

The Polarizing Effect of Partisan Echo Chambers

Sara B. Hobolt, Katharina Lawall & James Tilley

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

Table of Contents

Appendix 1: Recruitment	2
Appendix 2: Experimental design	4
Appendix 3: Elite affective polarization treatment	7
Appendix 4: Balance tables	8
Appendix 5: Sample and population comparison	10
Appendix 6: Full regression tables	12
Appendix 7: Exploring differences between Conservative and Labour partisans	22
Appendix 8: Ethics	25

Appendix 1: Recruitment

Together with the *Centre for Experimental Social Sciences (CESS)* at the University of Oxford we worked to recruit British adults living in England who were Labour or Conservative partisans via targeted Facebook advertisements. When potential respondents clicked on an advertisement, they were re-directed to sign up to the subject pool of the research lab and then invited to participate in our study.

We chose Facebook as our primary recruitment platform because it offers access to a more representative group of participants than traditional research lab subject pools dominated by university students. Facebook has a wide reach in the UK. According to our representative survey in July 2021, 70 per cent of people used Facebook weekly or more often. These figures match official UK statistics from the Office of Communications (Ofcom) who estimate that 65 per cent of adults in Britain used Facebook in 2021.¹ Equally, Facebook users are broadly similar to the age profile of the country at large. According to our survey, the 30 per cent of people who use Facebook less frequently than once a week have an average age of 51 (SD=17.6) whereas the 70 per cent of people who use Facebook weekly or more have an average age of 48 (SD=16.8).

The design and implementation of the Facebook advertisements closely followed recommended best practices for social media recruitment campaigns.² Our advertisements consisted of an image, some text and a sign-up link and were targeted at Facebook users who lived in England and were over the age of 18. We piloted various texts and images to determine the most cost-effective combination. We show the two most widely used adverts below. One advertisement provided a short invitation to join the study: “Get compensated for discussing politics with others. We invite you to participate in one of our small online group discussions about politics. Join the University of Oxford experimental social science participant pool today!”. The accompanying image (image A) shows a set of smiling people and displays the university logo. The other advertisement used a more explicit reference to politics, with an image of the House of Commons and the Prime Minister at the time, to try and recruit partisans more effectively (image B). After clicking on the advertisement, Facebook users were directed to a short sign-up form to join the *CESS* subject pool.

We used several exclusion criteria to select who was eligible to participate in the study and thus be invited to fill in the Wave 1 pre-treatment survey. These criteria were related to the key research question of how discussion environments impact affective polarization among partisans. In line with this, we only recruited individuals to the pre-treatment wave 1 survey who were over the age of 18, British citizens, lived in England and gave a partisan preference of Conservative or Labour. We limited recruitment in this way using the very short questionnaire which *CESS* gave to respondents when they initially signed up following the Facebook advertisement. People who met the criteria were then sent the pre-treatment wave 1 survey. These exclusion criteria are necessary because we are interested in the views of partisans of the two main parties who are able to vote in a UK General Election. Restricting participants to those who live in England is necessary given the very different party systems in Wales and Scotland (most obviously the presence of the nationalist parties).

¹ Ofcom. 2021. Adults’ Online Behaviours and Attitudes 2021.

² Neundorf, Anja and Aykut Ozturk. 2023. How to improve representativeness and cost-effectiveness in samples recruited through Meta: A comparison of advertisement tools. *PLoS ONE* 18(2): e0281243.



Image A



Image B

Facebook example adverts

After completing the wave 1 pre-treatment survey, we then invited participants (checking again using the wave 1 pre-treatment survey that all were over the age of 18, living in England, British citizens and a Conservative or Labour partisan) to participate in a discussion session. In the invitation email, all participants (regardless of future treatment status) received the same basic practical information about the discussion session. They were informed that the session would in total last around 40 minutes, that they would discuss a political issue in small groups, and that they would be compensated for their time. At no point were participants informed about any of the treatments and the participant's decision to sign up and attend a discussion session was independent of treatment assignment.

