What's left after right-wing extremism? The effects on political orientation
APPENDIX
For Online Publication

A. Theoretical Insights

A.1 Terrorism and public attitudes

Terrorist attacks, committed by groups or single individuals, are a major source of public fear, and several studies have helped us make significant leaps in our understanding of how terrorist violence affects political ideology, tolerance, prejudice and support for non-democratic regulations (see, e.g., Huddy et al., 2005; Berrebi and Klor, 2008; Kibris, 2011; Legewie, 2013; Hersh, 2013; Burke et al., 2013; Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014; Birkelund et al., 2019; Ferrin et al., 2019; Aytaç and Çarkoğlu, 2019; Larsen et al., 2020; Muñoz et al., 2020; Böhmelt et al., 2019; Belmonte, 2020). Yet, the bulk of extant studies have disproportionately focused on Islamic terrorism, which is one type of terrorist violence against civilians. Terrorism comes in different forms and, whereas left-wing or anarchist terrorism has been mostly active in the 1970s and 1980s – and it is now a rare occurrence – incidents of far-right terrorism have fast become a growing threat in the West. Emblematic events include the Norway attacks in July 2011 and the Christchurch mosque shootings in March 2019 in New Zealand; in both cases a right-wing extremist killed or injured more than 100 people. In addition to large-scale successful attacks with many victims, many countries recorded an increase in smaller-scale far-right terror plots that were foiled by security services.[1]

The literature on terrorism and public opinion shows that right-wing parties receive a higher support in opinion polls following periods of more frequent and deadlier terrorist attacks (see, e.g., Berrebi and Klor, 2008; Kibris, 2011; Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014; Economou and Kollias, 2015). This is because highly threatening situations encourage people to embrace political attitudes offering simple but cognitively rigid solutions to questions of security, and these solutions "are more likely to resonate with the cognitive and rhetorical styles of those on the political right than the left" (Jost et al., 2009, p.321). As a matter

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[1]Available online: `https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-security/britain-foiled-22-attacks-since-march-2017-top-counter-terrorism-officer-says-idUSKCN1VU1YH`

of fact, fear of death and perceptions of a dangerous world are usually associated with the holding of broadly right orientations (Bonanno and Jost, 2006). Right-wing parties are also expected to possess an advantage in addressing security threats because they implement more stringent security policies or make fewer concessions to violent groups among other measures (Aytaç and Çarkoğlu, 2019).

Yet, these studies largely focus on Islamic terrorism which differs from far-right terrorism in many respects, in particular in the ideological aim of the perpetrators. According to the Global Terrorism Database (GTD), terrorism is "the threatened or actual use of illegal force and violence by a non-state actor to attain a political, economic, religious, or social goal through fear, coercion, or intimidation".[2] As a result, the type of non-state actor perpetrating violence, and their political or religious goals, should contribute to how terrorism affects the audience and shapes public sentiments.

Although terms like "Jihadism", "Jihadist" and Islamist are often applied inconsistently, Islamic terrorists are motivated by extreme interpretations of religious texts, and the main ideological tenets they elaborate include the imposition of Shari'a law via violent Jihad and the use of grievances affecting Muslims "aired in an overtly religious context" (LaFree et al., 2017, p.4). Far-right terrorism, on the other hand, cuts across a variety of religious and non-religious groups (LaFree et al., 2017), and is "motivated by various extremist right-wing political ideologies, including extreme nationalism, racism and white supremacy" (Piazza, 2017, p.52).[3] Radical right violence also crucially intersects traditional politics as commonly ascribed motivations for violent right-wing extremism – such as economic grievances produced by a decline in manufacturing employment and societal changes leading to greater empowerment of racial minorities – are also associated with the success of populist right-wing parties (Piazza, 2017; Norris and Inglehart, 2019). As such, the very ideology underpinning the attack has important implications for our understanding of the effect of violence on public attitudes. Whereas Islamic or Jihadi-inspired terrorism is predominantly driven by religious motivation, right-wing terrorism is motivated by radical right *political* views, grounded in race-based identity, seeking to promote nationalism and endorsing its xenophobic form, "nativism", which portraits non-native cultures as a threat to the homogeneity of nation-state populations (Mudde, 2007; Rooduijn et al., 2017). We expect this distinction to have important implications for the way terrorism shapes political ideology. Differences in

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[2]Available online: `https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/downloads/Codebook.pdf`

[3]Focusing on the target of violence, Ravndal (2018, p.47) argues that we can consider an attack as right-wing terrorism if the victims are individuals who belong to "a group predefined as an enemy or as unwanted by the far right".

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the identity of the perpetrators – and their predominant ideology – have largely been absent in the burgeoning quantitative literature on the impact of terrorism on public opinion.

Particularly important for this research, far-right terrorism has been portrayed by academics and commentators as the tip of a larger entity. The far right is often characterized by a large base of supporters (the base of the "iceberg") who are usually engaged in low level violence (Perliger, 2012). At the same time, and more importantly, the act of violence is usually motivated by ideas that are becoming popular within wider society and promoted by political parties.[4] For example, the support for mono-culturalism national self-interest, the protection of national borders and the defence of national traditions against ethnic changes have gained currency among a large swath of the electorate in recent years (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018; Norris and Inglehart, 2019). A non-negligible number of citizens have bought into the idea that refugees and immigrants increase the risk of terrorism (Eatwell and Goodwin, 2018; Böhmelt et al., 2019; Nussio et al., 2019), while substantial portions of Western respondents in recent surveys agree that there is a fundamental clash between the values of their society and Islam.[5] Moreover, as radical right parties constitute a fundamental challenge for established parties, their ideas are "contagious" and their success has led mainstream right parties to adopt anti-immigrant and culturally protectionist positions (Wagner and Meyer, 2017; Abou-Chadi and Krause, 2018).[6] In fact, many conservative parties in Europe have co-opted the agenda of radical right parties by, e.g., embracing the definition of immigration as a national problem and increasingly addressing liberal-authoritarian issues (Van Spanje, 2010; Wagner and Meyer, 2017). In the 2019 general election, the former leader of the UK Independence Party (UKIP), Nigel Farage, went as far as to claim that the Tory manifesto resembled UKIP's document in 2015 and included issues that he had campaigned on for years.[7]

Given the strong link between far-right terrorism and political alignment, we ask whether

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[4]Case studies of right-wing terrorist violence suggest that many radical right extremists were at one point mentored, financed or involved with legitimate political parties and that initial contacts with the far-right ideology and the subsequent deepening of involvement were "facilitated by the fact that some of their ideas were shared by many representatives of the mainstream, or indeed discussed 'down the pub'" (Pisoiu and Ahmed, 2016, p.176).

[5]Available online: `https://yougov.co.uk/topics/international/articles-reports/2019/02/03/westernmena-attitudes-religion-portray-lack-faith-`

[6]As competition is not limited to the left-right dimension but also concerns cross-cutting issues, Abou-Chadi and Krause (2018) find that these reactions are not limited to the mainstream right.

[7]Available online: `https://inews.co.uk/news/politics/nigel-farage-tory-manifesto-is-copy-ukip-2015-manifesto-1321128`. Interestingly, a recent study finds that there are no differences between Tory members who voted Conservative and those who voted UKIP in 2015 on key issues, such as attitudes to non-EU immigration (Webb et al., 2017).

citizens, by dissociating from the attack and the use of violence more generally, distance themselves also from the core values of the perpetrator and their political views. As conservatives or individuals of right-wing ideology are likely to share some "diluted" or moderate versions of the same ideas promoted by far-right terrorists, we expect the attack to affect their political self-placement in a direction that dissociates themselves with this ideology.

Previous research has convincingly shown that Islamic terrorism attacks provokes positional shifts in reactionary and conservative directions (see, e.g., Berrebi and Klor, 2008; Kibris, 2011; Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014; Economou and Kollias, 2015). We ask instead whether far-right terrorism can actually cause the opposite effect, thus decreasing conservatism and reducing the likelihood of reporting positions at the right end of the political spectrum.

A.2 Background material on the two attacks

We focus on two well-known incidents that were incited by extreme-right propaganda: the 2016 murder of MP Jo Cox and the 2017 Finsbury Park attack.

The British Member of Parliament, Jo Cox, was killed in the street in her constituency of Batley and Spen in Yorkshire, a week before the UK's referendum on membership of the European Union (EU). She was assassinated by Thomas Mair, a 53-year-old white supremacist whose violent hatred extended to white people he deemed "collaborators". In fact, investigators found evidence of extreme right-wing beliefs in Mair's apartment and during a search of his online activities, which "showed him to be obsessed with the Nazis, notions of white supremacy and apartheid-era South Africa."[8] The attack was not immediately described in the context of a terrorist attack (see also figure B.3 for examples of newspaper front pages the day after the attack), although the media have later on depicted the perpetrator as a "far-right terrorist".[9] And while Mair was tried for murder, rather than terrorism, the persecutors said that Mair's crimes were "nothing less than acts of terrorism" and the judge in his case made it clear, when delivering a whole life sentence, that he considered this to be a terrorist murder.

The attack caused a shock across Britain, leading to the suspension of campaigning for the Brexit referendum. Shortly after the incident, tributes were poured in for Jo Cox from across the political spectrum, including the Prime Minister David Cameron and the Labour

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[8]Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/nov/23/thomas-mair-found-guilty-of-jo-cox-murder

[9]Available online: Ibidem

party leader Jeremy Corbyn. Other party leaders also joined the tributes. Nicola Sturgeon, the Scottish first minister, said Cox was a brilliant young MP just doing her job, while Nigel Farage, Member of the European Parliament, prominent Leave.EU campaigner and leader of the UK Independence Party, said that he was deeply saddened and offered his condolences.[10] Following the incident, Union Flags on British public buildings, including the Palace of Westminster, Buckingham Palace, and 10 Downing Street, were flown at half mast.

