

Online Appendix for: Do opportunistic snap elections affect political trust? A quasi-experiment from the UK

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1 Appendix

Table A1: Descriptive summary statistics

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Trust Government	870	0.470	0.499	0	1
Trust Media	846	0.221	0.415	0	1
Trust Legal system	857	0.740	0.439	0	1
Sat. with life	869	0.918	0.274	0	1
Direction of country	772	0.466	0.499	0	1
Direction of the EU	705	0.262	0.440	0	1
Treatment	870	0.779	0.415	0	1
Left-right position	870	4.907	2.012	1	10
Eurosceptic	870	0.344	0.475	0	1
Sex	870	0.497	0.500	0	1
Age (years)	870	51.157	19.633	15	96
Age (categorical)	870	3.989	1.704	1	6
Employment	870	2.413	0.630	1	3
Urbanicity	870	2.237	0.563	1	3
Region	870	6.282	2.823	1	11

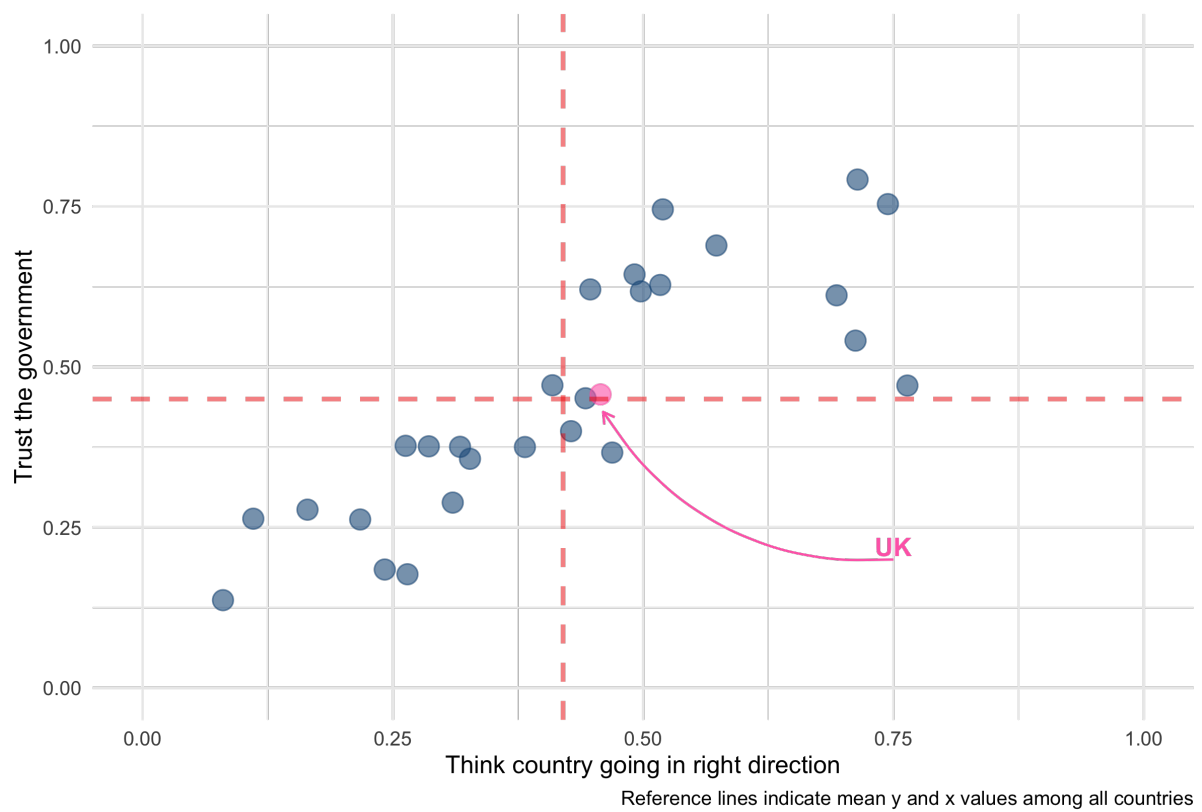


Figure A1: Mean level trust measures in Eurobarometer 87.2

Table A2: OLS regression models

X	(1) Main model	(2) + linear left-right interaction	(3) + binary left-right interaction	(4) + EU-based interaction
Treatment	0.10** (0.04)	-0.14 (0.12)	0.18*** (0.05)	0.04 (0.05)
Left-right position	0.05*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)		
Treatment*Left-right position		0.05** (0.02)		
Left-wing voter			0.01 (0.08)	
Treatment*Left-wing voter			-0.24*** (0.09)	
Eurosceptic				-0.20*** (0.07)
Treatment*Eurosceptic				0.14* (0.08)
Sex (female)	-0.09** (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.10*** (0.03)	-0.11*** (0.03)
Age (baseline: 15-24)				
25-24	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.06)
35-44	-0.00 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	0.00 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.07)
45-54	-0.06 (0.07)	-0.05 (0.07)	-0.06 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.07)
55-64	-0.00 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.02 (0.07)
65+	0.01 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	0.03 (0.06)
