the centre, (2) hire more municipal employees, (3) 1% of the local population, (4) closed and (5) army.

D.1 Aggregate average marginal component effects (AMCEs)

Table 13: **Aggregate average marginal component effects (AMCEs)**

	Main model	Weighted model	Municip. FE model
(Intercept)	0.37***	0.37***	
	(0.03)	(0.03)	
More than 30-min walk	0.17***	0.18***	0.17***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Less than 30-min walk	0.16***	0.17***	0.17***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
More infrastructure to municipality	0.09***	0.08**	0.09***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.08***	0.08**	0.09***
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
More than 1% of local population	−0.05*	−0.05*	−0.06*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Less than 1% of local population	0.05*	0.06*	0.05*
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Partially open	−0.00	−0.01	−0.00
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Fully open	−0.12***	−0.12***	−0.12***
	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.02)
Church	−0.07*	−0.06*	−0.07*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Government	0.04	0.04	0.05
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
IOs	−0.02	−0.02	−0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Local government	0.06*	0.06*	0.06*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.06
Adj. R^2	0.05	0.05	0.00
Num. obs.	3496	3496	3496
RMSE	0.49	0.49	0.50
N Clusters	586	586	586

Omitted: (1) in the ctr, (2) hire municipal employees, (3) 1% of local pop, (4) closed, (5) army. $^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

D.2 Aggregate marginal means (MMs)

Table 14: **Aggregate marginal means (MMs)**

level	estimate	std.error	z
In ctr	0.39	0.01	30.36
< 30mins from ctr	0.55	0.01	46.58
> 30mins from ctr	0.56	0.01	47.27
Hire more municipal employees	0.44	0.01	38.34
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.53	0.01	42.14
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.53	0.01	42.38
< 1% of local population	0.55	0.01	46.59
1% of local population	0.50	0.01	39.61
> 1% of local population	0.45	0.01	36.53
Fully open	0.43	0.01	33.87
Partially open	0.54	0.01	43.02
Closed	0.54	0.01	42.44
Army	0.49	0.02	29.11
Church	0.43	0.02	23.83
Government	0.54	0.02	33.57
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.48	0.02	27.26
Local Government	0.56	0.02	32.06

Note: SE's in parentheses are clustered by respondent. N= 3,516; unique N = 586.

D.3 Test of H3

In this section we test for differences in subgroup preferences on camp size, by presence of an active host site.[45] Tables 15 and 17 show marginal means and average marginal component effects for subgroups based on camp size, respectively. Table 16 shows that there is no statistically significant difference in marginal means between subgroups towards camp size, suggesting that there is no evidence that there are substantial differences in preferences for camp size between those places with and without an active host site.

Table 15: **Active host site marginal means (MMs)**

level	estimate	std.error	z	Camp
< 1% of local population	0.52	0.03	19.93	Yes
1% of local population	0.50	0.03	16.10	Yes
> 1% of local population	0.47	0.03	15.92	Yes
< 1% of local population	0.56	0.01	42.25	No
1% of local population	0.50	0.01	36.25	No
> 1% of local population	0.44	0.01	32.91	No

Note: SE's in parentheses are clustered by respondent. N= 3,516; unique N = 586.

Table 16: **Subgroup analysis, differences in marginal means**

BY	statistic	level	estimate	std.error	z
No - Yes	mm_difference	< 1% of local population	0.04	0.03	1.34
No - Yes	mm_difference	1% of local population	-0.01	0.03	-0.16
No - Yes	mm_difference	> 1% of local population	-0.03	0.03	-0.99

We also test the validity of hypothesis H3:

H.3 (Past Exposure/Contact): Opposition to hosting large camps (more than 1% of the population) should be stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp.

Based on our qualitative work, the presence of an active camp makes people less likely to support the construction of a relatively large host site in their municipality. In other words, our hypothesis is:

[45] For a discussion of testing for differences in marginal means see Leeper et al. (2020)

- *H.0: Opposition to hosting large camps (more the 1% of the population) is not stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp.*

- *H.A: Opposition to hosting large camps (more the 1% of the population) is stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp.*

We get a Z-score -0.99.[46] Under $\alpha = 0.05$, the critical value is 1.64 (p-value $= 0.84$) and hence, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. We, therefore, conclude that there is no evidence in favour of the hypothesis that opposition to hosting large camps (more the 1% of the population) is stronger in municipalities that already host a refugee camp.

[46] We test against the alternative hypothesis that the difference in marginal means for a large camp (more than 1% of the local population) between municipalities without and with active host sites is positive.

Table 17: **Active host site AMCEs**

	Active host site	No active host site
(Intercept)	0.41***	0.36***
	(0.07)	(0.03)
More than 30mins walk	0.17***	0.17***
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Less than 30mins walk	0.12**	0.17***
	(0.04)	(0.02)
More infrastructure	0.09	0.09***
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.08	0.08***
	(0.04)	(0.02)
More than 1% of local population	−0.04	−0.06*
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Less than 1% of local population	0.01	0.06**
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Partially open	−0.01	−0.00
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Fully open	−0.14**	−0.11***
	(0.05)	(0.02)
Church	−0.11	−0.06*
	(0.06)	(0.03)
Government	0.04	0.04
	(0.06)	(0.03)
IOs	−0.07	−0.01
	(0.06)	(0.03)
Local government	0.08	0.05
	(0.07)	(0.03)
R^2	0.06	0.06
Adj. R^2	0.04	0.05
Num. obs.	706	2790
RMSE	0.49	0.49
N Clusters	119	467

Omitted: (1) in the ctr, (2) hire municipal employees, (3) 1% of local pop, (4) closed, (5) army. $^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Appendix E Subgroup results

E.1 Variables

Table 18: **Descriptive statistics**

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Pctl(25)	Pctl(75)	Max
Sociocultural threat PCA	3,516	1.951	2.069	0	0	3.2	10
Economic threat PCA	3,516	3.778	2.911	0	1.3	6.2	10
Ethnocentric PCA	3,516	6.400	2.274	0	4.995	8.011	10
Ideology	3,294	5.020	2.493	0	4.000	7.000	10

In addition to the aggregate results, we also conducted a subgroup analysis. We present descriptive statistics of the variables used in this analysis in Table 18. In order to construct the first three variables, we created three indices using polychoric principle component analysis (PCA): (1) perceived socio-cultural threat, (2) perceived economic threat and (3) ethnocentric values. We normalized these variables to vary between 0 and 10. Prior to computing our centred and standardized PCAs, we replaced a few missing data with mean values of the respective variables. We present a scree plot of eigenvalues and principal components loadings in Fig. 29 and Table 22.

Perceived socio-cultural threat PCA

To form an index of perceived socio-cultural threat, we used variables measuring respondents' perceptions on how refugees' presence threatens the community because

- They are not Christians
- They do not follow the customs and traditions
- They are not white

- They do not speak the language [47]

All four variables included a 5-scale outcome ranging from completely agree to completely disagree. We present below the correlation table of these variables. This centered and standardized PCA explains 65.58% of the variation.

Table 19: **Perceived socio-cultural threat correlation matrix**

	Christians	Customs	White	Language
Christians	1.0000			
Customs	0.8297	1.0000		
White	0.5685	0.6023	1.0000	
Language	0.5947	0.7139	0.7715	1.0000

Perceived economic threat PCA

To create an index of perceived economic threat, we used variables measuring respondents' perceptions on how refugees' presence causes economic threats because

- Asylum seekers threaten our municipality by taking jobs from Greeks
- Asylum seekers are a burden on the municipal budget and take up resources that are intended for locals [48]

Both variables included a 5-scale outcome ranging from completely agree to completely disagree. We present below the correlation table of these variables. This centered and standardized PCA explains 80.84% of the variation.

[47] Number of missing values for each variable at the councillor level were the following, respectively: 11, 11, 5, 6.

[48] Number of missing values for each variable at the councillor level were the following, respectively: 11, 29.

Table 20: **Perceived economic threat correlation matrix**

	Budget	Jobs
Budget	1.0000	
Jobs	0.6849	1.0000

Ethnocentric values PCA

We created an index of ethnocentric values based on how important councillors thought one (or all) of the following elements are for someone to be considered a "truly Greek": (question adapted from **?**):

- Being able to speak the Greek language
- Sharing Greek customs and traditions
- Having been born in Greece
- Being an Orthodox Christian [49]

All four variables included a 5-scale outcome ranging from completely agree to completely disagree. This centred and standardized PCA explains 57.24% of the variation.

Table 21: **Ethnocentric values correlation matrix**

	Language	Customs	Born	Christian
Language	1.0000			
Customs	0.6225	1.0000		
Born	0.3748	0.3771	1.0000	
Christian	0.4589	0.6423	0.5483	1.0000

[49] Number of missing values for each variable at the councillor level were the following, respectively: 6, 6, 8, 9.

Figure 29: **Screeplot of eigenvalues**

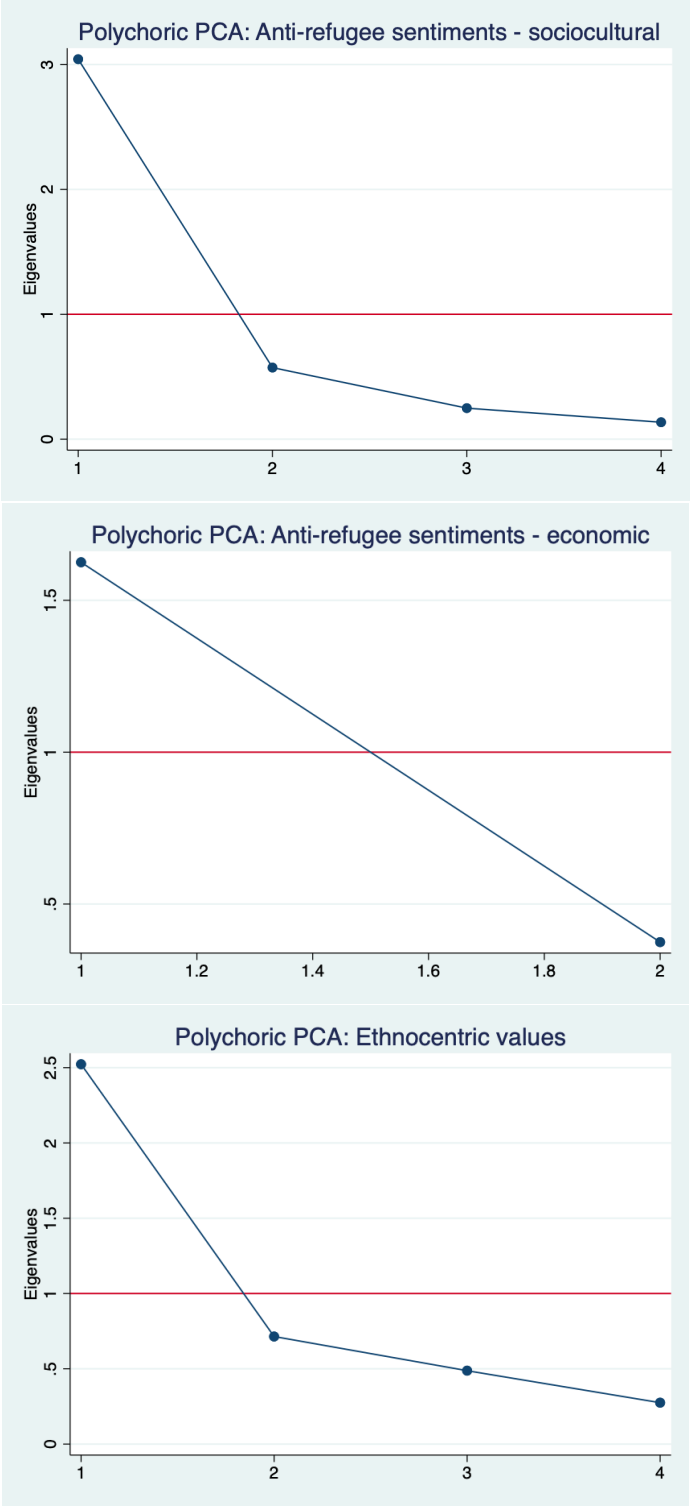


Table 22: **Principal components loadings**

Perceived socio-cultural threat PCA		**Perceived economic threat PCA**		**Ethnnocentric values PCA**	
Christians	0.49	Budget	0.71	Language	0.49
Customs	0.52	Jobs	0.71	Customs	0.53
White	0.48			Born	0.44
Language	0.51			Christian	0.53

Ideology

We also performed subgroup analysis by political ideology. To measure ideology, we asked, "In politics, people sometimes talk of left and right. Where would you place yourself on the following scale?" and provided a scale ranging from 0 (left) to 10 (right). For the purposes of the analysis, we divided respondents by the mid-value (5). We present a histogram of this variable in Fig. 30.

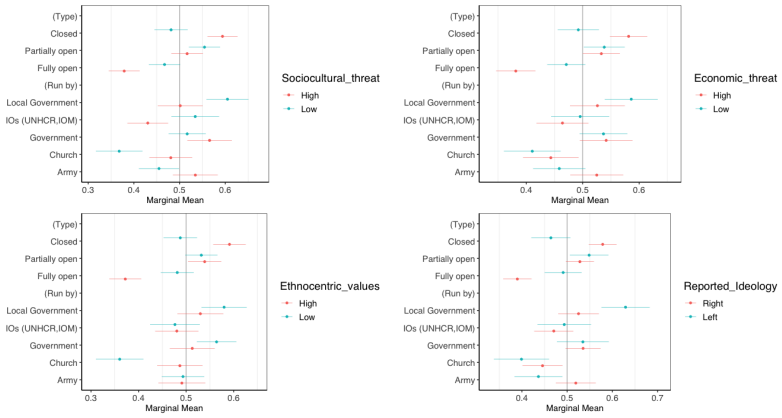


Figure 30: **Histogram of self-reported ideology**

E.2 Subgroup AMCEs and MMs

Table 23 reports average marginal component effects (AMCEs) for subgroups of respondents based on their perceived sociocultural threat, perceived economic threat, ethnocentric values and political orientation (ideology). Table 24 (p. 30-33) and Figures 31 and 32 show marginal means for the same subgroups, respectively. For the purposes of the analysis, we divided PCA indices by median values and assigned them to the categories of 'low' and 'high' for each index. We divided the ideology variable by its median value and assigned the categories of 'left' and 'right'.

