

Do voters polarize when extreme parties enter parliament?

Daniel Bischof[†]
Markus Wagner^{*}

3rd March 2018

Abstract

Do voters polarize ideologically when radical views gain political legitimacy, or does the rise of radical voices merely reflect societal conflict? We argue that the elite polarization as signalled by radical parties' first entrance into parliament leads to voter divergence. Immediately after the election, legitimization and backlash effects mean that voters on both ideological sides move towards the extremes. In the longer term, this polarization is solidified because of radical parties' parliamentary presence. A panel study of Dutch voters shows that the 2002 parliamentary entrance of a radical-right party indeed led to immediate ideological polarization across the political spectrum. Estimating two-way fixed effects models on Eurobarometer data from 17 countries (1973–2016) shows an additional long-term impact of radical-right party entry on polarization. The presence of radical voices on the right has polarizing effects, illustrating how such institutional recognition and legitimation can have a far-reaching impact on society.

word count=abstract 148;
full manuscript (excluding abstract)=9182.

[†]Department of Political Science, University of Zurich (CH); bischof@ipz.uzh.ch.

^{*}Department of Government, University of Vienna (AT); markus.wagner@univie.ac.at.

1 Introduction

A recurrent theme of democracies is the rise of extreme parties. The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw the growing success of Socialist and Communist parties, and the 1920s and 1930s witnessed increasing support for National Socialism in Weimar Germany, Benito Mussolini's National Fascist Party in the Kingdom of Italy. More recently, (left-wing) Green parties rose to prominence in the 1980s in several European countries, while many party systems have recently experienced the entry of radical-right parties into parliament. In 2017, for example, the Alternative für Deutschland entered the German Bundestag, ending that country's long spell as one of the only Western European countries without an established radical-right party.

When parties and candidates that are more extreme than their competitors become relevant in democratic societies, observers regularly raise concerns about the consequences for public discourse and for societal norms more generally. For instance, Donald Trump's campaign and election led to such fears. In June 2016 Mitt Romney, the former Republican nominee for president, suggested that Trump's election could provide legitimacy to radical views through 'trickle-down racism, trickle-down bigotry, trickle-down misogyny'.¹ The increased usage of racist/fascist symbols², the ensuing counter mobilization³, and violent clashes between Trump supporters and other groups⁴ all suggest that his election spurred both public mobilization by his supporters and a backlash against their extreme positions.⁵

The theory implicit to restructure these observations is that voters become more ideologically polarized when extreme views are publicly and broadly expressed by parties and candidates that are endowed with some level of political legitimacy (Hetherington 2001; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013; Layman, Carsey, and Horowitz 2006b). We define an extreme actor in this context as a new party or candidate that takes up more ideologically radical posi-

¹CNN: Mitt Romney says Donald Trump will change America with 'trickle-down racism'.

²Brad Lander (NYC City Council): Swastikas in Adam Yauch Park.

³NPR: Swastikas Are Painted At Adam Yauch Park In NYC – But Kids Win The Day.

⁴LA Times: Violence by far-left protesters in Berkeley sparks alarm.

⁵New Yorker: How Norms Change Higher levels of voter polarization are generally important because they can have broader societal consequences. For instance, they can lead to lower political interest and lower satisfaction with democracy and government performance (Layman, Carsey, and Horowitz 2006a; Iyengar, Sood, and Lelkes 2012; Sørensen 2014), but can also increase turnout and political engagement (Abramowitz and Saunders 2008).

tions than current parties and politicians. Ultimately, the institutional presence and relevance of such new, more radical competitors is thought to increase ideological polarization among citizens (Mudde 2013; Sprague-Jones 2011; Castanho Silva 2017). In this context, we mean by polarization that ideological views become more distant from the political center: the variance of positions increases (Ezrow 2007; Dalton 2008). The polarization caused by the rise of extreme voices is also often believed to occur on both sides: those who sympathize with the new party and those who oppose it (Tankard and Paluck 2016; Bishin et al. 2016; Bustikova 2014; Semyonov, Rajjman, and Gorodzeisky 2006).

We put this implicit theory to test by examining whether the institutional legitimization of parties located at the ideological extremes increases ideological polarization among voters. To study institutional legitimization, we focus on a specific, clearly identifiable type of event: extreme party entry into parliament. In elections in multiparty systems, new parties regularly manage to enter parliament for the first time (Bolleyer 2014; Tavits 2008), and often these new competitors are at the left or right extremes of the party system. The main examples we consider in this paper are radical-right parties, but we also examine whether ideological polarization occurs when parties enter on the left.

We argue that the initial institutional recognition and legitimation of radical parties has both short- and long-term effects on voter polarization. Immediately as a result of a party's successful entry into parliament, voters who sympathize with the party and its stances will see their own views as more socially acceptable (Tankard and Paluck 2016; Bursztyrn and Fiorin 2017) and will therefore be more likely to openly declare their ideological stance (*legitimation effect*). Voters on the opposite side of the political spectrum will react negatively to the perceived breaking of social norms and feel the need to distance themselves from the new competitors (*backlash effect*) (Bishin et al. 2016). In the longer term, the presence of radical parties in parliament will shape political debate in the country in parliament and the media (Dinas, Riera, and Roussias 2015). Based on previous research, this increased elite-level polarization should lead to further voter polarization, for instance through persuasion (Lenz 2009), cuing (Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012; Nicholson 2012; Druckman, Peterson, and Slothuus 2013), and issue entrepreneurship (De Vries and Hobolt 2012; Hobolt and de Vries 2015).

1 Introduction

We test the expectation of short- and long-term voter polarization after extreme party entry in three ways. In Study 1, we look at voter polarization after the first entry into parliament in 2002 of the radical-right Lijst Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands. Here, we take advantage of a pre-post panel study to compare voter polarization before and after the election.⁶ We use placebo tests to provide further evidence that the election *itself* appears to have caused the increase in voter polarization. Second, we examine the patterns of left-right polarization after radical right party entry in 17 countries from 1973 to 2016 based on Eurobarometer data. Using two-way fixed effects regression (Study 2) and synthetic control models (Study 3) we again find evidence that the public polarizes after extreme party entrance. Moreover, the size of this effect is substantial, at about one standard deviation.

The results of our studies highlight one common denominator: radical-right party entry leads to voter polarization. This is the case both in the short and the long term. Relying on the the same strategies we also test if similar patterns emerge after extreme parties enter on the left, but do not find evidence of an equivalent polarizing effect after radical left parties' first electoral success.

Our results have important implications for the study of elite polarization and its impact on voters. Existing work on the effects of elite positioning has tended to focus on gradual, over-time changes in political discourse (e.g. Layman, Carsey, and Horowitz 2006b; Layman and Carsey 2002; Hetherington 2009, 2001; Fiorina and Abrams 2007; Adams, De Vries, and Leiter 2012; Adams, Green, and Milazzo 2012; Gabel and Scheve 2007a; Down and Wilson 2010). In contrast, we show how polarization can increase quickly through single, highly newsworthy events – such as elections – that place extreme stances at the center of the political debate and provide legitimacy to them. In addition to being focusing events, elections can also have a longer-term impact by providing radical views with an institutionalized platform. Finally, our results address a common issue in studies of elite influence, namely the causal direction of ideological position-taking (Gabel and Scheve 2007b). By using a specific instance of elite polarization, extreme party entry, we are able to better assess the direction and mechanisms of changes in polarization. Furthermore, we add to the findings of Gabel and Scheve (2007b)

⁶Dinas, Hartman, and van Spanje (2016) recently used the same election study to test the effect of Fortuyn's murder before the election on projection bias.

2 Short-term effects of extreme party entry: Legitimization and backlash

by showing that ideological polarization among voters is driven by the entrance of specific parties, but not necessarily by increasing party system fragmentation more generally.

Our results also provide new insight into the debate on the broader links between elite and voter ideologies (Hetherington 2009; Down and Wilson 2010; Adams, Ezrow, and Somer-Topcu 2011; Adams, De Vries, and Leiter 2012; Adams, Green, and Milazzo 2012; Ezrow 2007). Recent research has shown that voters may be inattentive and fail to notice shifts in party positions (Adams 2012; Adams, Ezrow, and Somer-Topcu 2011, 2014). Other observers claim that radical-right parties, for example, have had little effect on voters' long-term attitudes (Mudde 2013). In contrast, other work shows that voters do react to elite positioning (Fernández-Vázquez 2014; Adams, Green, and Milazzo 2012; Seeberg, Slothuus, and Stubager 2017). Our findings highlight that newsworthy, legitimizing events such as elections have a focusing impact, perhaps leading voters to update their views more than after other, more subtle shifts. Elections, like leadership changes (Somer-Topcu 2016; Fernandez-Vazquez and Somer-Topcu 2017), manage to cut through the broader political debate and reach the general public. However, we also show that the informational, legitimizing effect of extreme party entry may well be conditional on the existence of a taboo concerning a party's views and an ostracization of the party itself (Van Spanje and Van Der Brug 2007).

2 Short-term effects of extreme party entry: Legitimization and backlash

The election of a new radical party into parliament is likely to be an important, attention-grabbing and sometimes even shocking development for established political parties, the media and many citizens. In addition to shaping the headlines, this event also provides voters with important information about the distribution of ideological preferences among voters and about the social and political acceptability of these views (Tankard and Paluck 2016; Bursztyn and Fiorin 2017). Research in social psychology shows that individuals learn about social norms over time, in a dynamic fashion (Paluck, Shepherd, and Aronow 2016; Tankard and Paluck 2016). As noted by Tankard and Paluck (2016: p.184), 'summary information about group opinions and behavior (indicated by the group's voting tallies, or other announcements about the group) ...update[s] our impressions of what the group typically does or what the

group values.' Signal events such as Supreme Court decisions in the United States can thus lead individuals to update their perceptions of social norms (Bartels and Mutz 2009: 249; Hoekstra and Segal 1996; Tankard and Paluck 2017: 1334). Similarly, the electoral success of a party that is more extreme than its competitors provides voters with summary information about the distribution of preferences and norms among the population (Tankard and Paluck 2016).⁷ The election of the extreme party thus tells voters that the views of the new extreme party are no longer as socially frowned upon as before, and that many people support these views. Because of this, the entry of extreme parties into parliament is likely to increase polarization among voters on both sides of the political debate.

First, extreme party entry will have a legitimization effect: people identifying with the new extreme party will express more extreme views. This is not because of persuasion, as voters are probably unlikely to change their ideological stances because a new, extreme party is elected. Instead, we believe that voters with extreme views will feel freer to declare and admit their pre-existing radical positions (Bursztyn and Fiorin 2017).

One reason for this is that perceptions of social norms will shift due to this event. In most cases, the ideological positions held by extreme parties were previously at least somewhat taboo. The entry of the extreme party from outside the political mainstream will lead supporters and sympathizers to feel that their views have greater legitimacy and social acceptance, even if these parties are still 'ostracized' by their mainstream competitors (van Spanje and Weber 2017; Van Spanje and Van Der Brug 2007; van Spanje 2010). The success of a party with radical views signals that the range of views that are voiced and deemed acceptable has changed. In the term used by Rabinowitz and Macdonald (1989), the event may thus change the 'region of acceptability' in the party system. This type of effect is akin to that posited by 'licensing' theory, which states that public information on norms has a greater impact on those who are already in favor of those norms. As Tankard and Paluck (2016: p.198) state, awareness of public support for certain views 'may license supporters to act on their views in public'.

⁷Of course, not all types of extreme party entry will contain the same type and amount of information for voters. In some countries, extreme party entry will be foreshadowed well by high poll ratings or by election into regional legislatures, weakening the additional informational content of entry into national parliament. Yet, we argue that even if there was prior success, the signaling effect of an electoral entry into national parliament adds substantially to comparable information from surveys or other elections.

2 Short-term effects of extreme party entry: Legitimization and backlash

An additional reason to expect a legitimization effect is because the party's success signals popular support for certain views. Before the extreme party entered parliament, people identifying with the party may have felt unsure about how many people also hold their extreme views. The success of the new party may tell these voters that there is more popular support for their views than they previously thought, further encouraging them to state their views openly.

Overall, we therefore expect:

- **Legitimization hypothesis:** After an extreme party enters parliament for the first time, people identifying with that party and its views will move further to the ideological extremes.

In addition to legitimizing radical views among party identifiers, the entry of an extreme party will lead other individuals to strengthen their opposition to these views. People identifying with parties on the opposite side of the political spectrum will feel the need to act against the legitimization of radical positions. Focusing events may thus lead to a backlash among voters who fear changes to the status quo (Bishin et al. 2016; Flores and Barclay 2016). For example, some voters – such as minorities – are likely to feel threatened by the normalization of positions that threaten their rights. Even voters who are not likely to be directly affected by the normalization of radical views will want to actively speak out against radical positions they disapprove of. In reaction to the shifting norms, opposing voters may take even stronger stances towards the other side of the political spectrum (Bishin et al. 2016; Bustikova 2014).

Hence, we expect:

- **Backlash hypothesis:** After an extreme party enters parliament for the first time, people identifying with opposing parties will move further to the ideological extremes.

In sum, the entry of radical parties into parliament may have short-term effects on voter positions simply by legitimizing extreme views and by creating a backlash among opposing voters.

3 Long-term effects of extreme party entry

Based on the findings in previous research, the short-term of extreme party entry is likely to be solidified and strengthened in the longer term. This is because getting into parliament can provide these parties with a significant increase in various resources (Dinas, Riera, and Roussias 2015). They can use their parliamentary platform and improved financial means to present their views and gain attention for their positions. In addition, competitors and the media will also provide them with publicity. Simply being represented in parliament is also likely to be taken as a signal by other parties that this new party is a significant threat. As a result, other parties will also address the issues and positions of their new competitor, thereby raising the party's prominence. For example, they may attack the new competitor more and take its positions into account when formulating campaign strategies. Moreover, the ability to win seats may go hand in hand with increased media coverage (Dunn and Singh 2011). Parties with parliamentary representation are often provided with more and better access to the media, in particular by state broadcasters. As a result, parliamentary representation can be a boon for parties' long-term chances of survival, amplifying the effect generated by their initial success in getting into parliament (Dinas, Riera, and Roussias 2015).

The increased resources and attention afforded to parties that manage to enter in parliament will affect how voters perceive political debates and may thereby shift voter positions. In this paper, we do not test the mechanisms that explain why extreme party presence affects voter polarization. Yet, it is nevertheless helpful to think about the plausible mechanisms of this effect. First, if radical views are increasingly prominent on both sides, this may shape voter positions through persuasion (Lenz 2009), perhaps strengthened by motivated reasoning (Taber and Lodge 2006). Analogous to our short term mechanisms outlined above, this will include perceptions of the types of views that are socially acceptable (Tankard and Paluck 2016; Hogg 2010). Second, elite polarization may lead voters to rely more on party positions as cues (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012), whereby voters simply decide to adopt the positions held by the parties they support (Zaller 1992; Bartels 2002; Steenbergen, Edwards, and de Vries 2007). Research has shown that greater elite polarization means that motivated reasoning and cue-taking increases (Slothuus and de Vreese 2010; Druckman,

Peterson, and Slothuus 2013; Brader, Tucker, and Duell 2012; Ray 2003; Steenbergen, Edwards, and de Vries 2007). Finally, extreme party entry may change the content of political debates and thus lead to issue evolution (Carmines and Stimson 1986, 1989; Carmines and Wagner 2006; Stevens 2013), changing the issue content of the left-right dimension. Polarization will then increase if partisan positions on the new issues are clearer and more distinct (Arndt 2016). With their increased presence in parliamentary debates and the media, extreme parties may be important ‘issue entrepreneurs’ (Hobolt and de Vries 2015; De Vries and Hobolt 2012) that introduce or emphasize innovative and divisive issues that have the potential to reshape party competition.⁸

These long-term effects will occur in addition to short-term effects hypothesized above. They can be thought of as accompanying the legitimization/backlash effect, strengthening the divisions between the two groups even further. In summary, our final hypothesis is:

- **Long-term polarization hypothesis:** Voter-level ideological polarization will increase after an extreme party enters parliament for the first time.