As the man who murdered Cox later in the day shouted "Britain First", the name of a far-right organization which has aligned itself with Farage's party and policies, the parallels between some Leave campaign rhetoric and the terrorist's motivations were pointed out (Jones, 2019). Yet, Farage himself responded that the murder was down to "one deranged, dangerous individual",[11] dismissing any consideration that the tone of the political debate leading to the Brexit referendum contributed to a climate of hate and fear. Whereas mainstream political parties came together to express their sadness and horror, and the activities of the far-right groups came under the spotlight, their leaders seemed to have rushed, at least initially, to distance themselves from the attack, including Paul Golding, the leader of Britain First.[12] Other online activities recalled that one bad apple did not represent the entire group and refuted the claim that racist, anti-migrant rhetoric played any role in the attack.[13] They also blamed mental health issues for what media and commentators described as an ideological attack, and even went so far as to accuse political opponents of staging a "false flag" attack.

As mentioned, Jo Cox's assassination took place one week before the 2016 EU membership referendum. During the Brexit campaign, the fight against terrorism featured prominently in the public debate. The Leave campaign's narrative of 'taking back control' made ample references to the threat posed by a borderless Europe, highlighting how the UK was powerless against terrorists. The Remain camp argued that the UK would be more secure inside the EU, because the EU had effective tools to fight terrorism (see Bove et al., 2021, for a discussion). David Cameron asserted that EU membership made Britain safer against

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[10]Available online: https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jun/16/jo-cox-attack-politicians-support-and-shock

[11]Available online: https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/nigel-farage-claims-all-remain-8236531

[12]Available online: https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/britain-first-jo-cox-uk_5762f6a6e4b0681487dcdcc1

[13]Available online: https://globalcomment.com/10-obscene-reactions-from-the-far-right-to-jo-coxs-murder/

terrorism, while prominent policy makers in the UK and abroad suggested that leaving the EU would present real risks to counter-terrorism efforts. As such, before the attack there was already quite a lot of attention around the issue of terrorism. Although the rival official campaigns suspended their activities as a sign of respect, campaigning resumed on Sunday 19 June and the media mostly focused on the referendum as such. A relatively high baseline level of attention towards terrorism before the attack, combined with an increasing focus on a fast-approaching EU referendum after the attack and the fact that the assassination was not immediately described in the context of a terrorist attack, could explain why the search for the term "terrorism" only exhibits a more modest increase in the wake of Jo Cox's assassination, as Figure 1 shows.

The second attack involved a 48-year-old man, Darren Osborne, who drove a van into a crowd of Muslims near the Finsbury Park Mosque, in north London, on 19 June 2017, causing one death and injuring ten people. Darren Osborne appeared to have been motivated by anger over Islamist terror attacks in London and Manchester in 2017, and a child grooming scandal in Rochdale that involved men of Asian origin. The incident was described by politicians like Sadiq Khan, the Mayor of London, or the Prime Minister, Theresa May, as a terrorist attack and investigated by counter-terrorism police as an act of terrorism. Newspapers also described the incident as a terrorist attack (see Figure B.3).

Actors from the entire political spectrum openly condemned the events. The prime minister Theresa May praised London's multicultural community and promised more efforts to fight against extremism, including Islamophobia.[14] In a similar vein, the leader of the opposition, Jeremy Corbyn, said his thoughts were with those affected by the event and he condemned the incident as "an attack on all of us."[15] In addition to political actors, the attack was condemned by Christian, Sikh, and Jewish religious leaders. Prince Charles, among other public figures, also visited Finsbury Park Mosque to meet the community leaders and conveyed a message from the Queen.

Yet, unlike with the assassination of Jo Cox, several extremists posted praise of the attacker on Facebook. When far-right group, like Britain First, posted about the Finsbury Park Mosque terrorist attack on their social media pages, many responses tried to justify the attack on Muslims or defined the perpetrator as a "hero".[16]

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[14]Available online: `https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/jun/19/theresa-may-to-chair-cobra-meeting-after-finsbury-park-terror-attack`

[15]Available online: `https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/finsbury-park-attack-jeremy-corbyn-theresa-may-video-reactions-mosque-watch-latest-a7797856.html`

[16]Available online: `https://more.bham.ac.uk/euro-islam/tag/facebook/`; `https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/google-hosts-far-right-videos-urging-islamophobic-violence-fxgdwkwl2`

In sum, three main differences seem to emerge between the two incidents: first, notwithstanding the unequivocal condemnation of the attacks from political leaders across the political spectrum and a strong media coverage, the framing of attacks by the media seems to have implied a clearer link with terrorism in the case of the Finsbury Park attack, whereas media and commentators were slower in framing Jo Cox's assassination as a terrorist attack. Second, whereas after Jo Cox's assassination far-right influencers and activists online tried to distance themselves from the attack, there were several cases of incitation of violence against Muslims and praise of the attack from far-right activists in the wake of the Finsbury Park attack. Third, the two attacks differ in the level of public attention to terrorism. In particular, a fast-approaching EU referendum means that the effects were likely to be shorter-lived for the murder of MP Jo Cox. We return to this issue in Section C.4.

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https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/finsbury-park-terror-attack-van-latest-comments-glorifying-terrorism-reported-government-home-office-facebook-britain-first-a7798356.html

B. Additional Information

- Figure B.1 presents the spatial distribution of all terrorist attacks in Great Britain from 2006 to 2018.

- Figure B.2 presents the timing of each far-right terrorist attack in our sample relative to the wave of the British Election Study that it coincides with.

- Figure B.3 provides examples of UK national newspaper front pages from the day after each sampled attack. The top row is for the Jo Cox MP attack and the bottom row is for the Finsbury Park attack.

- Figure B.4 explores the treatment effect on citizens' beliefs about the single most important issue facing the country. We consider 'terrorism' and the six other most popular issues: 'immigration', 'economy', 'inequality', 'health', 'Europe', and 'negativity'. We construct a binary indicator for each one of these issues coding respondents who believe that the corresponding issue is the most important national problem. The results indicate that: (i) after the two sampled attacks, individuals are more likely to report terrorism as the top national problem; (ii) exposure to terrorism sways public opinion away from other popular issues. This exercise confirms the salience of the two attacks for the British public, and that these incidents were correctly perceived by the large audience as acts as terrorism rather than violent crime.

- Table B.1 presents summary statistics and definitions for all variables in Eq. (1).

- Figure B.5 shows the distribution of ideological self-placement on the left-right scale of the political spectrum for the 2-day sample (panel (a)) and the 3-day sample (panel (b)); where 0 is the most left-wing and 10 is the most right-wing.

- Table B.2 performs balancing tests in observed characteristics across treatment and control units. This shows that there are differences in the mean of some covariates across the two groups, such as age and employment status.

- Table B.3 reports the mean, variance and skewness of covariates across treatment and control units after entropy balancing, showing that this method corrects for all imbalances observed in Table B.2 and makes the two groups identical.

- Tables B.4 and B.5 report the full regression results for panels (a) and (b) of Figure 3, respectively.

- Figure B.6 explores the treatment effect on citizens' beliefs about traditional British values. The analysis is based on available data from BES wave 13 (Finsbury Park attack). It shows that, after the attack, respondents are less likely to take a 'strong' positive position on the maintenance and stability of traditional British values.

Figure B.1: Terrorist attacks in Great Britain, 2006-2018

No. killed
& wounded by
far-right
perpetrators

13

9

6

3

0

No. killed
& wounded by
all terrorists

•   0

50

100

Jo Cox MP attack

Finsbury Park attack
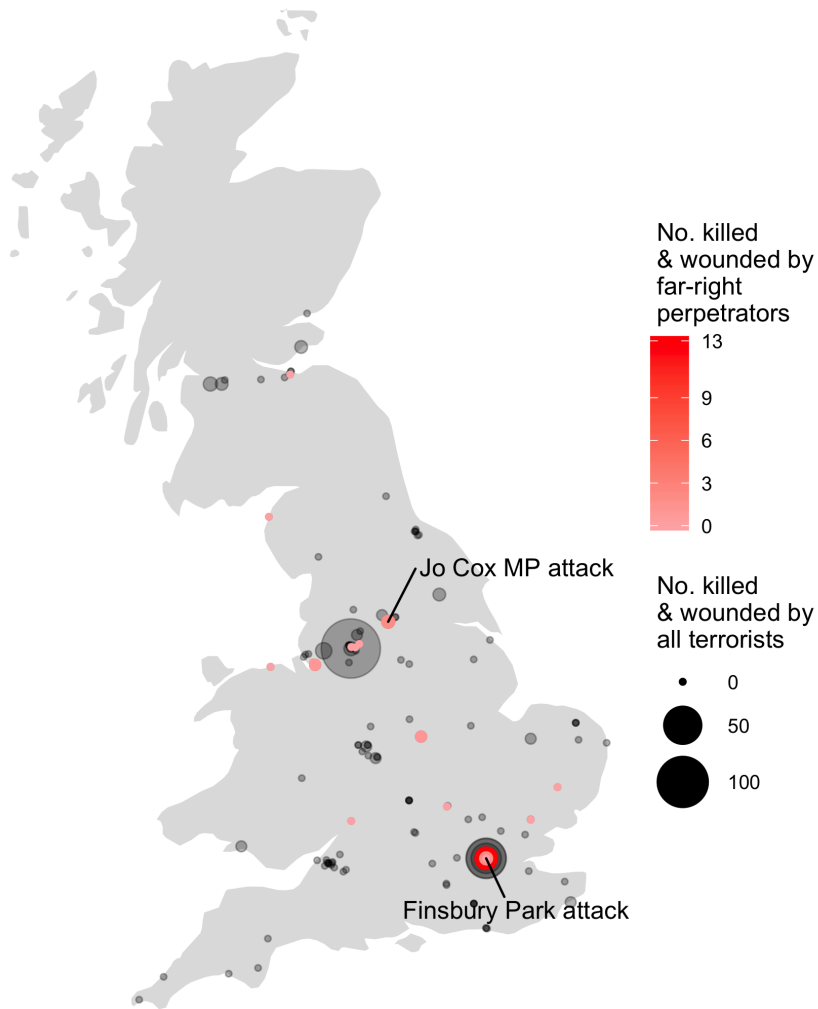
Source: Global Terrorism Database 2006 - 2018

Notes: Attacks where the perpetrator is defined as either "Anti-Muslim extremist" or "Neo-Nazi extremist" are classified as far-right and are shaded in red. All other attacks are shaded in black. The size of each point reflects the total number of people killed or wounded as a result of that attack.