Appendix 2: Experimental design

We held small group discussions on a salient policy issue (The New Plan for Immigration: the Conservative government's new policy on immigration and refugees) from 20th September 2021 to 10th December 2021. We ran 33 sessions, and within those, 86 small group discussions. 724 participants attended a session and, out of these, 66 participants attended an online session but were not assigned to a small group discussion due to participant numbers. Potential participants filled in a wave 1 pre-treatment survey and were then invited to sign up for an online session. During the online sessions, held on Zoom, participants first watched a short introduction video about a policy issue and then discussed the policy issue in small groups of 6-8 for around 30 minutes. After this, participants filled in the post-treatment survey in which we measured our outcomes of interest.

Our experiment is a 2x2 factorial design, with two factors: the first factor being the group composition (mixed group/ homogeneous group), and the second factor being elite affective polarization (high elite affective polarization/ low elite affective polarization). We designed the experiment so that the factors would be fully crossed, meaning half of the participants in our study would be part of a mixed group discussion and half of the participants would be part of a homogeneous group discussion. Similarly, half of the participants would be exposed to the low elite polarization treatment and half to the high elite affective polarization treatment.

With 724 participants (and 658 participants taking part in a discussion), our experiment is well-powered. Prior to fielding the experiment, we used the DeclareDesign Wizard, an interactive power calculator, to determine our target sample size. We expected that the group composition treatment effect would be around 0.25 of SD in the outcome, and that the video treatment effect would be slightly weaker at around 0.2 of a SD in the outcome. Based on these expectations, to detect treatment effects with 80 per cent power and at the significance level of $\alpha=0.05$, we require a minimum sample size to detect the group composition effect of around 500 participants and for the video treatment effect of around 700 participants.

The group composition treatment varied by small group discussion. Participants either discussed in a homogeneous group, meaning that they were placed only with their co-partisans (e.g. Labour partisans discussed with only Labour partisans), or in a heterogeneous group, meaning that they were placed in a balanced group with both co-partisans and out-partisans (Labour and Conservative partisans). The elite affective polarization treatment varied by session and was manipulated in the information video that participants watched at the start of the online session. The video either contained video clips signaling high elite affective polarization or low elite affective polarization (see Appendix 3 for more details).

Recruitment and incentives

Appendix 1 describes the recruitment process. Potential participants from the *CESS* subject pool who met the criteria were invited to fill in the 10-minute pre-treatment wave 1 survey which contained standard questions on demographic background, political attitudes and measures of negative and positive partisanship. A total of 1,275 individuals filled in the pre-treatment wave 1 survey. Those respondents who identified as Labour or Conservative partisans, were over the age of 18, were British citizens and lived in England (N=1,166), were invited via email to sign-up to an online discussion event. The majority of eligible participants took part in an online discussion session (62 per cent). A total of 724 participants attended an online discussion session, and of those, 718 filled in the post-treatment wave 2 survey. This means that almost all participants who were present during an online session also filled in the

post-treatment survey (a 99 per cent completion rate). To incentivize survey completion, people who completed the pre-treatment wave 1 survey were paid £3. Participants who attended the online discussion event in full and filled in the post-treatment wave 2 survey were paid £20. Monetary incentives are a common feature of online experiments and the incentive level was set in consultation with *CESS*. Participants were only allowed to take part in one discussion session. Participants who did not turn up to a discussion session were re-invited to a future session. Participants who attended in part, but dropped out of a session, were not re-invited to join a future session.

Online sessions

The discussion sessions took place on weekdays at lunchtime (12-1 and 1-2pm) and during the early evening (5pm-6pm, 6pm-7pm). Each online session lasted around 45 minutes in total, and was divided into three parts:

- 1) Welcome and arrival period in main Zoom ‘room’ (5 minutes)
- 2) Introduction video about the policy issue in main Zoom ‘room’ (5 minutes)
- 3) Small group discussion in ‘breakout room’ (around 30-35 minutes).

Parts 1 and 2 of the session were in the main Zoom ‘room’ with all participants and facilitators present, while part 3 was conducted in breakout rooms in which participants discussed in small groups of 6-8. We ran 33 online sessions, and within those, 86 small group discussions. This meant that two to four small discussion groups were normally taking place at the same time within one online session.