4 Research Design

We rely on three studies employing two different data sources to test how voters polarize in the short and long term after extreme party entry. The first study makes use of an individual panel study conducted during the 2002 Dutch national parliamentary elections. This study allows us to carefully evaluate the short-term legitimization/backlash mechanisms by exploiting the survey’s panel design. The second study then extrapolates these findings to a longer-term, macro-level perspective. Based on Eurobarometer data we test if the entry of an extreme party led to polarization particularly in countries employing an electoral threshold, a methodological decision we elaborate on below.

To test our theoretical argument we rely on respondents’ general left-right self-placement. We believe that this survey measure constitutes an appropriate source of information to assess

⁸Like the short-term impact of extreme party entrance, the long-term effects may also occur on both sides of the political divide. Nicholson (2012) shows that the cues sent out by politicians primarily decrease support among opposing partisans rather than increasing support among the party faithful. Moreover, backlash often occurs when individuals feel threatened by change, particularly if they already hold negative views about the relevant group (Bishin et al. 2016). This holds for extreme party entry.

public polarization. First, general questions about left-right placements allow respondents to interpret for themselves what they understand as being left or right. This means that our study gets at the underlying ideological divisions between voters. For many studies, the shifting meaning of left and right is a disadvantage, but for our purposes – capturing summary ideological divisions between citizens – it is important to take into account how the policy content of debates shifts (De Vries, Hakhverdian, and Lancee 2013; Lachat 2017), e.g. due to the efforts of “issue entrepreneurs” (Hobolt and de Vries 2015). Hence, in our view polarization also increases if voter views on individual issues stay the same, but politics changes to revolve around more divisive issues. This should be captured by the left-right measure and means that using such a measure is in fact an advantage for our purposes. To the extent that left-right responses fail to capture shifts in the issue content of political debates, our findings should in fact underestimate polarization effects. Hence, using left-right polarization probably provides a conservative estimate of the impact of extreme party entry.

Second, in contrast to issue-specific questions, respondents’ left-right placement is available across several countries and time periods. This allows us to test our argument on a large sample of countries and compare these findings to our findings based on the election panel study.⁹

5 Results

5.1 Study 1: Election panel study in the Netherlands (2002)

We investigate the short-term effects of extreme party using the case of the Lijst Pim Fortuyn (LPF), which entered the Dutch parliament at the 2002 election. Named after its founder, the party was a populist radical right party, focusing on issues of migration and cultural heritage (Akkerman 2005; Dinas, Hartman, and van Spanje 2016; Koopmans and Muis 2009; De Lange and Art 2011).¹⁰ The party gained prominence under the guidance of its charismatic leader,

⁹Issue-specific questions are rarely available in comparable fashion across countries and time. Even in the case of the Dutch election study, issue-specific question vary prior to and after the election. For instance, the Dutch election panel asked respondents about their position on asylum seekers prior to the election, only to ask them about their position on migration after the election.

¹⁰While the LPF took a liberal stance on gay rights, the LPF is nevertheless classes as radical-right populist by most observers due to its focus on (Muslim) immigration and multiculturalism and its criticism of the political and cultural elite (De Lange and Art 2011; Ennser 2010).

who founded his new party about three months before the election.

The election of LPF is an ideal case to study our hypothesis. First, the party's late founding gave its leader little time to build up its reputation and influence the media before getting into parliament. This means that the long-term mechanisms outlined in our theory are unlikely explanations for a short-term polarization effect immediately after an election. Second, the party's electoral success was fairly unexpected (Van Holsteyn and Irwin 2003: 42). Third, as van Holsteyn, Irwin, and Den Ridder (2003) note, its success was not preceded by a public shift to the right prior to election day. To a certain extent this reduces the possibility of the reversed causation that would arise if public polarization was a cause for, rather than the consequence of, the electoral success of the radical right party.

We use the 2002 Dutch Parliamentary Election Study (DPES) to assess within-subject shifts in public attitudes. To our knowledge, this is the only study that combines two key prerequisites to test our hypotheses: it was conducted before and after the first election of a radical-right party to parliament and includes repeated measures of left-right ideological self-placement.¹¹

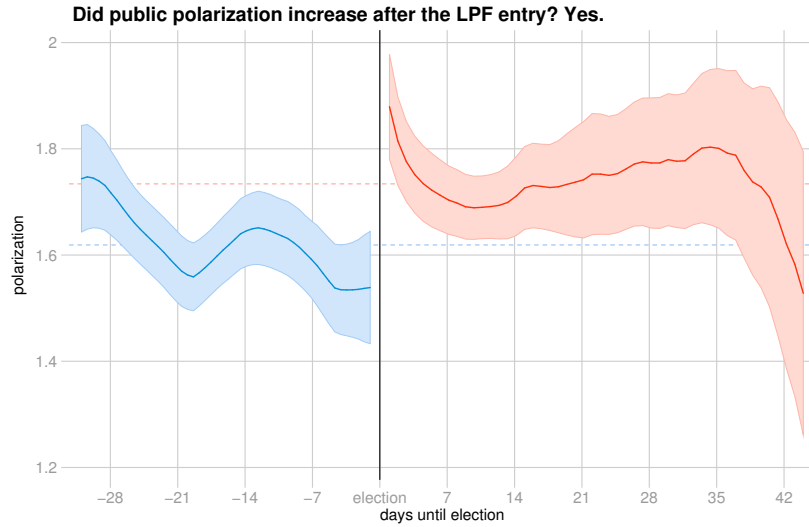
The pre-election wave began interviewing citizens 31 days prior to election day, and the post-election wave interviewed the same respondents up until 42 days after the election.¹² In total, the DPES reports data for 1,904 panel respondents. The study allows us to compare the same respondents prior to and after experiencing the entrance of an extreme party. This design thus enables us to draw on the rare occasion of within-person comparisons, meaning that any time-invariant subject-specific covariate such as gender, education or even income can be controlled away by using subject-specific fixed effects. In addition, our design allows us to rely on covariates observed prior to the election to explain voter shifts on the general left-right scale after LPF had entered parliament, so we can eliminate the alternative explanation that the shift in voters' general left-right placement resulted from the fact that voters shifted their party identification after the successful election of the LPF into parliament. Party support and identity cannot be affected by the entrance of LPF into parliament as they were measured prior to the election.

¹¹Most election panel studies ask about respondents' left-right placement prior to election, but not thereafter.

¹²Unfortunately we cannot sensibly make use of the post-post-election interviews since the scale of the left-right self-placement question changed from a 11 to 10 points.

5 Results

Figure 1: Descriptives: Did polarization increase after the LPF entrance (Netherlands 2003)? Yes.



Note: Comparison of polarization in pre- and post election panel (within person comparison). The Figure presents local polynomial regression plots, surrounded by 83.4 % confidence intervals; kernel=epanechnikov; degree of smooth=0. Horizontal lines reported μ pre- (in blue) and post-election (in red) polarization.

In both waves respondents were asked to place themselves on a general left-right scale from 1 (extreme left) to 11 (extreme right). We estimate each respondent’s squared distance to the mode prior to the election and after the election.¹³ In addition, we also use individual movement on the left-right scale, directly investigating voter shifts after the entrance of an extreme party.

Figure 1 plots the polarization of all panel respondents before (blue) and after (red) the election using local linear regressions. Polarization increased after the election to a substantial degree, and this trend is fairly stable across the time period covered by the election panel.¹⁴ The dip in polarization towards the end of the post-election panel is likely to be driven by the fact that fewer respondents were interviewed towards the end of the panel. Furthermore, consistent with arguments made by Gerber and Huber (2010: 157), the most crucial difference in polarization due to the election is close to the appearance of the treatment, i.e. the election.

¹³We could also use the daily mode. Note, however, that both election studies are not perfect rolling cross-sections. Thus, estimating a daily mode is subject to bias towards the respective subgroup interviewed at a given day. The findings are also robust to using the squared distance to the mean (rather than modal) voter’s position as well as to the center point of the scale (6).

¹⁴The number of respondents placing themselves at 6, the midpoint of the scale, also decreases from 929 to 805, another sign of polarization. Figure A.2 in the Appendix shows that most of the respondents who moved away from the mid-point shifted to the right.

5 Results

Table 1: Regression estimates: Did polarization increase after the LPF entrance (Netherlands 2003)? Yes.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Pre/post	Pre/post	Pre/post	Placebo: Fortuyn	Placebo: Fortuyn
before/after	0.120 (0.0315)	0.124 (0.0322)	0.121 (0.0314)	-.112 (0.0755)	-0.011 (0.1020)
Constant	1.628 (0.0851)	2.154 (0.215)	1.616 (0.0150)	1.644 (0.0357)	
R^2	0.00228	0.0187	0.0105	0.00142	
N	2839	2765	2972	1551	1508
Interview date	✓	✓			
Individual FE			✓		
Controls		✓			✓
Matching					✓

all models use clustered standard errors by panel id (only model (5) not);
 Model (5) propensity score matching, 1-match per respondent
 before Fortuyn murder;
 controls (age, gender, urban vs. rural, social class, voting preference,
 political knowledge, religiosity) omitted from table.

To substantiate this descriptive finding, Table 1 reports the results of an OLS regression estimating the average treatment effect by comparing pre- and post-election left-right positions for each respondent. We find a significant increase in ideological polarization of almost one standard deviation ($\sigma=1.26$; $\beta=1.20$) between the two waves. This increase remains similar in size across all models we estimated, also when controlling only for the interview date (model 1) or when using individual fixed effects (model 3).

Concerns of confounded treatment may linger because the party’s leader, Pim Fortuyn, was murdered seven days before the election took place (Dinas, Hartman, and van Spanje 2016). Fortuyn’s killing, not the entrance of the LPF into parliament, might be the major cause why the public polarized. LPF voters might have felt threatened in their identity by the assassination of their party’s leader, perhaps spilling over into a strengthening of their ideology. To address this potential confounding event, we conduct a placebo test that estimates the influence of Fortuyn’s killing on ideological polarization. Using only the pre-election wave, we compare respondents interviewed prior to Pim Fortuyn’s assassination (77 %) with respondents interviewed thereafter but before the election itself (22 %). The latter cannot plausibly be affected by an election outcome they have not yet observed but have experienced Fortuyn’s murder. Any effect on ideological polarization stemming from his murder should be observable in this subsample of respondents. Model (4) in Table 1 draws a simple OLS comparison

between the two pre-election groups and does not find a statistically significant polarization effect after Fortuyn's murder. Given that other differences in the two pre-election groups may exist, Model (5) then uses propensity score matching (Rubin 1974; Rosenbaum and Rubin 1985) to compare each respondent after the assassination to a most similar respondent before his assassination (for a similar approach see Dinas, Hartman, and van Spanje 2016). This analysis does not show an increase of polarization due to Pim Fortuyn's assassination either. Moreover, the size of the coefficient is much smaller than that in the pre-post-election comparisons. Thus, the placebo tests provide further support for our theoretical argument that the election of the radical-right LPF (and not Fortuyn's murder) led to ideological polarization.

Legitimization & backlash effects in the 2002 Dutch election Next, we investigate the legitimization and backlash mechanisms in the Dutch case. Voters' reactions to the entrance of an extreme party should depend on how their general political identity relates to the party entering parliament. In this case, voters identifying with right-wing parties should be subject to a legitimization effect and left-wing party identifiers to a backlash effect.

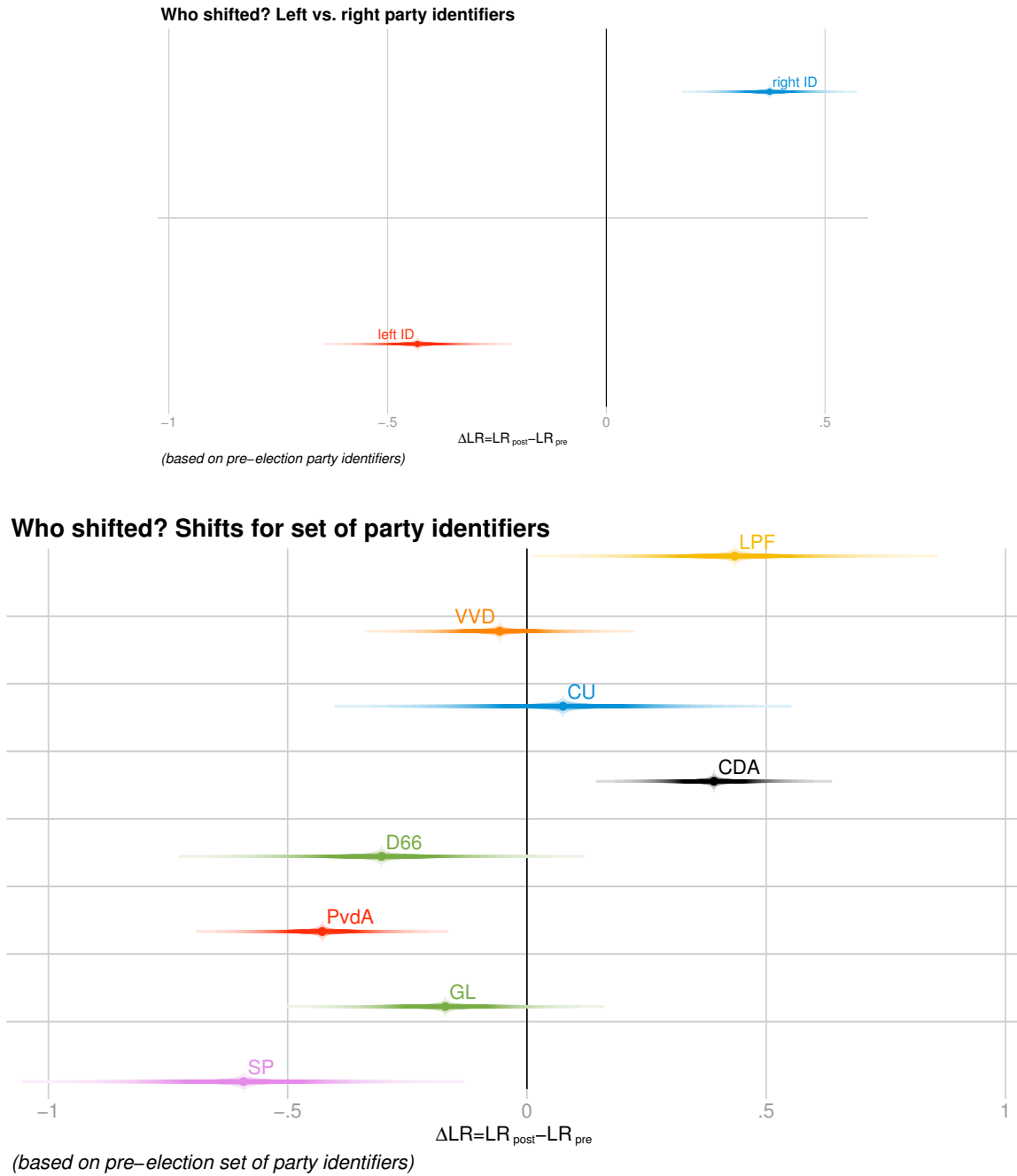
To test this expectation, we first split the respondents into groups based on their reported party identification *prior* to the election. Note that our findings remain similar if we use respondents' reported voting decision; we do not use this information due to post-treatment bias. Then, we examine which party identifiers move their general left-right self placement after the election. Here, we use as our dependent variable in an OLS regression the difference in voters' left-right self-placement after the election compared to their placement before the election.

Figure 2 reports the findings of analyses of ideological shifts conditional on party support. In the upper panel we split the respondents into those identifying with left- and right-leaning parties, respectively.¹⁵ The legitimization and backlash effects are clearly visible: voters identifying with a right-leaning party *ceteris paribus* moved further to the right, while those identifying with a left-leaning party moved to the left.

The bottom panel of Figure 2 reports more fine-grained results for each group of party

¹⁵We omitted very small parties with few identifiers from this analysis (Leefbaar Nederland; Duurzaam Nederland; Partij voor de Dieren; Partij van de Toekomst; Alliantie Vernieuwing).