Table 23: **Subgroup AMCEs**

	Sociocult. PCA-low	Sociocult. PCA-high	Econ. PCA-low	Econ. PCA-high	Ethnocent. PCA-low	Ethnocent. PCA-high	Ideology Left	Ideology Right
(Intercept)	0.31***	0.30***	0.29***	0.32***	0.35***	0.27***	0.30***	0.31***
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)
< 30mins from ctr	0.20***	0.13***	0.18***	0.15***	0.16***	0.16***	0.17***	0.16***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
> 30mins from ctr	0.18***	0.16***	0.16***	0.17***	0.14***	0.19***	0.15***	0.18***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.06*	0.10**	0.07*	0.09**	0.07*	0.09**	0.09*	0.07**
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.09**	0.09**	0.08*	0.10***	0.12***	0.05	0.09*	0.08**
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
< 1% of local population	−0.08**	−0.02	−0.03	−0.08**	−0.05	−0.05	−0.05	−0.05*
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
> 1% of local population	−0.09**	−0.12***	−0.06*	−0.15***	−0.07*	−0.14***	−0.07	−0.14***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Partially open	0.08**	0.14***	0.07*	0.16***	0.07*	0.16***	0.06	0.15***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Closed	0.01	0.22***	0.03	0.21***	0.02	0.21***	−0.03	0.19***
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)
Church	−0.09*	−0.05	−0.05	−0.08*	−0.13**	−0.01	−0.03	−0.08*
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.03)
Government	0.05	0.02	0.07*	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.09*	0.01
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.03)
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.07	−0.11**	0.03	−0.08*	−0.02	−0.02	0.07	−0.07*
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)
Local Government	0.14***	−0.03	0.12**	−0.01	0.08*	0.03	0.19***	0.01
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
R^2	0.07	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.08	0.07	0.07
Adj. R^2	0.07	0.07	0.04	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.06	0.07
Num. obs.	1768	1728	1694	1802	1732	1764	1170	2124
RMSE	0.48	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	0.48
N Clusters	295	291	283	303	292	294	195	354

We divide PCA variables by their median values. Omitted: (1) in the ctr, (2) hire municipal employees, (3) 1% of local pop, (4) closed, (5) army. $^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Table 24: **Subgroup marginal means (MMs)**

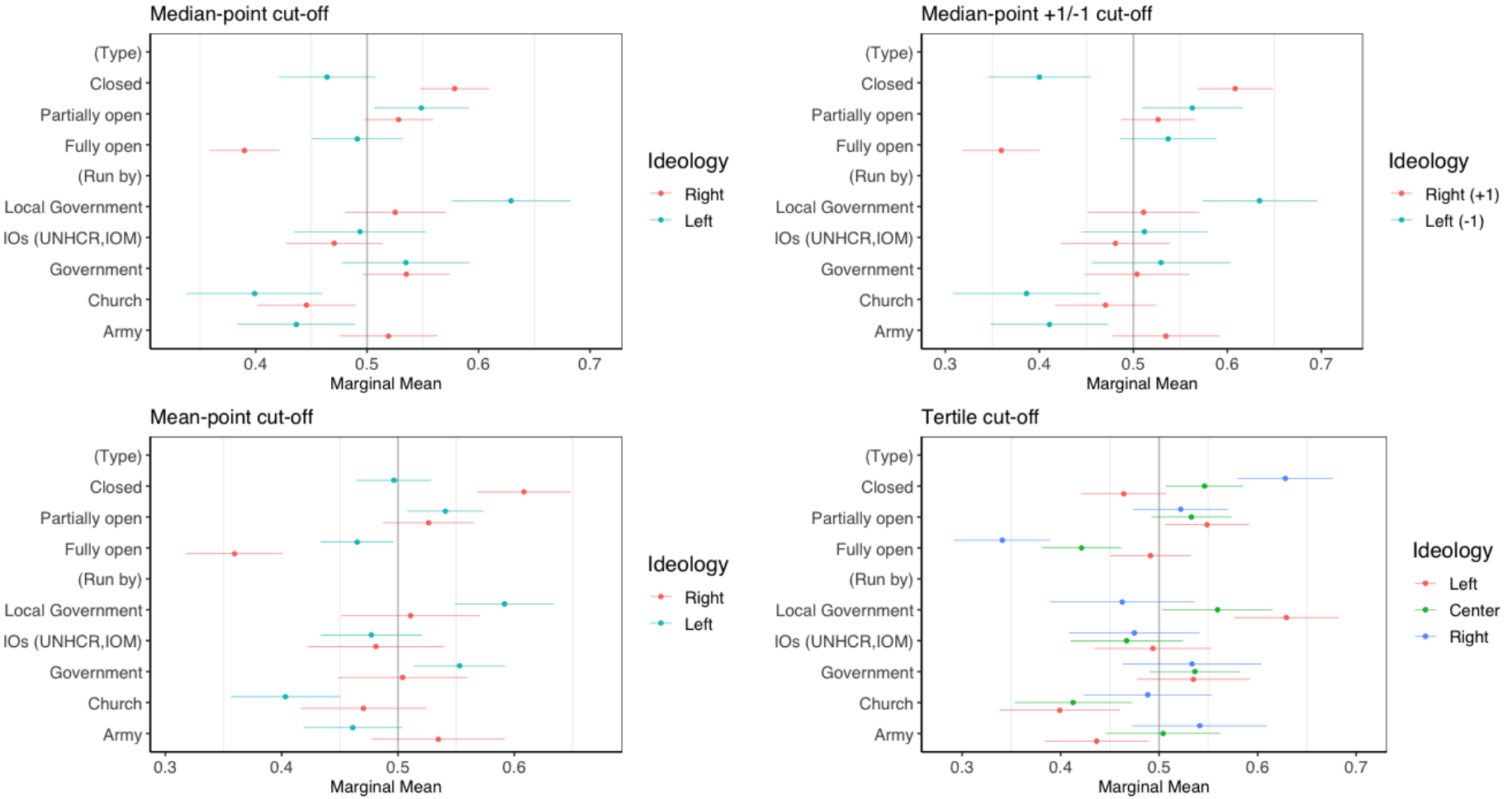
level	estimate	std.error	z	**Sociocultural threat**
In ctr	0.40	0.02	22.62	High
< 30mins from ctr	0.54	0.02	31.53	High
> 30mins from ctr	0.56	0.02	36.08	High
Hire more municipal employees	0.43	0.02	27.12	High
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.54	0.02	27.92	High
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.53	0.02	30.04	High
< 1% of local population	0.54	0.02	32.58	High
1% of local population	0.53	0.02	31.84	High
> 1% of local population	0.43	0.02	24.67	High
Fully open	0.38	0.02	21.91	High
Partially open	0.52	0.02	29.28	High
Closed	0.59	0.02	35.32	High
Army	0.53	0.03	21.34	High
Church	0.48	0.02	20.07	High
Government	0.57	0.02	22.76	High
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.43	0.02	18.91	High
Local Government	0.50	0.03	19.95	High
In ctr	0.37	0.02	20.46	Low
< 30mins from ctr	0.57	0.02	34.15	Low
> 30mins from ctr	0.55	0.02	31.14	Low
Hire more municipal employees	0.45	0.02	27.15	Low
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.52	0.02	32.02	Low
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.53	0.02	29.86	Low
< 1% of local population	0.56	0.02	33.34	Low
1% of local population	0.47	0.02	24.57	Low
> 1% of local population	0.46	0.02	26.96	Low
Fully open	0.47	0.02	26.62	Low
Partially open	0.55	0.02	31.77	Low
Closed	0.48	0.02	25.90	Low
Army	0.46	0.02	20.25	Low
Church	0.37	0.03	14.13	Low
Government	0.52	0.02	24.87	Low
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.53	0.03	20.05	Low
Local Government	0.60	0.02	25.73	Low

level	estimate	std.error	z	**Economic threat**
In ctr	0.39	0.02	22.42	High
< 30mins from ctr	0.54	0.02	33.11	High
> 30mins from ctr	0.57	0.02	35.88	High
Hire more municipal employees	0.44	0.01	30.08	High
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.53	0.02	29.67	High
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.54	0.02	32.16	High
< 1% of local population	0.57	0.02	35.69	High
1% of local population	0.50	0.02	28.82	High
> 1% of local population	0.43	0.02	25.67	High
Fully open	0.38	0.02	21.42	High
Partially open	0.53	0.02	31.78	High
Closed	0.58	0.02	34.43	High
Army	0.52	0.02	21.91	High
Church	0.44	0.03	17.65	High
Government	0.54	0.02	22.69	High
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.46	0.02	19.73	High
Local Government	0.53	0.02	21.24	High
In ctr	0.38	0.02	20.46	Low
< 30mins from ctr	0.57	0.02	32.77	Low
> 30mins from ctr	0.54	0.02	31.08	Low
Hire more municipal employees	0.45	0.02	24.61	Low
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.52	0.02	29.91	Low
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.52	0.02	27.92	Low
< 1% of local population	0.53	0.02	30.39	Low
1% of local population	0.50	0.02	27.11	Low
> 1% of local population	0.47	0.02	26.12	Low
Fully open	0.47	0.02	27.32	Low
Partially open	0.54	0.02	29.04	Low
Closed	0.49	0.02	26.40	Low
Army	0.46	0.02	19.37	Low
Church	0.41	0.03	16.01	Low
Government	0.54	0.02	24.82	Low
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.50	0.03	18.85	Low
Local Government	0.59	0.02	24.47	Low

level	estimate	std.error	z	**Ethnocentric values**
In ctr	0.37	0.02	21.16	High
< 30mins from ctr	0.54	0.02	32.77	High
> 30mins from ctr	0.58	0.02	37.42	High
Hire more municipal employees	0.44	0.02	26.49	High
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.55	0.02	29.14	High
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.51	0.02	30.60	High
< 1% of local population	0.56	0.02	34.41	High
1% of local population	0.52	0.02	28.55	High
> 1% of local population	0.42	0.02	23.85	High
Fully open	0.37	0.02	21.67	High
Partially open	0.54	0.02	30.14	High
Closed	0.59	0.02	33.90	High
Army	0.49	0.03	19.49	High
Church	0.49	0.02	19.99	High
Government	0.51	0.02	21.26	High
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.48	0.02	20.69	High
Local Government	0.53	0.02	21.49	High
In ctr	0.40	0.02	21.75	Low
< 30mins from ctr	0.56	0.02	33.13	Low
> 30mins from ctr	0.53	0.02	29.93	Low
Hire more municipal employees	0.44	0.02	27.77	Low
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.51	0.02	30.77	Low
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.55	0.02	29.52	Low
< 1% of local population	0.55	0.02	31.35	Low
1% of local population	0.48	0.02	27.48	Low
> 1% of local population	0.47	0.02	27.93	Low
Fully open	0.48	0.02	27.21	Low
Partially open	0.53	0.02	30.68	Low
Closed	0.49	0.02	27.10	Low
Army	0.49	0.02	21.62	Low
Church	0.36	0.03	14.13	Low
Government	0.56	0.02	26.55	Low
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.48	0.03	17.86	Low
Local Government	0.58	0.02	23.89	Low

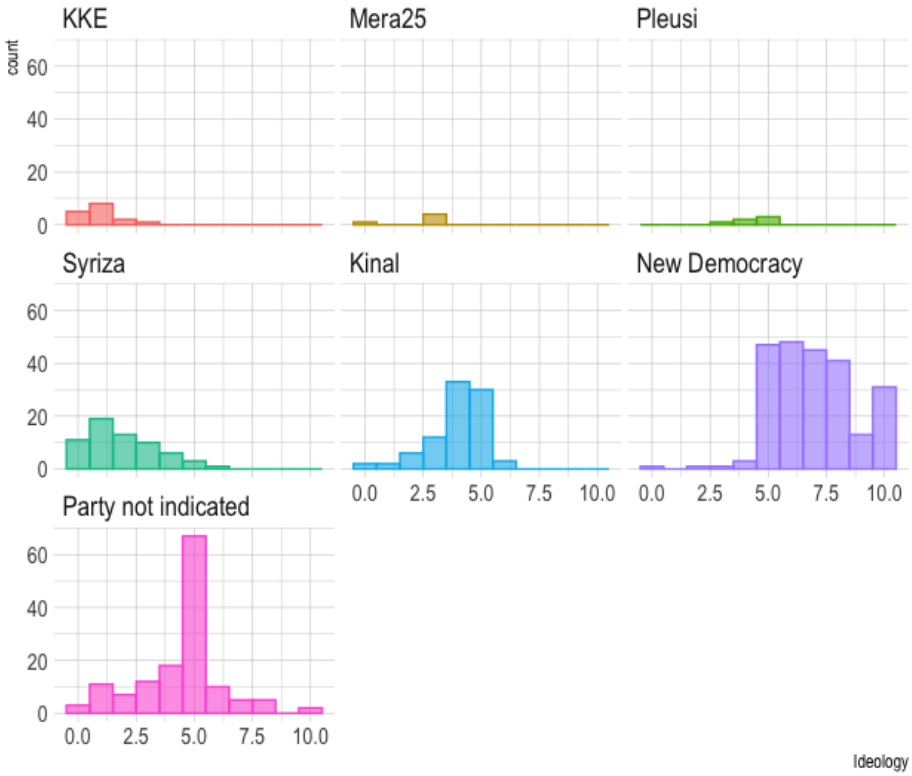
level	estimate	std.error	z	**Reported Ideology**
In ctr	0.39	0.02	24.03	Right
< 30mins from ctr	0.55	0.01	36.67	Right
> 30mins from ctr	0.56	0.01	38.58	Right
Hire more municipal employees	0.45	0.01	30.26	Right
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.53	0.02	32.78	Right
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.53	0.02	32.60	Right
< 1% of local population	0.56	0.01	38.50	Right
1% of local population	0.52	0.02	31.46	Right
> 1% of local population	0.43	0.02	27.39	Right
Fully open	0.39	0.02	24.35	Right
Partially open	0.53	0.02	33.25	Right
Closed	0.58	0.02	36.83	Right
Army	0.52	0.02	23.03	Right
Church	0.45	0.02	19.72	Right
Government	0.54	0.02	27.02	Right
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.47	0.02	21.32	Right
Local Government	0.53	0.02	22.89	Right
In ctr	0.39	0.02	16.39	Left
< 30mins from ctr	0.56	0.02	26.77	Left
> 30mins from ctr	0.55	0.02	24.65	Left
Hire more municipal employees	0.44	0.02	21.09	Left
Hire more teachers and doctors	0.53	0.02	24.28	Left
More infrastructure to the municipality	0.53	0.02	23.74	Left
< 1% of local population	0.56	0.02	24.36	Left
1% of local population	0.48	0.02	21.97	Left
> 1% of local population	0.47	0.02	22.41	Left
Fully open	0.49	0.02	23.53	Left
Partially open	0.55	0.02	25.18	Left
Closed	0.46	0.02	21.00	Left
Army	0.44	0.03	16.14	Left
Church	0.40	0.03	12.82	Left
Government	0.53	0.03	18.25	Left
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.49	0.03	16.31	Left
Local Government	0.63	0.03	23.12	Left

Note: N= 3,516; unique N = 586.



Note: Plots show marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). We present subgroup analyses by a) perceived socio-cultural threat, b) perceived economic threat and c) ethnocentric values and. We constructed these metrics using multiple variables as factors in PCA analysis. SE's are clustered by respondent.

Figure 31: **Subgroup marginal means - PCAs (MMs)**



Note: Plots show marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). We present subgroup analyses by ideology. SE's are clustered by respondent.