During the breakout rooms, participants talked about immigration and asylum policy in a group of 6-8 other people. A trained facilitator was present during the discussions. Facilitators started the small group discussion by calling on each participant to briefly give their opinion on the new government policy, and then opened up the discussion. Our facilitators were trained to be as unobtrusive as possible and did not seek to encourage discussions to be balanced in any way – beyond allowing for the introductory statements – but rather to allow for the discussion to flow as similarly as possible to the kind of political discussion that occurs in real life situations.

At the end of the small group discussion, facilitators asked participants to fill in the wave 2 post-treatment survey by posting the link to the survey in the chat. Facilitators stayed in the breakout room for another few minutes in case participants had any issues accessing the survey. Facilitators then thanked the participants for their attendance and ended the session. The objective of the experiment was not shared with facilitators.

Group composition treatment and assignment to treatment

The group composition treatment manipulated the discussion environment that participants were in during the break-out rooms. Participants either discussed in a homogeneous group, meaning that they discussed only with their co-partisans (e.g. Labour partisans discussing with Labour partisans) or discussed in a heterogeneous group, meaning that they discussed in a balanced group with both co-partisans and out-partisans (Labour and Conservative partisans). Heterogeneous groups were designed to have the same exact number of Labour and Conservative partisans – four Labour partisans and four Conservative partisans. This was the case in the vast majority of the discussion groups: 34 out of the 42 mixed discussion groups has 8 participants in total, meaning four from each partisan group. In four of the mixed discussion groups there were 7 participants: 3 from one partisan group and 4 from another. There were also four mixed discussion groups with six participants meaning there were 3

Conservative and 3 Labour partisans in a group. Across the experiment, half of the small discussion groups were homogeneous and half were heterogeneous. The target number of homogeneous and heterogeneous groups per online session was determined in advance each week by the researchers. Participants did not receive any information on group composition during the sign-up process or the actual session.

For around half of the participants (48 per cent), assignment to the group composition treatment took place at the session level. This meant that all participants within the same online session received the same group composition treatment (e.g. all participants would be assigned to discuss in homogeneous groups; or all participants in that online session would be assigned to discuss in mixed groups). Which group composition treatment was given during each online session was determined in advance of the session by the session supervisor with an assignment probability of 0.5 to the homogeneous group treatment and an assignment probability of 0.5 to the mixed discussion group treatment. For the other half of the participants in our sample (52 per cent), the group composition treatment was assigned at the discussion group level. This means that, within each online session, some participants in that online session were assigned to discuss in mixed groups, while other participants in the same online session were assigned to discuss in homogeneous groups.

In both cases, allocation to a specific breakout room discussion group was done according to the alphabetical ordering of first names. During the arrival/welcome period, session supervisors ticked participants' names off attendance lists, one for Conservative and one for Labour partisans. For example, for a session with 32 participants (16 Conservative and 16 Labour), the session supervisor would create two mixed and two homogeneous discussion groups. The first four participants, from A-Z, on the list of Labour partisans and the first four participants on the list of Conservative partisans, from A-Z, would be allocated to breakout room 1 and form a mixed discussion group. The next seven participants on the list of Labour partisans would be allocated to breakout room 2 and form a homogeneous discussion group. Similarly, the next seven participants on the list of Conservative partisans would be allocated to breakout room 3 and form a homogeneous discussion group. The next four participants on the Labour list and the Conservative list would be allocated to room 4 to form a mixed group. The remaining one participant on the Labour list would be allocated to breakout room 2 and join the homogeneous discussion group, and the remaining participant on the Conservative list would be allocated to room 3 to join the homogeneous discussion group. We switched the assignment rules mid-way through the study so that the last participants on each partisan list would be assigned to a homogeneous group, then the next participants to a mixed group etc. When assignment is conducted at the discussion group level, the only determinant of treatment assignment is the relative alphabetical ordering of a participant's first name in a given session's attendance list. This should be independent of the participant's potential outcomes and therefore constitutes a valid random assignment mechanism.

Assignment to the non-discussion group was also done by the session supervisor and participants were not able to select into the non-discussion group. Assignment to the non-discussion group occurred in sessions where an uneven number of participants turned up. For example, if 33 participants showed up to the session, the one surplus participant at the bottom (or top) of the alphabetical attendance list was allocated to the non-discussion group.