Figure 2: Testing the legitimization & backlash mechanisms



Note: OLS estimates surrounded by whiskers reporting 95% confidence intervals. Full model specification with covariates reported in table A.1 on page 36 in the appendix.

supporters. The parties are sorted based on their left-right placement in the Chapel Hill Expert Survey, starting with the most right-leaning party (LPF) (Bakker et al. 2015). The models again use an OLS estimation with the difference between respondents' pre- and post-election left-right self-placements as a dependent variable. We expect right-wing party identifiers (LPF, VVD, CU and CDA) to move to the right and left-wing party identifiers (D66, PvdA, GL and SP) to move to the left.¹⁶

In general, the estimates are in line with our theoretical expectations. All but one group (VVD identifiers) adapted their ideology as expected. Furthermore, these shifts are statistically significant for LPF, CDA, PvdA and SP identifiers. Thus, we find strong movements of left-right placement particularly on the extremes of the ideological scales. These movements are strong evidence that our mechanisms work as expected, as our argument implies that the strongest effect at the extremes of the ideological scale. Yet, the strong and positive effect for the relatively centrist CDA and D66 voters indicates that the entrance of the LPF also led to an abandonment of the center in the Netherlands. This test of our mechanisms further strengthens the conclusion that the ideological movement of voters after the entrance of the LPF is structured and occurred in similar ways on both sides of the ideological spectrum.

5.2 Study 2: global time-series-cross-sectional findings

Our first study showed that the Dutch public polarized ideologically after the entrance of the radical right LPF. But do these findings hold in the longer term and generalize across contexts?

In our second study, the unit of analysis is country-years. Here, we rely on Eurobarometer data, which contains surveys conducted since 1973 in member states of the European Union. Combining all Eurobarometer studies which asked respondents to place themselves on a general left-right scale running from 1 (extreme left) to 10 (extreme right) gives us information about 1,717,808 respondents across 17 European countries (see Figure B.2). On average, 1,083 respondents are asked to place themselves in each study and country. To measure public polarization we use the standard deviation of left-right self-placements in each country-year

¹⁶Since the left-right scale comes with a defined maximum and minimum, some voters cannot move further to the left or right (truncation). Thus, tobit models, which control for such "ceiling effects", are perhaps more appropriate models for our data. However, using tobit models results in the same conclusions as reported here (see Table A.2 in the Appendix).

5 Results

($\mu=2.09$; $\sigma=0.22$).¹⁷ We also conducted robustness tests for this study by re-estimating our models using the agreement measure proposed by Van Der Eijk (2001) (see below).

Table 2 reports the countries and party entries we analyze.¹⁸ We identified radical-right parties based on standard party family accounts.¹⁹ In general, we included countries for which

Table 2: Study 2, countries & party entries included in the study

country	years	Radical right party entry
Belgium	1973-2016	Vlaams Blok (1978)
Bulgaria	2004-2016	АТАКА (2005)
Denmark	1973-2016	Dansk Folkeparti (1998)
Finland	1992-2016	
France*	1973-2016	Front National (1986)
Germany	1973-2016	
Greece	1980-2016	Laïkós Orthódoxos Synagermós (2007)
Italy	1973-2016	Lega Nord (1992)
Luxembourg	1973-2016	
Netherlands	1973-2016	Lijst Pim Fortuyn (2002)
Poland	2004-2016	Kukiz (2015)
Portugal	1985-2016	
Romania	2004-2016	
Slovenia	2004-2016	
Spain	1985-2016	
Sweden	1994-2016	Sverigedemokraterna (2010)
United Kingdom	1973-2016	

Note: * France employed an electoral threshold in the 1986 election, which helped the FN to enter parliament in this election.

we either observe no entrance of an extreme right party into parliament for the entire period included in our studies (e.g. Germany) or countries for which we observe the entry of an extreme right party (e.g. Sweden).²⁰

As outlined in our theory we have good reason to assume that the entrance of an extreme party into parliament constitutes a shock-like event in the short term. In the longer term, by entering parliament extreme parties are granted access to the resources provided by having

¹⁷We also collected the fieldwork dates for all Eurobarometer studies to ensure that the fieldwork was conducted and completed before the election.

¹⁸We include Italy and the Netherlands even though both witnessed earlier entrances of radical-right parties, the Movimento Sociale Italiano (1946) and the Centre Party (1982). Results are robust if we exclude Italy and the Netherlands from Studies 2 and 3 (Tables B.6 & C.10 in the appendix).

¹⁹A more valid approach might be to use the actual ideological positions of radical-right parties as measured e.g. through manifestos or expert assessments. Yet, such ideological positions are not available for most cases we study here.

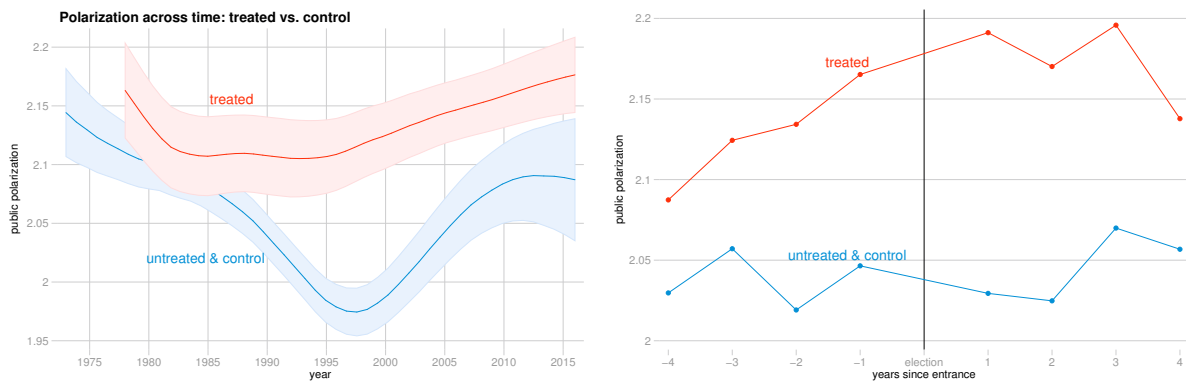
²⁰This means that we excluded countries from our analysis which experienced the entry of an extreme party but whose entrance is not covered in the data (Austria (FPÖ 1986), Czech Republic (Nezávislí 2004), Estonia (Eesti Kodanik 1992), Latvia (Nacionālā apvienība / Tēvzemei un Brīvībai / LNNK 1998), Lithuania (Jaunoji Lietuva 1992), Hungary (Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja 1998), Slovakia (Slovenská národná strana 1990)).

5 Results

seats in the national legislature, acquire access to state funding in most countries and face increased media attention (Dinas, Riera, and Roussias 2015). Besides these theoretical reasons, focusing on entry into parliament constitutes the best possible test in a time-series-cross-sectional setting to disentangle the complex causal relationship between voters and political parties. The literature on representation posits that parties follow voters in the positions they take, so that elite polarization should also be the consequence of voter polarization (Ezrow 2007). Thus, this literature focuses on how parties have incentives to follow voters, be it voters in general or just their own supporters (Adams et al. 2006; Ezrow et al. 2010). However, our discussion above highlighted that parties may also shape what voters think. Untangling the causal association between these two phenomena is thus crucial to avoid problems of endogeneity (Gabel and Scheve 2007b; Down and Wilson 2010). Our research designs helps us to assess the causal impact of elite polarization on voters.

Figure 4 shows key descriptives based on the Eurobarometer data. The panel on the left

Figure 4: Descriptives, cross time development & pre/post election polarization



Note: Figure on the left reports uses local polynomials (kernel: epanechnikov; degree: 0) surrounded by 83.7 % confidence intervals. Figure on the right plots mean of respective sample by year.

plots compares polarization in countries which have experienced the entrance of an extreme party (“*treated*”) with the countries which either never experienced (“*control*”) or had not yet experienced the entry of an extreme party at the respective year drawn on the x-axis (“*untreated*”). It becomes strikingly evident that the trajectories are substantially distinct for treated and control countries: it seems that countries with radical right parties in parliament experience a substantively larger voter-level ideological polarization. The panel on the right

then compares the average public polarization in treated and control countries in the legislative periods before and after the entrance of an radical right party. The panel shows that on average the entrance of a radical right party leads to more ideological polarization among voters in the year after the election, while after an election voters *de-polarize* in the control countries. The Figure gives some first suggestive evidence that radical-right party entry might lead to increased ideological polarization.

To get a better and more coherent understanding of the polarization patterns across countries and time, we estimate two-way fixed effects models. Causal claims are difficult to achieve with TSCS data. In the best-case scenario we would compare the entrance of an extreme party in a country with the absence of such a party entrance in the *same* country at the *same* point in time. Obviously, we can never observe both of these outcomes.²¹ The best we can do is to “impute” a credible counterfactual for each country.

We rely on a fixed-effects regression model to approximate such a credible counterfactual (Folke, Hirano, and Snyder 2011; Fowler and Hall 2015; Bechtel, Hangartner, and Schmid 2016). Thus, we control for country-effects and time-varying effects by introducing fixed effects. Such a model effectively compares countries having experienced the entrance of a radical-right party with countries that had not experienced the same event in the same decade.²² In essence, such a modeling strategy generalizes the well-known differences-in-differences approach (Fowler and Hall 2015: 45; Keele and Minozzi 2013). Thus, we estimate the following model:

$$\text{polarization}_{c,t} = \alpha + \beta_1 \text{radical right party entry}_{c,t} + \Gamma \mathbf{Z}_{c,t-1} + \zeta_c + \delta_t + \epsilon_{c,t} \quad (1)$$

where c, t index countries and years respectively; β_1 reports the effect of extreme party entrance; $\mathbf{Z}_{c,t-1}$ a set of controls lagged by one year outlined below; ζ_c country fixed effects; δ_t decade fixed effects and $\epsilon_{c,t}$ the error term. Due to contemporaneous correlation we cluster

²¹A regression discontinuity design could allow a comparison between situations in which extreme parties barely entered parliament with situations they barely did not enter. Using such a RD design is unfortunately not possible in our case due to the small number of suitable observations.

²²Due to sample size we cannot introduce both country, yearly fixed effects and controls. Yet, we also estimated models using year fixed effects only. The findings reported here remain substantially the same (see table B.6 in the appendix).

5 Results

the standard errors by the treatment appearance (country/election cycle) (Abadie et al. 2017). The variable extreme party entry is ‘1’ for the time periods after which an extreme party has entered parliament and ‘0’ otherwise.²³ In our models we control for the effective number of parliamentary parties, party system polarization, GDP growth and unemployment, as these are all factors which should affect voter-level ideological polarization (for a detailed description of the variables see: table B.4 in the appendix).

Table 3 reports the OLS estimates from these model specifications. Radical right parties’

Table 3: Does polarization increase after entrance of extreme right party? Yes.

	entire sample			countries with threshold		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
radical right enter	0.0896 (0.0344)	0.116 (0.0321)	0.131 (0.0327)	0.126 (0.0530)	0.161 (0.0448)	0.174 (0.0478)
GDP growth			-0.00640 (0.00314)			-0.00506 (0.00522)
unemployment _{t-1}			0.00256 (0.00341)			-0.00297 (0.00471)
party system polarization _{t-1}			-0.000746 (0.00209)			-0.000702 (0.00364)
party system fragmentation _{t-1}			-0.0177 (0.0126)			-0.0216 (0.0169)
Constant	2.055 (0.0210)	2.103 (0.0512)	2.203 (0.111)	2.088 (0.0360)	2.505 (0.0957)	2.610 (0.140)
R^2	0.0348	0.674	0.690	0.0612	0.646	0.670
$N_{clusters}$	164	164	145	82	82	74
N	534	534	503	253	253	243
Country FEs		✓	✓		✓	✓
Decade FEs		✓	✓		✓	✓

Clustered standard errors by country/election;
country fixed effect & decade fixed effects omitted from table.

entrance into parliament (radical right enter) has clear consequences for voter polarization. These effects remain remarkably stable across models: without (Model 1) and with fixed effects (remaining models), and for the entire sample (Models 1 to 3) or only for countries which use electoral thresholds (Models 4 to 6).

Radical right party entrance has a positive and significant effect in all models. For each

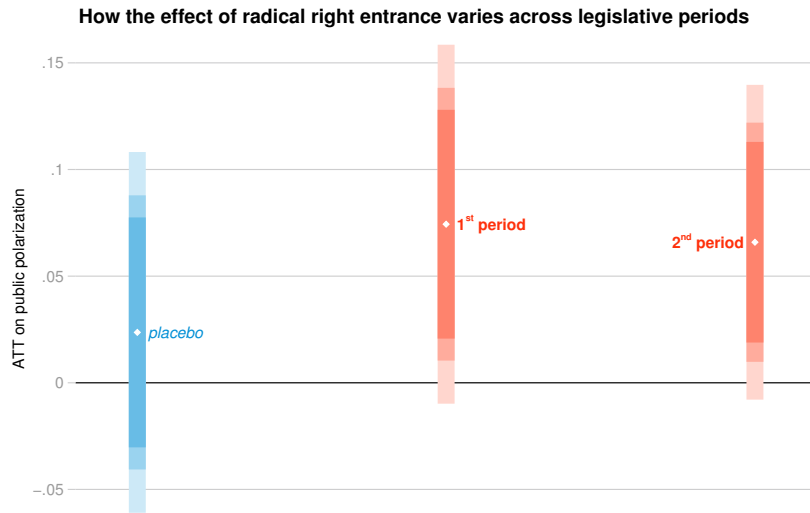
²³We could introduce a lagged dependent variable (LDV) into our models to control for autocorrelation, but introducing a LDV into our two-way fixed effects model leads to a nickell bias. More crucially, it is likely to lead to post-treatment bias. Thus, we decided not to use a LDV in the main models; robustness tests with an LDV are discussed below.

specification the coefficient of radical right party entrance remains comparable in size and statistical significance. The effect of radical right party entrance is also substantively large, with a resulting increase in polarization ($\mu=2.11$; $\sigma=0.23$) of almost one standard deviation ($\beta=0.17$ in Model 6). Electoral thresholds make entrances of new parties more difficult, rarer and as such these events should have even more disturbing and shock-like effects in these countries. Notice the substantively larger estimate we observe for the sample of countries relying on electoral thresholds. We take this result as lending more plausibility to our findings and the suggested mechanisms we outlined in our theoretical section.

These findings are robust across a set of different model specifications (Table B.6 in the appendix). First, we excluded the two countries which experienced significant success of “old” radical right parties (Italy: Alleanza Nazionale & the Netherlands: Centre Party). Second, to estimate more flexible time trends we re-estimated our models using a cubic term for decades (decades³). We also tested if there is a general trend towards ideological polarization after elections. However, using electoral cycle splines we do not find such an effect (Figure B.5 in the appendix). Third, in the Appendix we report a LDV model as well as a model using panel-corrected standard errors and bootstrapped standard errors (Table B.6). These modeling decisions do not affect the interpretations presented above. Fourth, using van der Eijk’s agreement measure instead of our polarization measure results in equivalent findings (see appendix Figure B.4 and Table B.5). Finally, we conducted randomization tests to check if our findings are model dependent (Hsiang and Jina 2014: 23-26). We replaced the entry of radical right parties 10000 times and then re-estimated equation (1) each time. We re-sampled our data in three ways, reported in detail in section B.3 in the appendix. The coefficient estimates confirm our findings.

While we cannot provide the same detailed individual-level analysis as in our Study 1, we can address the question of whether the polarization effect is already visible immediately after the election. We re-estimate our models, this time counting the legislative periods after the entrance of the extreme party instead of using a simple dummy measure. Figure 5 reports the estimates from these models across the first two legislative periods after an extreme party entry. We find some support for an immediate effect in the first legislative period (“honey-

Figure 5: Is there an “immediate” effect of extreme parties on public polarization? Yes.



Note: OLS estimates surrounded by whiskers reporting 99 %, 95 % & 90 % confidence intervals. Reference category is radical right entrance=0.

moon”) after the entrance of the extreme party that then remains robust afterwards. Furthermore, we also report a placebo test in figure 5 by reporting the effect of the year before the extreme party entrance on polarization (in blue). We do not find any effect on polarization using this placebo estimate.