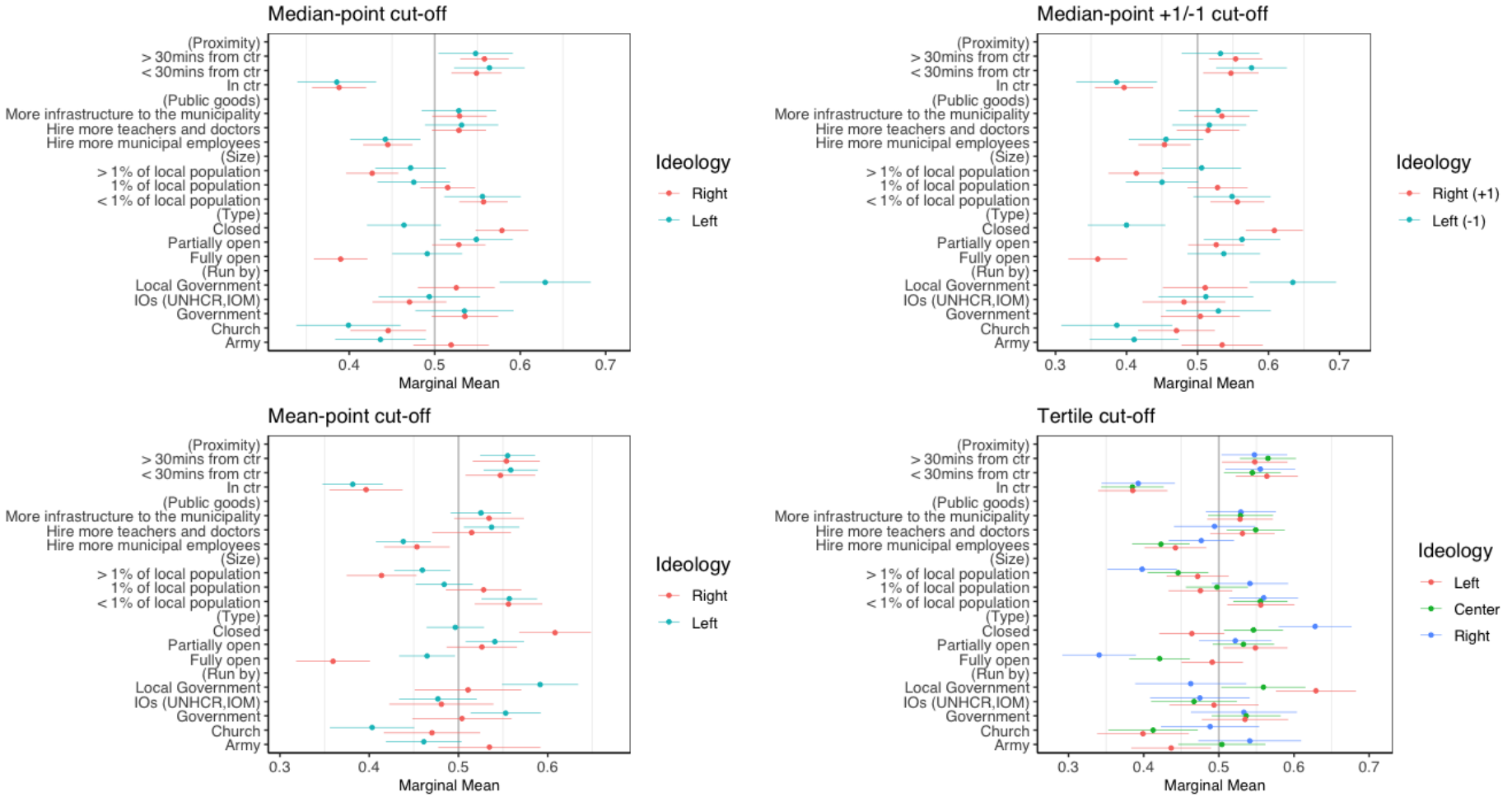
Figure 32: **Subgroup marginal means - Ideology (MMs)**

E.3 Further robustness checks

In Fig. 33, we conduct sensitivity analysis where we show results with different cutoff criteria for Ideology (0-10). The panel on the top-left shows the results when the cutoff point is the median point (5). The panel on the top-right displays results when we restrict 'Left' to 0-4 and 'Right' to 6-10. The panel on the bottom-left demonstrates results when the cutoff is the mean ideological point (5.02). Finally, the panel on the bottom-right divides ideology into three categories: 0-4 being 'Left', 4-7 being 'Center' and 7-10 being 'Right'. In Figures 34, 35 and 36, we conduct similar sensitivity checks for PCA variables. In each figure, in the top panel, we divide the indices by their median values and assign them to the categories of 'low' and 'high' (similarly to the main subgroup analysis). In each middle panel, we divide the indices by their mean values instead and assign them accordingly to the categories of 'low' and 'high'. In each bottom panel, we divide the variable into tertiles and assign them accordingly to the categories of 'low', 'median' and 'high'. We did not detect major differences in results when different cut-offs were applied.

In Fig. 37 we show the distribution of reported ideology by councillors' reported party affiliation (a response to the question, Which party do you think most closely represents your political beliefs now?). The plot shows the distribution of reported ideology by reported party affiliation, where the X-axis displays the count of councillors by party and the y-axis shows their reported ideology from 0 to 10, 0 being far left and 10 being far-right. KKE (the Communist Party of Greece), Mera25, Pleusi Eleutherias and Syriza are parties associated with the left. Kinal is a centre/left party, and New Democracy is a centre-right/right-wing party.

Finally, we conducted a balance test where rather than comparing outcomes across feature levels, we compared covariates across feature levels. We did not detect any imbalances for any of the covariates we used in the analysis. Table 26 reports those regression results.



Note: Plots show marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). SE's are clustered by respondent.

Figure 33: **Ideology sensitivity checks (MMs)**

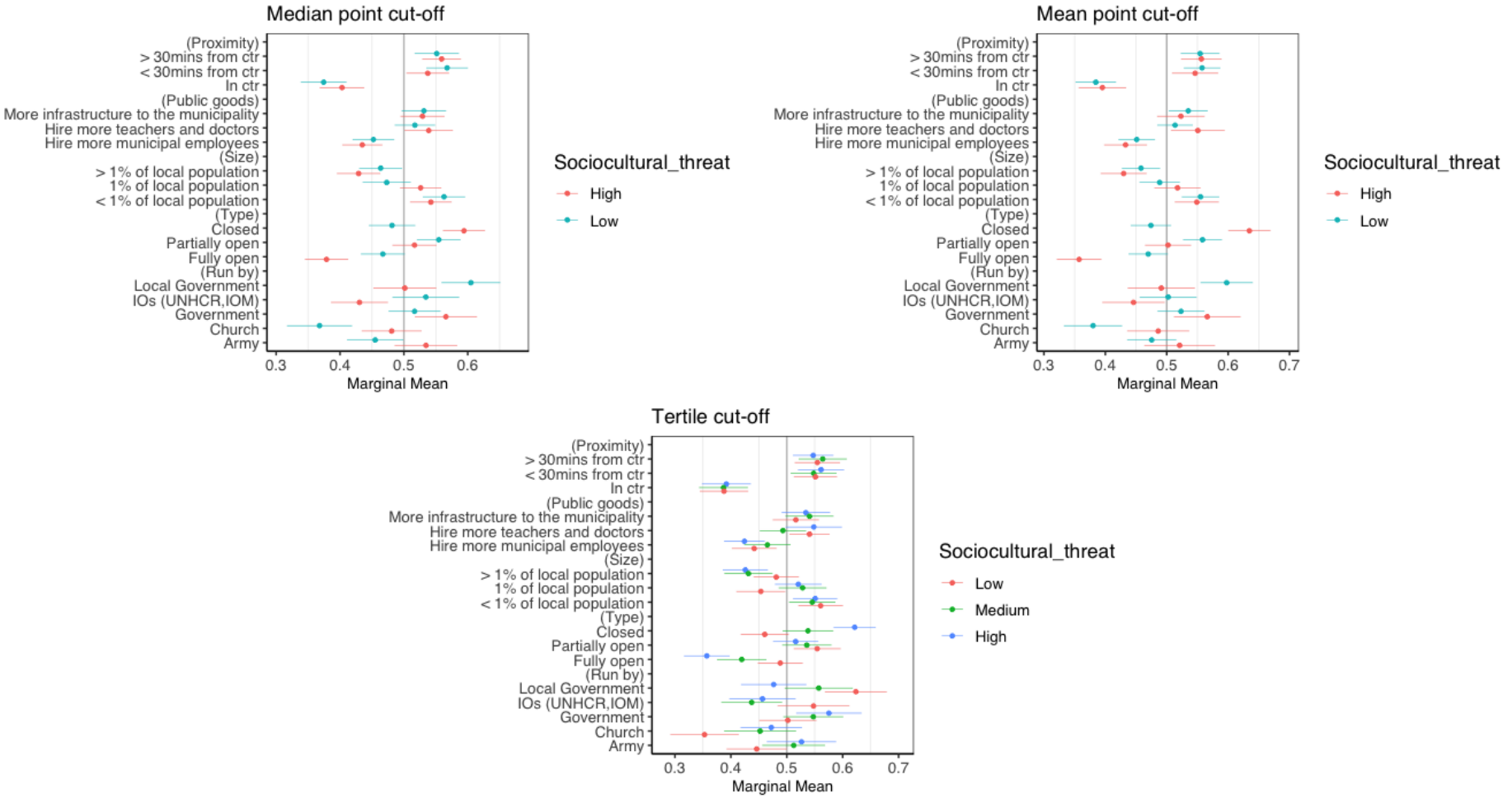


Figure 34: **Sociocultural threat PCA sensitivity checks**

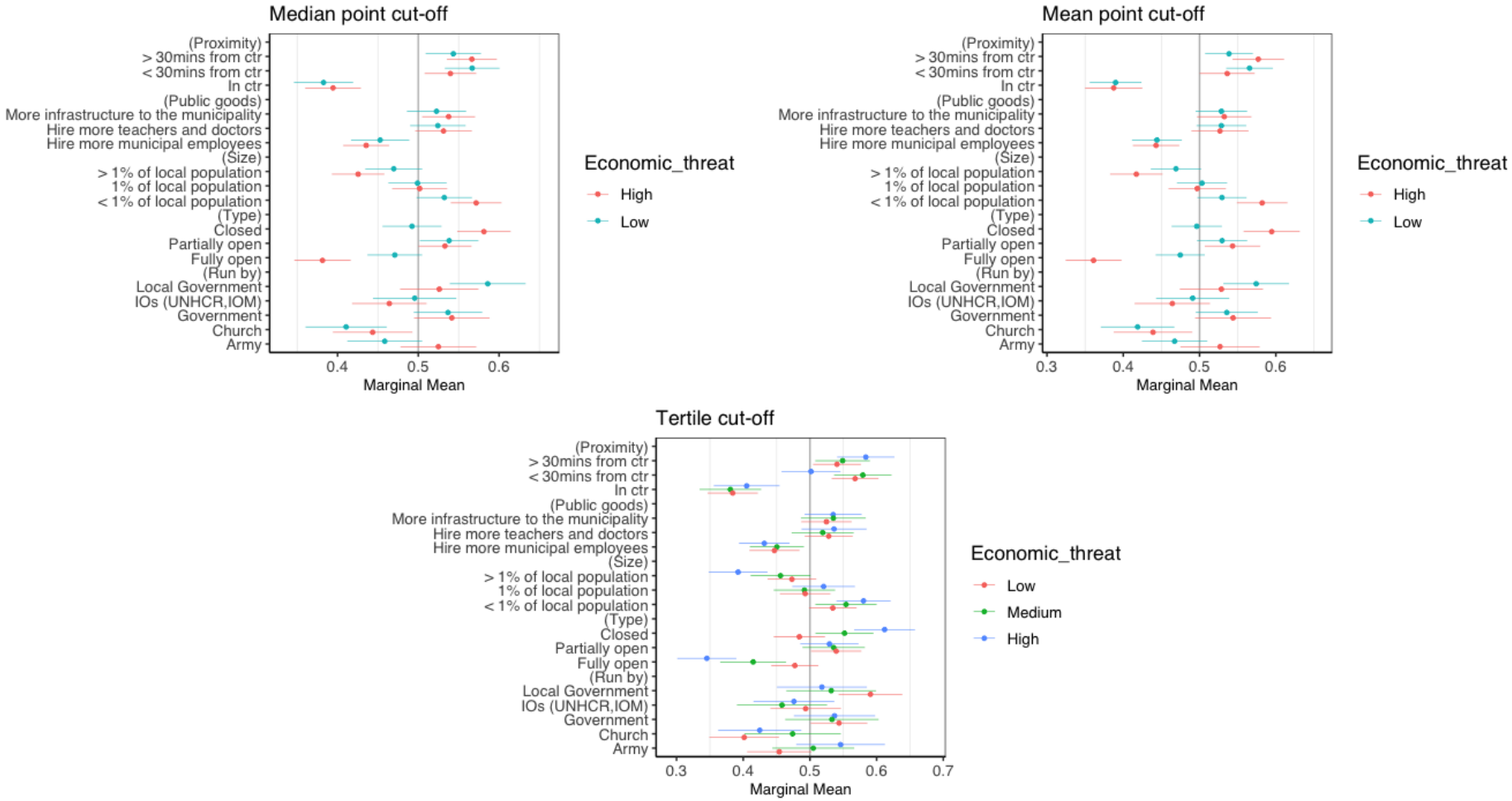


Figure 35: **Economic threat PCA sensitivity checks**

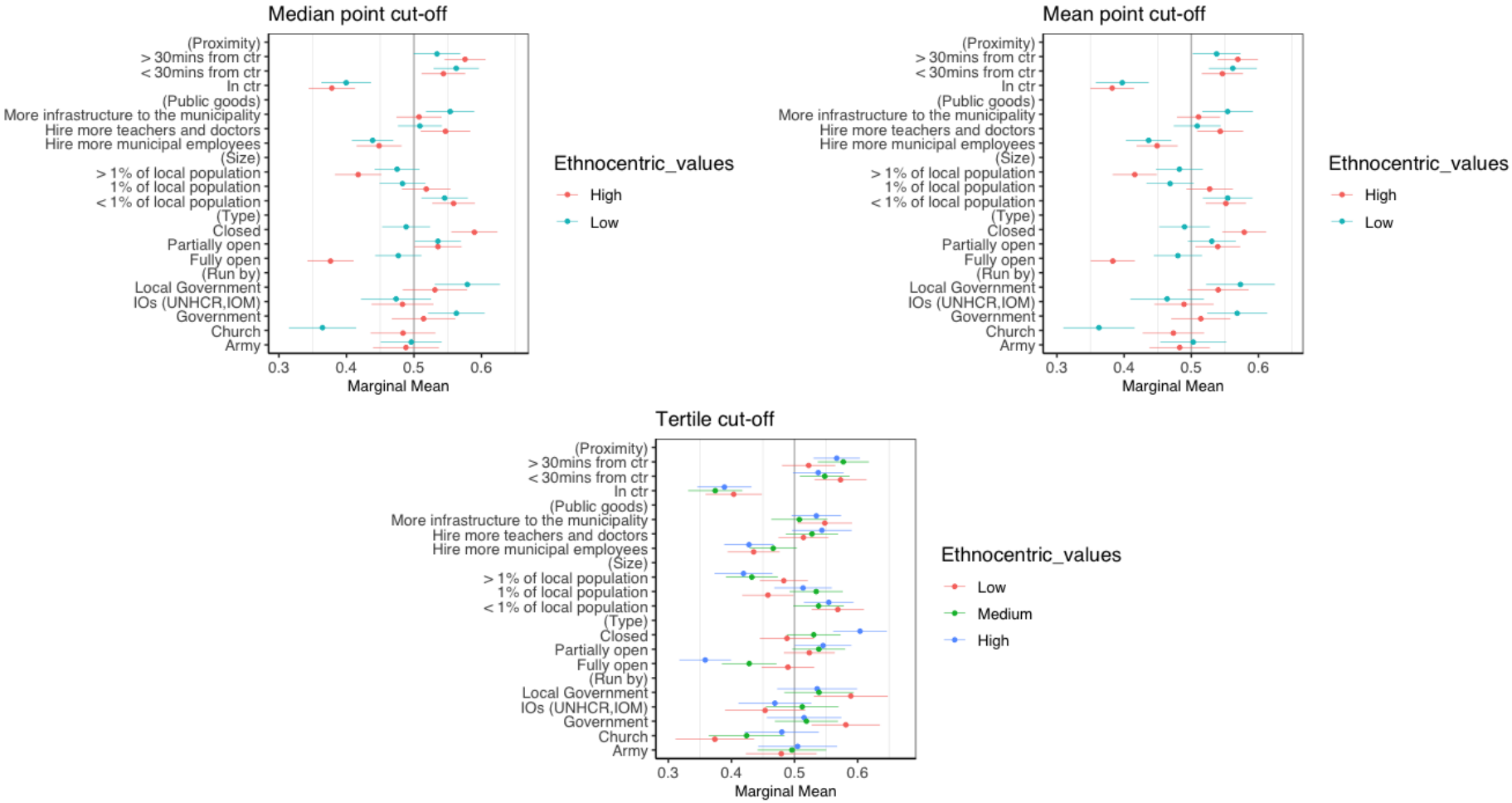


Figure 36: **Ethnocentric values PCA sensitivity checks**

Note: Plot shows the distribution of reported ideology by reported party affiliation. The X-axis displays the count of councillors by party, and the y-axis shows their reported ideology from 0 to 10, with 0 being far left and 10 being far-right. We are unable to produce graphs for two extreme far-right parties Golden Dawn and the Greek Solution, as we only had two respondents (12 observations) from these parties, and neither of these two respondents answered our question about ideology.