Appendix 3: Elite affective polarization treatment

In addition to the group composition treatment, we also slightly varied the introduction video participants watched before their small group discussion. Half of the participants were shown a video containing low elite affective polarization, while half were shown a video containing high levels of elite affective polarization. The video treatment constituted a very conservative manipulation. Out of the six-and-a-half-minute video that participants in the high affect condition watched, only around 90 seconds contained the high affect treatment. The rest of the video was kept exactly the same as the low affect video. We consistently find no evidence that the video treatment had any effect on policy or affective polarization (see Appendix 6). One plausible explanation for the null effects of the video treatment on outcomes is that the treatment manipulation was simply too weak to affect the attitudes of participants. This appears likely given the responses to manipulation check questions about the immigration debate. The table below shows that people in different treatment groups did not differently agree with statements about perceptions of elite affect.

Table A3a: Elite affective polarization treatment and perceptions of immigration debate

	<i>Low elite affect</i>	<i>High elite affect</i>
Arguments about the New Plan for Immigration are mainly about the facts	15%	15%
Arguments about the New Plan for Immigration are mainly about feelings	67%	66%
There are strong opinions on both sides when it comes to immigration policy	87%	94%
Immigration policy will always lead to a heated debate	85%	87%

Note: Percentages shown agree or strongly agree with the statement.

Elite affective polarization treatment

Elite affective polarization was manipulated in the information video that participants watched at the start of the online session, before they joined the break-out rooms. The overall purpose of the video in the discussion event was to inform participants about the discussion topic (The New Plan for Immigration) and to give clear partisan cues about policy positions on this topic. The first part of the video was around five minutes long and the same across the two elite affective polarization conditions. This introduced the New Plan for Immigration, a policy proposal by the Conservative government, and the critiques against it by Labour, the opposition party. It featured clips from the House of Commons, showing the Conservative Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and the Conservative Home Secretary, Priti Patel, arguing in favour of the new immigration and asylum policy. The video then gave equal airtime to critiques of the new policy from the opposition, featuring Labour leader Keir Starmer and Labour Shadow Home Secretary Nick Thomas-Symonds. The second part of the video (around 90 seconds) was only shown in the high affective elite polarization condition. This second part showed clips from the House of Commons that featured high affect exchanges between Labour and Conservative politicians that did not mention the policy area or add new information about the policy issue. The goal of the second part of the video was to prime individuals about high levels of elite affect without providing more information or partisan cueing about the policy area. The high elite affective polarization video was shown in half of the online sessions, while the low elite affective polarization video was shown in the other half of the online sessions. Participants did not receive any information on the video type during the sign-up process or the actual session.

Appendix 4: Balance tables

Table A4a: Balance in the whole sample

		Mixed		Homogenous		Diff.	SE
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Age (in years)		51.3	15.6	50.6	14.4	-0.7	1.2
Immigration score		3.2	1.3	3.5	1.3	0.3	0.1
PID strength		2.6	0.8	2.6	0.8	0.0	0.1
Affective polarization		57.1	24.4	58.0	23.0	0.9	1.9
Positive PID		3.1	0.7	3.1	0.7	0.0	0.1
Negative PID		3.1	0.9	3.1	0.9	0.0	0.1
Political interest		4.2	0.7	4.3	0.7	0.1	0.1
Discuss politics		3.5	0.8	3.6	0.8	0.1	0.1
		<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%		
Gender	Female	155	49.8	159	45.8		
	Male	156	50.2	186	53.6		
	NA	0	0.0	2	0.6		
Ethnicity	Other	40	12.9	34	9.8		
	White-British	271	87.1	313	90.2		
Education	Other	89	28.6	99	28.5		
	Postgraduate degree	93	29.9	135	38.9		
	Undergraduate degree	129	41.5	113	32.6		

Note: Immigration score is agree/disagree that 'immigration should be decreased' from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (5). Affective polarization is in-group party feeling thermometer score minus out-group party feeling thermometer score (-100 to +100). Positive partisanship is based on a five-item scale as is negative partisanship: higher score indicates more positive partisanship and more negative partisanship. Interest in politics ranges from 1 (none at all) to 5 (a great deal). Discuss politics is 'how often do you discuss politics with others?' and ranges from 1 (almost never) to 5 (most of the time).