Employment (baseline: Self-employed)				
Employed	0.08 (0.06)	0.08 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)
Unemployed	0.12* (0.07)	0.12* (0.07)	0.11 (0.07)	0.10 (0.07)
Urbanicity (baseline: rural)				
Town/Suburb	0.02 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)	0.02 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.07)
City	-0.04 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.08)	-0.11 (0.08)
Constant	-0.00 (0.15)	0.19 (0.17)	0.23 (0.15)	0.41*** (0.14)
Observations	870	870	870	1,006
R-squared	0.09	0.10	0.09	0.06

Regional FE included but not shown

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Table A3: Logistic regression models

X	(1) Main model	(2) + linear left-right interaction	(3) + binary left-right interaction	(4) + EU-based interaction
Treatment	0.44** (0.18)	-0.65 (0.52)	0.77*** (0.21)	0.17 (0.20)
Left-right position	0.21*** (0.04)	0.03 (0.09)		
Treatment*Left-right position		0.22** (0.10)		
Left-wing voter			0.02 (0.35)	
Treatment*Left-wing voter			-1.03*** (0.39)	
Eurosceptic				-0.89*** (0.33)
Treatment*Eurosceptic				0.65* (0.36)
Sex (female)	-0.37** (0.15)	-0.37** (0.15)	-0.42*** (0.15)	-0.47*** (0.14)
Age (baseline: 15-24)				
25-34	-0.10 (0.31)	-0.04 (0.32)	-0.11 (0.31)	-0.35 (0.27)
35-44	-0.01 (0.32)	0.04 (0.33)	0.02 (0.32)	-0.11 (0.27)
45-54	-0.25 (0.32)	-0.21 (0.33)	-0.27 (0.32)	-0.39 (0.28)
55-64	-0.01 (0.32)	0.03 (0.32)	-0.02 (0.32)	-0.06 (0.28)
65+	0.05 (0.29)	0.08 (0.30)	0.03 (0.29)	0.14 (0.25)
Employment (baseline: Self-employed)				
Employed	0.35 (0.29)	0.35 (0.29)	0.27 (0.28)	0.24 (0.27)
Unemployed	0.55* (0.31)	0.55* (0.31)	0.48 (0.30)	0.43 (0.28)
Urbanicity (baseline: rural)				
Town/Suburb	0.09 (0.32)	0.10 (0.33)	0.08 (0.32)	-0.13 (0.31)
City	-0.17 (0.36)	-0.16 (0.37)	-0.18 (0.36)	-0.51 (0.35)
Constant	-2.20*** (0.68)	-1.34* (0.77)	-1.17* (0.66)	-0.38 (0.62)
Observations	870	870	870	1,006

Regional FE included but not shown
Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