Figure B.2: Timeline of events

Jo Cox MP attack

Start of BES W8   End of BES W8

6th May 2016   16th June   22nd June

1 day sample

2 days sample

3 days sample

Finsbury Park attack

Start of BES W13   End of BES W13

9th June 2017   19th June   23rd June

1 day sample

2 days sample

3 days sample
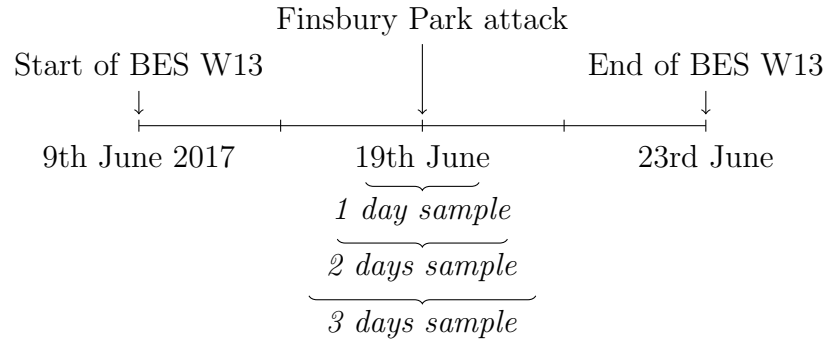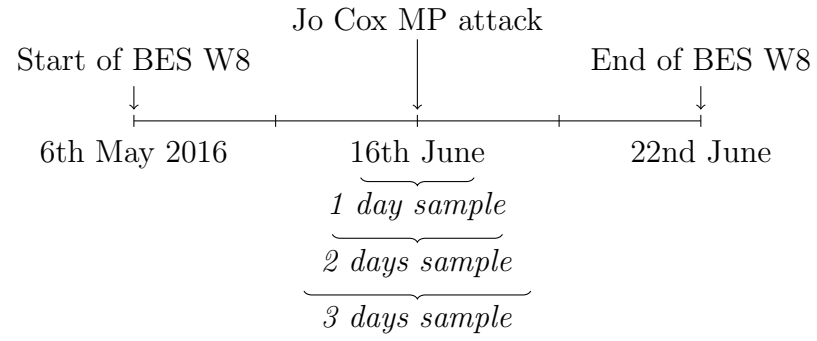
Figure B.3: Newspaper front pages from the day after the attacks

Figure B.4: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's perceptions about the 'most important issue'
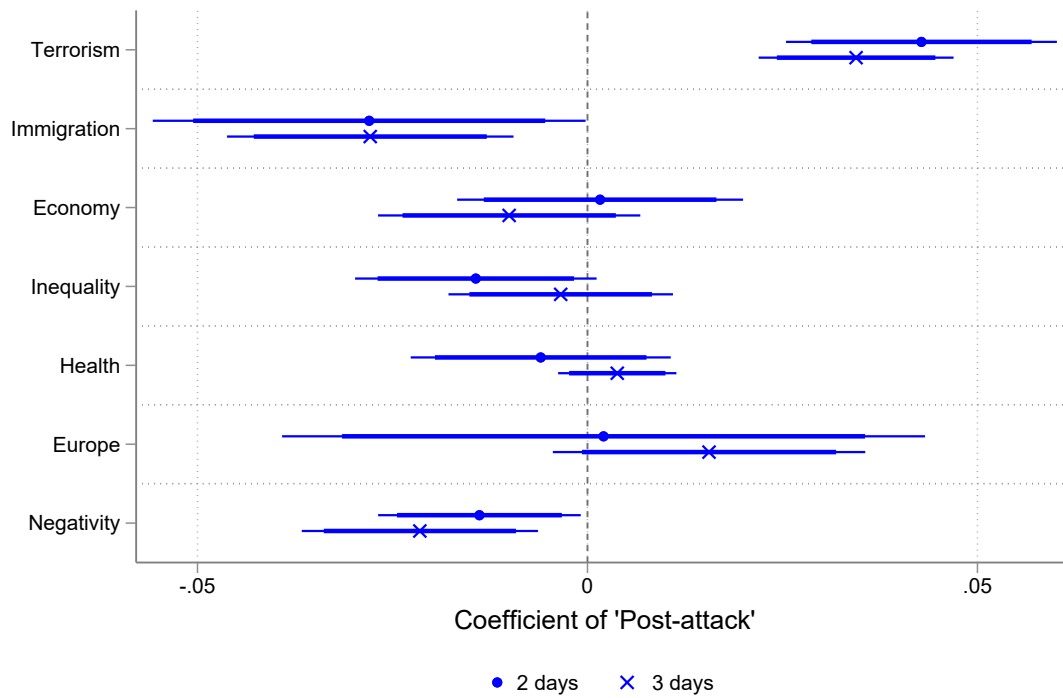
Notes: The dependent variable is a binary indicator coding the 'most important issue' shown on the vertical axis. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects and controls. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

Table B.1: Summary statistics (3-day sample) and definitions for all model variables

	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	Definition
Right Orientation	0.16	0.37	0	1	=1 if the respondent's self-placement on the left-right scale of the political spectrum takes values 8, 9 or 10; 0 otherwise
Post-attack	0.26	0.44	0	1	=1 if the respondent is interviewed after the day of a far-right attack; =0 if nterviewed before the day of a far-right attack
Male	0.50	0.50	0	1	=1 if the respondent is male, =0 if female
Age	53.92	15.93	18	92	Age of the respondent
Age squared	3160.87	1619.04	324	8464	Age of the respondent squared
Education (high)	0.50	0.50	0	1	=1 if the respondent's highest level of education is a degree or higher
Education (medium)	0.40	0.49	0	1	=1 if the respondent's highest level of education is A-levels or GCSEs
Education (low)	0.10	0.30	0	1	=1 if the respondent's highest level of education below GCSE level or none
Employed	0.51	0.50	0	1	=1 if the respondent is in full or part-time employment
Retired	0.34	0.48	0	1	=1 if the respondent is retired
Student	0.03	0.18	0	1	=1 if the respondent is a full-time student
Not working	0.12	0.32	0	1	=1 if the respondent is not employed at all
Number of observations		4489			

Figure B.5: Ideological self-placement on the left–right scale of the political spectrum
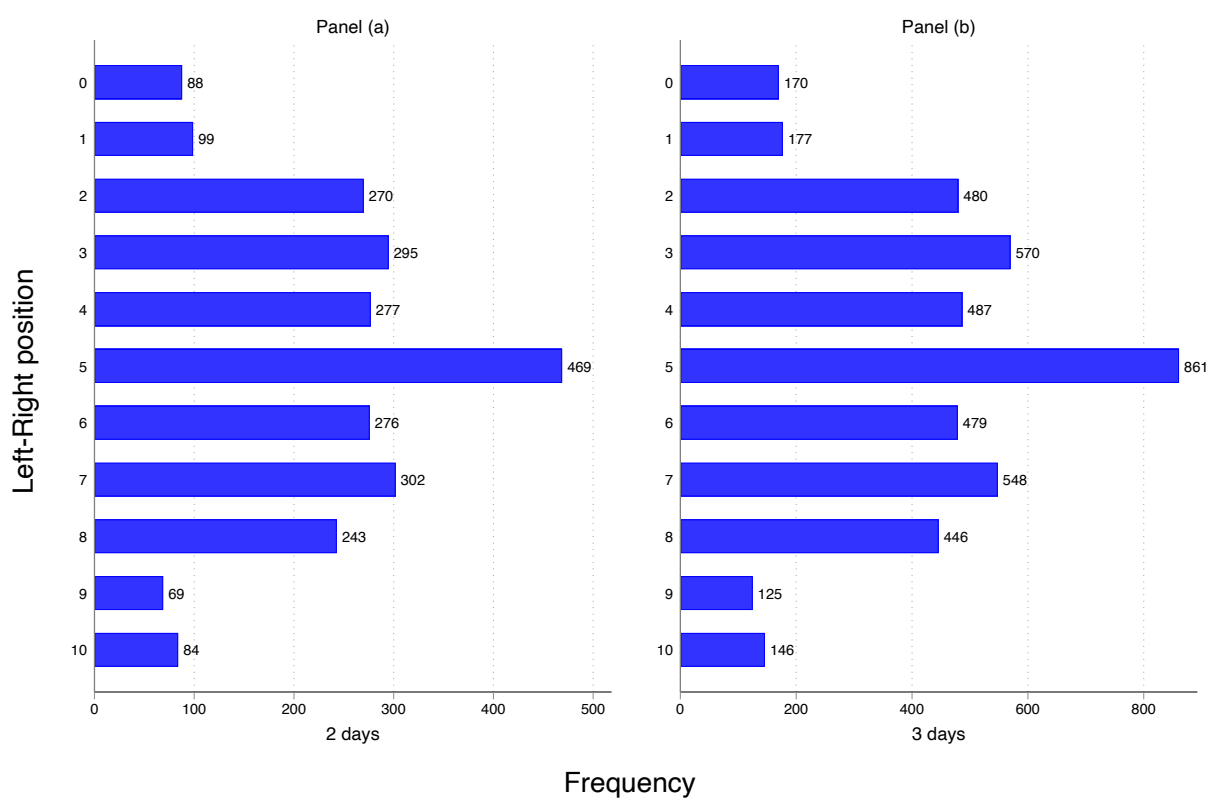
Table B.2: Covariate balance