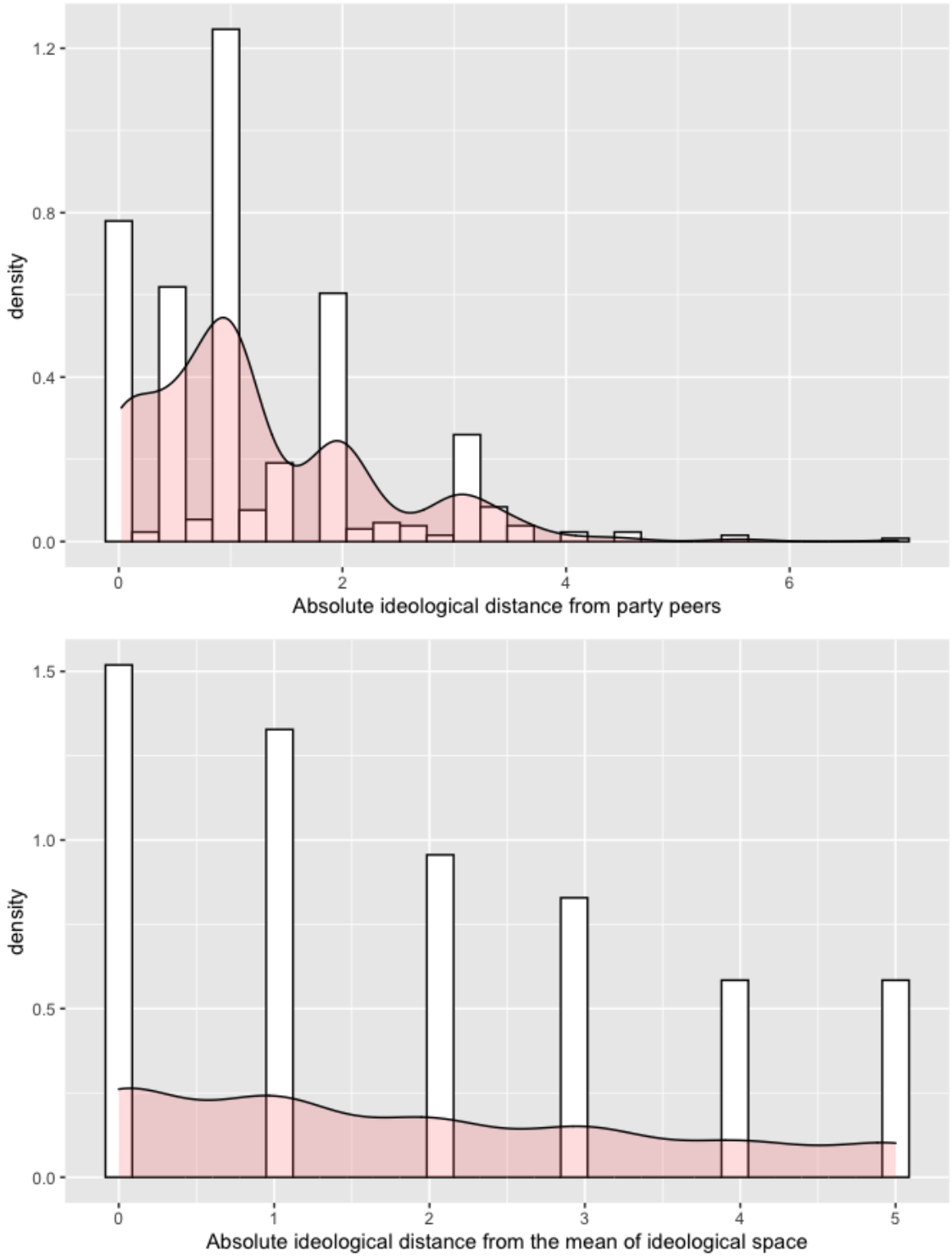
Figure 37: **Reported party affiliation vs reported ideology of councillors**

Table 25: **Balance test (Covariates as dependent variables)**

	Sociocultural threat	Economic threat	Ideology	Ethnocentric values	Active camp
(Intercept)	1.86***	3.63***	4.91***	6.62***	0.18***
	(0.15)	(0.21)	(0.19)	(0.15)	(0.03)
< 30mins from ctr	−0.12	−0.05	−0.06	−0.09	0.01
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.02)
> 30mins from ctr	0.01	0.10	0.08	−0.01	0.02
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.10)	(0.02)
Hire more teachers and doctors	−0.12	−0.15	−0.07	−0.16	0.01
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.02)
More infrastructure to the municipality	−0.02	−0.06	0.10	−0.12	−0.00
	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.10)	(0.09)	(0.02)
< 1% of local population	0.00	0.05	−0.15	−0.15	−0.02
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.02)
> 1% of local population	−0.13	−0.11	−0.14	−0.36***	−0.01
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.02)
Partially open	0.15	0.17	0.17	−0.09	−0.00
	(0.09)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.10)	(0.02)
Closed	0.09	0.15	0.13	−0.01	0.01
	(0.09)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.09)	(0.02)
Church	0.28*	0.24	0.18	0.29*	0.02
	(0.11)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.12)	(0.02)
Government	0.06	−0.00	0.13	0.10	0.03
	(0.11)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.02)
IOs (UNHCR,IOM)	0.22*	0.25	0.20	0.21	0.03
	(0.10)	(0.14)	(0.13)	(0.12)	(0.02)
Local Government	0.13	0.11	−0.10	−0.05	0.01
	(0.10)	(0.16)	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.02)
R^2	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00
Adj. R^2	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	−0.00
Num. obs.	3516	3516	3294	3516	3516
RMSE	2.07	2.91	2.49	2.27	0.40
N Clusters	586	586	549	586	586

Omitted: (1) in the ctr, (2) hire municipal employees, (3) 1% of local pop, (4) closed, (5) army. $^{***}p < 0.001$; $^{**}p < 0.01$; $^{*}p < 0.05$

Appendix F Variables



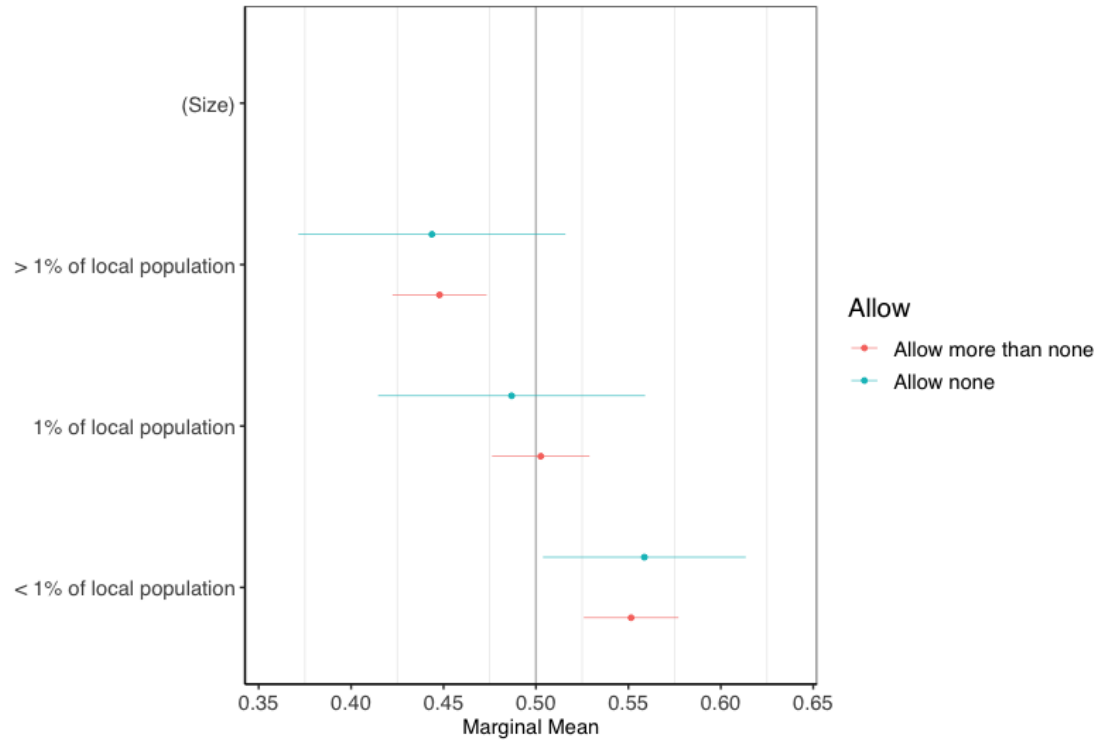
Note: The first panel of the plot takes the absolute ideological distance of a politician from the mean of everyone else in her party, and the second panel takes the absolute ideological distance of a politician from everyone else surveyed.

Figure 38: **Histogram of polarisation variables**

Appendix G Robustness checks

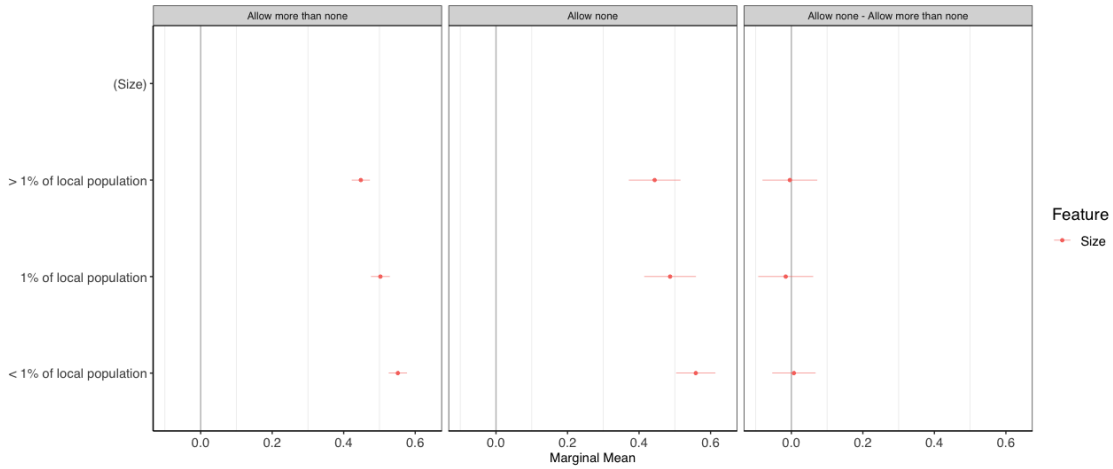
As a robustness check to the quota policy question, I look into the subgroup results by politicians' response to the pre-treatment policy decision on whether refugees should be allowed in Greece. I divide the answers into two main groups: 'Allow more than none' and 'Allow none.' Fig. 39 shows that those who have preferred allowing (more than none) refugees in the pre-treatment questions have similar policy preferences to those who have preferred accepting no refugees whatsoever. Fig. 40 demonstrates marginal means differences. The type of camp is the main policy area where a statistically significant difference occurs in policy preferences between these two groups. While both groups oppose fully open camps and support closed camps, the councillors who refuse to accept refugees are much more likely (and significantly differently) to accept the policy proposal if it involves closed camps. Similarly, this group opposes accepting the policy proposal if it offers a fully open camp much more than the group who initially said they would be willing to accept some refugees.

Another pre-treatment question asked in the survey was about the acceptance rate (percentage-wise). I now divide councillors into four subgroups based on their preferred acceptance rates: 'Accept less than 20%, Accept 40% to 50%, Accept 60% to 80%, Accept all'. When I look at marginal means based on these subgroups, a startling preference appears: those who would like to accept less than 20% of refugees who apply are more likely to accept 1% of the local population than any other group. This is an example of a policy reversal that can be seen in the second panel of Fig. 41 as 1% of the local population accounts to, on average, accepting more than 20% of refugees who applied. When looking at the difference in marginal means in the second panel of Fig. 42, it can be seen that those who are willing to accept 60% to 80% are statistically less willing to accept 1% of the population than those who



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 39: **Marginal means in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**

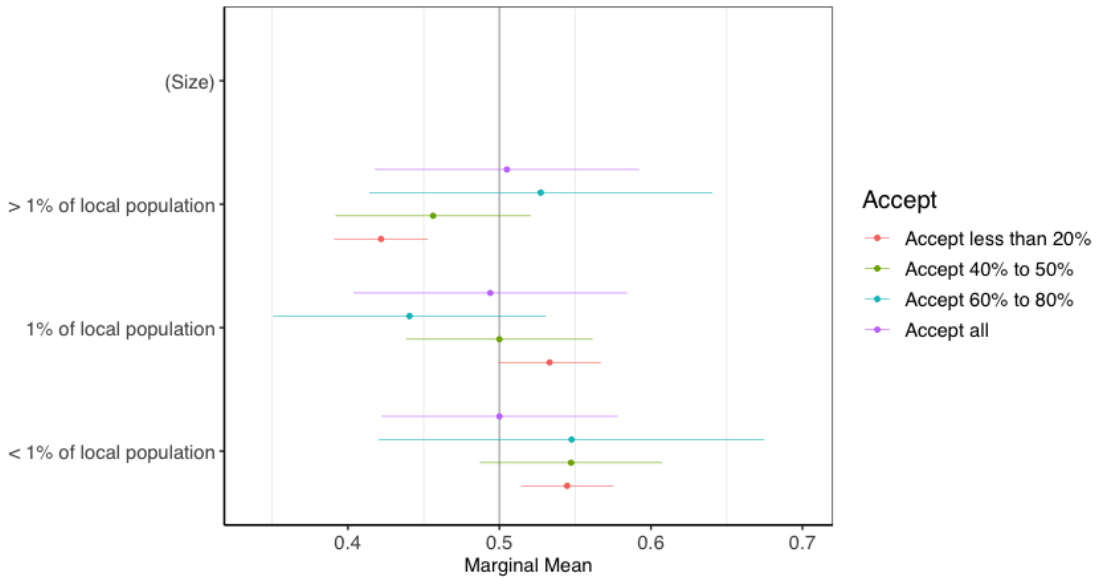


Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 40: **Marginal means differences in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**

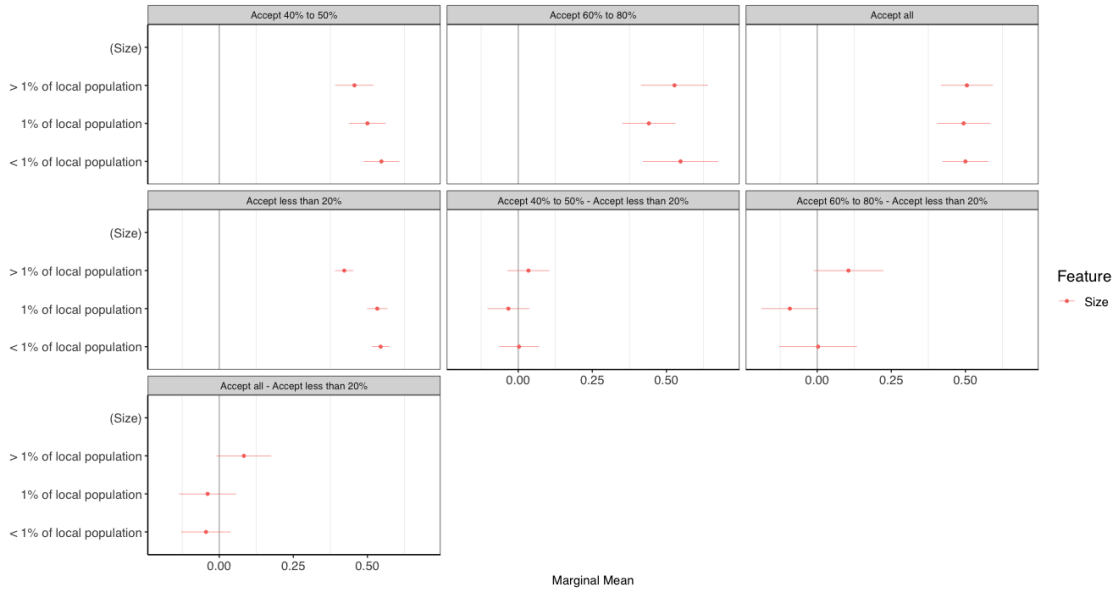
are willing to accept 20%, when facing the policy package as a whole.

This result supports the notion that politicians might reverse their initial policy decisions in the short run when faced with trade-offs.



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 41: **Marginal means in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**



Note: Plot shows marginal means for each attribute value (point estimates and 95% CIs). These values can be interpreted as the average probability that a councillor will support each proposal with a given attribute level, marginalized over all other attribute values. SE's are clustered by respondent (N= 586); N= 3,516.