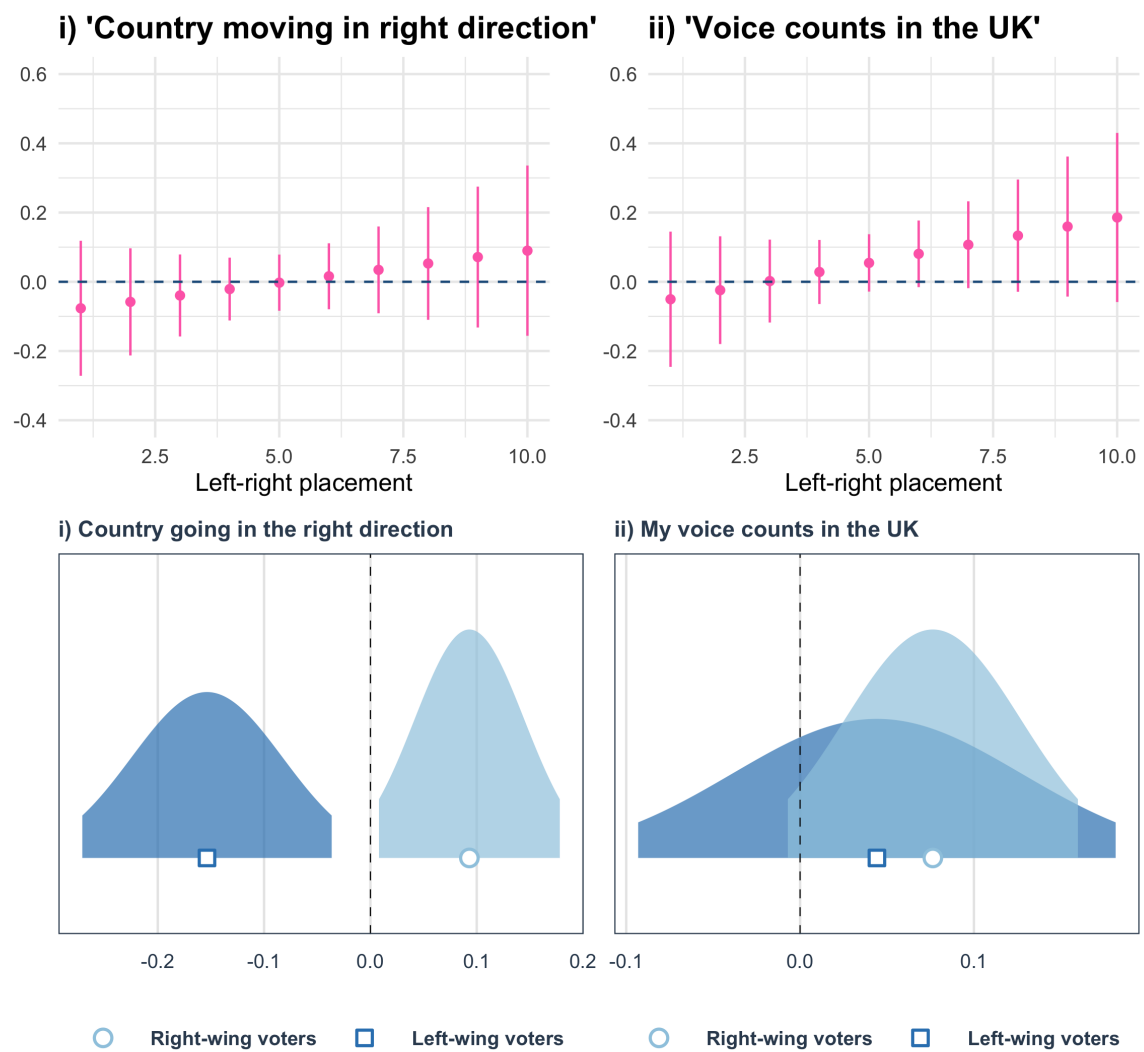


Figure A2: Conditional test of mechanisms by ideology

A Robustness tests

Testing influence of day 0 respondents

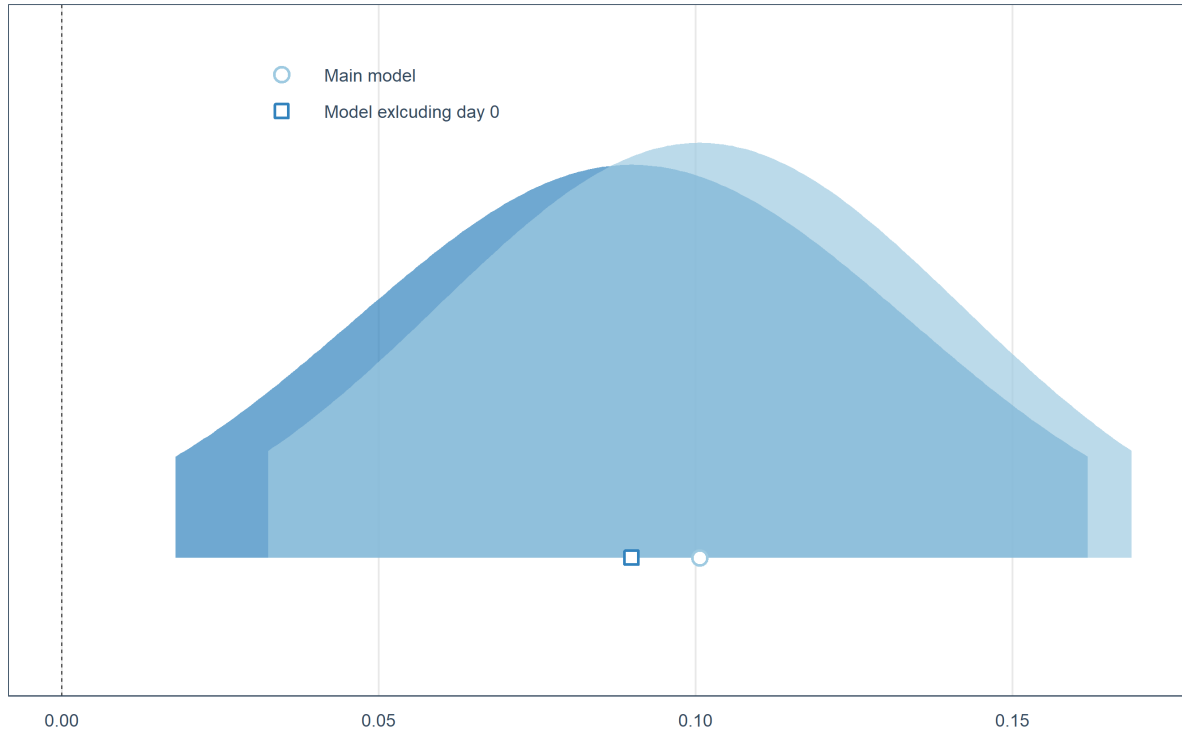


Figure A3: ITT effect sensitivity to day 0 observations

To provide evidence that we have not just observed an effect on the date of treatment spuriously out of chance, we apply a randomisation inference test in which we randomly assign the date for treatment for observations creating a placebo treatment date and model its effect on our outcome measure of trust. Figure A5 reports the results of 1,000 iterations. The vertical dashed line indicates the reported treatment effect coefficient. As demonstrated, the density of treatment effects using placebo-assigned treatment dates cluster around zero and are significantly distinct from the point-estimate ($\beta = .10$ | $p = 0.015$) that we find in our analysis. We take this as strong evidence that our observed treatment effects are not spurious.