5.3 Study 3: Synthetic control estimates

Using two-way fixed effects model as reported above provides the most elegant and conservative test for such data. Yet, this identification strategy rests particularly on one crucial assumption, namely that we can observe parallel trends between the countries which have experienced the entrance of a radical right party and countries without such an entrance prior to the entrance of the extreme party. Yet, given the small number of countries and entrances in our dataset, this parallel trends assumption might well be violated. While this assumption cannot be tested, the right panel in Figure 4 suggests that the trends between treated and control countries appear to be fairly similar before the entrance of an extreme party, despite a stark outlier two years before the election.

To address this issue we use generalized synthetic control models (GSCM) (Xu 2017; Abadie

and Gardeazabal 2003; Abadie, Diamond, and Hainmueller 2010, 2015). Synthetic Control Models rest on a similar idea as the better-known differences-in-differences estimator (Keele 2015: 322-323). GSCM allows researchers to estimate the effect of a non-random intervention (here the entrance of a radical right party) on an outcome of interest (here ideological polarization) in the treated unit (*Average Treatment Effect on the Treated*) (Strezhnev 2017: 1-2). First, researchers systematically choose the comparative units (also known as the *donor pool*) for the unit which experienced the intervention (Abadie, Diamond, and Hainmueller 2015). Second, based on a set of predictor variables chosen by the researcher the SCM algorithm approximates the temporal trend of the outcome of interest prior to the intervention. Thus, the algorithm assigns different weights to each donor within the pool to minimize the distance between the trend of the treated unit and the control units. The major advantage of GSCM lies in the approximation of the pre-treatment trends. Hence, the method is well-suited to approximating pre-treatment trends even if the analysis rests on a small set of countries (Abadie, Diamond, and Hainmueller 2015: 496-497). Below, we estimate the generalized form of the SCM (Xu 2017). Instead of imputing a counterfactual for a single case, the Generalized Synthetic Control Method (GSCM) generates a counterfactual for each treated unit based on the untreated units by estimating a linear interactive two-way fixed effect model.

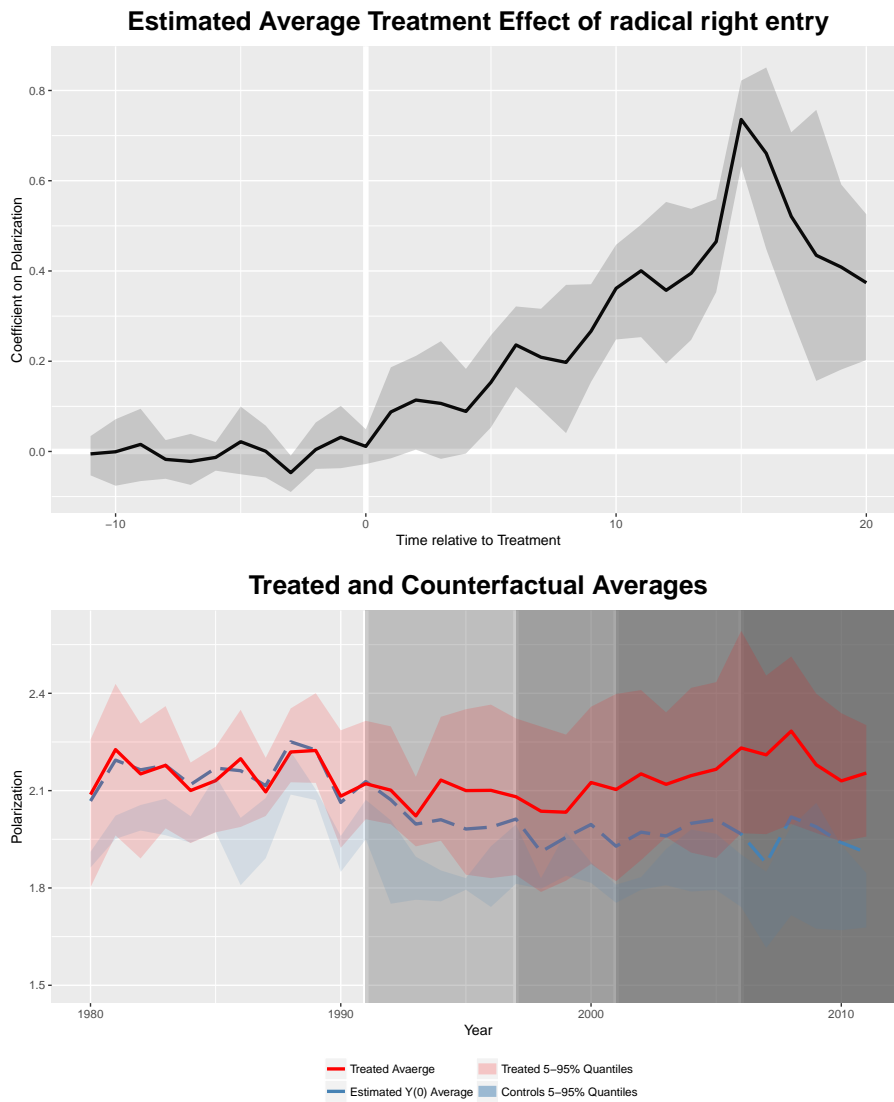
Figure 6 reports our findings for radical right party entries. We can only include countries from the analysis above for which we observe enough pre-treatment time periods for the GSCM to converge.²⁴ We use the same covariates used for the GSCM estimation as in the TSCS models in Table 3.²⁵

The upper panel in Figure 6 reports the Average Treatment Effect across time based on our GSCM estimates, i.e. the difference between the factual and the estimated counterfactual development of polarization across our sample (surrounded by parametric bootstrapped standard errors). We find further support for our previous findings. We observe a clear and strong

²⁴Countries included are Denmark, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, United Kingdom. The GSCM needs panels to be balanced across units to estimate the counterfactuals. Thus, we can only rely on countries which experienced the treatment a minimum of ten years before our panel data start. To maximize the countries included in our analysis before the treatments, we use countries for which the Eurobarometer provides data since 1980, giving us enough pre-treatment periods before the first entrance of a radical right occurs in our dataset (Italy, 1992, Lega Nord).

²⁵We linearly interpolated party system polarization and the effective number of parties. Our results are robust to the exclusion of these variables and years (see below).

Figure 6: GSCM results for radical right entry



Note: Countries included: Denmark (Y_{treat} : 1998), Germany (no treat), Greece (Y_{treat} : 2007), Italy (Y_{treat} : 1992), Luxembourg (no treat), Netherlands (Y_{treat} : 2002) & United Kingdom (no treat).
 Years included: 1980-2016.
 $ATT=0.2527$; $SE=0.04138$; $CI_l=0.176$; $CI_u=0.3396$.

treatment effect of radical right entry on voter polarization. Directly after the election of a radical right party into parliament, the factual and counterfactual scenarios diverge dramatically. The lower panel of Figure 6 reports these factual and counterfactual scenarios separately. Here, it is especially noteworthy that in contrast to a simple TSCS model the estimated model fits the pre-treatment trends of the treated units very well. Immediately after the first radical right party enters parliament (Lega Nord 1992), the trajectories of the two scenarios begin to

diverge. While public opinion appears to de-polarize again approximately 15 years after the treatment takes place, this particular finding should be treated with caution. It is more than likely that this decrease is due to other factors, such as the potential normalization of politics and radical positions. Furthermore, the effect is driven by a single case (Italy).

We conducted several robustness tests. First, a key concern in relation to our GSCM models is that in some countries extreme parties might have entered regional or local parliamentary chambers prior to entering the national parliament. As a result, voters might have polarized prior to extreme parties entering the national parliament. To address this concern, we moved the treatment in each country to one electoral cycle ahead of the actual occurrence (Figure C.8). For this placebo test, we do not find a significant effect of radical right party entry. Second, to estimate the models for the entire time series we had to linearly interpolate a few data points for party system polarization and the effective number of parties. For robustness we removed these years from the analysis (Figure C.9 in the appendix). Third, as in Study 2 we removed Italy and the Netherlands from our analysis (Figure C.10 in the appendix); the findings remain similar in significance and substance.²⁶

6 Radical party entry on the left

So far, we have only examined extreme party entry on the right. However, party entry on the left may also lead to ideological polarization among voters. Communist, radical left and Green parties may legitimize left-wing views previously thought socially unacceptable, while opponents may react to these parties' success by moving further right. To test this, we repeat our two studies above for entry on the left of the party system.

First, we analyze a multi-wave election panel in Germany (1983). The German Green party entered the parliament after the 1983 elections for the first time and was perceived as an ideological extreme challenger party. Focusing on environmental concerns along with strong anti-nuclear stance the party challenged not only mainstream right parties, but also the Social Democratic party (SPD). We use data from the second wave of a three-wave panel (11 to 23 February 1983) and the third wave (16 to 28 March 1983); the election itself was on 6 March

²⁶For comparability and robustness we conducted another synthetic control method on the entrance of a radical right party into parliament (Appendix on page 51).

1983. Using similar covariates as in the Dutch case, we again run models estimating whether the public polarized after the election (Table A.3 in the appendix). However, we do not find an increase of polarization after the entrance of the Green party in Germany. Second, we re-run our two-way fixed effects model for radical left entries. Yet, we do not find any effect of radical left entries on public polarization (Table B.7 in the appendix). Third, we estimate a synthetic control model for the entrance of the German Greens. Again, we cannot find any effect of this entrance (Figure C.15 in the appendix).

Overall, our expectation that voters polarize after extreme party entry finds support for the radical right, but not for parties that enter on the left of the party system.

7 Discussion and conclusion

Voters polarize ideologically when parties that are more right-wing than their competitors enter parliament. A panel study in the Netherlands in 2002 provides within-individual evidence of increased immediate polarization on both sides of the political spectrum. Voters supporting right-wing parties moved further to the right when the radical-right party won its first seats, and voters supporting left-wing parties moved further left. We termed these short-term changes legitimization and backlash. Next, evidence from TSCS and GSCM models using Eurobarometer data showed that there are also long-term effects of radical-right party entry.

Using the same empirical approaches, no equivalent effect was found when parties that are more left-wing than their competitors enter parliament. Why might voters adjust to radical right party entry in particular? First, the positions of radical parties on the right may “suffer” from a significant societal ‘taboo’, more so than even the positions of the radical parties on the left. This means that radical-right positions are likely to break social norms and hence experience legitimization by entering parliament. This explains why short-term effects may be greater on the right. Second, long-term polarization effects may be greatest after radical right party entry because these parties have arguably done more to shift issue concerns among European voters. Specifically, the rise of the radical right may have shifted the left-right dimension towards cultural concerns centered on immigration. When strong radical-right populist parties manage to place these issues on the policy agenda, this may change how voters place

References

themselves in more general terms as well. Thus, there is evidence from the Netherlands that cultural issues are used more for left-right self-placement today than 30 years ago (De Vries, Hakhverdian, and Lancee 2013). This could be a way in which party strength, and especially party entry, on the radical right influences self-placement in the longer term.

Overall, our findings are important for research into the impact of extreme parties and candidates on politics. Party systems in Europe have recently been marked by the rise of new competitors, frequently on the fringes of the party system. Often, these competitors have experienced significant electoral success, as in the case of Syriza and Podemos in Greece and Spain or of the Sweden Democrats and the PVV in Sweden and the Netherlands. In the United States, the election of Donald Trump signified a radical change in presidential discourse and positions. It is important that these events have an impact not just on how voters experience politics, but on how they place *themselves* on ideological scales. While some observers, e.g. Mudde (2013: 7), argue that radical-right parties ‘have rarely changed [voters’] more long-term attitudes’, our results show that extreme right party entry has a radicalising and polarizing effect that goes beyond elite discourse and media debates.

More generally, our findings provide strong evidence that elite polarization affects voter polarization when signalled via distinctive, newsworthy and legitimizing events. Extreme party entry is arguably a relatively clear-cut form of elite polarization, and the simple entrance of such a new party affects the range of party positions represented in parliament. Like leadership change (Somer-Topcu 2016; Fernandez-Vazquez and Somer-Topcu 2017), this binary change on its own appears to have an effect on voters. Our finding is an important step towards identifying key mechanisms of voter polarization more precisely. Since voter polarization is both a key characteristic of democratic societies and one where causal relationships are most complex, it is important to study its antecedents and to use careful methodological approaches when doing so.

References

Abadie, A, A Diamond, and Jens Hainmueller. 2010. “Synthetic Control Methods for Comparative Case Studies: Estimating the Effect of California’s Tobacco Control Program.” *Journal of the American Statistical Association* 105 (490): 493–505.

References

- Abadie, Alberto, Alexis Diamond, and Jens Hainmueller. 2015. "Comparative Politics and the Synthetic Control Method." *American Journal of Political Science* 59 (2): 495–510.
- Abadie, Alberto, and Javier Gardeazabal. 2003. "The Economic Costs of Conflict: A Case Study of the Basque Country." *American Economic Review* 93 (1): 113–132.
- Abadie, Alberto, Susan Athey, Guido Imbens, and Jeffrey Wooldridge. 2017. "When Should You Adjust Standard Errors for Clustering?" arXiv Working Paper: <http://arxiv.org/abs/1710.02926>, last checked: 18/02/24.
- Abramowitz, Alan I., and Kyle L. Saunders. 2008. "Is Polarization a Myth?" *Journal of Politics* 70 (2): 542–555.
- Adams, James. 2012. "Causes and Electoral Consequences of Party Policy Shifts in Multiparty Elections: Theoretical Results and Empirical Evidence." *Annual Review of Political Science* 15 (1): 401–419.
- Adams, James, Catherine E. De Vries, and Debra Leiter. 2012. "Subconstituency Reactions to Elite Depolarization in the Netherlands: An Analysis of the Dutch Public's Policy Beliefs and Partisan Loyalties, 1986–98." *British Journal of Political Science* 42 (01): 81–105.
- Adams, James, Jane Green, and Caitlin Milazzo. 2012. "Has the British Public Depolarized Along With Political Elites? An American Perspective on British Public Opinion." *Comparative Political Studies* 45 (4): 507–530.
- Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow, and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2011. "Is Anybody Listening? Evidence That Voters Do Not Respond to European Parties' Policy Statements During Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 55 (2): 370–382.
- Adams, James, Lawrence Ezrow, and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2014. "Do Voters Respond to Party Manifestos or to a Wider Information Environment? An Analysis of Mass-Elite Linkages on European Integration." *American Journal of Political Science* 58 (4): 967–978.
- Adams, James, Michael Clark, Lawrence Ezrow, and Garrett Glasgow. 2006. "Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976–1998." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (3): 513–529.
- Akkerman, Tjitske. 2005. "Anti-immigration parties and the defence of liberal values: The exceptional case of the List Pim Fortuyn." *Journal of Political Ideologies* 10 (3): 337–354.
- Arndt, Christoph. 2016. "Issue Evolution and Partisan Polarization in a European Multiparty System: Elite and Mass Repositioning in Denmark 1968–2011." *European Union Politics* 17 (4): 660–682.
- Bakker, Ryan, Catherine D. Vries, Erica Edwards, Liesbet Hooghe, Seth Jolly, Gary Marks, Jonathan Polk, Jan Rovny, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Milada A. Vachudova. 2015. "Measuring Party Positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill Expert Survey Trend File, 1999–2010." *Party Politics* 21 (1): 143–152.