Figure 42: **Marginal means differences in camp size preferences, by initial policy decision**

Appendix H Materials and methods

To generate the sample, we used the US Current Population Survey. We created a total of 170 subgroups weighted based on age, gender, region and work status. The stratification tables can be found in Fig. 43, assuming a total (targeted) sample size of 2,500 respondents in each country. Fig. 44 reports the subgroups that we could not fill our quotas completely on Prolific and thus weighted accordingly in our analysis to ensure representativeness. Fig. 45 shows an example pair from the conjoint experiment. Fig. 46 demonstrates the distribution of the dependent variable.

Figure 43: **Stratification**

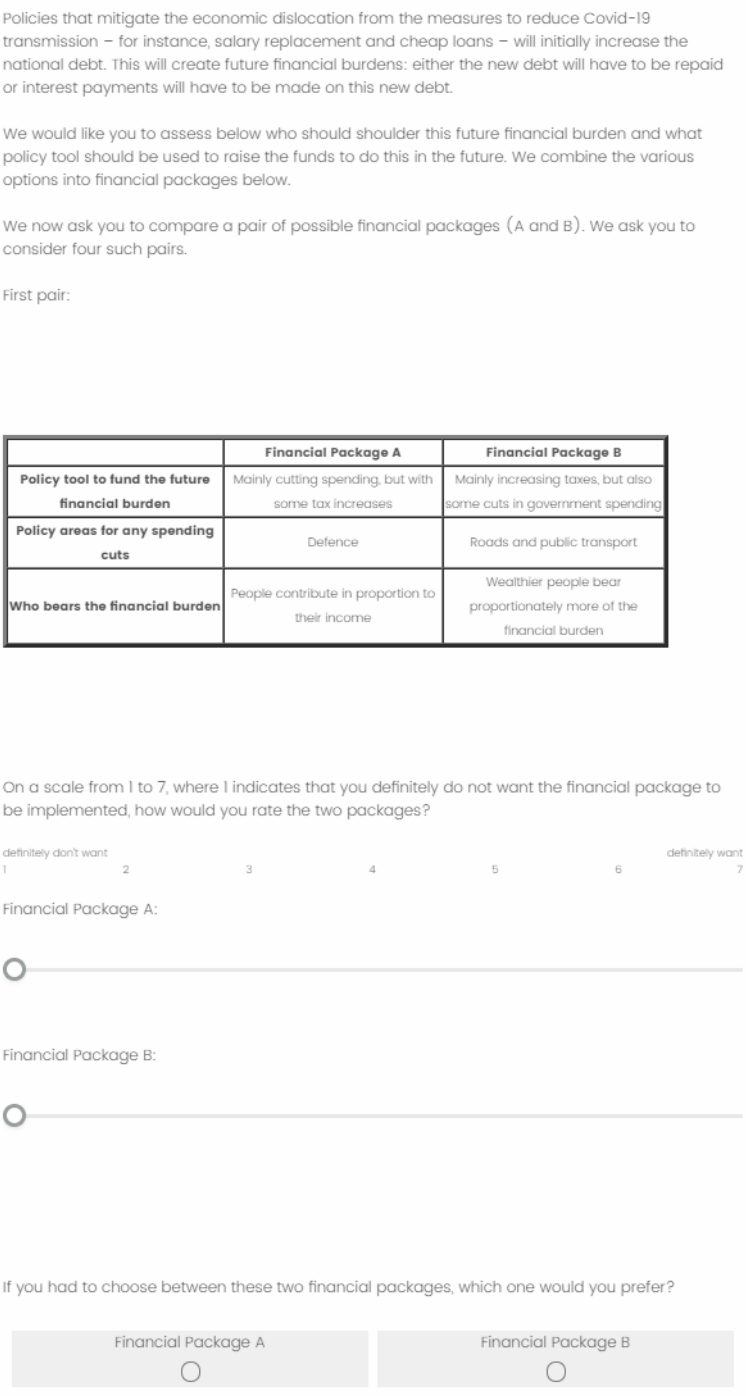
		Work Status							
		Employed (also includes unemployed 65+)				Unemployed			
		Regions				**Regions**			
	Age	Northeast	Midwest	South	West	Northeast	Midwest	South	West
Female	18-24	14.11	20.39	31.58	20.17	10.98	10.49	23.89	14.10
	25-34	28.92	34.16	61.33	38.53	10.40	9.66	25.07	16.27
	35-44	25.44	32.29	55.80	36.64	9.14	9.48	22.33	15.41
	45-54	28.51	33.40	57.51	34.90	9.26	10.88	24.31	13.91
	55-64	24.98	28.73	45.27	27.63	15.91	16.95	37.60	21.58
	65+	52.43	60.08	106.15	62.46				
Male	16-24	13.10	19.64	33.75	21.07	12.00	11.59	23.25	14.48
	25-34	33.26	38.67	67.53	48.23	6.55	6.87	14.51	10.02
	35-44	28.69	35.94	64.57	45.16	4.56	5.09	10.29	7.07
	45-54	29.68	35.36	65.08	39.56	6.59	6.96	13.42	7.38
	55-64	24.84	30.99	49.21	31.59	11.89	12.37	23.93	14.87
	65+	42.59	49.76	86.33	52.67				

Figure 44: **Subgroups not filled completely**

United States		
Subgroup	**Sample no.**	**Reached no.**
Female/Northeast/65+	52	33
Male/Northeast/55-64/e	25	12
Male/Northeast/65+	43	32
Male/Northeast/55-64/u	12	8
Female/Midwest/65+	60	28
Male/ Midwest/65+	50	27
Female/South/65+	106	57
Male/South/55-64/e	49	40
Male/ South/65+	86	37
Male/South/55-64/u	24	22
Female/West/65+	62	34
Male/West/55-64/e	32	20
Male/ West/65+	53	34
Male/West/55-64/u	15	12

Note: Subgroups for respondents above the age of 65 do not include a work status variable. For those below the age of 65, e indicates "employed" and u indicates "unemployed".

Figure 45: **An example pair from the conjoint**



Policies that mitigate the economic dislocation from the measures to reduce Covid-19 transmission – for instance, salary replacement and cheap loans – will initially increase the national debt. This will create future financial burdens: either the new debt will have to be repaid or interest payments will have to be made on this new debt.

We would like you to assess below who should shoulder this future financial burden and what policy tool should be used to raise the funds to do this in the future. We combine the various options into financial packages below.

We now ask you to compare a pair of possible financial packages (A and B). We ask you to consider four such pairs.

First pair:

	Financial Package A	Financial Package B
Policy tool to fund the future financial burden	Mainly cutting spending, but with some tax increases	Mainly increasing taxes, but also some cuts in government spending
Policy areas for any spending cuts	Defence	Roads and public transport
Who bears the financial burden	People contribute in proportion to their income	Wealthier people bear proportionately more of the financial burden

On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 indicates that you definitely do not want the financial package to be implemented, how would you rate the two packages?

definitely don't want 1 2 3 4 5 6 definitely want 7

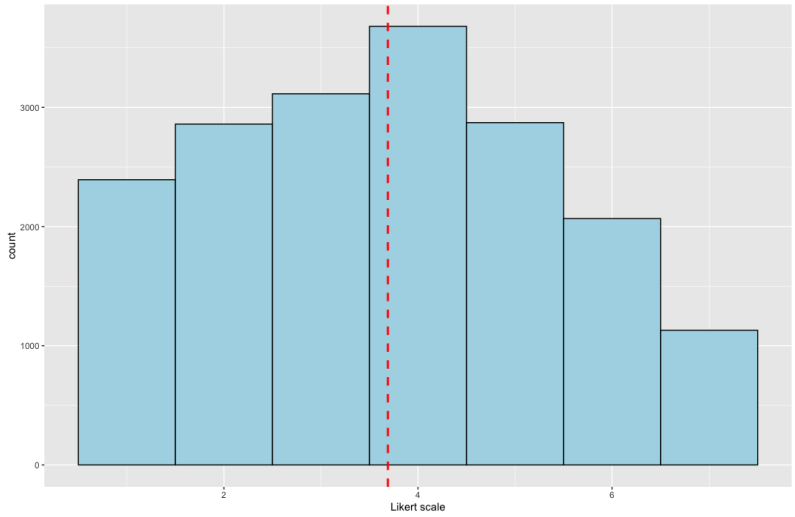
Financial Package A:

Financial Package B:

If you had to choose between these two financial packages, which one would you prefer?

Financial Package A ○ Financial Package B ○

Figure 46: **Distribution of the dependent variable**



Note: Distribution of respondents' perceived rating of a policy package with 1-7 Likert scale. Red line depicts mean support level.

Our two information treatments took the following form:

> **Information about COVID-19 deaths (T1)**: *The Washington-based Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) predicts that – with the current government guidance in place – about 68,841 people in the US will have died due to the coronavirus by August 4. This means that the number of COVID-19 deaths per one million people would be 210.*[50]

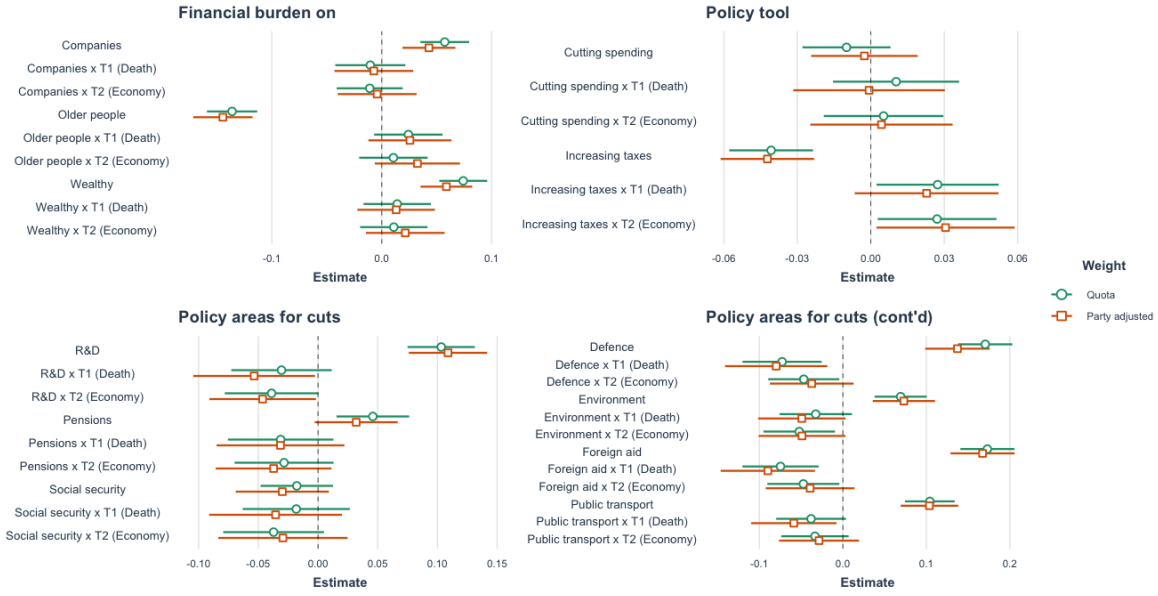
> **Economic information (T2)**: *The International Monetary Fund (IMF) expects the US economy to shrink by 5.9% in 2020 compared with 2019. This estimated loss of 5.9% equates to a loss of around $3,848 per person in 2020 compared with 2019.*

To ensure the robustness of our aggregate results, we implemented (manually targeted) entropy-adjusted weights to create a fully balanced sample in terms of partisan affiliation. In specific, we used entropy balancing to re-weight our survey sample to known partisan affiliation characteristics of the US population (pre-2020). This method adjusts differences in the first, second, and third moment of the covariate distributions (i.e. covariate means, variances, and skewness) (for a detailed presentation of the methods, see Hainmueller & Xu 2011). We do not observe any major differences in the aggregate preferences when we adjust our sample to these characteristics. Fig. 47 and Table 32 show regression results of aggregate preferences with partisanship-adjusted weights.

[50] *Ex post*, this number proved to be an under-estimate of the actual death toll of almost 200,000 people. But at the time of the survey, this was indeed the best available estimate. Moreover, no one –including our subjects– expected such a high toll. For instance, in our survey, almost 40% of our respondents provided an estimate smaller than 70,000, while only 15% of them got actually close (by 10k or so) to the actual number; the median estimate of COVID-19 deaths provided was slightly below 100,000. As a result, there was an equal number of subjects who provided a lower/higher estimate than the one provided by IHME. Or, in other words, our subjects were not remarkably more accurate regarding their predictions.

Tables 26 and 27 tests balance across covariates and policy elements, respectively. Fig. 48 and 49 visualize the control group results. Fig. 50 and 51 visualize the coefficients across all three groups.

Figure 47: **Aggregate results with partisanship-adjusted weights**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Each panel represents an attribute. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 32 displays the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

Table 26: **Balance of treatment and control across covariates**

	Control	T1	T2
Republican	0.00 $[-0.02; 0.02]$	0.01 $[-0.00; 0.03]$	-0.02 $[-0.03; 0.00]$
Independent	-0.01 $[-0.02; 0.01]$	0.01 $[-0.01; 0.03]$	-0.01 $[-0.03; 0.01]$
25-34	-0.00 $[-0.03; 0.02]$	-0.06^* $[-0.08; -0.03]$	0.06^* $[0.04; 0.09]$
35-44	-0.00 $[-0.03; 0.02]$	-0.02 $[-0.04; 0.00]$	0.02 $[-0.00; 0.05]$
45-64	-0.02 $[-0.04; 0.01]$	-0.02^* $[-0.05; -0.00]$	0.04^* $[0.02; 0.06]$
65+	0.03^* $[0.00; 0.06]$	-0.05^* $[-0.08; -0.02]$	0.02 $[-0.01; 0.04]$
20-60k	0.02 $[-0.00; 0.03]$	0.02^* $[0.01; 0.04]$	-0.04^* $[-0.06; -0.02]$
60-100k	-0.03^* $[-0.05; -0.01]$	0.08^* $[0.06; 0.10]$	-0.05^* $[-0.07; -0.03]$
100k+	0.01 $[-0.01; 0.03]$	0.01 $[-0.01; 0.03]$	-0.02 $[-0.04; 0.00]$
R^2	0.00	0.01	0.00
Adj. R^2	0.00	0.00	0.00
Observations	18,128	18,128	18,128
RMSE	0.47	0.47	0.47

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 27: **Balance of treatment and control across policy elements**

	Control	T1	T2
Companies	0.02	−0.01	−0.01
	[−0.00; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.01]	[−0.03; 0.01]
Older people	0.01	−0.00	−0.01
	[−0.01; 0.03]	[−0.02; 0.02]	[−0.02; 0.01]
Wealthy	0.02*	0.00	−0.03*
	[0.00; 0.04]	[−0.02; 0.02]	[−0.05; −0.01]
Cutting spending	−0.00	0.00	0.00
	[−0.02; 0.01]	[−0.02; 0.02]	[−0.01; 0.02]
Increasing taxes	−0.01	0.01	0.00
	[−0.03; 0.00]	[−0.01; 0.03]	[−0.01; 0.02]
Defence	0.01	−0.01	0.00
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.04; 0.02]	[−0.02; 0.03]
Environment	−0.00	0.02	−0.02
	[−0.03; 0.02]	[−0.01; 0.05]	[−0.04; 0.01]
Foreign aid	0.01	−0.02	0.01
	[−0.02; 0.03]	[−0.04; 0.01]	[−0.02; 0.04]
R&D	0.01	−0.01	−0.00
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.02]	[−0.03; 0.03]
Pensions	0.02	−0.02	−0.01
	[−0.01; 0.05]	[−0.04; 0.01]	[−0.03; 0.02]
Social security	−0.01	0.00	0.01
	[−0.03; 0.02]	[−0.03; 0.03]	[−0.02; 0.03]
Public transport	0.00	−0.00	−0.00
	[−0.02; 0.03]	[−0.03; 0.03]	[−0.03; 0.03]
R^2	0.00	0.00	0.00
Adj. R^2	0.00	0.00	0.00
Observations	18136	18136	18136
RMSE	0.47	0.47	0.47