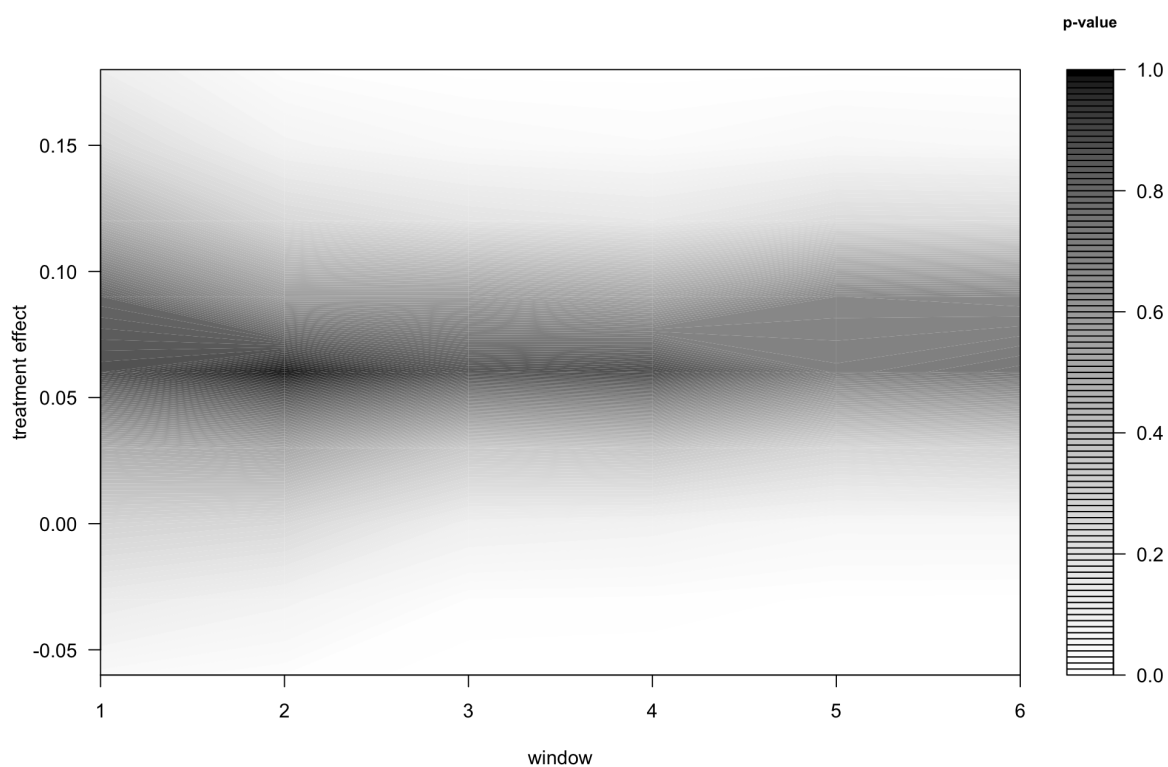


Figure A4: rdlocrand window sensitivity test

Randomisation inference using 2000 permutations

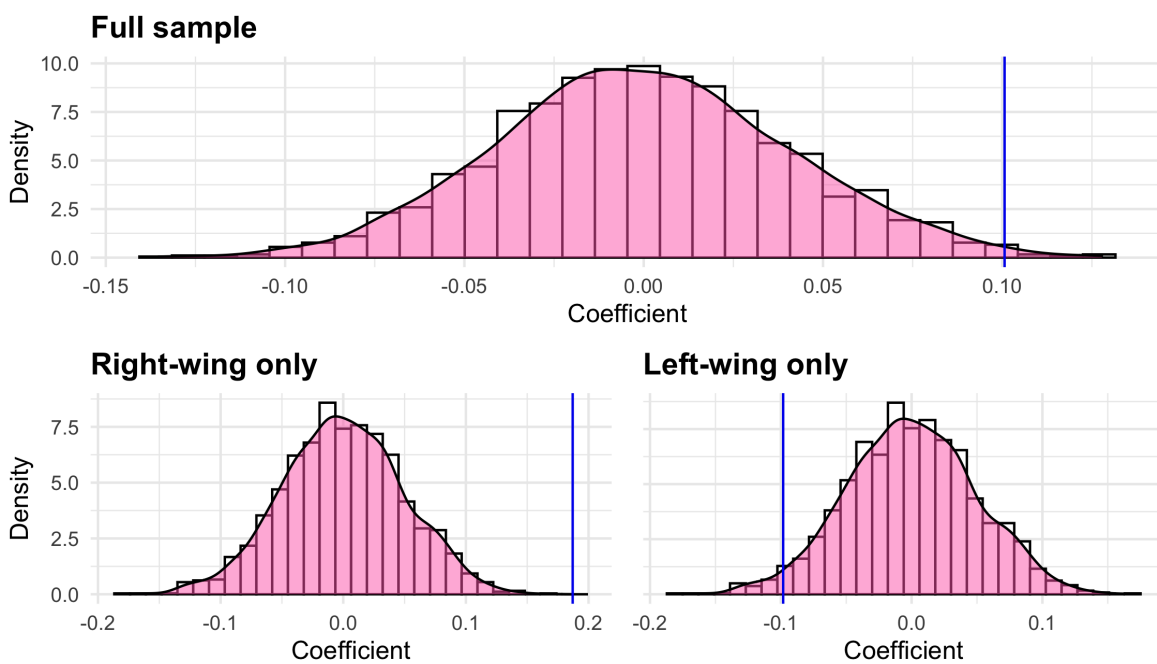


Figure A5: Randomisation inference via permutation

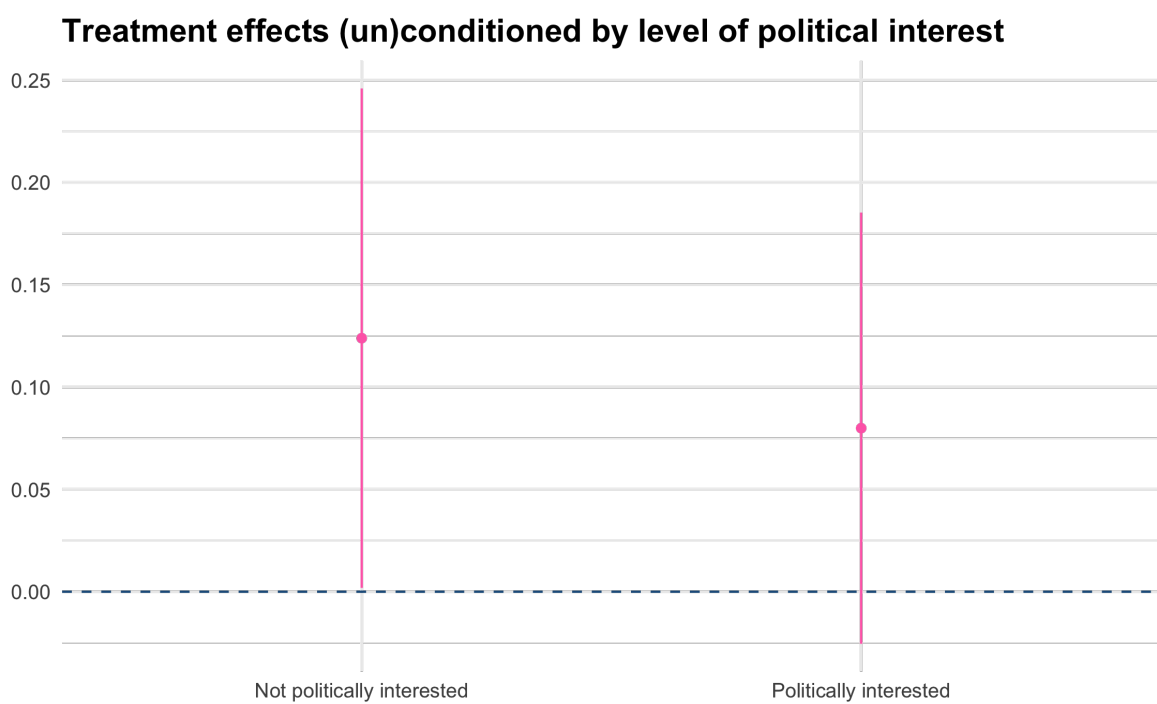


Figure A6: (Non-)moderating role of political interest

Multiverse analysis specification curve

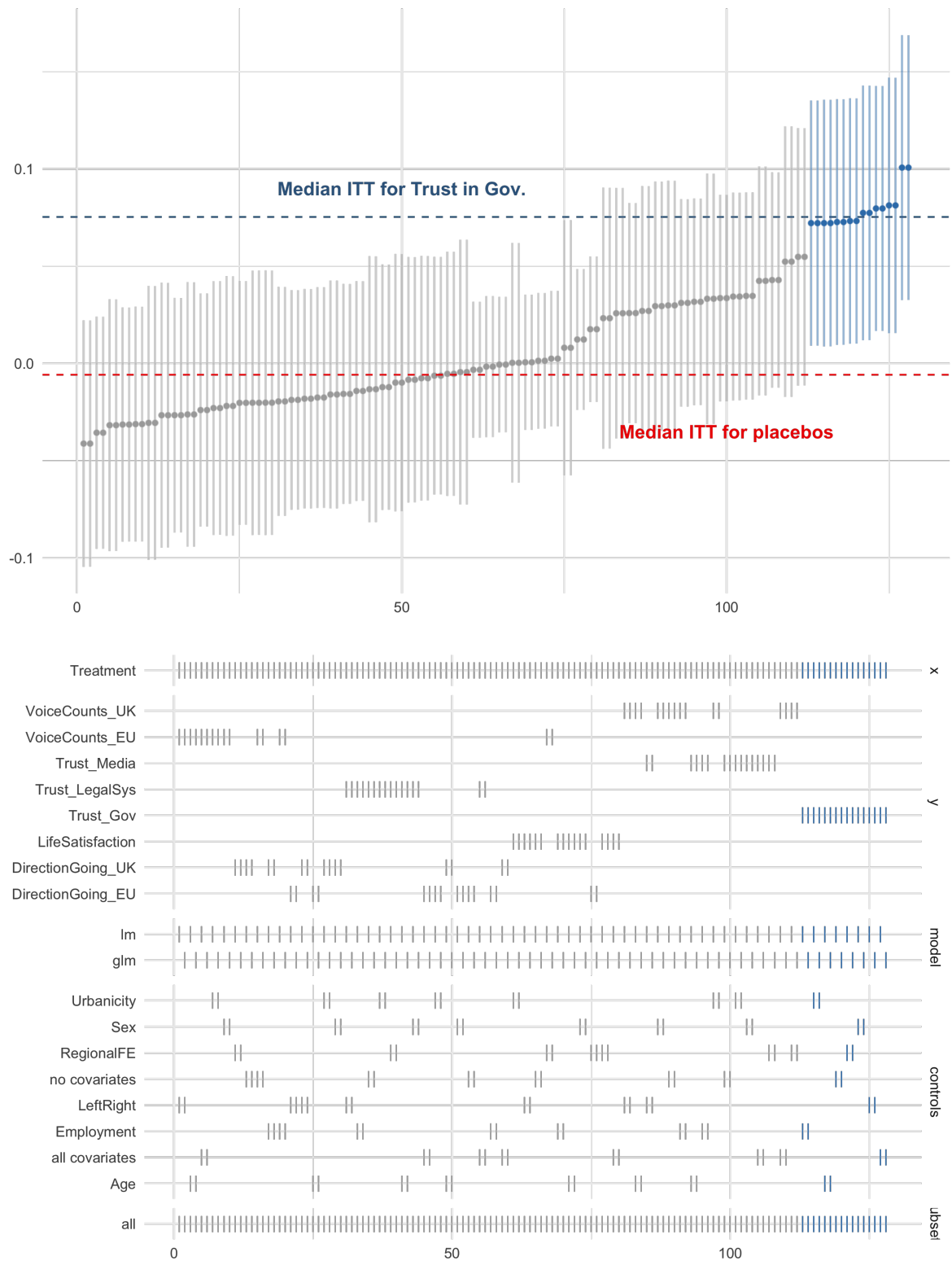


Figure A7: Multiverse specification curve

B Media reporting



The prime minister steps out in Downing Street to announce that a general election will be held on 8 June, despite her several previous promises not to hold a snap poll. Photograph: Peter Mullan/Corbis Images

Amelia Auliana and Peter Weller