References

- Bartels, Brandon L., and Diana C. Mutz. 2009. "Explaining Processes of Institutional Opinion Leadership." *The Journal of Politics* 71 (01): 249 – 261.
- Bartels, Larry M. 2002. "Beyond the Running Tally: Partisan Bias in Political Perceptions." *Political Behavior* 24 (2): 117–150.
- Bechtel, Michael M., Dominik Hangartner, and Lukas Schmid. 2016. "Does Compulsory Voting Increase Support for Leftist Policy?" *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (3): 752–767.
- Bishin, Benjamin G., Thomas J. Hayes, Matthew B. Incantalupo, and Charles A. Smith. 2016. "Opinion Backlash and Public Attitudes: Are Political Advances in Gay Rights Counterproductive?" *American Journal of Political Science* 60 (3): 625–648.
- Bolleyer, Nicole. 2014. *New Parties in Old Party Systems. Persistence and Decline in Seventeen Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brader, Ted, Joshua A. Tucker, and Dominik Duell. 2012. "Which Parties Can Lead Opinion? Experimental Evidence on Partisan Cue Taking in Multiparty Democracies." *Comparative Political Studies* 46 (11): 1485–1517.
- Bursztyn, Leonardo, Georgy Egorov, and Stefano Fiorin. 2017. "From Extreme to Mainstream: How Social Norms Unravel." Working paper: [http://home.uchicago.edu/~\\$bursztyn/Bursztyn_Egorov_Fiorin_Extreme_Mainstream_2017_07_31.pdf](http://home.uchicago.edu/~$bursztyn/Bursztyn_Egorov_Fiorin_Extreme_Mainstream_2017_07_31.pdf), last checked: 18/03/02.
- Bustikova, Lenka. 2014. "Revenge of the Radical Right." *Comparative Political Studies* 47 (12): 1738–1765.
- Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1986. "On the Structure and Sequence of Issue Evolution." *American Political Science Review* 80 (3): 901–920.
- Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1989. *Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Carmines, Edward G., and Michael W. Wagner. 2006. "Political Issues and Party Alignments: Assessing the Issue Evolution Perspective." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (1): 67–81.
- Castanho Silva, Bruno. 2017. "Populist Radical Right Parties and Mass Polarization in the Netherlands." *European Political Science Review* p. (first view).
- Dalton, Russell J. 2008. "The Quantity and the Quality of Party Systems: Party System Polarization, Its Measurement, and Its Consequences." *Comparative Political Studies* 41 (7): 899–920.

References

- De Lange, Sarah. 2009. "From the Periphery to Power: Explanations for the Government Participation of Niche Parties in West European Parliamentary Democracies." Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR Joint Sessions, Lisbon, 14-19 April 2009: <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/6ebec9dc-0476-4ff7-9b59-11b146472a47.pdf>, last checked: 18/02/24.
- De Lange, Sarah L, and David Art. 2011. "Fortuyn versus Wilders: An Agency-based Approach to Radical Right Party Building." *West European Politics* 34 (6): 1229–1249.
- De Vries, C. E., and Sara B. Hobolt. 2012. "When Dimensions Collide: The Electoral Success of Issue Entrepreneurs." *European Union Politics* 13 (2): 246–268.
- De Vries, Catherine E., Armen Hakhverdian, and Bram Lancee. 2013. "Dynamics of Voters' Left/Right Identification: The Role of Economic and Cultural Attitudes." *Political Science Research and Methods* 1 (02): 223–238.
- Dinas, Elias, Erin Hartman, and Joost van Spanje. 2016. "Dead Man Walking: The Affective Roots of Issue Proximity Between Voters and Parties." *Political Behavior* 38 (3): 659–687.
- Dinas, Elias, Pedro Riera, and Nasos Roussias. 2015. "Staying in the First League: Parliamentary Representation and the Electoral Success of Small Parties." *Political Science Research and Methods* 3 (02): 187–204.
- Down, Ian, and Carole J. Wilson. 2010. "Opinion Polarization and Inter-Party Competition on Europe." *European Union Politics* 11 (1): 61–87.
- Druckman, James N., Erik Peterson, and Rune Slothuus. 2013. "How Elite Partisan Polarization Affects Public Opinion Formation." *American Political Science Review* 107 (01): 57–79.
- Dunn, Kris P., and Shane P. Singh. 2011. "The Surprising Non-Impact of Radical Right-Wing Populist Party Representation on Public Tolerance of Minorities." *Journal of Elections, Public Opinion & Parties* 21 (3): 313–331.
- Enns, L. 2010. "The Homogeneity of West European Party Families: The Radical Right in Comparative Perspective." *Party Politics* 18 (2): 151–171.
- Ezrow, Lawrence. 2007. "The Variance Matters: How Party Systems Represent the Preferences of Voters." *Journal of Politics* 69 (1): 182–192.
- Ezrow, Lawrence, Catherine E. De Vries, Marco R. Steenbergen, and Erica E. Edwards. 2010. "Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation: Do Parties Respond to the Mean Voter Position or to Their Supporters?" *Party Politics* 17 (3): 275–301.
- Fernández-Vázquez, Pablo. 2014. "And Yet It Moves: The Effect of Election Platforms on Party Policy Images." *Comparative Political Studies* 47 (14): 1919–1944.

References

- Fernandez-Vazquez, Pablo, and Zeynep Somer-Topcu. 2017. "The informational role of party leader changes on voter perceptions of party positions." *British Journal of Political Science* pp. 1–20.
- Fiorina, Morris P., and Samuel J. Abrams. 2007. "Political Polarization in the American Public." *Annual Review of Political Science* 11: 563–588.
- Flores, A. R., and S. Barclay. 2016. "Backlash, Consensus, Legitimacy, or Polarization: The Effect of Same-Sex Marriage Policy on Mass Attitudes." *Political Research Quarterly* 69 (01): 43–56.
- Folke, Olle, Shigeo Hirano, and James M. Snyder. 2011. "Patronage and elections in U.S. States." *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 567–585.
- Fowler, Anthony, and Andrew B. Hall. 2015. "Congressional Seniority and Pork: A Pig fat Myth?" *European Journal of Political Economy* 40: 42–56.
- Gabel, M., and K. Scheve. 2007a. "Mixed Messages: Party Dissent and Mass Opinion on European Integration." *European Union Politics* 8 (1): 37–59.
- Gabel, Matthew, and Kenneth Scheve. 2007b. "Estimating the Effect of Elite Communications on Public Opinion Using Instrumental Variables." *American Journal of Political Science* 51 (4): 1013–1028.
- Gerber, Alan S., and Gregory A. Huber. 2010. "Partisanship, Political Control, and Economic Assessments." *American Journal of Political Science* 54 (1): 153–73.
- Hetherington, Marc J. 2001. "Resurgent Mass Partisanship: The Role of Elite Polarization." *American Political Science Review* 95 (03): 619–631.
- Hetherington, Marc J. 2009. "Review Article: Putting Polarization in Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science* 39 (02): 413.
- Hobolt, Sara B., and Catherine E. de Vries. 2015. "Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition." *Comparative Political Studies* 48 (9): 1159–1185.
- Hoekstra, Valerie J., and Jeffrey A. Segal. 1996. "The Shepherding of Local Public Opinion: The Supreme Court and Lamb's Chapel." *Journal of Politics* 58 (4): 1079–1102.
- Hogg, Michael A. 2010. "Influence and Leadership." In *Handbook of Social Psychology*, ed. Susan T Fiske, Daniel T Gilbert, and Gardner Lindzey. Vol. 2 John Wiley & Sons pp. 1166–1207.
- Hsiang, Solomon M, and Amir S Jina. 2014. "The Causal Effect of Environmental Catastrophe on Long-Run Economic Growth: Evidence From 6,700 Cyclones." *National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series* 20352: 1–70.

References

- Iyengar, Shanto, Gaurav Sood, and Yphtach Lelkes. 2012. "Affect, not ideology a social identity perspective on polarization." *Public opinion quarterly* 76 (3): 405–431.
- Keele, Luke. 2015. "The Statistics of Causal Inference: A View from Political Methodology." *Political Analysis* 23 (3): 313–335.
- Keele, Luke, and William Minozzi. 2013. "How Much Is Minnesota Like Wisconsin? Assumptions and Counterfactuals in Causal Inference with Observational Data." *Political Analysis* 21 (2): 193–216.
- Koopmans, Ruud, and Jasper Muis. 2009. "The Rise of Right-wing Populist Pim Fortuyn in the Netherlands: A Discursive Opportunity Approach." *European Journal of Political Research* 48 (5): 642–664.
- Lachat, Romain. 2017. "Which Way from Left to Right? On the Relation between Voters' Issue Preferences and Left-right Orientation in West European Democracies." *International Political Science Review* p. 019251211769264.
- Layman, Geoffrey C., and Thomas M. Carsey. 2002. "Party Polarization and "Conflict Extension" in the American Electorate." *American Journal of Political Science* 46 (4): 786.
- Layman, Geoffrey C., Thomas M. Carsey, and Juliana Menasce Horowitz. 2006a. "PARTY POLARIZATION IN AMERICAN POLITICS: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (1): 83–110.
- Layman, Geoffrey C., Thomas M. Carsey, and Juliana Menasce Horowitz. 2006b. "Party Polarization in American Politics: Characteristics, Causes, and Consequences." *Annual Review of Political Science* 9 (1): 83–110.
- Lenz, Gabriel S. 2009. "Learning and Opinion Change, Not Priming: Reconsidering the Priming Hypothesis." *American Journal of Political Science* 53 (4): 821–837.
- Lupia, Arthur, and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need To Know?* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, Cas. 2007. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Mudde, Cas. 2013. "Three Decades of Populist Radical Right Parties in Western Europe: So What?" *European Journal of Political Research* 52 (1): 1–19.
- Nicholson, Stephen P. 2012. "Polarizing Cues." *American Journal of Political Science* 56 (1): 52–66.
- Paluck, Elizabeth Levy, Hana Shepherd, and Peter M. Aronow. 2016. "Changing Climates of Conflict: A Social Network Experiment in 56 Schools." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 113 (3): 566–571.

References

- Rabinowitz, George, and Stuart E. Macdonald. 1989. "A Directional Theory of Issue Voting." *American Political Science Review* 83 (1): 93–121.
- Ray, Leonard. 2003. "When Parties Matter: The Conditional Influence of Party Positions on Voter Opinions about European Integration." *Journal of Politics* 65 (4): 978–994.
- Rosenbaum, Paul R., and Donald B. Rubin. 1985. "Constructing a Control Group Using Multivariate Matched Sampling Methods that Incorporate the Propensity Score." *American Statistician* 39 (1): 33–38.
- Rubin, Donald B. 1974. "Estimating Causal Effects of Treatments in Randomized and Nonrandomized Studies." *Journal of Educational Psychology* 66 (5): 688–701.
- Seeberg, Henrik Bech, Rune Slothuus, and Rune Stubager. 2017. "Do Voters Learn? Evidence That Voters Respond Accurately to Changes in Political Parties' Policy Positions." *West European Politics* 40 (02): 336–356.
- Semyonov, Moshe, Rebeca Rajjman, and Anastasia Gorodzeisky. 2006. "The Rise of Anti-foreigner Sentiment in European Societies, 1988-2000." *American Sociological Review* 71 (3): 426–449.
- Slothuus, Rune, and Claes H. de Vreese. 2010. "Political Parties, Motivated Reasoning, and Issue Framing Effects." *Journal of Politics* 72 (3): 630–645.
- Somer-Topcu, Zeynep. 2016. "Agree or Disagree: How Do Party Leader Changes Affect the Distribution of Voters Perceptions." *Party Politics* (May).
- Sørensen, Rune J. 2014. "Political competition, party polarization, and government performance." *Public Choice* 161 (3-4): 427–450.
- Sprague-Jones, Jessica. 2011. "Extreme Right-wing Vote and Support for Multiculturalism in Europe." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34 (4): 535–555.
- Steenbergen, Marco R., Erica E. Edwards, and Catherine E. de Vries. 2007. "Who's Cueing Whom?" *European Union Politics* 8 (1): 13–35.
- Stevens, Daniel. 2013. "Issue Evolution in Britain: The Debate on European Union Integration, 1964-2010." *European Journal of Political Research* 52 (4): 536–557.
- Strezhnev, Anton. 2017. "Generalized Difference-in-Differences Estimands and Synthetic Controls." Working Paper: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5931baca440243906ef65ca3/t/5966ed55b8a79b4498bfa8a3/1499917654432/generalized> last checked: 18/02/24.
- Taber, Charles S, and Milton Lodge. 2006. "Motivated Skepticism in the Evaluation of Political Beliefs." *American Journal of Political Science* 50 (3): 755–769.

References

- Tankard, Margaret E., and Elizabeth Levy Paluck. 2016. "Norm Perception as a Vehicle for Social Change." *Social Issues and Policy Review* 10 (1): 181–211.
- Tankard, Margaret E., and Elizabeth Levy Paluck. 2017. "The Effect of a Supreme Court Decision Regarding Gay Marriage on Social Norms and Personal Attitudes." *Psychological Science* 28 (09): 1334–1344.
- Tavits, Margit. 2008. "Party Systems in the Making: The Emergence and Success of New Parties in New Democracies." *British Journal of Political Science* 38 (01): 113–133.
- Van Der Eijk, Cees. 2001. "Measuring Agreement in Ordered Rating Scales." *Quality and Quantity* 35 (3): 325–341.
- van Holsteyn, Joop J M, Galen A Irwin, and Josje M Den Ridder. 2003. "In the Eye of the Beholder: The Perception of the List Pim Fortuyn and the Parliamentary Elections of May 2002." *Acta Politica* 38 (1): 69–87.
- Van Holsteyn, Joop J.M., and Galen A. Irwin. 2003. "Never a Dull Moment: Pim Fortuyn and the Dutch Parliamentary Election of 2002." *West European Politics* 26 (2): 41–66.
- van Spanje, Joost. 2010. "Contagious Parties: Anti-Immigration Parties and Their Impact on Other Parties' Immigration Stances in Contemporary Western Europe." *Party Politics* 16 (5): 563–586.
- van Spanje, Joost, and Till Weber. 2017. "Does Ostracism Affect Party Support? Comparative Lessons and Experimental Evidence." *Party Politics* p. (forthcoming).
- Van Spanje, Joost, and Wouter Van Der Brug. 2007. "The Party as Pariah: The Exclusion of Anti-immigration Parties and its Effect on Their Ideological Positions." *West European Politics* 30 (5): 1022–1040.
- Xu, Yiqing. 2017. "Generalized Synthetic Control Method: Causal Inference with Interactive Fixed Effects Models." *Political Analysis* 25 (01): 57–76.
- Zaller, John R. 1992. *The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

A Appendix: study 1

Here, we report full reports for our analyses of changes in left-right self-placement conditional on party identification in the Netherlands in 2002. The first two models below in Table [A.1](#) use respondents' left-right self placement after the election as a dependent variable and control for the pre-election left-right self placement (LR_{pre}). The third and fourth model are those reported in the paper (in [Figure 2](#) on page [15](#)). They include respondents left-right self placement as predictors in the regression equation. Thus, here the difference between respondents' placement after the election and respondents' placement before the election are used as a dependent variable. Table ?? then presents results using Tobit regression models for the same analyses.

Section [A.1](#) presents changes in party identification among voter between the pre-election panel and the two post-election panels. As is clear from this [Figure](#), there is very little change in party identification across panel waves.

Table A.1: Is there a backlash & legitimization effect? Yes.

	(1) Pre/post comparison	(2) Pre/post comparison + controls	(3) Post _{tr} -Pre _{tr}	(4) Post _{tr} -Pre _{tr} + controls
LPF ID	0.716 (0.155)	0.711 (0.163)	0.293 (0.171)	0.392 (0.184)
VVD ID	0.387 (0.112)	0.478 (0.117)	-0.172 (0.120)	-0.0768 (0.130)
CU ID	0.321 (0.171)	0.219 (0.190)	-0.0776 (0.189)	-0.113 (0.215)
CDA ID	0.460 (0.0967)	0.435 (0.104)	0.213 (0.107)	0.168 (0.118)
D66 ID	-0.520 (0.153)	-0.377 (0.157)	-0.372 (0.170)	-0.337 (0.178)
PvdA ID	-0.901 (0.104)	-0.809 (0.108)	-0.458 (0.113)	-0.484 (0.121)
GL ID	-0.881 (0.127)	-0.701 (0.133)	-0.209 (0.135)	-0.217 (0.148)
SP ID	-1.377 (0.171)	-1.182 (0.177)	-0.661 (0.186)	-0.669 (0.199)
LR _{pre}	0.626 (0.0203)	0.564 (0.0221)		
asylum		0.116 (0.0283)		0.0169 (0.0316)
crime		0.0293 (0.0320)		-0.0471 (0.0361)
euthanasia		-0.0497 (0.0224)		-0.00465 (0.0253)
inequality		-0.0637 (0.0267)		0.0312 (0.0298)
female		0.0323 (0.0723)		0.0825 (0.0822)
age		-0.000488 (0.00233)		0.000134 (0.00265)
social class		0.00659 (0.0404)		0.0231 (0.0459)
political knowledge		-0.0225 (0.0115)		0.000277 (0.0131)
rural		0.0239 (0.0272)		0.00522 (0.0309)
religion		0.182 (0.0815)		0.128 (0.0927)
Constant	2.612 (0.139)	2.745 (0.348)	0.346 (0.0732)	0.118 (0.365)
R^2	0.647	0.655	0.0366	0.0431
N	1404	1339	1404	1339

Standard errors in parentheses

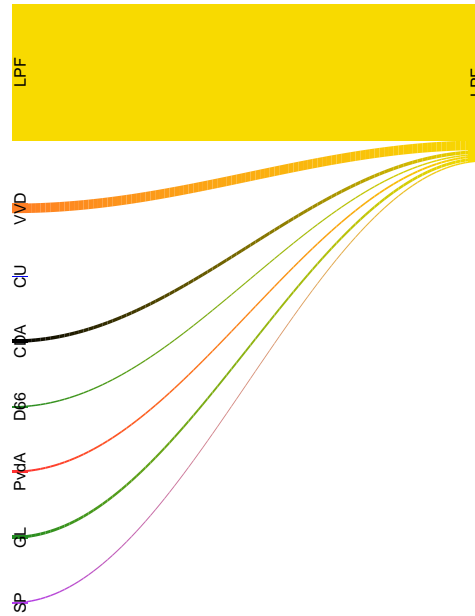
Table A.2: Tobit models: Is there a backlash & legitimization effect after LPF? Yes.