| | 2 days | | | | 3 days | | | |
	Mean Control	Mean Treatment	Diff.	p-value	Mean Control	Mean Treatment	Diff.	p-value
Male	0.51	0.51	0.01	0.82	0.50	0.50	-0.00	0.95
Age	54.95	49.15	5.80	0.00	54.66	51.81	2.86	0.00
Age squared	3259.72	2702.16	557.56	0.00	3232.16	2959.34	272.82	0.00
Education (high)	0.50	0.46	0.04	0.10	0.51	0.49	0.02	0.33
Education (medium)	0.40	0.45	-0.04	0.07	0.39	0.42	-0.02	0.17
Education (low)	0.10	0.10	0.00	0.81	0.10	0.09	0.01	0.53
Employed	0.48	0.54	-0.06	0.02	0.50	0.53	-0.03	0.06
Retired	0.38	0.24	0.14	0.00	0.36	0.30	0.06	0.00
Student	0.03	0.06	-0.03	0.00	0.03	0.04	-0.01	0.02
Not working	0.11	0.16	-0.05	0.00	0.11	0.13	-0.01	0.22
Observations	1,977	495	2,472		3,316	1,173	4,489	

Notes: This table shows the mean of covariates across treatment and control units, together with conventional t-tests for differences in means across the two groups.

Table B.3: Covariate balance after entropy weighting

	Treatment units			Control units		
	Mean	Variance	Skewness	Mean	Variance	Skewness
2-day sample						
Male	0.51	0.25	-0.03	0.51	0.25	-0.03
Age	49.15	287.07	-0.21	49.14	287.02	-0.21
Age squared	2702.16	2646179.58	0.25	2701.69	2645736.26	0.25
Education (medium)	0.45	0.25	0.22	0.45	0.25	0.21
Education (low)	0.10	0.09	2.72	0.10	0.09	2.72
Employed	0.54	0.25	-0.15	0.54	0.25	-0.15
Retired	0.24	0.18	1.20	0.24	0.18	1.20
Student	0.06	0.05	3.84	0.06	0.05	3.84
3-day sample						
Male	0.50	0.25	-0.02	0.50	0.25	-0.02
Age	51.81	275.75	-0.37	51.80	275.74	-0.37
Age squared	2959.34	2687725.49	0.09	2959.28	2687749.99	0.09
Education (medium)	0.42	0.24	0.34	0.42	0.24	0.34
Education (low)	0.09	0.08	2.82	0.09	0.08	2.82
Employed	0.53	0.25	-0.12	0.53	0.25	-0.12
Retired	0.30	0.21	0.87	0.30	0.21	0.87
Student	0.04	0.04	4.48	0.04	0.04	4.48

Notes: This table shows the mean, variance and skewness of covariates acrosss treatment and control units, after re-weighting the sample through entropy balancing.

Table B.4: Full regression results for panel (a) of Figure 3

|	(1)	(2)	(3)
Post-attack	-0.045	-0.038**	-0.025*
	(0.134)	(0.040)	(0.092)
Male	-0.003	0.024	0.026**
	(0.868)	(0.109)	(0.029)
Age	-0.013***	-0.008**	-0.003
	(0.010)	(0.044)	(0.258)
Age squared	0.000***	0.000**	0.000
	(0.009)	(0.030)	(0.122)
Education (medium)	0.083***	0.067***	0.073***
	(0.007)	(0.003)	(0.001)
Education (low)	0.135***	0.075**	0.067***
	(0.006)	(0.020)	(0.005)
Employed	0.098**	0.048	0.046
	(0.027)	(0.205)	(0.157)
Retired	0.051	0.045	0.041
	(0.259)	(0.388)	(0.367)
Student	0.011	-0.041	-0.023
	(0.857)	(0.398)	(0.583)
Sample	1 day	2 days	3 days
Region × Wave FEs	✓	✓	✓
R-squared	0.063	0.045	0.036
Observations	1,079	2,472	4,489

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. p-values are reported in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.5: Full regression results for panel (b) of Figure 3

Sample:	2 days				3 days			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Post-attack	-0.038**	-0.049***	-0.032**	-0.031**	-0.025*	-0.031**	-0.023**	-0.024**
	(0.040)	(0.008)	(0.035)	(0.050)	(0.092)	(0.047)	(0.042)	(0.036)
Male	0.024		0.001		0.026**		-0.002	
	(0.109)		(0.970)		(0.029)		(0.882)	
Age	-0.008**		-0.005*		-0.003		-0.000	
	(0.044)		(0.078)		(0.258)		(0.988)	
Age squared	0.000**		0.000		0.000		0.000	
	(0.030)		(0.167)		(0.122)		(0.993)	
Education (medium)	0.067***		0.020		0.073***		0.021**	
	(0.003)		(0.150)		(0.001)		(0.038)	
Education (low)	0.075**		0.020		0.067***		0.002	
	(0.020)		(0.436)		(0.005)		(0.883)	
Employed	0.048		0.018		0.046		0.017	
	(0.205)		(0.356)		(0.157)		(0.314)	
Retired	0.045		0.027		0.041		0.022	
	(0.388)		(0.464)		(0.367)		(0.269)	
Student	-0.041		-0.003		-0.023		-0.003	
	(0.398)		(0.938)		(0.583)		(0.905)	
LDV			0.661***	0.668***			0.653***	0.658***
			(0.000)	(0.000)			(0.000)	(0.000)
Region × Wave FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
R-squared	0.045	0.016	0.506	0.504	0.036	0.009	0.487	0.486
Observations	2,472	2,472	1,899	1,899	4,489	4,489	3,383	3,383

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. p-values are reported in parentheses; * $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure B.6: The effect of a far-right terrorism on people's beliefs about
traditional British values
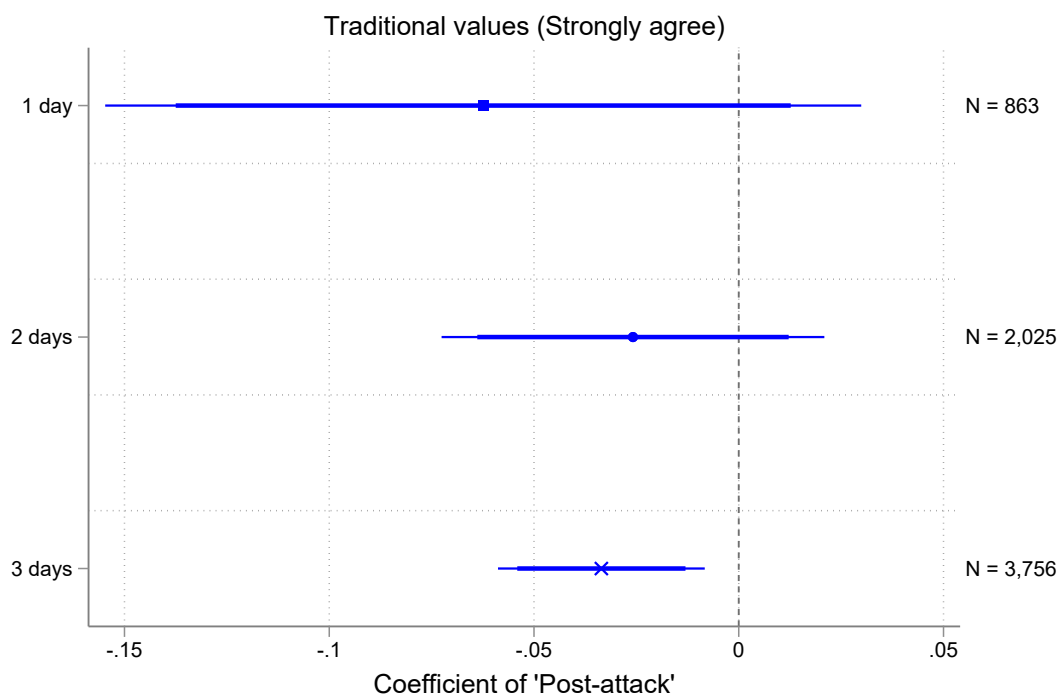
Notes: The dependent variable is a binary indicator taking value 1 if the respondent 'strongly agrees' with
the statement *"Young people today don't have enough respect for traditional British values"* (about 25% of
observations); and 0 otherwise. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects and controls. Standard
errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C. Additional Analyses and Robustness Tests

C.1 Alternative specifications of the outcome variable

Throughout our main analysis, the outcome variable 'Right Orientation' captures ideological self-placement at values 8 or more on the 0-10 left-right scale of the political spectrum. In Figure C.1a, we check the sensitivity of our results to re-coding the outcome variable so that it reflects more extreme right positions; that is, values 9 or 10 on the left-right scale. The estimates obtained point to the same direction: once again, we can see that exposure to far-right terrorism induces a shift away from the right end of the political spectrum. It must be noted that, based on this alternative definition, the outcome variable captures a much smaller number of individuals who classify themselves as 'right' (see Figure B.5); this can potentially explain the insignificant effects when we consider a very restrictive sample and specification (2-day bandwidth and lagged effects).