Theresa May claimed Wednesday yesterday that she was responding to the "unprecedented" pressure on her party to call a general election, but she also said that she would not do so until she had a "parliamentary majority that will ensure her vision for Britain".

The prime minister made an uncharacteristic statement in the morning, hours before a letter outside No 10, during which she requested her resignation, was not to go to the public before noon.

She accused opposition parties of trying to "jeopardise her government's preparations for exiting the EU" as she called for what would be the last election in three years – while Labour's Jeremy Corbyn responded by saying he

would welcome the opposition's fight as election-opposing the party itself.

May said: "We need a general election and we need one now because here at Westminster a vote-of-choice today that does while the European Union, against its negotiating position, and before the deadline talks begin."

Supporters of the prime minister said she would use the election to re-elect her own team, with no prospect of the election being called by Michael Gove, suggesting he could secure a majority of 100 in the House of Commons.

His message suggested the number of Tory MPs would rise from 330 to 364, while Labour could drop from 230 to 204.

Under the Fixed-term Parliaments Act, May cannot call an election directly, but

she said she would lay down a motion in the House of Commons, requiring two-thirds of MPs to vote for it. Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the SNP all promised not to stand when May was allowed to call the Commons to re-elect her.

MPs will vote on whether to dissolve parliament following a six-hour debate between the Commons and the House of Lords.