	(1) Pre/post comparison	(2) Pre/post comparison + controls	(3) Post _{it} -Pre _{it}	(4) Post _{it} -Pre _{it} + controls
LPF ID	0.740 (0.159)	0.728 (0.166)	0.293 (0.170)	0.393 (0.183)
VVD ID	0.365 (0.114)	0.461 (0.120)	-0.172 (0.120)	-0.0762 (0.129)
CU ID	0.352 (0.176)	0.240 (0.195)	-0.0775 (0.188)	-0.113 (0.214)
CDA ID	0.470 (0.0992)	0.442 (0.106)	0.214 (0.107)	0.168 (0.117)
D66 ID	-0.515 (0.156)	-0.370 (0.159)	-0.372 (0.169)	-0.337 (0.177)
PvdA ID	-0.891 (0.106)	-0.800 (0.110)	-0.458 (0.113)	-0.485 (0.120)
GL ID	-0.857 (0.130)	-0.678 (0.135)	-0.209 (0.135)	-0.218 (0.148)
SP ID	-1.358 (0.175)	-1.168 (0.181)	-0.664 (0.185)	-0.673 (0.198)
LR _{pre}	0.644 (0.0209)	0.581 (0.0227)		
asylum		0.115 (0.0288)		0.0167 (0.0314)
crime		0.0338 (0.0326)		-0.0472 (0.0359)
euthanasia		-0.0542 (0.0228)		-0.00466 (0.0251)
inequality		-0.0617 (0.0272)		0.0315 (0.0296)
female		0.0425 (0.0737)		0.0826 (0.0817)
age		-0.000135 (0.00238)		0.000130 (0.00263)
social class		0.00355 (0.0411)		0.0232 (0.0456)
political knowledge		-0.0228 (0.0118)		0.000233 (0.0130)
rural		0.0265 (0.0277)		0.00535 (0.0307)
religion		0.171 (0.0830)		0.128 (0.0921)
Constant	2.503 (0.143)	2.611 (0.355)	0.346 (0.0730)	0.118 (0.363)
Constant	1.304 (0.0252)	1.289 (0.0255)	1.420 (0.0268)	1.432 (0.0277)
<i>N</i>	1404	1339	1404	1339
<i>L</i> _{censored}	11	10	1	1
<i>R</i> _{censored}	30	28	0	0

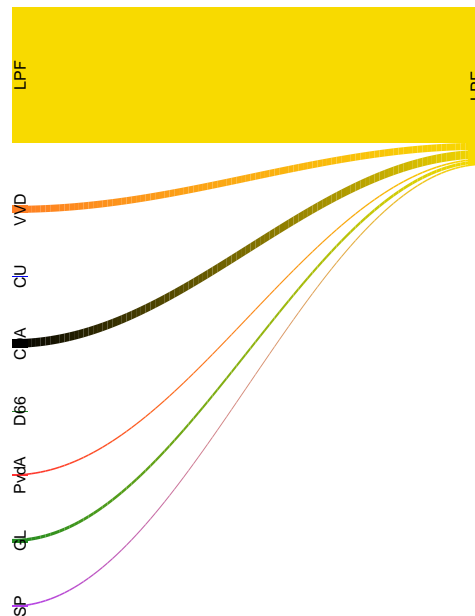
Standard errors in parentheses

A.1 Voter identity movement in Dutch panel waves

(a) Shifting Voter ID from pre to post I election panel



(b) Shifting Voter ID from pre to post II election panel



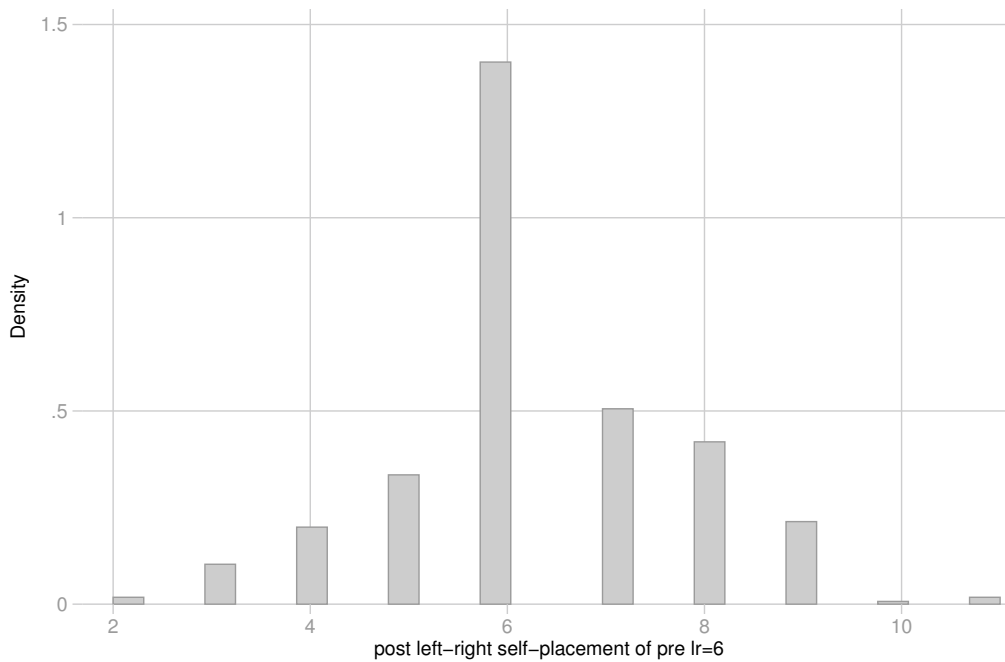
B Appendix: study 2

Table A.3: Did polarization increase after the Green entrance (Germany 1983)? No.

	(1)	(2)	(3)
	DE	DE	DE
before/after	0.0150 (0.0434)	0.0158 (0.0435)	0.0346 (0.0431)
Constant	1.075 (0.403)	0.574 (0.485)	1.646 (0.0200)
R^2	0.00146	0.0264	0.000656
N	1994	1994	2169
Interview date	✓	✓	
Individual FE			✓
Controls		✓	

all models use clustered standard errors by panel id;
controls (age, gender, urban vs. rural, social class,
voting preference, political knowledge, religiosity)
omitted from table.

Figure A.2: Denisty histogram of post election self left-right placement, 6 in pre_{lr} only



B Appendix: study 2

This Appendix presents further analyses relevant to the TSCS analysis of Eurobarometer data. Figure B.2 summarizes the coding of party entry graphically. Figure B.3 presents the raw data for the polarization measure. Treated, untreated and control cases are identified with different colors. Table B.4

B Appendix: study 2

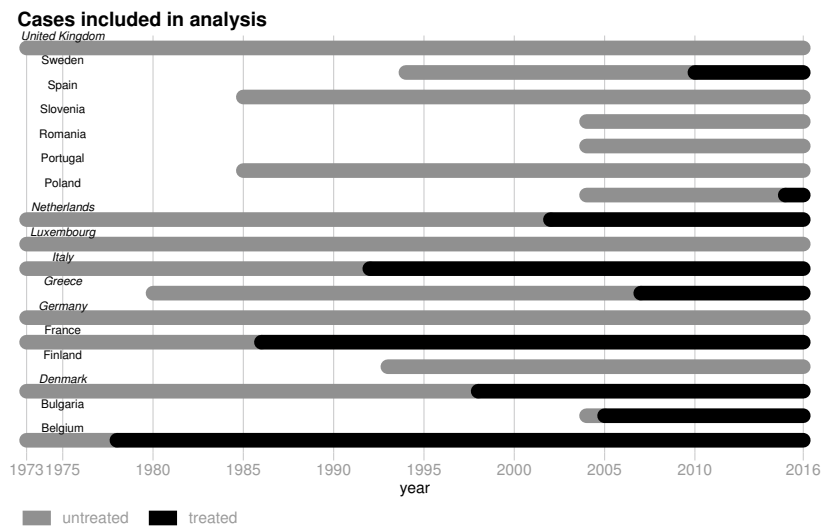
provides the sources for the aggregate-level controls included in some of the TSCS models.

Next, Figure B.5 and the subsequent tables presents our analyses when using the Van Der Eijk (2001) measure of agreement rather than the standard deviation. To ease interpretation we rescaled van der Eijk's measure to reflect *disagreement*. Results of these analyses match the results presented in the main paper.

Table B.1 presents results for the entrance of radical left parties. There is no evidence of polarization among voters after radical left party entry. The Table also shows that the effect of radical right party entry holds if we control for radical left party entry.

Finally, section B.3 presents a placebo test using simulated data. These results provide further evidence in favour of our expectations.

Figure B.2: Countries, cases & time periods included in the analyses



Notice: Table 2 in the appendix on page 17 reports the party entrances included in our analyses.

Figure B.3: Study 2, raw data

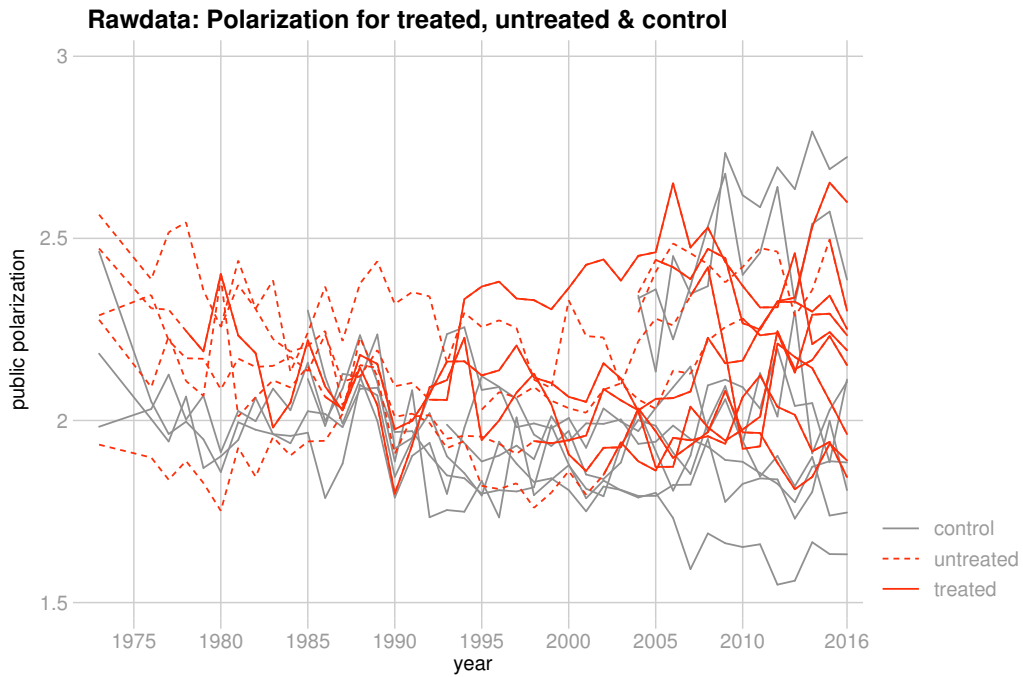


Table B.4: Sources used to create controls included in analyses

variable	source	download date	web link	sample covered
GDP growth (% change from previous year)	Comparative Political Data Set (Variable: realgdpgr)	7/12/17	link	entire
unemployment (% of civilian labour force)	European Commission (Variable ZUTN)	2/23/18	link	entire
party system polarization (standard deviation)	Manifesto Project Database (based on standard deviation of "rile")	2/22/18	link	27 country/years not covered
party system fragmentation (Effective Number of Parties)	Manifesto Project Database (based on ENP estimated from "absseat")	2/22/18	link	27 country/years not covered

B.1 Using van der Eijk measure of agreement

Figure B.4: Scatterplot of van der Eijk's agreement & standard deviation of LR scale

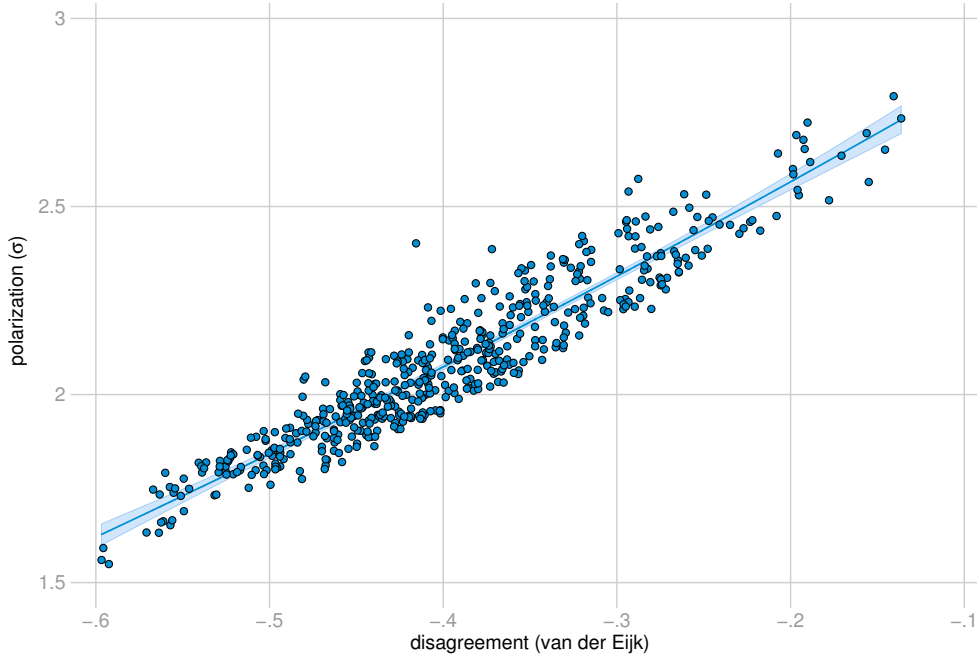


Figure B.5: Is there a general trend towards more polarization after elections? No.