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Figure 48: **Conjoint treatment effects (AMCEs), by political party (no-info group)**

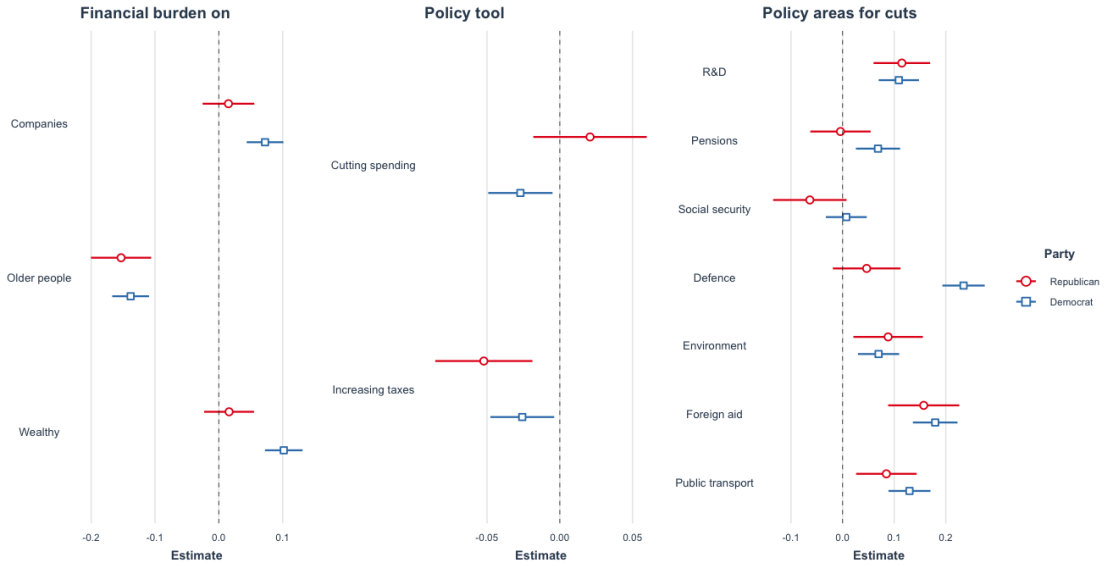
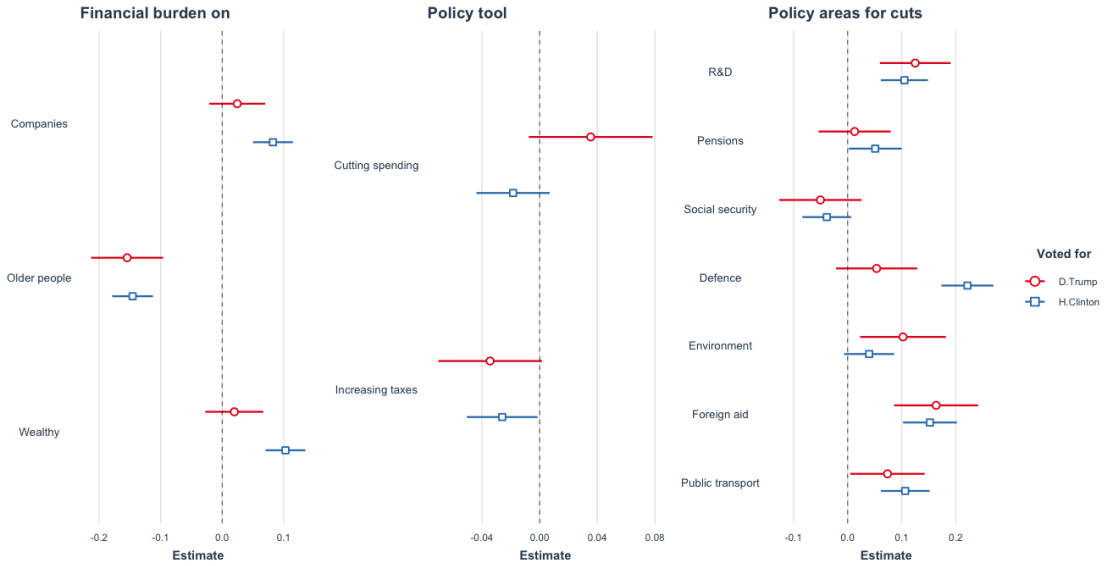


Figure 49: **Conjoint treatment effects (AMCEs), by 2016 vote (no-info group)**



Notes: The plots show estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Each panel represents an attribute. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Tables 33 and 34 in the Appendix display the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

Figure 50: **Information treatment effects, by party**

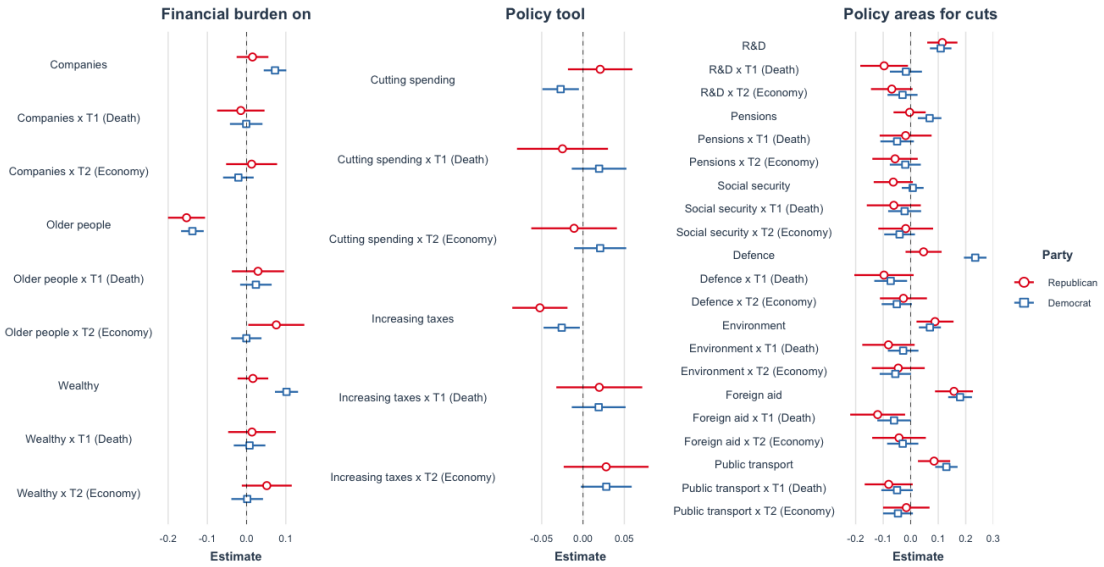
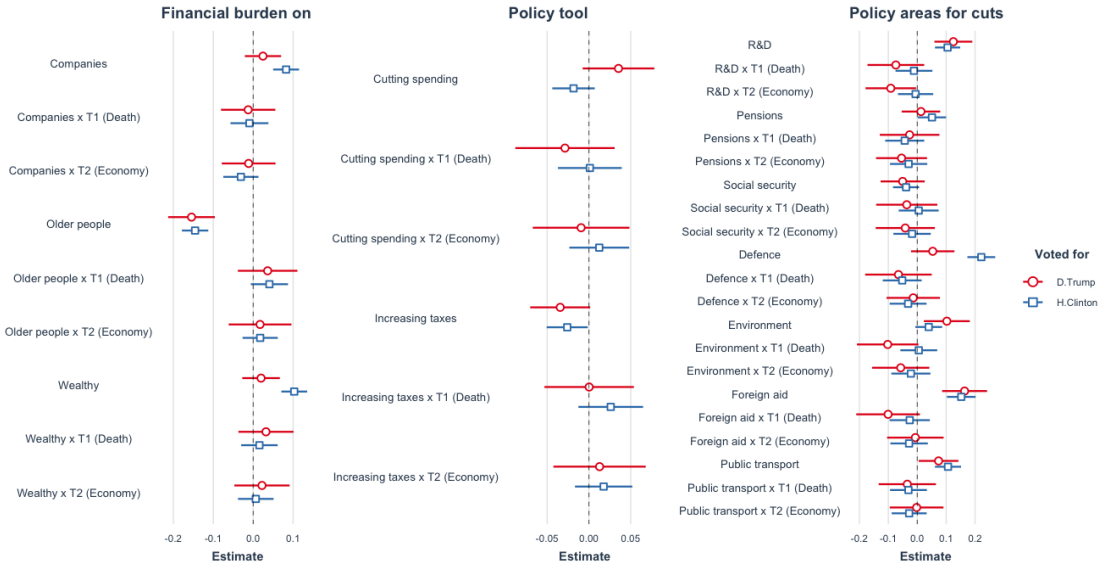


Figure 51: **Information treatment effects, by presidential vote**

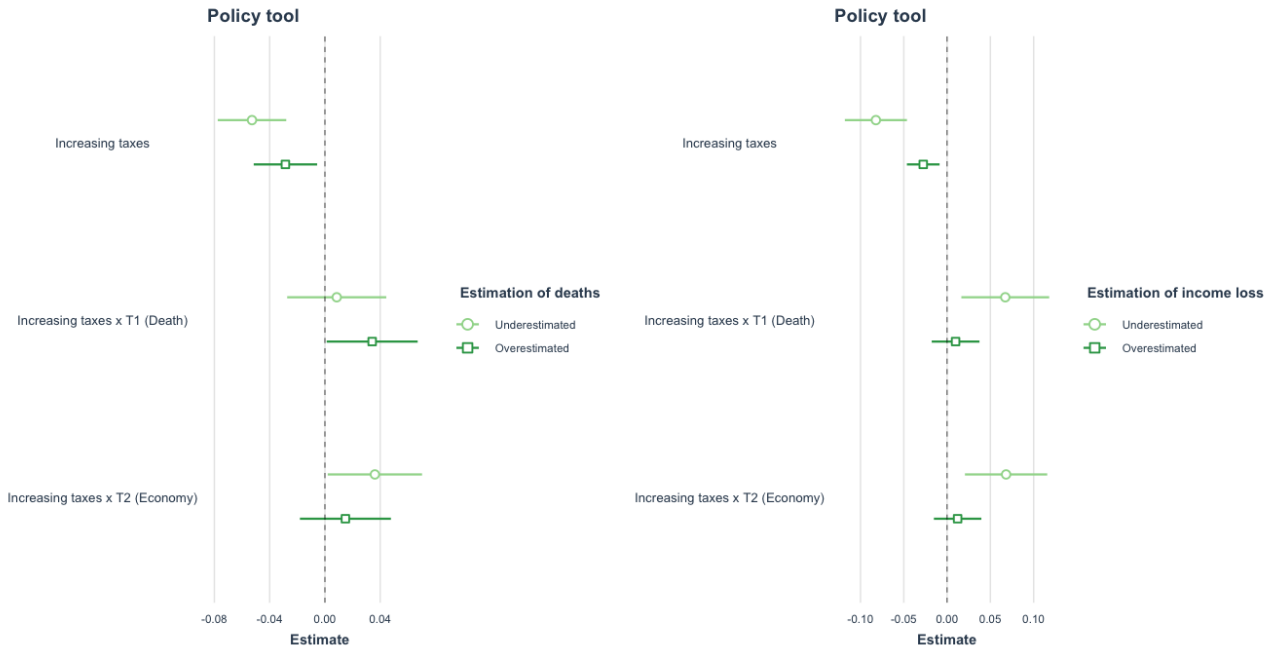


Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. Each panel represents an attribute. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Tables 33 and 34 display the underlying regression results. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

Appendix I Exploring alternative mechanisms

Fig. 52 explores alternative mechanisms through which informational reset may have arisen post-treatment. In particular, it explores whether informational effects occur due to under/over-estimating the health and/or economic costs of COVID-19. Prior to treatment, respondents were asked to answer questions regarding their likely estimates of COVID-19 deaths and income loss given the lockdown in April. A respondent's estimate is categorised as correct if it falls within a range of +/- 5,000 deaths or +/- 1% income loss, respectively, relative to the IHME and IMF estimates. An estimate below the specified range is categorised as an underestimate, an estimate above the specified range is categorised as an overestimate.

Figure 52: **Estimation of deaths and income loss and fiscal consensus.**



Notes: The plot shows estimates of the effect of randomly assigned values of fiscal adjustment attributes on the probability of a policy package to be preferred. The bars represent 95% confidence intervals; standard errors are clustered by respondent.

Appendix J Additional t-tests on informational reversals across control and treatment groups

Tables 10 and 11 showed informational reversals in fiscal policy preferences across control and treatment groups among Democrats and Republicans. Tables 28 and 29 show the same, but now among Clinton and Trump voters, respectively.

Table 28: **Informational reversals among Clinton voters (2016)**

	Estimates			**Differences in estimates**		**p-value**	
	Control	T1	T2	Control-T1	Control-T2	Control-T1	Control-T2
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fiscal burden on							
Companies	0.082	-0.009	-0.030	0.091	0.112	0.0138**	0.0018***
Older people	-0.145	0.040	0.017	-0.185	-0.162	<0.001***	<0.001***
Wealthy	0.102	0.015	0.006	0.087	0.096	0.018**	0.008***
Policy tool							
Spending cuts	-0.018	0.001	0.012	-0.019	-0.03	0.509	0.286
Tax increases	-0.025	0.026	0.017	-0.051	-0.042	0.075*	0.116
Policy cuts							
Defence	0.221	-0.051	-0.031	0.272	0.252	<0.001***	<0.001***
Environment	0.039	0.005	-0.021	0.034	0.06	0.506	0.246
Foreign aid	0.152	-0.026	-0.028	0.178	0.18	0.001***	<0.001***
R&D	0.104	-0.011	-0.005	0.115	0.109	0.020*	0.024**
Pension	0.050	-0.043	-0.029	0.093	0.079	0.086*	0.135
Social security	-0.038	0.005	-0.017	-0.043	-0.021	0.409	0.687
Public transport	0.106	-0.030	-0.027	0.136	0.133	0.008***	0.007***

Notes: Table shows estimated AMCEs for each policy element within Clinton voters across control and treatment groups. Asterisks indicate significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 34 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

Table 29: **Informational reversals within Trump 2016 voters**

	Estimates			**Differences in estimates**		**p-value**	
	Control	T1	T2	Control-T1	Control-T2	Control-T1	Control-T2
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Fiscal burden on							
Companies	0.024	-0.012	-0.011	0.036	0.035	0.480	0.481
Older people	-0.154	0.036	0.017	-0.19	-0.171	0.003***	0.007***
Wealthy	0.019	0.032	0.022	-0.013	-0.003	0.819	0.966
Policy tool							
Spending cuts	0.035	-0.028	-0.009	0.063	0.044	0.183	0.343
Tax increases	-0.034	0.000	0.012	-0.034	-0.046	0.403	0.259
Policy cuts							
Defence	0.053	-0.065	-0.013	0.118	0.066	0.175	0.396
Environment	0.102	-0.102	-0.057	0.204	0.159	0.019**	0.055*
Foreign aid	0.163	-0.100	-0.006	0.263	0.169	0.002***	0.038**
R&D	0.124	-0.074	-0.091	0.198	0.215	0.008***	0.002***
Pension	0.012	-0.026	-0.054	0.038	0.066	0.614	0.351
Social security	-0.050	-0.036	-0.041	-0.014	-0.009	0.867	0.913
Public transport	0.073	-0.034	-0.002	0.107	0.071	0.165	0.307

Notes: Table shows estimated AMCEs for each policy element within Trump voters across control and treatment groups. Asterisks indicate significant differences in coefficients between two groups from a Wald test of significance. *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1. The reference policy elements on each attribute are the following, respectively: (1) people contribute in proportion to their income, (2) an equal balance of spending cuts and tax increases, and (3) health care. Table 34 in the Appendix displays the underlying regression results.

Appendix K Regression tables

K.1 Aggregate results (Likert scale and binary outcome)

K.2 Aggregate results with state fixed effects

K.3 Aggregate results with partisanship-adjusted entropy weights

K.4 Heterogeneous effects with party

K.5 Heterogeneous effects with presidential vote

K.6 Heterogeneous effects with value of life

K.7 Heterogeneous effects with aggregate preferences for the allocation of tax burden (Conditioning on "Who should pay?")