In Figure C.1b, we explore the treatment effect on 'Left Orientation'; that is, a binary indicator that captures respondents who place themselves at the left end of the political spectrum (values 2 or less on the left-right scale). All specifications return statistical insignificant estimates, suggesting that exposure to far-right terrorism does not affect individuals' self-positioning towards the 'left'; i.e., it does not cause similar shifts across all ideologies within the political spectrum. The absence of an effect 'across-the-board' is also confirmed when we consider the full scale of ideological self-placement and test for the impact of 'Post-attack' on the continuous version of the dependent variable: the estimates fail to reach high levels of statistical significance across all specifications, both when using OLS estimation (Figure C.1c, panel (a)) and when using ordered probit estimation (Figure C.1c, panel (b)).

At the same time, the failure to find significant effects for 'Left Orientation' in Figure C.1b indicates that our key findings cannot be attributed to 'deradicalization': people moving away from both extremes and taking more moderate positions (and thus converging towards more centrist attitudes) after the attacks.

Figure C.1a: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's right orientation: alternative definition
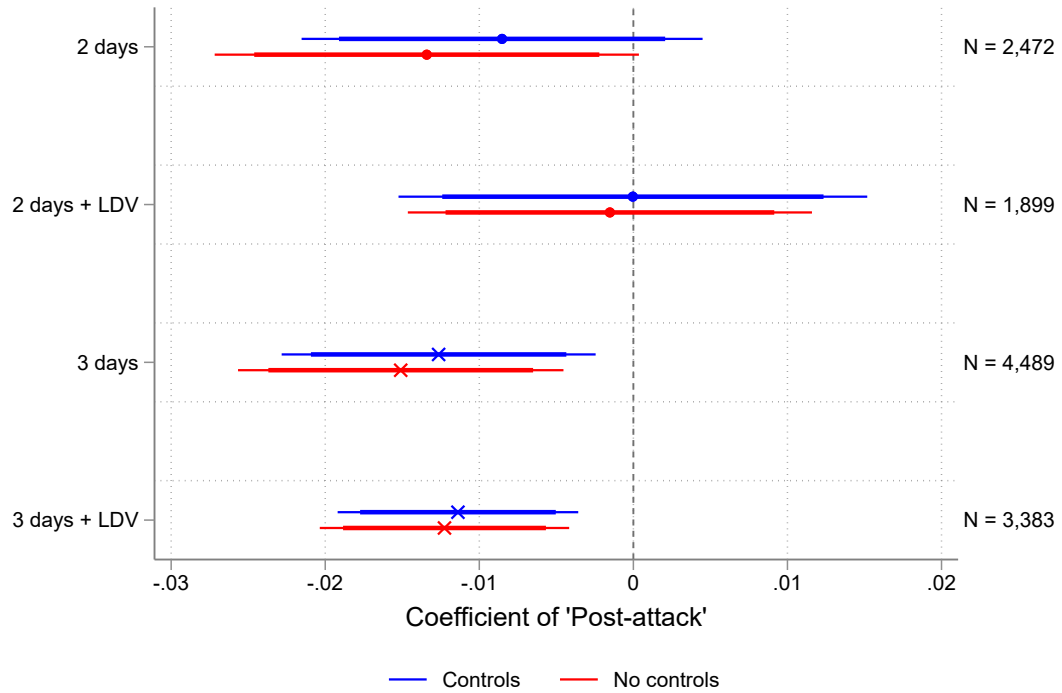
Notes: The dependent variable takes value 1 for individuals who place themselves at values 9 or 10 on the 0-10 left-right scale; 0 otherwise. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

Figure C.1b: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's left orientation
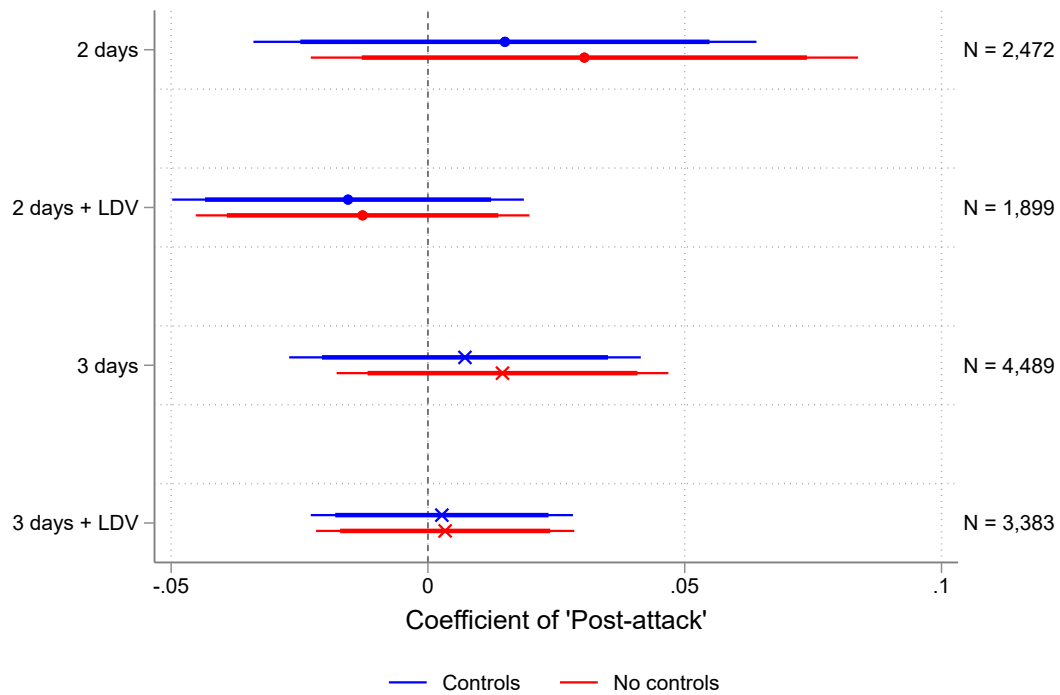
Notes: The dependent variable takes value 1 for individuals who place themselves at values 0, 1 or 2 on the 0-10 left-right scale; 0 otherwise. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

Figure C.1c: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's left-to-right orientation: continuous variable
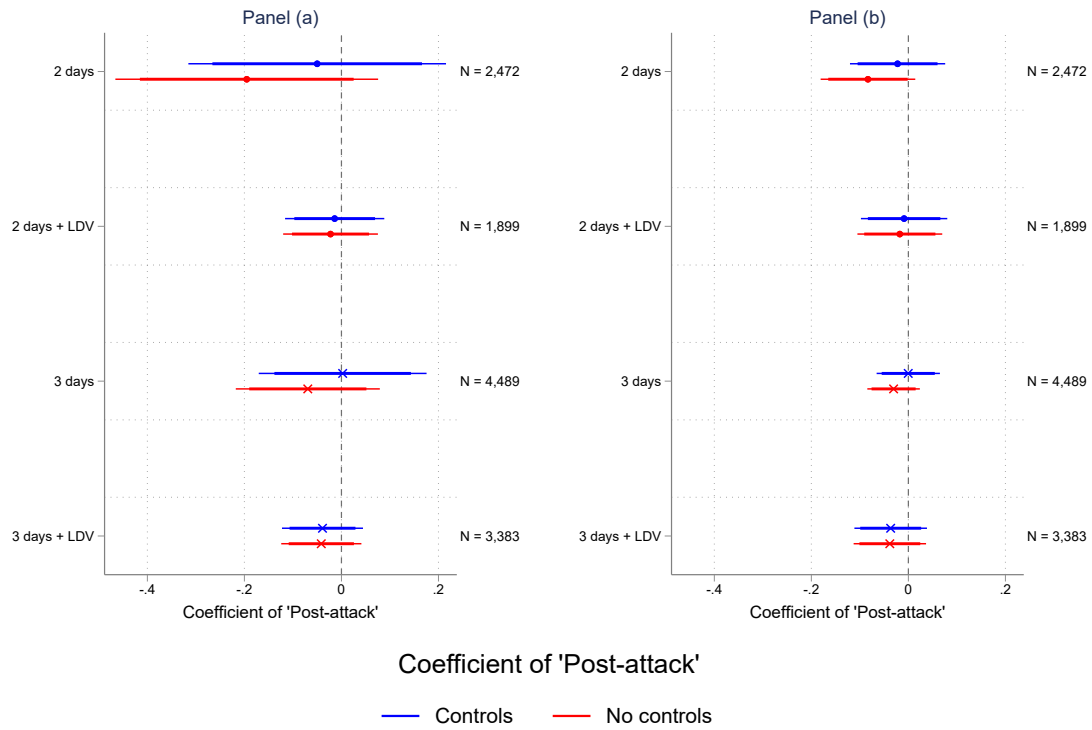
Notes: The dependent variable takes values between 0 and 10 on the left-right scale (see Figure B.5). Panel (a) shows the results of OLS estimation and panel (b) shows the results of ordered probit estimation. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C.2 Comparison with Jihadi-inspired extremism

Extant studies show that Islamic terrorism can be an important driver of negative attitudes towards immigration – and Muslim immigrants in particular – as political leaders often link the issue of terrorism to unfettered immigration, and anti-immigration rhetoric continues to resonate well with voters (Nussio et al., 2019; Van de Vyver et al., 2016; Creighton and Jamal, 2015). At the same time, Islamic terrorism can cause a shift towards more right-wing ideological positions, since threats and fear of death encourage people to support cognitively rigid and because right-wing governments are purportedly less likely to accommodate violent groups' demands (see, e.g., Berrebi and Klor, 2008; Kibris, 2011; Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014; Economou and Kollias, 2015; Aytaç and Çarkoğlu, 2019).