Table A4b: Balance among Conservative partisans

		Mixed		Homogenous		Diff.	SE
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Age (in years)		54.4	14.4	48.8	14.3	-5.6	1.7
Immigration score		2.4	1.0	2.4	1.1	0.0	0.1
PID strength		2.4	0.7	2.3	0.8	-0.1	0.1
Affective polarization		51.9	27.1	48.3	24.6	-3.6	3.1
Positive PID		3.0	0.7	2.9	0.7	-0.1	0.1
Negative PID		2.7	0.8	2.5	0.7	-0.2	0.1
Political interest		4.1	0.8	4.2	0.8	0.0	0.1
Discuss politics		3.3	0.8	3.3	0.9	0.1	0.1
		N	%	N	%		
Gender	Female	62	39.7	41	32.3		
	Male	94	60.3	86	67.7		
Ethnicity	Other	15	9.6	10	7.9		
	White-British	141	90.4	117	92.1		
Education	Other	56	35.9	53	41.7		
	Postgraduate degree	43	27.6	30	23.6		
	Undergraduate degree	57	36.5	44	34.6		

Table A4c: Balance among Labour partisans

		Mixed		Homogenous		Diff.	SE
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Age (in years)		48.1	16.3	51.7	14.4	3.5	1.6
Immigration score		4.0	1.0	4.1	0.9	0.1	0.1
PID strength		2.7	0.8	2.8	0.8	0.0	0.1
Affective polarization		62.4	20.1	63.6	20.0	1.2	2.1
Positive PID		3.2	0.6	3.2	0.6	0.0	0.1
Negative PID		3.5	0.8	3.5	0.8	0.0	0.1
Political interest		4.3	0.7	4.4	0.7	0.1	0.1
Discuss politics		3.6	0.7	3.7	0.7	0.1	0.1
		N	%	N	%		
Gender	Female	93	60.0	118	53.6		
	Male	62	40.0	100	45.5		
Ethnicity	NA	0	0.0	2	0.9		
	Other	25	16.1	24	10.9		
Education	White-British	130	83.9	196	89.1		
	Other	33	21.3	46	20.9		
	Postgraduate degree	50	32.3	105	47.7		
	Undergraduate degree	72	46.5	69	31.4		

Appendix 5: Sample and population comparison

Table A5 shows, for a range of variables, the differences between the people we recruited at wave 1 and those at wave 2. It also compares them to a representative survey of the relevant population (Conservative and Labour partisans in England). These data come from a nationally representative survey conducted online by YouGov in July 2021. This has 3,788 respondents in total and 3,249 respondents in England. We compare measures of basic social characteristics, policy opinions on immigration and our key measures of affective polarization, as well as partisan strength. The figures are separated by Conservative and Labour partisans as they differ on almost all of these measures by partisanship. Reassuringly, there are generally few differences between the people who participated in discussions and those who took the survey, but never participated in a discussion. Equally, in many ways our discussants are quite similar to partisans in the general population. For example, there are no large differences by age, race or gender. In other ways, our recruits look somewhat different. Our sample is substantially more educated, with almost twice as many holding a degree, and is two to three times as likely to discuss politics with friends regularly. In terms of issue positions and affective polarization, our Conservative discussants look very similar to their fellow partisans in the population. The Labour discussants hold slightly more pro-immigration positions than the average Labour partisan, however.

Table A5: Comparison of basic characteristics across the population, survey sample and discussion sample

	Conservative partisans			Labour partisans		
	<i>Survey (England)</i>	<i>Wave 1 survey</i>	<i>Discussion participants</i>	<i>Survey (England)</i>	<i>Wave 1 survey</i>	<i>Discussion participants</i>
Mean age	56.5	51.9	51.8	44.6	50.7	49.9
% men	51%	61%	64%	45%	44%	43%
% degree	35%	58%	62%	47%	77%	79%
% white British	94%	90%	90%	83%	86%	86%
Discuss politics regularly	10%	40%	44%	19%	58%	62%
Mean immigration score (1-5)	2.0	2.4	2.4	3.2	4.1	4.1
Affective polarization (-100 to +100)	48	49	50	52	63	63
PID strength score (1-4)	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.7	2.7
+ve PID score (1-5)	2.8	3.0	2.9	2.9	3.2	3.2
-ve PID score (1-5)	2.8	2.6	2.6	3.3	3.5	3.5

Note: Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Immigration question is agree/disagree that ‘immigration should be decreased’ from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Affective polarization is in-group party feeling thermometer score minus out-group party feeling thermometer score. Positive partisanship is based on a five-item scale as is negative partisanship; higher scores indicate more positive partisanship and more negative partisanship.