Table 30: **Aggregate results**

	Likert scale	Binary
(Intercept)	0.38*	0.43*
	[0.35; 0.41]	[0.38; 0.48]
Companies	0.06*	0.09*
	[0.04; 0.08]	[0.05; 0.13]
Companies x T1	−0.01	−0.01
	[−0.04; 0.02]	[−0.06; 0.05]
Companies x T2	−0.01	0.01
	[−0.04; 0.02]	[−0.04; 0.07]
Older people	−0.14*	−0.21*
	[−0.16; −0.11]	[−0.25; −0.18]
Older people x T1	0.02	0.00
	[−0.01; 0.06]	[−0.05; 0.05]
Older people x T2	0.01	0.02
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.07]
Wealthy	0.07*	0.12*
	[0.05; 0.10]	[0.09; 0.16]
Wealthy x T1	0.01	0.04
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.02; 0.09]
Wealthy x T2	0.01	0.01
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.04; 0.06]
Cutting spending	−0.01	−0.02
	[−0.03; 0.01]	[−0.05; 0.01]
Cutting spending x T1	0.01	0.02
	[−0.02; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.06]
Cutting spending x T2	0.01	0.00
	[−0.02; 0.03]	[−0.04; 0.04]
Increasing taxes	−0.04*	−0.06*
	[−0.06; −0.02]	[−0.10; −0.03]
Increasing taxes x T1	0.03*	0.03
	[0.00; 0.05]	[−0.02; 0.07]
Increasing taxes x T2	0.03*	0.01
	[0.00; 0.05]	[−0.03; 0.05]
Defence	0.17*	0.21*
	[0.14; 0.20]	[0.15; 0.26]
Defence x T1	−0.07*	−0.02
	[−0.12; −0.03]	[−0.09; 0.06]
Defence x T2	−0.05*	−0.02
	[−0.09; −0.00]	[−0.09; 0.06]

Environment	0.07*	0.09*
	[0.04; 0.10]	[0.04; 0.14]
Environment x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.10]
Environment x T2	−0.05*	−0.05
	[−0.10; −0.01]	[−0.12; 0.02]
Foreign aid	0.17*	0.22*
	[0.14; 0.21]	[0.17; 0.28]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.07*	0.01
	[−0.12; −0.03]	[−0.07; 0.08]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.05*	−0.01
	[−0.09; −0.00]	[−0.08; 0.06]
R&D	0.10*	0.10*
	[0.07; 0.13]	[0.04; 0.15]
R&D x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.11]
R&D x T2	−0.04	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.05; 0.10]
Pensions	0.05*	0.04
	[0.02; 0.08]	[−0.02; 0.09]
Pensions x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.05; 0.10]
Pensions x T2	−0.03	−0.00
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.07]
Social security	−0.02	−0.05
	[−0.05; 0.01]	[−0.10; 0.00]
Social security x T1	−0.02	−0.01
	[−0.06; 0.03]	[−0.08; 0.07]
Social security x T2	−0.04	0.00
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.08]
Public transport	0.10*	0.13*
	[0.07; 0.13]	[0.08; 0.18]
Public transport x T1	−0.04	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.04; 0.10]
Public transport x T2	−0.03	−0.00
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.07]
T1	0.01	−0.03
	[−0.03; 0.05]	[−0.10; 0.03]
T2	0.03	−0.00
	[−0.01; 0.07]	[−0.07; 0.06]
R^2	0.11	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.11	0.10
Num. obs.	18116	18100
RMSE	0.28	0.48
N Clusters	2245	2243

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 31: **Aggregate results with state fixed effects**

	Likert scale	Binary
Companies	0.06^*	0.09^*
	$[0.04; 0.08]$	$[0.06; 0.13]$
Companies x T1	-0.01	-0.01
	$[-0.04; 0.02]$	$[-0.06; 0.05]$
Companies x T2	-0.01	0.01
	$[-0.04; 0.02]$	$[-0.04; 0.06]$
Older people	-0.14^*	-0.21^*
	$[-0.16; -0.11]$	$[-0.25; -0.18]$
Older people x T1	0.02	0.00
	$[-0.01; 0.06]$	$[-0.05; 0.05]$
Older people x T2	0.01	0.02
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.03; 0.07]$
Wealthy	0.08^*	0.13^*
	$[0.05; 0.10]$	$[0.09; 0.16]$
Wealthy x T1	0.01	0.04
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.02; 0.09]$
Wealthy x T2	0.01	0.01
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.04; 0.06]$
Cutting spending	-0.01	-0.02
	$[-0.03; 0.01]$	$[-0.05; 0.01]$
Cutting spending x T1	0.01	0.02
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.02; 0.06]$
Cutting spending x T2	0.01	0.00
	$[-0.02; 0.03]$	$[-0.04; 0.04]$
Increasing taxes	-0.04^*	-0.06^*
	$[-0.06; -0.02]$	$[-0.10; -0.03]$
Increasing taxes x T1	0.03^*	0.03
	$[0.00; 0.05]$	$[-0.02; 0.07]$
Increasing taxes x T2	0.03^*	0.01
	$[0.00; 0.05]$	$[-0.03; 0.05]$
Defence	0.17^*	0.21^*
	$[0.14; 0.20]$	$[0.15; 0.26]$
Defence x T1	-0.07^*	-0.02
	$[-0.12; -0.03]$	$[-0.10; 0.06]$
Defence x T2	-0.05^*	-0.02
	$[-0.09; -0.00]$	$[-0.09; 0.06]$

Environment	0.07*	0.09*
	[0.04; 0.10]	[0.04; 0.14]
Environment x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.10]
Environment x T2	−0.05*	−0.05
	[−0.09; −0.01]	[−0.12; 0.02]
Foreign aid	0.17*	0.23*
	[0.14; 0.20]	[0.17; 0.28]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.07*	0.01
	[−0.12; −0.03]	[−0.07; 0.08]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.05*	−0.01
	[−0.09; −0.00]	[−0.08; 0.06]
R&D	0.10*	0.10*
	[0.08; 0.13]	[0.05; 0.15]
R&D x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.11]
R&D x T2	−0.04*	0.02
	[−0.08; −0.00]	[−0.05; 0.10]
Pensions	0.05*	0.04
	[0.02; 0.08]	[−0.02; 0.09]
Pensions x T1	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.05; 0.10]
Pensions x T2	−0.03	−0.00
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.07]
Social security	−0.02	−0.05
	[−0.05; 0.01]	[−0.10; 0.00]
Social security x T1	−0.02	−0.01
	[−0.06; 0.03]	[−0.08; 0.07]
Social security x T2	−0.04	0.00
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.07; 0.08]
Public transport	0.11*	0.13*
	[0.08; 0.13]	[0.08; 0.18]
Public transport x T1	−0.04	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.04; 0.10]
Public transport x T2	−0.03	−0.00
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.07]
T1	0.01	−0.03
	[−0.03; 0.05]	[−0.10; 0.04]
T2	0.03	−0.00
	[−0.01; 0.07]	[−0.07; 0.06]
R^2	0.12	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.12	0.10
Num. obs.	18116	18100
RMSE	0.28	0.48
N Clusters	2245	2243

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 32: **Aggregate results with partisanship-adjusted entropy weights**

	Quota weight	Partisanship adjusted weight
(Intercept)	0.38^*	0.40^*
	$[0.35; 0.41]$	$[0.36; 0.43]$
Companies	0.06^*	0.04^*
	$[0.04; 0.08]$	$[0.02; 0.07]$
Companies x T1	-0.01	-0.01
	$[-0.04; 0.02]$	$[-0.04; 0.03]$
Companies x T2	-0.01	-0.00
	$[-0.04; 0.02]$	$[-0.04; 0.03]$
Older people	-0.14^*	-0.14^*
	$[-0.16; -0.11]$	$[-0.17; -0.12]$
Older people x T1	0.02	0.03
	$[-0.01; 0.06]$	$[-0.01; 0.06]$
Older people x T2	0.01	0.03
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.01; 0.07]$
Wealthy	0.07^*	0.06^*
	$[0.05; 0.10]$	$[0.04; 0.08]$
Wealthy x T1	0.01	0.01
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.02; 0.05]$
Wealthy x T2	0.01	0.02
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.01; 0.06]$
Cutting spending	-0.01	-0.00
	$[-0.03; 0.01]$	$[-0.02; 0.02]$
Cutting spending x T1	0.01	-0.00
	$[-0.02; 0.04]$	$[-0.03; 0.03]$
Cutting spending x T2	0.01	0.00
	$[-0.02; 0.03]$	$[-0.02; 0.03]$
Increasing taxes	-0.04^*	-0.04^*
	$[-0.06; -0.02]$	$[-0.06; -0.02]$
Increasing taxes x T1	0.03^*	0.02
	$[0.00; 0.05]$	$[-0.01; 0.05]$
Increasing taxes x T2	0.03^*	0.03^*
	$[0.00; 0.05]$	$[0.00; 0.06]$
Defence	0.17^*	0.14^*
	$[0.14; 0.20]$	$[0.10; 0.18]$
Defence x T1	-0.07^*	-0.08^*
	$[-0.12; -0.03]$	$[-0.14; -0.02]$
Defence x T2	-0.05^*	-0.04
	$[-0.09; -0.00]$	$[-0.09; 0.01]$

Environment	0.07*	0.07*
	[0.04; 0.10]	[0.04; 0.11]
Environment x T1	−0.03	−0.05
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.10; 0.00]
Environment x T2	−0.05*	−0.05
	[−0.10; −0.01]	[−0.10; 0.00]
Foreign aid	0.17*	0.17*
	[0.14; 0.21]	[0.13; 0.21]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.07*	−0.09*
	[−0.12; −0.03]	[−0.15; −0.03]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.05*	−0.04
	[−0.09; −0.00]	[−0.09; 0.01]
R&D	0.10*	0.11*
	[0.07; 0.13]	[0.08; 0.14]
R&D x T1	−0.03	−0.05*
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.10; −0.00]
R&D x T2	−0.04	−0.05*
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.09; −0.00]
Pensions	0.05*	0.03
	[0.02; 0.08]	[−0.00; 0.07]
Pensions x T1	−0.03	−0.03
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.02]
Pensions x T2	−0.03	−0.04
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.09; 0.01]
Social security	−0.02	−0.03
	[−0.05; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.01]
Social security x T1	−0.02	−0.04
	[−0.06; 0.03]	[−0.09; 0.02]
Social security x T2	−0.04	−0.03
	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.02]
Public transport	0.10*	0.10*
	[0.07; 0.13]	[0.07; 0.14]
Public transport x T1	−0.04	−0.06*
	[−0.08; 0.00]	[−0.11; −0.01]
Public transport x T1	−0.03	−0.03
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.02]
T1	0.01	0.02
	[−0.03; 0.05]	[−0.03; 0.07]
T2	0.03	0.01
	[−0.01; 0.07]	[−0.04; 0.06]
R^2	0.11	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.11	0.10
Num. obs.	18116	18116
RMSE	0.28	0.29
N Clusters	2245	2245

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 33: **Heterogeneous effects with party**

	Republican	Democrat	Independent
(Intercept)	0.43*	0.36*	0.37*
	[0.38; 0.49]	[0.32; 0.40]	[0.30; 0.44]
Companies	0.02	0.07*	0.07*
	[−0.03; 0.06]	[0.04; 0.10]	[0.01; 0.13]
Companies x T1	−0.01	−0.00	−0.03
	[−0.08; 0.05]	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.11; 0.06]
Companies x T2	0.01	−0.02	−0.01
	[−0.05; 0.08]	[−0.06; 0.02]	[−0.09; 0.06]
Older people	−0.15*	−0.14*	−0.10*
	[−0.20; −0.11]	[−0.17; −0.11]	[−0.16; −0.05]
Older people x T1	0.03	0.02	0.03
	[−0.04; 0.10]	[−0.02; 0.06]	[−0.05; 0.10]
Older people x T2	0.08*	−0.00	−0.01
	[0.00; 0.15]	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.09; 0.07]
Wealthy	0.02	0.10*	0.08*
	[−0.02; 0.06]	[0.07; 0.13]	[0.03; 0.14]
Wealthy x T1	0.01	0.01	0.02
	[−0.05; 0.07]	[−0.03; 0.05]	[−0.06; 0.09]
Wealthy x T2	0.05	0.00	0.00
	[−0.01; 0.12]	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.07; 0.08]
Cutting spending	0.02	−0.03*	−0.01
	[−0.02; 0.06]	[−0.05; −0.00]	[−0.06; 0.04]
Cutting spending x T1	−0.02	0.02	0.04
	[−0.08; 0.03]	[−0.01; 0.05]	[−0.02; 0.11]
Cutting spending x T2	−0.01	0.02	−0.00
	[−0.06; 0.04]	[−0.01; 0.05]	[−0.07; 0.06]
Increasing taxes	−0.05*	−0.03*	−0.06*
	[−0.09; −0.02]	[−0.05; −0.00]	[−0.11; −0.02]
Increasing taxes x T1	0.02	0.02	0.07*
	[−0.03; 0.07]	[−0.01; 0.05]	[0.00; 0.13]
Increasing taxes x T2	0.03	0.03	0.03
	[−0.02; 0.08]	[−0.00; 0.06]	[−0.04; 0.10]
Defence	0.05	0.23*	0.12*
	[−0.02; 0.11]	[0.19; 0.28]	[0.03; 0.21]
Defence x T1	−0.10	−0.07*	−0.01
	[−0.20; 0.01]	[−0.13; −0.01]	[−0.12; 0.10]
Defence x T2	−0.03	−0.05	−0.01
	[−0.11; 0.06]	[−0.11; 0.00]	[−0.12; 0.11]

Environment	0.09*	0.07*	0.05
	[0.02; 0.16]	[0.03; 0.11]	[−0.03; 0.14]
Environment x T1	−0.08	−0.03	0.01
	[−0.18; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.03]	[−0.10; 0.12]
Environment x T2	−0.05	−0.06	−0.02
	[−0.14; 0.05]	[−0.11; 0.00]	[−0.13; 0.10]
Foreign aid	0.16*	0.18*	0.17*
	[0.09; 0.23]	[0.14; 0.22]	[0.09; 0.25]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.12*	−0.06	−0.02
	[−0.22; −0.02]	[−0.12; 0.00]	[−0.13; 0.08]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.04	−0.03	−0.06
	[−0.14; 0.05]	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.16; 0.05]
R&D	0.11*	0.11*	0.07
	[0.06; 0.17]	[0.07; 0.15]	[−0.01; 0.14]
R&D x T1	−0.10*	−0.02	0.04
	[−0.18; −0.01]	[−0.08; 0.04]	[−0.06; 0.13]
R&D x T2	−0.07	−0.03	−0.01
	[−0.14; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.02]	[−0.11; 0.09]
Pensions	−0.00	0.07*	0.04
	[−0.06; 0.05]	[0.03; 0.11]	[−0.03; 0.11]
Pensions x T1	−0.02	−0.05	0.00
	[−0.11; 0.08]	[−0.11; 0.01]	[−0.09; 0.10]
Pensions x T2	−0.06	−0.02	0.00
	[−0.14; 0.03]	[−0.08; 0.04]	[−0.10; 0.11]
Social security	−0.06	0.01	−0.05
	[−0.13; 0.01]	[−0.03; 0.05]	[−0.12; 0.02]
Social security x T1	−0.06	−0.02	0.09
	[−0.16; 0.04]	[−0.08; 0.04]	[−0.02; 0.19]
Social security x T2	−0.02	−0.04	−0.04
	[−0.12; 0.08]	[−0.10; 0.02]	[−0.14; 0.05]
Public transport	0.08*	0.13*	0.05
	[0.03; 0.14]	[0.09; 0.17]	[−0.01; 0.12]
Public transport x T1	−0.08	−0.05	0.06
	[−0.17; 0.01]	[−0.11; 0.01]	[−0.03; 0.15]
Public transport x T2	−0.02	−0.05	0.02
	[−0.10; 0.07]	[−0.10; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.12]
T1	0.04	0.02	−0.08
	[−0.05; 0.12]	[−0.04; 0.07]	[−0.17; 0.02]
T2	−0.01	0.03	0.04
	[−0.09; 0.07]	[−0.02; 0.09]	[−0.06; 0.14]
R^2	0.09	0.15	0.10
Adj. R^2	0.08	0.15	0.09
Num. obs.	3912	10015	3197
RMSE	0.30	0.27	0.28
N Clusters	479	1248	398