Our study adds to this debate by showing that people's reactions to terrorism varies with the identity of the perpetrator and their predominant ideology or motivations. As such, terrorism inspired by far-right extremism will have different effects on people's ideological positions compared to terrorism inspired by Jihadi extremism. To provide further evidence that the effects are context-conditional, we run the same regression set-up as before – based on an 'Unexpected Event during Survey Design' (UESD) – but we now exploit information from Islamic terrorism. To this end, we consider two Jihadi-inspired attacks whose timing coincides with recent BES waves and which had widespread national media coverage and numerous casualties: the Manchester Arena bombing (22 May 2017, wave 12) and the London Bridge stabbing (29 November 2019; wave 18). Figure C.2 displays the treatment effect of these two attacks on 'Right Orientation'. Even though the effect is not precisely estimated, it appears to be positive across all specifications (after Islamic terrorism, individuals are more likely to classify themselves as 'right'), which is broadly in line with previous research and confirms that importance of the context.

Figure C.2: The effect of Jihadi-inspired terrorism on right orientation
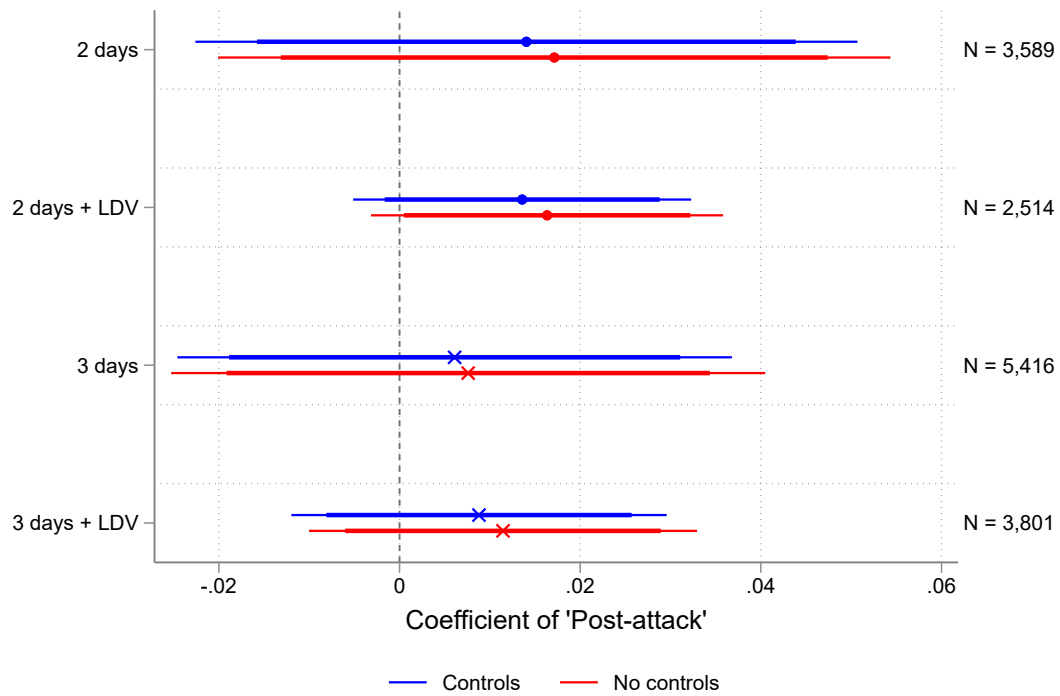
Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C.3 The conditional effect of distance

Physical proximity to a terrorist attack can amplify the perception of threat and the personal sense of vulnerability, and affect the extent to which the event is covered by the local media (Böhmelt et al., 2019; Bove et al., 2021; Nussio et al., 2021). At the same time, distance from terrorism can reduce mortality salience as individuals feel less connected to the environment where the attack occurred. In line with these arguments, we expect that distance will act as a moderating factor whereby individuals that reside further away from an attack are less likely to change their ideological positions. Yet, the existence of a "proximity effect" has become a debated issue and Agerberg and Sohlberg (2021) find that individuals close to the attack do not display larger attitude changes than similar less proximate individuals.

To test whether physical proximity is an important factor moderating ideological shifts, we interact our treatment variable ('Post-attack') with the distance between the centroid point of an individual's local authority district and the location of the far-right attack in the corresponding wave. We normalise the distance measure by splitting it into decile groups, where individuals in group 1 are the most proximate to the attack and those in group 10 are the furthest away. Using the estimates from the model with the interaction term, we calculate the margins of the 'Post-attack' variable and plot them over the respective values of the distance measure. Panels (a) and (b) in Figure C.3 report the margins for the 2-day sample, before and after the inclusion of the LDV, respectively; whereas panels (c) and (d) report the corresponding margins for the 3-day sample. The terrorism-induced effect on right orientation is indeed larger for individuals within the immediate proximity of the attack and it begins to move towards 0 as we consider individuals who are further away from the attack. This verifies the moderating role of physical distance in how individuals respond to (far-right) terrorism.

It should be acknowledged, however, that the estimated effect is negative across all values of distance and only fails to reach statistical significance when we consider the highest decile groups – which points to a rather weak dependence on physical proximity. As documented in this study, all individuals across the UK were exposed to the two attacks; yet, due to the mechanisms outlined above, the post-attack shift in ideological self-placement (away from the right end of the political spectrum) is relatively less pronounced for those living far away from the incidents.

Figure C.3: The conditional effect of distance
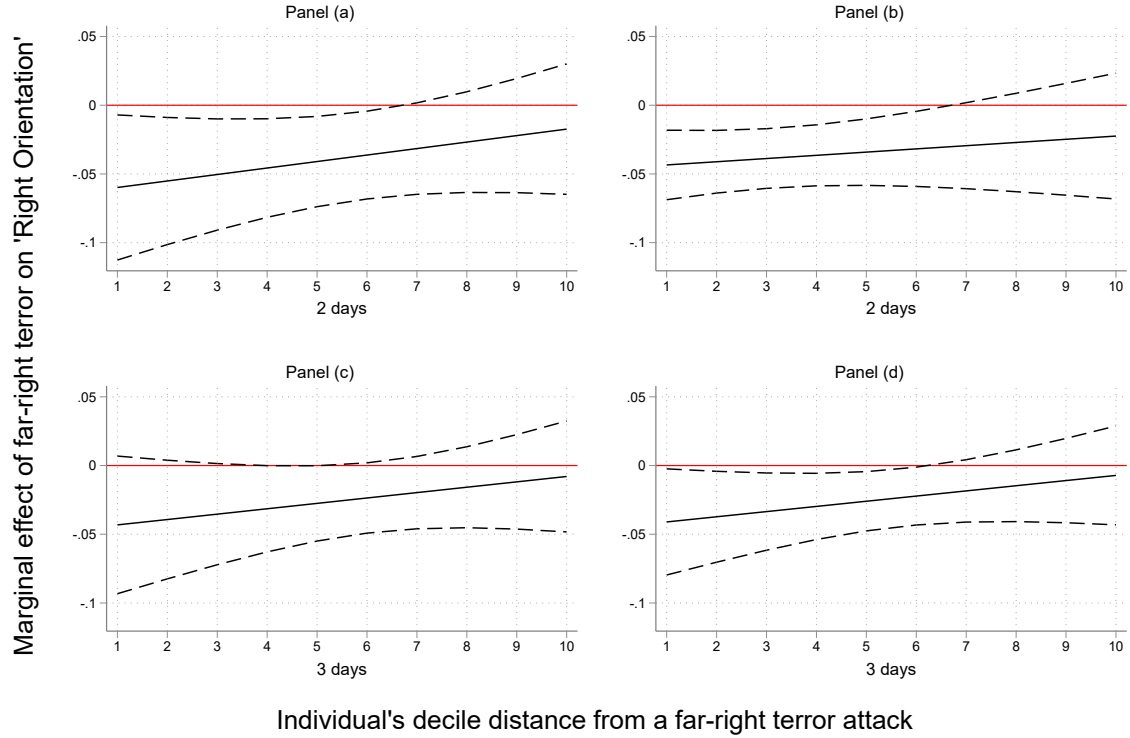
Individual's decile distance from a far-right terror attack

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects and controls. Panels (a) and (c) show the margins before the inclusion of the LDV, whereas panels (b) and (d) show the margins after the inclusion of the LDV. Decile distance is the kilometer distance binned into deciles between the centroid point of an individual's local authority district and the location of the far-right attack in the corresponding wave. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Dashed lines signify 90% confidence intervals.

C.4 Results for individual attacks

Our baseline model (Eq. (1)) pools the treatment effects of the two far-right terrorist attacks together, and controls for region-by-wave fixed effects. The latter allows us to restrict the pre- and post-attack comparisons to individuals living in the same region and interviewed in the same wave. It also removes any biases arising from systematic differences in how the two waves are fielded (Balcells and Torrats-Espinosa, 2018).