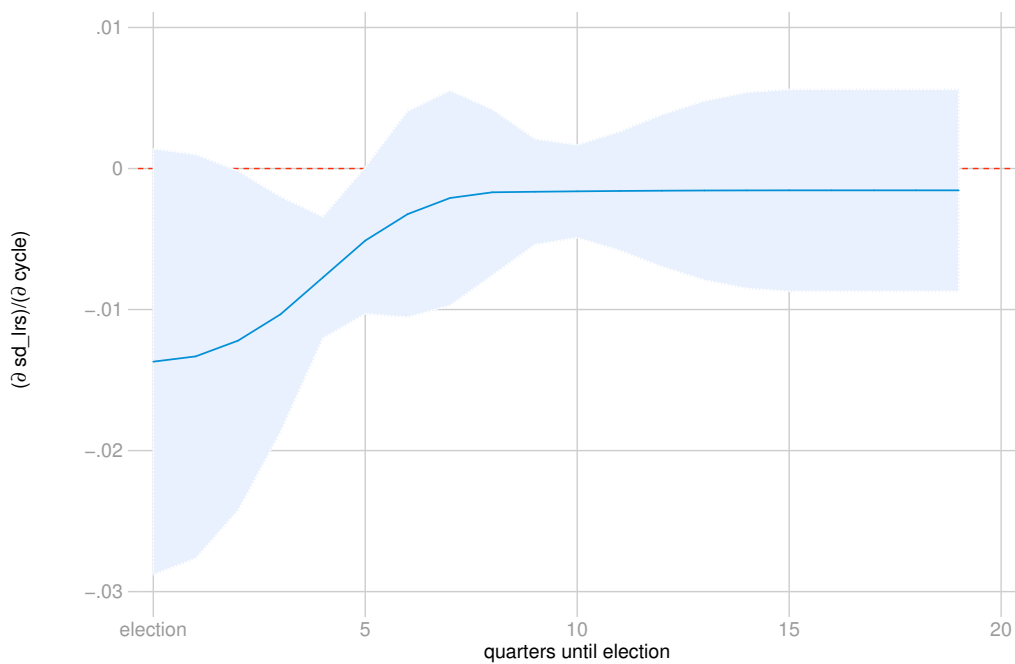


Table B.5: Robustness: van der Eijk's agreement measure

	entire sample			countries with threshold		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	disagreement	disagreement	disagreement	disagreement	disagreement	disagreement
radical right enter	0.0482 (0.0138)	0.0657 (0.0142)	0.0700 (0.0148)	0.0597 (0.0198)	0.0852 (0.0200)	0.0890 (0.0216)
GDP growth			-0.00307 (0.00124)			-0.00238 (0.00211)
unemployment _{<i>t</i>-1}			0.000157 (0.00129)			-0.00149 (0.00194)
party system polarization _{<i>t</i>-1}			-0.000120 (0.000844)			-0.000162 (0.00146)
party system fragmentation _{<i>t</i>-1}			-0.00355 (0.00562)			-0.00920 (0.00785)
Constant	-0.412 (0.00814)	-0.400 (0.0221)	-0.382 (0.0478)	-0.387 (0.0135)	-0.271 (0.0411)	-0.226 (0.0589)
<i>R</i> ²	0.0641	0.633	0.660	0.0929	0.555	0.583
<i>N</i> _{clusters}	164	164	145	82	82	74
<i>N</i>	534	534	503	253	253	243
Country FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decade FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Clustered standard errors by country/election;
country fixed effect & decade fixed effects omitted from table.

Table B.6: Robustness: Does polarization increase after entrance of extreme right party? Yes.

	(1) year FE	(2) bootstrap	(3) without IT + NT	(4) Decade ³	(5) LDV	(6) LDV+controls	(7) PCSE+LDV	(8) PCSE+LDV+controls
radical right enter	0.117 (0.0335)	0.116 (0.0453)	0.158 (0.0582)	0.177 (0.0485)	0.0523 (0.0188)	0.0610 (0.0204)	0.0407 (0.0164)	0.0490 (0.0171)
GDP growth				-0.00533 (0.00524)		-0.00421 (0.00225)		-0.00452 (0.00183)
unemployment _{t-1}				-0.00367 (0.00452)		0.00110 (0.00188)		0.00173 (0.00179)
party system polarization _{t-1}				-0.000677 (0.00363)		-0.00136 (0.00119)		-0.00151 (0.000841)
party system fragmentation _{t-1}				-0.0225 (0.0170)		0.000725 (0.00874)		-0.000469 (0.00735)
polarization _{t-1}					0.605 (0.0474)	0.596 (0.0529)	0.610 (0.0370)	0.601 (0.0378)
Constant	2.230 (0.0909)	2.103 (0.0487)	2.385 (0.0928)	2.632 (0.136)	0.788 (0.0996)	0.816 (0.143)	0.783 (0.0807)	0.823 (0.101)
R^2	0.697	0.674	0.728	0.667	0.806	0.804	0.967	0.967
$N_{clusters}$	164	164	57	74	150	142	.	.
N	534	534	169	243	508	493	508	493
Country FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Decade FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Model(2) reports bootstrapped standard errors by country, 1000 replications;

Models (6) & (7) use panel-corrected standard errors (panel-specific AR1 + panel-level heteroskedastic errors);

Remaining models: clustered standard errors by country/election;

country fixed effect & decade fixed effects omitted from table.

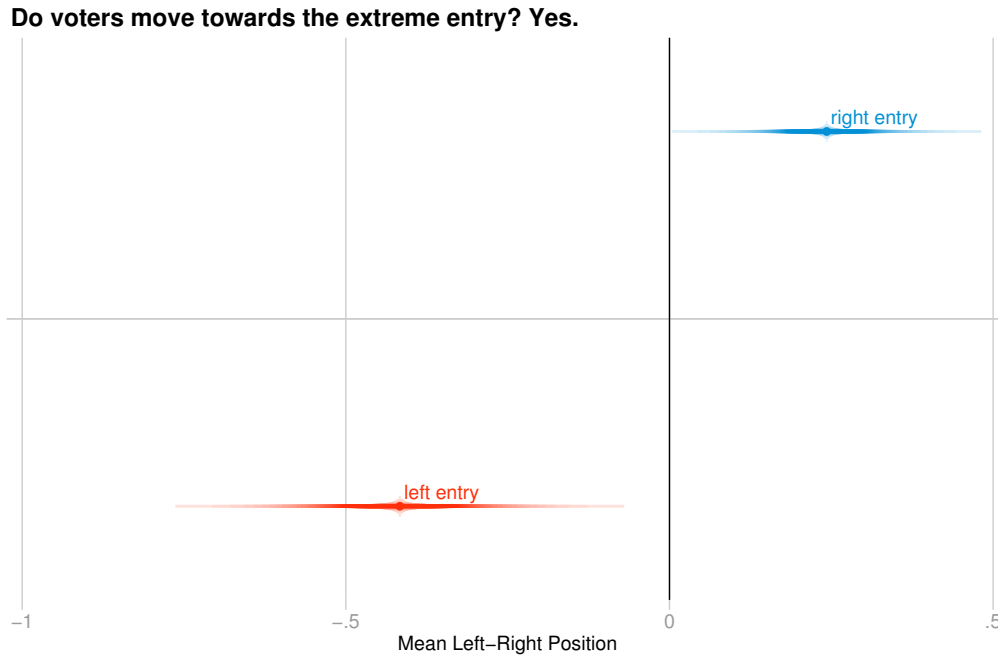
Table B.7: Does polarization increase after entrance of extreme left parties? No.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	baseline	fixed effects	controls	radical right enter
radical left enter	-0.0521 (0.0382)	-0.0437 (0.0325)	-0.0396 (0.0308)	-0.0350 (0.0276)
radical right enter				0.130 (0.0327)
GDP growth			-0.00674 (0.00302)	-0.00588 (0.00314)
unemployment _{t-1}			0.00306 (0.00306)	0.00215 (0.00336)
party system polarization _{t-1}			-0.000356 (0.00216)	-0.000953 (0.00210)
party system fragmentation _{t-1}			-0.00842 (0.0131)	-0.0180 (0.0124)
Constant	2.120 (0.0324)	2.184 (0.0451)	2.226 (0.112)	2.221 (0.108)
R^2	0.0113	0.656	0.668	0.692
$N_{clusters}$	164	164	145	145
N	534	534	503	503
Country FEs		✓	✓	✓
Decade FEs		✓	✓	✓

Clustered standard errors by country/election;
country fixed effect & decade fixed effects omitted from table.

B.2 Voter movement after extreme entry

Figure B.6: How do voters move after extreme entry?



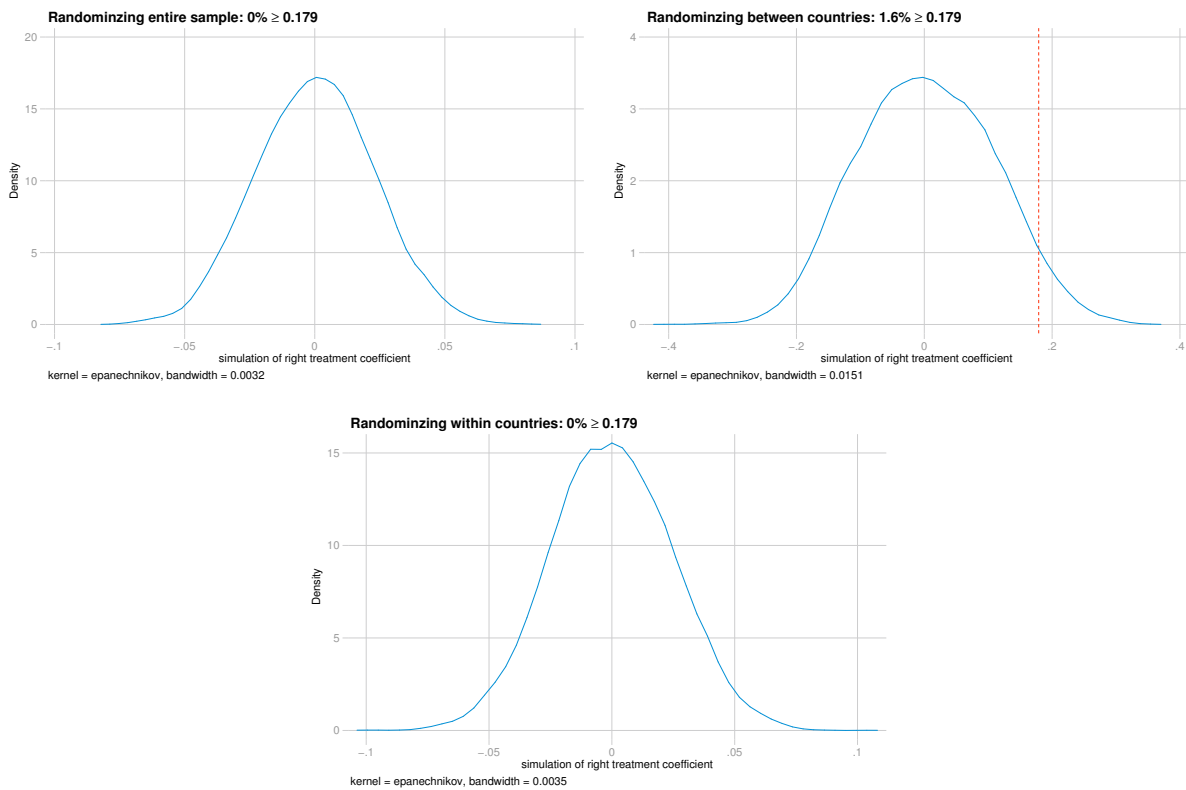
Note: OLS estimates surrounded by whiskers reporting 95 % confidence intervals. Estimates use two-way fixed effects models as outlined in equation 1.

B.3 Placebo tests: simulating random data

We conducted randomization tests to check if our finding is model dependent, a spurious correlation (for a more detailed discussion please consult: Hsiang and Jina 2014: 23-26). To do so we randomize our entire sample and create a false new data set. We then re-estimate equation 1. We replaced the entry of radical right parties 10000 times, each time re-estimating equation 1. We re-sampled our data in three ways:

- *entire sample* – Randomly re-assigning each radical right entry.
- *between countries* – Randomly re-assigning each country’s history of radial right entry to another country while preserving the order of years. Thereby we can test if global trends in our data (contemporaneous correlation) drive our findings.
- *within countries* – Randomly re-ordering the appearance of radial right entry in each country. Thereby we can test if invariant cross-sectional patterns drive our findings.

Figure B.7: Randomizing the entry of extreme right parties



B Appendix: study 2

Figure B.7 reports the findings from these three simulations. It becomes visible that both for the entire sample and the within sample simulations we cannot randomly find the same coefficient as our analysis. Also in case of the between simulation we randomly find our coefficient only in 1.6 % of our simulations. Thus, the simulations are re-assuring for our findings. These appear to be truly not spurious and based on our modeling decisions.

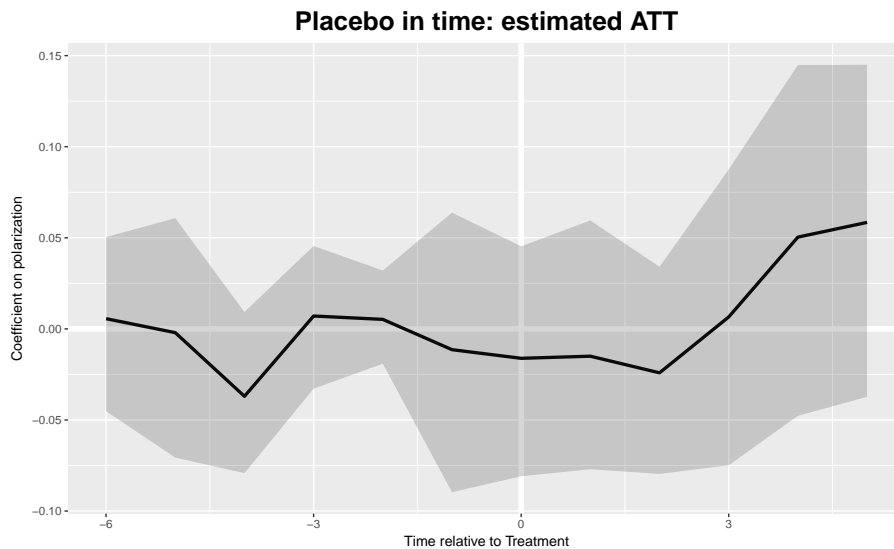
C Appendix Study 3

This Appendix presents further analyses relevant to the GSCM analysis of Eurobarometer data. We present results when we run the same analyses on a placebo in time (section C.1), where no equivalent effect is found. We also present results when we exclude linearly interpolated data (section C.2), and when we exclude Italy and the Netherlands (section C.3). Here, the results match those presented in the main paper very closely.

Next, we also present SCM analyses for radical right entry in Denmark and radical left (Green party) entry in Germany. While we find evidence of ideological polarization among voters after radical right entry in Denmark, there is no such evidence for change among voters in Germany after Green party entry.

C.1 Placebo in time

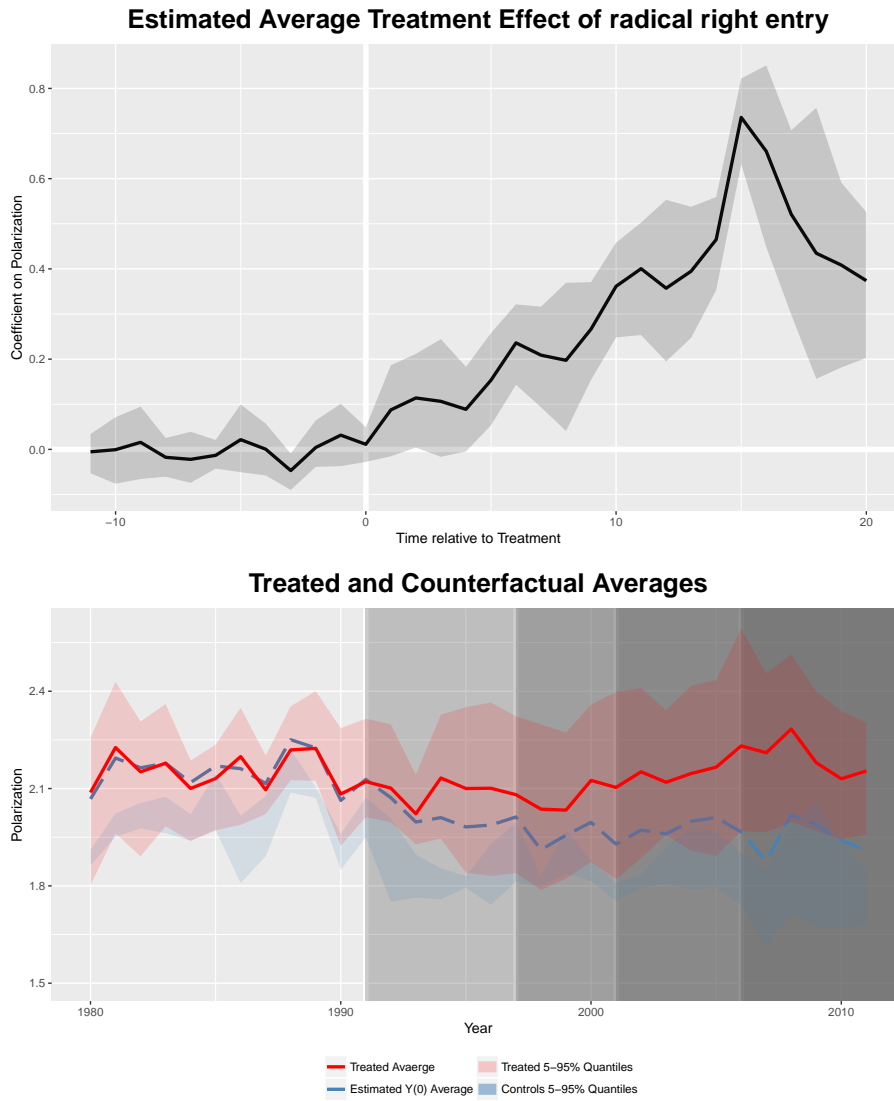
Figure C.8: Placebo in time: no effect



Note: Countries included: Denmark (Y_{treat} : 1994), Germany (no treat), Greece (Y_{treat} : 2004), Italy (Y_{treat} : 1987), Luxembourg (no treat), Netherlands (Y_{treat} : 1998) & United Kingdom (no treat). Years included: 1980-2016.