Appendix 6: Full regression tables

Table A6a: OLS models predicting change in opinion by treatment for Conservatives

		Illegal entry	Benefits cut	Appeals reduced	NPI Scale	Self-placement
Group type	Homogenous	.42	.62*	.62*	.54*	.52*
	Non discussion	.29	-.28	-.43	-.15	.15
	Mixed	-	-	-		
Video affect	Low	-.06	.10	-.05	.00	.01
	High	-	-	-		
Second survey date		-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01*
Intercept		-.16	-.16	.02	-.15	.01
N		295	290	286	279	288

Note: * $p < 0.05$. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity, but identified themselves as Conservative in response to a follow up.

Table A6b: OLS models predicting change in opinion by treatment for Labour partisans

		Illegal entry	Benefits cut	Appeals reduced	NPI Scale	Self-placement
Group type	Homogenous	-.42*	-.77*	-.80*	-.65*	-.53*
	Non discussion	.75*	.26	-.17	.24	.24
	Mixed	-	-	-		
Video affect	Low	-.24	-.01	.20	.03	.08
	High	-	-	-		
Second survey date		.01	.00	.00	.00	.00
Intercept		-.76*	-.32	-.00	-.41*	-.54*
N		403	409	394	380	411

Note: * $p < 0.05$. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity, but identified themselves as Labour in response to a follow up.

Table A6c: Mean change in policy polarization (difference between Conservative and Labour partisans) by treatment

		Illegal entry	Benefits cut	Appeals reduced	NPI Scale	Self-placement
Group type	Homogenous	.82	1.05	.91	.83	.97
	Mixed	.22	-.01	-.40	-.05	.14

Note: Positive scores on policy polarization change indicate that Labour and Conservative partisans moved further away from one another after the treatment. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity, but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up.

Table A6d: Regression model: policy opinions by treatment (NPI scale, Labour partisans)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Intercept	-0.26 (0.18)	-0.31 (0.23)	-0.27 (0.45)	-0.44 (0.45)	2.15 ** (0.19)	2.60 ** (0.43)
Homogeneous group	-0.70 ** (0.18)	-0.60 * (0.29)	-1.34 ** (0.44)	-0.91 * (0.36)	-0.76 ** (0.20)	-0.78 ** (0.20)
Non-discussion	0.23 (0.24)	0.28 (0.35)	-0.02 (0.58)	-0.09 (0.47)	-0.18 (0.34)	-0.19 (0.34)
Low affect	0.01 (0.17)	0.12 (0.28)	0.02 (0.17)	-0.02 (0.17)	-0.05 (0.18)	-0.37 (0.19)
Homogeneous group: Low affect		-0.19 (0.37)				
Non-discussion: Low affect		-0.10 (0.49)				
University degree			-0.53 (0.36)	-0.08 (0.23)		-0.22 (0.24)
Gender=Male			-0.16 (0.17)	-0.19 (0.17)		0.47 * (0.19)
Gender=Other			-1.79 (3.17)	-1.88 (2.97)		-0.49 (1.12)
Age			0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)		-0.00 (0.01)
Discuss politics=Regularly			0.37 * (0.19)	0.09 (0.33)		-0.06 (0.18)
Homogeneous group: University degree			0.84 (0.49)			
Non-discussion: University degree			0.37 (0.64)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics				0.37 (0.41)		
Non-discussion: Discuss politics				0.57 (0.53)		
R ²	0.05	0.05	0.09	0.08	0.04	0.07
Adj. R ²	0.04	0.04	0.06	0.06	0.03	0.06
Num. obs.	372	372	372	372	401	401
RMSE	1.63	1.63	1.61	1.62	1.79	1.77