In Figure C.4, we present the results when we estimate our model separately for each attack/wave. For the 2-day sample, we find consistent effects across the two attacks: both the murder of MP Jo Cox (panel (a)) and the Finsbury Park attack (panel (b)) cause a negative shift in right orientation, and this shift is of similar magnitude – even though it less precisely estimated for the former attack due to the much smaller sample size (wider confidence intervals). However, when we look at the 3-day sample, the corresponding effect seems to persist only for the Finsbury Park attack. This is not so surprising given the timing and the context of the MP Jo Cox murder. This attack occurred just one week before the 2016 EU referendum, and, as a result, its media cycle was relatively short: after the initial shock, the media quickly returned to covering other referendum-related topics, which may have also affected the outcome variable. As such, a wider bandwidth for this particular attack increases the probability that the estimates capture, to some extent, other events correlated with the time of the interview.[17] Nevertheless, the absence of positive effects across the two attacks, samples and specifications is quite reassuring as regards to the inferences drawn in this research note: far-right extremism does not elicit changes in ideological positions in the same direction as Jihadi-inspired extremism (as also documented in Section C.2).

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[17]Running the analysis of Figure B.4 separately for each attack/wave reveals that, in both cases, individuals were significantly more likely to report terrorism as the top national problem after the corresponding attack. However, the estimated positive effect on 'terrorism as the most important issue' is smaller for the MP Jo Cox murder, possibly due to the timing of the attack so close to the referendum date. At the same time, we find that attention towards the EU referendum was substantially larger three days after the attack compared to one or two days after the attack. These additional results – that can be reproduced using our replication files – confirm that the political orientation effects in this case were more susceptible to other events. Finally, it is worth noting that the UK national newspapers were skewed in favour of the Leave vote in the referendum (Levy et al., 2016) and Jo Cox was a pro-Remain MP.

Figure C.4: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's right orientation: individual attacks
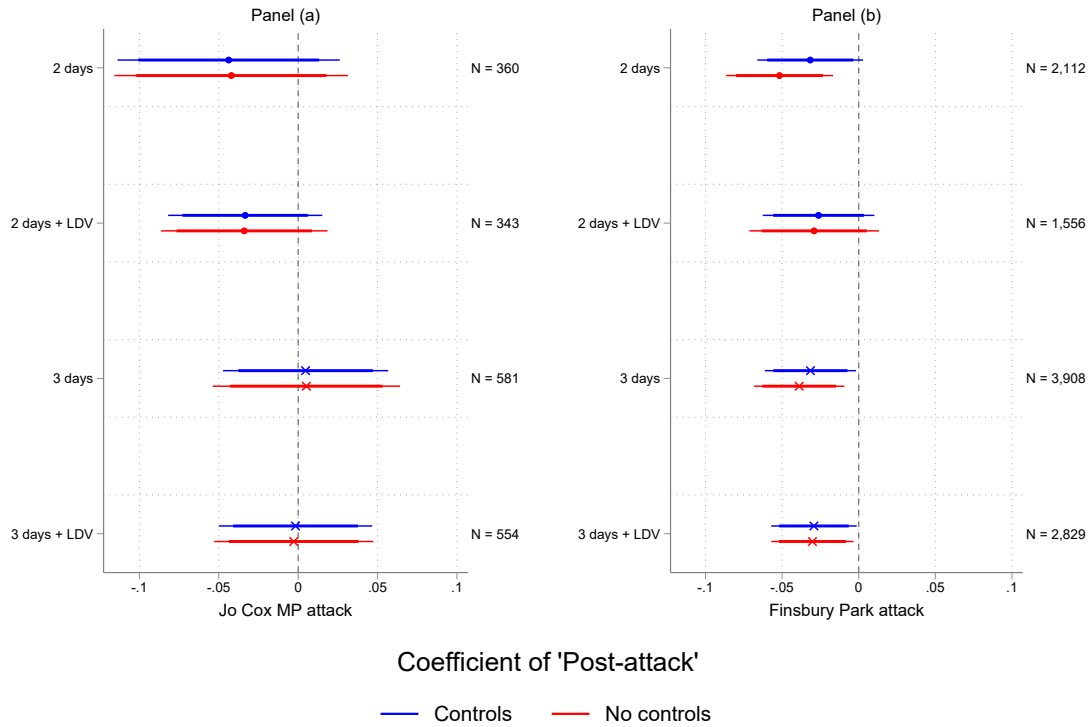
Coefficient of 'Post-attack'

Controls — No controls —

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C.5 Placebo: alternative outcomes

A potential threat to our identification strategy is the presence of collateral events; that is, the succession of reactions triggered by the unexpected event of interest, which may jointly affect the outcome variable (Muñoz et al., 2020). If, for instance, incumbents are held accountable for terrorist attacks, then the observed (negative) effect on right orientation can be explained by a lower post-attack support for the incumbent (right-wing) government,[18] rather than a shift in ideological positions. Similarly, if terrorism leads to greater interest in politics, then our results may be driven by a change in respondents' political involvement levels rather than their distancing from the ideology of the perpetrator. To rule out these possibilities, we perform placebo tests where we examine the effect on two alternative outcome variables: a measure of favourability towards the Prime Minister (PM) on a 0-10 scale (where 10 is the most favourable view) and a binary indicator for being a member of a political party. The results from these tests are shown in Figure C.5. In both cases, the 'Post-attack' estimates are very close to 0 and fail to reach statistical significance, suggesting that our results cannot be attributed to other terrorism-induced reactions.

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[18]Both attacks occurred during a right-wing administration: David Cameron was the PM at the time of the MP Jo Cox murder, and Theressa May was the PM at the time of the Finsbury Park attack.

Figure C.5: The effect of far-right terrorism on placebo outcomes
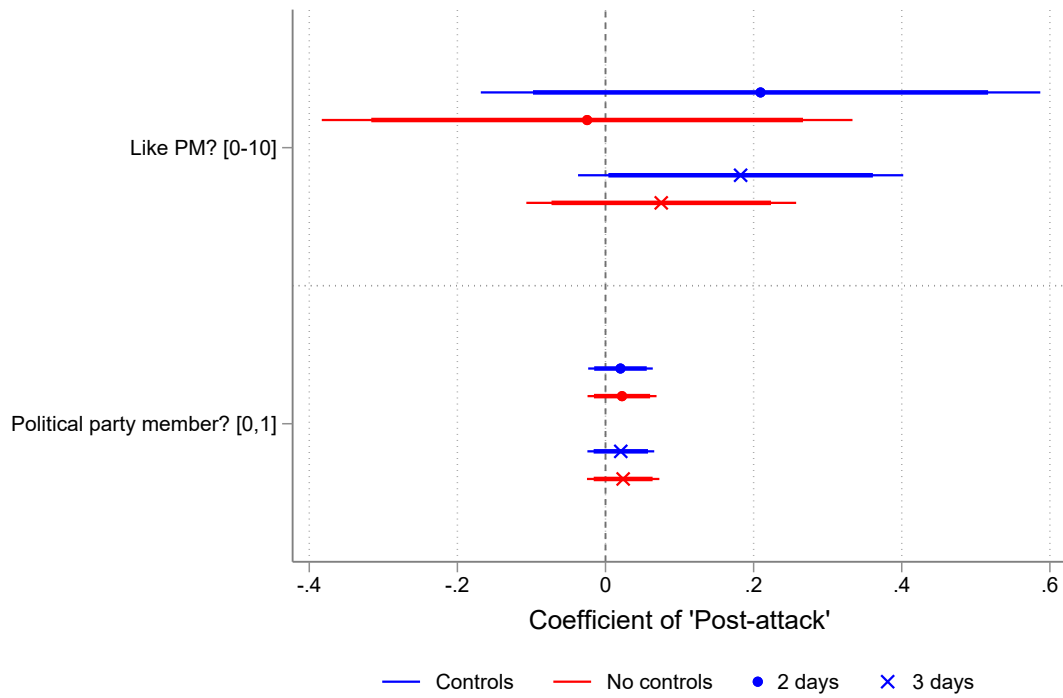
Notes: The dependent variable is listed on the vertical axis. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C.6 Placebo: alternative attack dates

To further address the possibility that pre-existing time trends could bias our findings, we test for the presence of such trends before the two attacks took place. To do so, we consider placebo treatments at an arbitrary time point at the left of the cutoff points, as recommended by Muñoz et al. (2020). More precisely, we set the placebo attack dates to be 1 week prior to the actual dates and run the same regression set-up as in Figure 3 (panel (b)). As expected, these placebo attack dates have no significant effect on people's right orientation and there is no evidence of pre-existing trends in the same direction (see Figure C.6).