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 34: **Heterogeneous effects with presidential vote**

	D.Trump	H.Clinton	Did not vote
(Intercept)	0.41*	0.37*	0.38*
	[0.34; 0.48]	[0.33; 0.42]	[0.32; 0.43]
Companies	0.02	0.08*	0.05*
	[−0.02; 0.07]	[0.05; 0.11]	[0.01; 0.09]
Companies x T1	−0.01	−0.01	−0.03
	[−0.08; 0.06]	[−0.06; 0.04]	[−0.09; 0.03]
Companies x T2	−0.01	−0.03	0.03
	[−0.08; 0.06]	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.03; 0.08]
Older people	−0.15*	−0.15*	−0.12*
	[−0.21; −0.10]	[−0.18; −0.11]	[−0.16; −0.08]
Older people x T1	0.04	0.04	−0.01
	[−0.04; 0.11]	[−0.01; 0.09]	[−0.07; 0.05]
Older people x T2	0.02	0.02	0.00
	[−0.06; 0.10]	[−0.03; 0.06]	[−0.05; 0.06]
Wealthy	0.02	0.10*	0.08*
	[−0.03; 0.07]	[0.07; 0.14]	[0.03; 0.12]
Wealthy x T1	0.03	0.02	−0.01
	[−0.04; 0.10]	[−0.03; 0.06]	[−0.07; 0.06]
Wealthy x T2	0.02	0.01	0.02
	[−0.05; 0.09]	[−0.04; 0.05]	[−0.04; 0.08]
Cutting spending	0.04	−0.02	−0.03
	[−0.01; 0.08]	[−0.04; 0.01]	[−0.07; 0.00]
Cutting spending x T1	−0.03	0.00	0.03
	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.02; 0.07]
Cutting spending x T2	−0.01	0.01	0.01
	[−0.07; 0.05]	[−0.02; 0.05]	[−0.04; 0.05]
Increasing taxes	−0.03	−0.03*	−0.05*
	[−0.07; 0.00]	[−0.05; −0.00]	[−0.09; −0.02]
Increasing taxes x T1	0.00	0.03	0.05
	[−0.05; 0.05]	[−0.01; 0.06]	[−0.00; 0.09]
Increasing taxes x T2	0.01	0.02	0.02
	[−0.04; 0.07]	[−0.02; 0.05]	[−0.02; 0.07]
Defence	0.05	0.22*	0.18*
	[−0.02; 0.13]	[0.17; 0.27]	[0.12; 0.25]
Defence x T1	−0.07	−0.05	−0.09*
	[−0.18; 0.05]	[−0.12; 0.02]	[−0.18; −0.00]
Defence x T2	−0.01	−0.03	−0.10*
	[−0.11; 0.08]	[−0.10; 0.03]	[−0.18; −0.01]

Environment	0.10*	0.04	0.10*
	[0.02; 0.18]	[−0.01; 0.09]	[0.04; 0.16]
Environment x T1	−0.10	0.01	−0.02
	[−0.21; 0.00]	[−0.06; 0.07]	[−0.10; 0.06]
Environment x T2	−0.06	−0.02	−0.11*
	[−0.16; 0.04]	[−0.09; 0.05]	[−0.19; −0.04]
Foreign aid	0.16*	0.15*	0.24*
	[0.09; 0.24]	[0.10; 0.20]	[0.18; 0.30]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.10	−0.03	−0.14*
	[−0.21; 0.01]	[−0.10; 0.04]	[−0.22; −0.06]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.01	−0.03	−0.17*
	[−0.10; 0.09]	[−0.09; 0.04]	[−0.25; −0.09]
R&D	0.12*	0.10*	0.11*
	[0.06; 0.19]	[0.06; 0.15]	[0.06; 0.17]
R&D x T1	−0.07	−0.01	−0.06
	[−0.17; 0.02]	[−0.08; 0.05]	[−0.14; 0.02]
R&D x T2	−0.09*	−0.01	−0.08*
	[−0.18; −0.00]	[−0.07; 0.06]	[−0.15; −0.00]
Pensions	0.01	0.05*	0.08*
	[−0.05; 0.08]	[0.00; 0.10]	[0.02; 0.15]
Pensions x T1	−0.03	−0.04	−0.07
	[−0.13; 0.08]	[−0.11; 0.02]	[−0.15; 0.02]
Pensions x T2	−0.05	−0.03	−0.04
	[−0.14; 0.03]	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.12; 0.04]
Social security	−0.05	−0.04	0.02
	[−0.13; 0.03]	[−0.08; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.08]
Social security x T1	−0.04	0.01	−0.02
	[−0.14; 0.07]	[−0.06; 0.07]	[−0.10; 0.06]
Social security x T2	−0.04	−0.02	−0.05
	[−0.14; 0.06]	[−0.08; 0.05]	[−0.13; 0.03]
Public transport	0.07*	0.11*	0.14*
	[0.00; 0.14]	[0.06; 0.15]	[0.07; 0.20]
Public transport x T1	−0.03	−0.03	−0.05
	[−0.13; 0.06]	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.13; 0.03]
Public transport x T2	−0.00	−0.03	−0.08*
	[−0.10; 0.09]	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.16; −0.00]
T1	0.02	−0.00	0.01
	[−0.08; 0.12]	[−0.06; 0.06]	[−0.06; 0.09]
T2	0.02	0.02	0.06
	[−0.08; 0.11]	[−0.04; 0.08]	[−0.01; 0.14]
R^2	0.10	0.16	0.12
Adj. R^2	0.09	0.15	0.11
Num. obs.	3695	7856	4848
RMSE	0.31	0.27	0.27
N Clusters	450	976	604

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 35: **Heterogeneous effects with top value of life**

	Top value of life	Not top value of life
(Intercept)	0.34*	0.40*
	[0.31; 0.38]	[0.36; 0.44]
Companies	0.08*	0.05*
	[0.05; 0.11]	[0.02; 0.08]
Companies x T1	−0.00	−0.01
	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.06; 0.03]
Companies x T2	−0.03	−0.00
	[−0.07; 0.01]	[−0.04; 0.04]
Older people	−0.16*	−0.11*
	[−0.19; −0.13]	[−0.14; −0.08]
Older people x T1	0.05*	0.01
	[0.00; 0.09]	[−0.03; 0.05]
Older people x T2	0.02	−0.00
	[−0.03; 0.06]	[−0.04; 0.04]
Wealthy	0.09*	0.07*
	[0.06; 0.12]	[0.04; 0.10]
Wealthy x T1	0.04	−0.01
	[−0.00; 0.09]	[−0.05; 0.03]
Wealthy x T2	−0.00	0.01
	[−0.05; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.05]
Cutting spending	−0.02	0.00
	[−0.05; 0.00]	[−0.02; 0.03]
Cutting spending x T1	0.03	−0.02
	[−0.00; 0.07]	[−0.05; 0.01]
Cutting spending x T2	0.02	−0.02
	[−0.01; 0.06]	[−0.05; 0.01]
Increasing taxes	−0.05*	−0.03*
	[−0.08; −0.02]	[−0.05; −0.01]
Increasing taxes x T1	0.04	0.01
	[−0.00; 0.08]	[−0.02; 0.04]
Increasing taxes x T2	0.06*	0.00
	[0.02; 0.09]	[−0.03; 0.03]
Defence	0.20*	0.15*
	[0.16; 0.25]	[0.10; 0.19]
Defence x T1	−0.08*	−0.05
	[−0.14; −0.01]	[−0.11; 0.01]
Defence x T2	−0.06	−0.04
	[−0.12; 0.01]	[−0.10; 0.01]

Environment	0.08*	0.07*
	[0.04; 0.13]	[0.03; 0.11]
Environment x T1	−0.06	−0.02
	[−0.12; 0.01]	[−0.08; 0.04]
Environment x T2	−0.06	−0.05
	[−0.12; 0.01]	[−0.11; 0.00]
Foreign aid	0.21*	0.15*
	[0.17; 0.26]	[0.11; 0.19]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.09*	−0.05
	[−0.16; −0.03]	[−0.11; 0.00]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.09*	−0.03
	[−0.15; −0.02]	[−0.08; 0.03]
R&D	0.11*	0.08*
	[0.07; 0.15]	[0.05; 0.12]
R&D x T1	−0.03	−0.03
	[−0.09; 0.03]	[−0.08; 0.03]
R&D x T2	−0.02	−0.04
	[−0.08; 0.04]	[−0.09; 0.01]
Pensions	0.06*	0.04
	[0.02; 0.10]	[−0.00; 0.08]
Pensions x T1	−0.04	−0.02
	[−0.10; 0.02]	[−0.08; 0.04]
Pensions x T2	−0.02	−0.03
	[−0.08; 0.05]	[−0.09; 0.02]
Social security	−0.01	−0.00
	[−0.06; 0.03]	[−0.04; 0.04]
Social security x T1	−0.01	−0.02
	[−0.07; 0.05]	[−0.08; 0.04]
Social security x T2	−0.04	−0.03
	[−0.10; 0.02]	[−0.09; 0.02]
Public transport	0.13*	0.08*
	[0.08; 0.17]	[0.04; 0.13]
Public transport x T1	−0.04	−0.04
	[−0.10; 0.02]	[−0.09; 0.02]
Public transport x T2	−0.04	−0.03
	[−0.10; 0.02]	[−0.08; 0.03]
T1	−0.01	0.03
	[−0.07; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.08]
T2	0.02	0.04
	[−0.03; 0.08]	[−0.02; 0.09]
R^2	0.15	0.09
Adj. R^2	0.14	0.08
Num. obs.	7904	10212
RMSE	0.28	0.27
N Clusters	986	1259

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Table 36: **Heterogeneous effects with aggregate preferences for the allocation of tax burden (Conditioning on "Who should pay?")**

	Companies	Older people	Wealthy
(Intercept)	0.44*	0.28*	0.44*
	[0.39; 0.48]	[0.23; 0.32]	[0.39; 0.48]
Companies x T1	−0.04		
	[−0.10; 0.03]		
Companies x T2	0.02		
	[−0.04; 0.09]		
Older people x T1		0.04	
		[−0.03; 0.11]	
Older people x T2		0.04	
		[−0.02; 0.11]	
Wealthy x T1			0.02
			[−0.05; 0.09]
Wealthy x T2			0.04
			[−0.02; 0.11]
Cutting spending	−0.00	0.00	−0.06*
	[−0.04; 0.04]	[−0.03; 0.04]	[−0.09; −0.02]
Cutting spending x T1	−0.00	−0.01	0.05
	[−0.05; 0.05]	[−0.06; 0.04]	[−0.01; 0.10]
Cutting spending x T2	0.01	−0.01	0.04
	[−0.04; 0.06]	[−0.06; 0.04]	[−0.01; 0.10]
Increasing taxes	−0.08*	−0.02	−0.05*
	[−0.11; −0.04]	[−0.06; 0.01]	[−0.08; −0.01]
Increasing taxes x T1	0.07*	0.02	0.02
	[0.02; 0.13]	[−0.03; 0.06]	[−0.03; 0.07]
Increasing taxes x T2	0.05	0.03	0.05*
	[−0.00; 0.10]	[−0.02; 0.07]	[0.00; 0.11]
Defence	0.20*	0.09*	0.21*
	[0.13; 0.26]	[0.03; 0.14]	[0.15; 0.27]
Defence x T1	−0.06	−0.08	−0.04
	[−0.15; 0.03]	[−0.17; 0.01]	[−0.13; 0.05]
Defence x T2	−0.05	−0.04	−0.07
	[−0.13; 0.04]	[−0.12; 0.04]	[−0.16; 0.01]

Environment	0.06	0.02	0.13*
	[−0.00; 0.12]	[−0.03; 0.08]	[0.06; 0.19]
Environment X T1	0.02	0.01	−0.10*
	[−0.06; 0.10]	[−0.08; 0.09]	[−0.19; −0.01]
Environment x T2	−0.07	−0.04	−0.09
	[−0.15; 0.02]	[−0.12; 0.04]	[−0.18; 0.00]
Foreign aid	0.17*	0.13*	0.22*
	[0.11; 0.24]	[0.07; 0.19]	[0.16; 0.28]
Foreign aid x T1	−0.03	−0.11*	−0.08
	[−0.12; 0.07]	[−0.20; −0.03]	[−0.16; 0.01]
Foreign aid x T2	−0.04	−0.06	−0.08
	[−0.13; 0.05]	[−0.14; 0.02]	[−0.17; 0.00]
R&D	0.12*	0.04	0.14*
	[0.06; 0.18]	[−0.01; 0.10]	[0.08; 0.19]
R&D x T1	−0.02	−0.03	−0.03
	[−0.11; 0.06]	[−0.11; 0.06]	[−0.12; 0.05]
R&D X T2	−0.07	−0.04	−0.02
	[−0.15; 0.01]	[−0.12; 0.03]	[−0.10; 0.06]
Pensions	0.04	0.02	0.09*
	[−0.02; 0.10]	[−0.04; 0.08]	[0.03; 0.15]
Pensions x T1	−0.00	−0.02	−0.07
	[−0.09; 0.08]	[−0.10; 0.07]	[−0.16; 0.01]
Pensions x T2	−0.02	−0.02	−0.07
	[−0.10; 0.07]	[−0.09; 0.06]	[−0.15; 0.01]
Social security	−0.02	−0.04	0.00
	[−0.07; 0.04]	[−0.09; 0.02]	[−0.05; 0.06]
Social security x T1	−0.00	−0.00	−0.01
	[−0.09; 0.08]	[−0.08; 0.08]	[−0.10; 0.07]
Social security x T2	−0.06	−0.05	−0.06
	[−0.14; 0.03]	[−0.13; 0.03]	[−0.14; 0.03]
Public transport	0.14*	0.03	0.14*
	[0.08; 0.19]	[−0.03; 0.08]	[0.08; 0.20]
Public transport x T1	−0.03	−0.02	−0.03
	[−0.11; 0.06]	[−0.10; 0.05]	[−0.12; 0.05]
Public transport x T2	−0.06	−0.01	−0.05
	[−0.14; 0.02]	[−0.08; 0.07]	[−0.13; 0.03]
R^2	0.06	0.02	0.06
Adj. R^2	0.06	0.02	0.06
Num. obs.	4506	4477	4516
RMSE	0.28	0.27	0.29
N Clusters	2022	2008	2038

* Null hypothesis value outside the confidence interval.

Appendix L Deviations from the Pre-Analysis Plans

Pre-analysis plans have been submitted for chapters 3, 4 and 5. The pre-analysis plan (PAP) and the full survey instrument for Chapters 3 and 4 can be found following this link. Chapter 5 was pre-registered via OSF on this link. The deviations from the PAPs can be found in Table 37.

Table 37: **Deviations from the PAP**

	Deviations from the pre-analysis plan
Chapter 3	There are no significant deviations from the pre-analysis plan for Chapter 3. As can be seen in Page 2 of the PAP, the research question, hypotheses and the methodology were implemented as pre-registered (regarding the conjoint experiment in Ch3). The one deviation regarding the conjoint experiment is that open-ended responses are not analysed using text analysis for this chapter.
Chapter 4	The research question and the hypotheses of Chapter 4 were not included in the pre-analysis plan of the survey instrument.
Chapter 5	From the PAP, hypotheses H1.1, H1.2, H3.1 and H3.2 were developed to be tested using the conjoint experiment in Chapter 5. These hypotheses were tested using the attribute elements of the conjoint experiment. The main deviation from the PAP is that only the first wave of the experiment was included in Chapter 5 as the second wave results were not available at the time of the thesis submission.