C.2 Robustness: GSCM without linearly interpolated variables

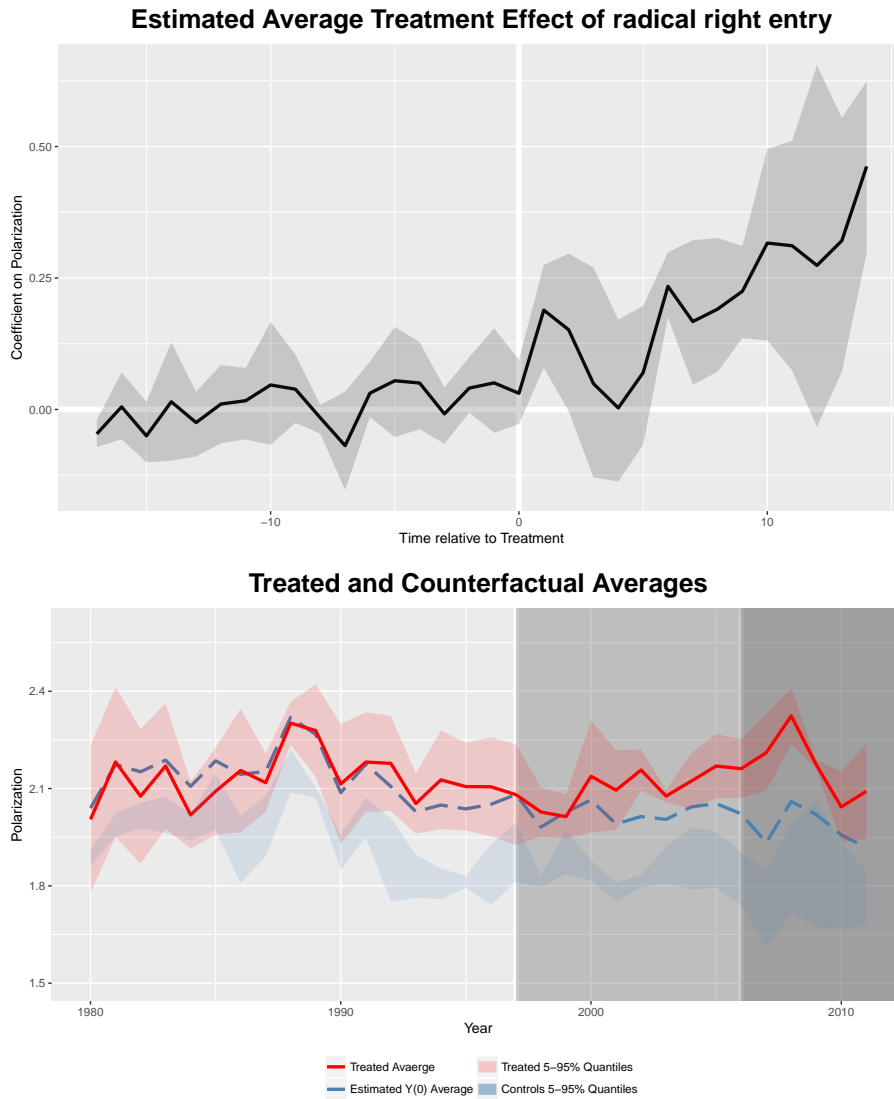
Figure C.9: Robustness: GSCM without interpolated variables



Note: Countries included: Denmark (Y_{treat} : 1998), Germany (no treat), Greece (Y_{treat} : 2007), Italy (Y_{treat} : 1992), Luxembourg (no treat), Netherlands (Y_{treat} : 2002) & United Kingdom (no treat).
 Years included: 1980-2016.

C.3 Robustness: GSCM without Italy & Netherlands

Figure C.10: Robustness: GSCM without Italy & Netherlands



Note: Countries included: Denmark (Y_{treat} : 1998), Germany (no treat), Greece (Y_{treat} : 2007), Luxembourg (no treat) & United Kingdom (no treat).
 Years included: 1980-2016.

C.4 SCM: radical right entrance in Denmark

Below we report our findings for the entrance of the Dansk Folkeparti (DF) in Denmark. The general elections in Denmark in 1998 experienced the entrance of the DF. The platform of the DF promised to protect the cultural heritage of the Danish people against foreigners, to work against the idea of a multicultural Denmark along with strict enforcement of law and order. The party has been classified

C Appendix Study 3

as populist radical right and as such this is the first such party to enter parliament in Denmark. They entered the parliament by achieving 7.5 % of the popular vote after several politicians split from the Fremskridtspartiet. Subsequently DF held 13 out of 179 seats in the Folketing. Since then the DF has always been represented in the Folketing and has frequently influenced and supported governmental legislation in Denmark (Mudde 2007: 43; De Lange 2009). All of this suggests that the DF should have had a substantial influence on how public opinion and polarization has developed in Denmark since 1998. Indeed, the results of our SCM analysis confirm that polarization took place after this party’s initial success.

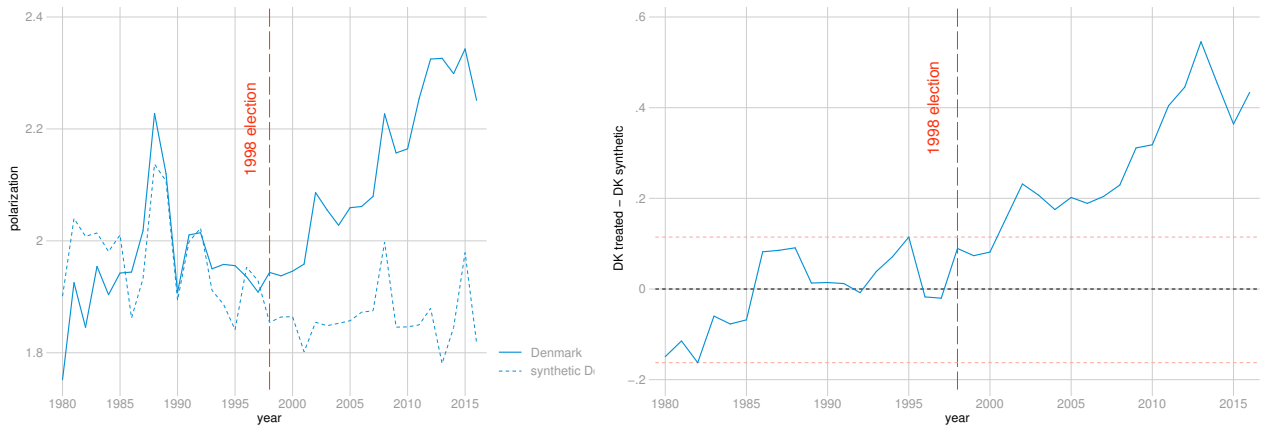
Table C.8: Synthetic weights for Denmark

country	weight
Germany	0
Greece	0.094
Luxembourg	0.096
Netherlands	0
United Kingdom	0.81

Table C.9: Polarization predictor means before Entrance of DF

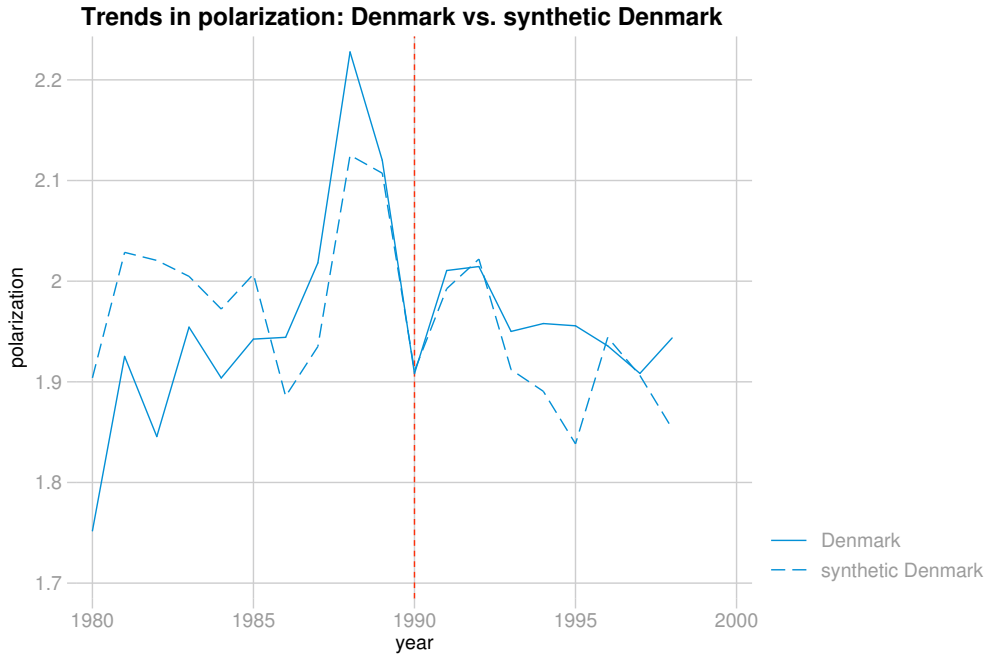
	factual	synthetic
	Denmark	Denmark
Public polarization (1980 & 1988 & 1998)	1.97	1.96
Public polarization	1.94	2.00
GDP growth	2.31	2.69
unemployment	7.83	8.62
ENP	5.01	2.21
party system polarization	2.55	1.88

Figure C.11: Denmark & synthetic Denmark



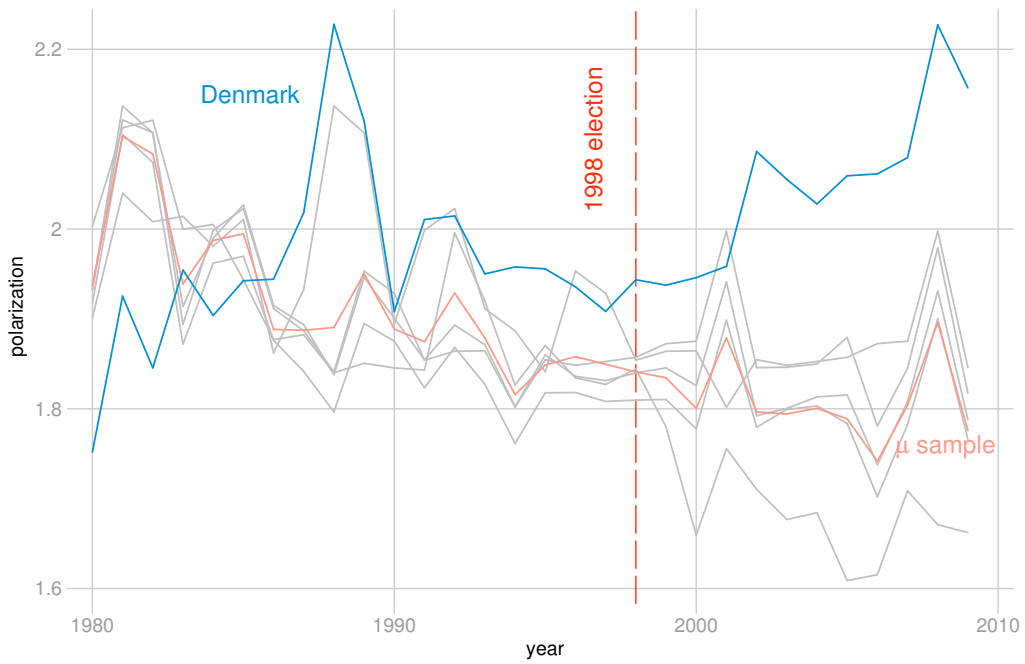
Note: Comparison of Polarization in Denmark & synthetic Denmark. Root Mean Square Percentage Error=0.082.

Figure C.13: Placebo in time: would we observe a comparable effect if the intervention happened one election earlier? No.



Note: RMSPE=0.081.

Figure C.14: Jackknife-1 deletion: are the differences driven by a specific donor? No.



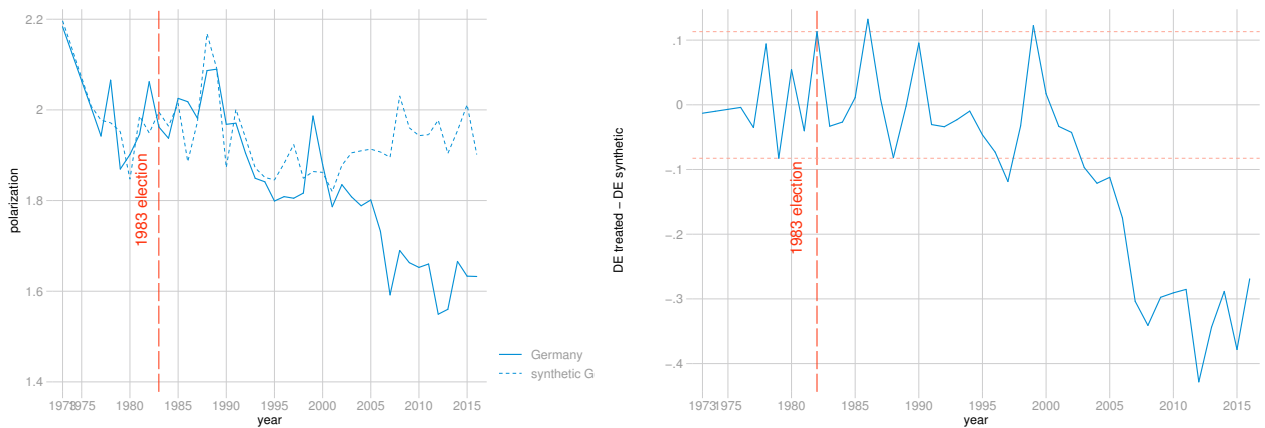
Note: Reported are the synthetic “Denmarks” dropping each donor and re-estimating our models.

C.5 SCM: radical left entrance in Germany

We do not have sufficient pre-treatment information across our sample to employ the GSCM for radical left party entrance. Yet, we can make use on the entrance of the Green party in Germany in 1983 to estimate the long-term effect of radical left party entrance. This case is well-suited for a SCM estimation since it is one of the earliest entries of radical left/Green parties within our sample. This is especially important because the entrance of the Green party in Germany is spatially correlated with other entries that occurred after the entry of the German Greens.

Figure C.15 reports the findings for the entrance of the Green party in Germany. The entrance of the Green party in Germany did not meaningfully affect ideological polarization. The left panel suggests that in the early 2000s public polarization decreased. Yet, this effect occurs approximately two decades after the treatment occurred, so it seems unlikely that this decrease can be causally linked to the entrance of the Greens in 1983.

Figure C.15: Germany & synthetic Germany



Note: Comparison of Polarization in Germany & synthetic Germany. Root Mean Square Percentage Error=0.06.