In a sign of the move she is likely to adopt during the next week's campaign, May quickly focused on her opponent in the address to parliament. "The only way to coming together for the government is now," she added. "In recent weeks, Labour have threatened to vote against the deal and agreement we made with the European Union, the Liberal Democrats have said they want to spend the business of government in a standstill, the SNP say they will vote against the legislation that for the European Union's membership of the European Union and protected our rights as every citizen's law."

Gove made clear that Labour would back the government in calling for dissolution, despite earlier from some of his party's MPs. He said: "I welcome the prime minister's decision to give the British people the chance to vote for a government that will put the interests of the country first. Labour will be offering the country an effective alternative to a government that has failed to deliver the progress, delivering living standards and bringing cuts to our schools and NHS."

Gove's shadow cabinet

John Crace's sketch

A resolution for Lent that Theresa just couldn't keep

Right to the end, Theresa May was unable to keep her own resolution. For the past six months the prime minister had insisted she wouldn't call an early general election because it wasn't in the best interests of the country. Now, however, Theresa May has decided to do a double revolution – there are advantages to being a voter's child – and has voted to call a snap election. Her own party's interests were more important than the country's. Clearly, however, she was not alone in this. She was making a statement to the British people.

During the last six months enough people on the left, Theresa May had the best of the idea, and she was not alone in this. She was making a statement to the British people.

After considering an election in recent years, the country was now going through a double revolution. People were literally standing up with a vote of disapproval to vote, and to satisfy them

strategies she was going to give over to another five years.

But that she wanted to see an opposition minister who didn't keep her word. The problem was the opposition. They were doing the wrong thing by opposing her. Her own party was not doing the right thing by opposing her. Her own party was not doing the right thing by opposing her.

She had changed her mind over time, when she spoke of the opportunity to become PM, and she couldn't for the life of her understand why other people couldn't be so flexible with their principles. "The country is voting."

Continued on page 7 →

Inside

How then did Theresa May's gamble in the election but she could have made page 2 →

Labour backbenchers attacked as Corbyn backs call for early election page 3 →

Strategic calls decision "huge political gamble" as she seeks broad support for independence referendum page 4 →

Philby Thymian-Corbyn had the chance to stop the prime minister's challenge. He refused to take it page 28 →



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Figure A8: Front page - The Guardian (19th April 2017)

The Daily Telegraph

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR



ELECTION 2017

May's bolt from the blue

- ◆ Snap election is only way to ensure Brexit success, says PM in exclusive article for the Telegraph
- ◆ Sudden announcement prompts more Labour infighting
- ◆ Polls show Tories are on course to win a huge majority

Theresa May's snap election announcement has sent the Tory government reeling. The PM's decision to call a general election in May, rather than the expected autumn, has been described as a "bolt from the blue".

The announcement has prompted a series of reactions from across the political spectrum. Labour's Jeremy Corbyn has called it a "betrayal of the people", while the Liberal Democrats' Tim Farron has said it is a "disaster".

May's decision has also prompted speculation about her motives. Some believe it is a move to secure a mandate for her Brexit agenda, while others think it is a tactical move to catch the opposition off guard.

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19 APR 2017

Fraser Nelson
This was a chance too good to resist

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May needs a strong Brexit mandate

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SNP will put SNP on the back foot

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An astonishing act of political courage

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Tories must seek common ground

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Leicester's European dream dashed by Arsenal

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**In a stunning move, Mrs May calls bluff of the
'game-playing' Remoaners (including 'unelected'
Lords) with a snap election and vows to . . .**



CRUSH THE SABOTEURS

REPORTS AND ANALYSIS: PAGES 4-19

 <https://www.google.com/news/section/uk-politics>

Figure A10: Front page - *The Daily Mail* (19th April 2017)



The

INDEPENDENT

WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2017

WWW.INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

The Brexit Election



- 'Extraordinary U-turn' from May as she sets out to make hard Brexit unstoppable
- Corbyn's Labour faces disaster on 8 June with polls showing historic Tory lead
- But Remainers insist: this is final chance to save Britain from 'disastrous deal'

Reports, analysis and comment from **JOE WATTS / JOHN RENTOUL / ANDREW GRICE / BEN CHU / HOLLY BAXTER / TIM FARRON / TOM PECK / JON STONE & MORE**

Figure A11: Front page - *The Independent* (19th April 2017)