Figure C.6: The effect of far-right attacks on people's right orientation: placebo attack dates
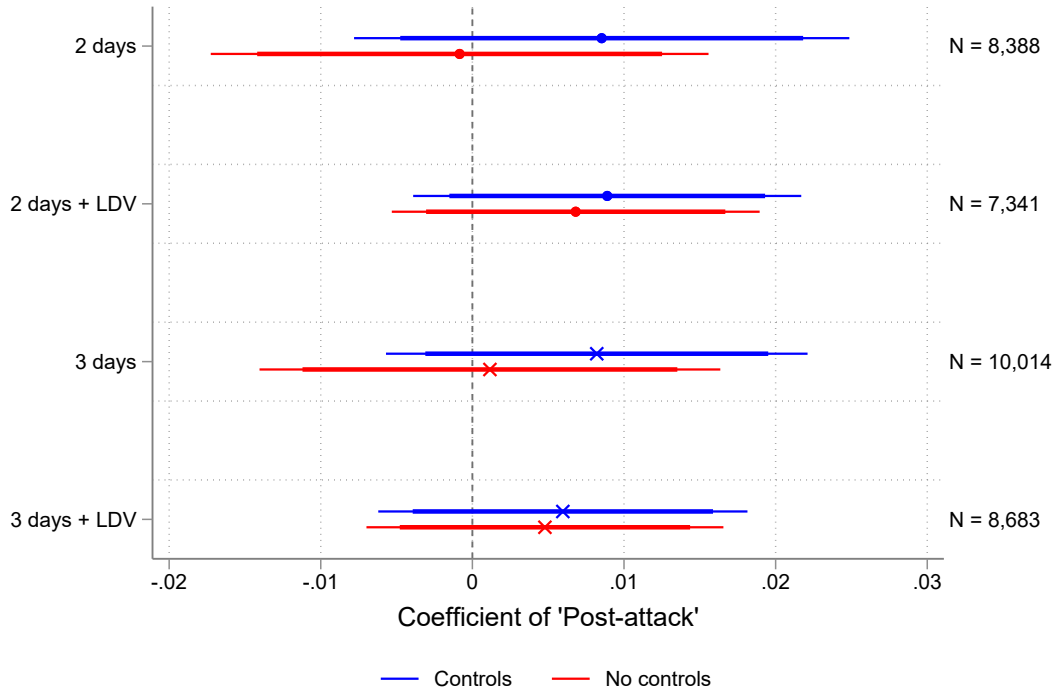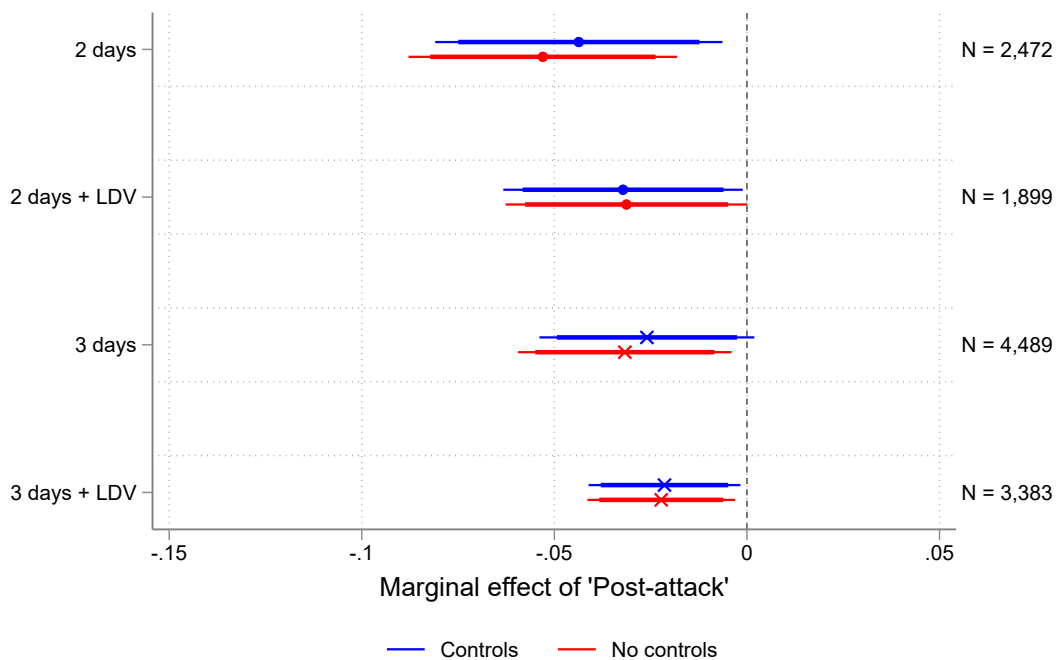

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. The placebo attack dates are set to be 1 week prior to the actual attack dates. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

C.7 Alternative estimation method: probit model

Throughout our main analysis, we estimate treatment effects on a dichotomous classification of political ideologies using a linear probability model. In this section, we check the sensitivity of our baseline results (Figure 3, panel (b)) to using a probit model.[19] As shown in C.7, the choice of the estimation model does not affect our inferences.

Figure C.7: The effect of far-right terrorism on people's right orientation: probit estimation

Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. All specifications include region-by-wave fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the region level. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

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[19]Timoneda (2021) shows that the ML (maximum-likelihood) and LPMFE (LPM with fixed effects) models produce identical predicted probabilities when the proportion of events in the sample is around 50 percent. Below 25 percent of events or rare events, however, the LPMFE model produces predicted probabilities much closer to the observed probability for a majority of the distribution, compared to the ML model.

C.8 Dealing with imbalances: coarsened-exact matching

In our main analysis, we correct for differences in observed characteristics across treatment and control groups using entropy balancing. An alternative approach to deal with such imbalances is to pre-process the data through matching techniques; that is, to match treated units with a carefully selected group of matched control units. In this section, we check the robustness of our results to using matching techniques. To do so, we rely on coarsened-exact matching (CEM).[20] This is a recently developed matching procedure that requires fewer assumptions, is more easily automated, and possesses more attractive statistical properties than other matching procedures, such as propensity score matching (Blackwell et al., 2009). It also has the advantage that it guarantees a reduction in imbalance after matching. This, however, comes with a cost. Units that cannot be matched are dropped, and thus it typically produces fewer matches than other methods, which can be problematic in finite samples – especially when we match on a large number of variables. To account for this limitation, we experiment with three sets of matching covariates: first, we use the full set of control variables in vector $\mathbf{Z}_{irw}$; second, we use only the significant control variables (i.e., we exclude the employment status variables which fail to reach statistical significance in columns (1) and (5) of Table B.5); and third, we use only the lagged measured of 'Right Orientation', which seems to absorb the impact of the other control variables when added to the model (see columns (3) and (7) of Table B.5). In all three cases, we also restrict the matched control units to come from the same region and the same survey wave as the treated units.[21]

Figure C.8 reports the treatment effect on 'Right Orientation' after performing matching based on these three specifications: full set of controls (panel (a)); significant controls (panel (b)); and LDV (panel (c)). The evidence obtained is in line with our previous findings. The treatment effect is negative and statistically significant in all specifications but one (full set of covariates; 2-day sample), where it appears to be borderline insignificant due to the small number of matched observations. Overall, the results indicate that individuals who are exposed to a far-right attack are less likely to classify themselves as 'right' compared to individuals who are not exposed to a far-right attack but are similar across a number of observable characteristics.

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[20]The idea of CEM is to temporarily coarsen each variable into substantively meaningful groups, exact match on these coarsened data and then only retain the original (uncoarsened) values of the matched data.

[21]For example, in the second specification, we identify control units that are of the same gender and age, have the same level of education, live in the same region, and are interviewed in the same wave, as the treated units. The matched 3-day sample (in the second specification) has a total of 3,069 individuals, of which 901 are treated and 2,168 are controls, and is split into 491 strata combinations.

Figure C.8: The effect of far-right terrorism on right orientation:
coarsened-exact matching

Coefficient of 'Post-attack'
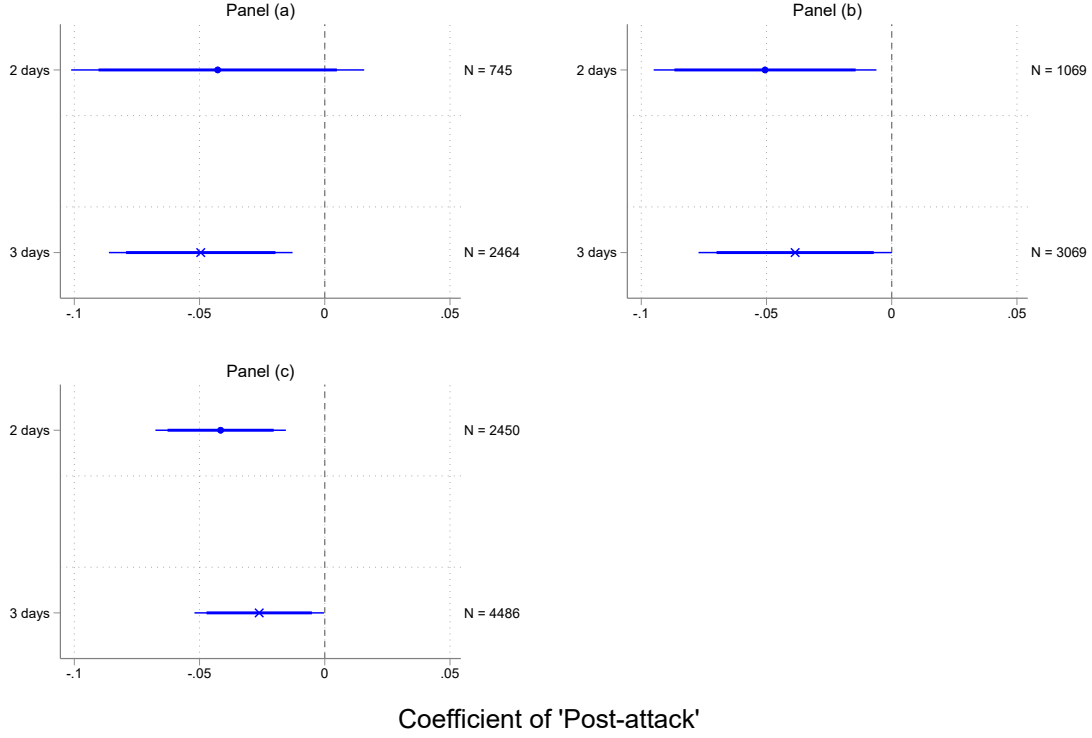
Notes: The dependent variable is 'Right Orientation'. The matching covariates are: all variables in vector $\mathbf{Z}_{irw}$ (panel (a)); the statistically significant variables in vector $\mathbf{Z}_{irw}$ (panel (b)); the lagged measure of 'Right Orientation' (panel (c)). In all three panels, the matched control units are also restricted to come from the same region and the same survey wave as the treated units. Binary variables are matched exactly on. Continuous variables (age and age squared) are coarsened using the Scott automatic coarsening algorithm. Fat (thin) lines signify the 90% (95%) confidence interval.

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