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M4, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M5-M6 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6e: Regression model: policy opinions by treatment (NPI scale, Conservative partisans)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
Intercept	-0.30 *	-0.41 *	-0.61	-0.60	7.60 **	7.15 **
	(0.14)	(0.17)	(0.42)	(0.40)	(0.23)	(0.54)
Homogeneous group	0.35 *	0.65 **	0.54	0.40	0.28	0.33
	(0.17)	(0.24)	(0.28)	(0.23)	(0.25)	(0.25)
Non-discussion	-0.29	-0.59	-1.46 **	-0.52	-0.43	-0.36
	(0.28)	(0.50)	(0.37)	(0.42)	(0.67)	(0.68)
Low affect	-0.03	0.21	-0.01	-0.00	0.11	0.21
	(0.16)	(0.23)	(0.16)	(0.16)	(0.25)	(0.25)
Homogeneous group: Low affect		-0.60				
		(0.33)				
Non-discussion: Low affect		0.50				
		(0.58)				
University degree			-0.01	0.00		-0.47
			(0.25)	(0.17)		(0.26)
Gender=Male			-0.28	-0.28		-0.16
			(0.17)	(0.17)		(0.26)
Age			0.01	0.01		0.01
			(0.01)	(0.01)		(0.01)
Discuss politics=Regularly			-0.09	-0.17		0.16
			(0.16)	(0.24)		(0.24)
Homogeneous group: University degree			-0.18			
			(0.34)			
Non-discussion: University degree			1.86 **			
			(0.43)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics				0.10		
				(0.33)		
Non-discussion: Discuss politics				0.62		
				(0.59)		
R ²	0.02	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.01	0.03
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.02	-0.00	0.01
Num. obs.	274	274	274	274	288	288
RMSE	1.34	1.33	1.32	1.33	2.08	2.07

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M4, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M5-M6 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6f: Main results regression model: affective polarization towards parties (-100 to +100)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	-2.01 (1.19)	-3.79 * (1.58)	-2.29 (1.29)	0.73 (3.99)	0.08 (3.83)	55.62 ** (1.72)	46.08 ** (3.98)
Homogeneous group	4.52 ** (1.46)	3.30 (2.46)	5.11 ** (1.73)	2.67 (3.04)	3.91 (2.27)	5.51 ** (1.95)	5.50 ** (1.96)
Non-discussion	1.06 (2.49)	0.26 (2.56)	1.06 (2.49)	1.01 (2.46)	0.93 (2.44)	1.11 (3.60)	1.34 (3.40)
Low affect	-1.23 (1.36)	-1.29 (1.36)	-0.67 (2.06)	-1.33 (1.37)	-1.41 (1.37)	-1.27 (1.86)	-1.16 (1.85)
Labour partisan		3.67 (2.11)					
Homogeneous*Labour		1.10 (2.96)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			-1.15 (2.71)				
University degree				-0.77 (2.33)	0.57 (1.63)		1.47 (2.13)
Gender=Male				-3.18 * (1.40)	-3.24 * (1.41)		-4.91 ** (1.86)
Gender=Other				4.72 (21.17)	4.76 (20.43)		19.40 (20.22)
Age				-0.00 (0.05)	-0.00 (0.05)		0.17 ** (0.06)
Discuss politics=Regularly				-0.79 (1.37)	-1.41 (2.06)		4.02 * (1.86)
Homogeneous group: University degree				2.75 (3.37)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					1.33 (2.82)		
R ²	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.04
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.03
Num. obs.	701	701	701	701	701	702	702
RMSE	18.06	17.97	18.07	18.05	18.06	24.64	24.32

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6g: Main results regression model: Affective polarization towards voters (-100 to +100)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	1.79 (1.37)	3.34 (1.75)	2.65 (1.47)	1.51 (4.00)	1.26 (3.74)	40.34 ** (2.03)	26.74 ** (4.87)
Homogeneous group	1.48 (1.72)	-1.73 (2.59)	-0.35 (2.19)	2.44 (3.41)	2.91 (2.65)	4.85 * (2.31)	4.54 * (2.29)
Non-discussion	-1.74 (3.05)	-1.03 (3.06)	-1.78 (3.04)	-1.50 (3.01)	-1.52 (3.02)	4.63 (4.08)	4.35 (3.91)
Low affect	-0.49 (1.63)	-0.55 (1.63)	-2.22 (2.34)	-0.49 (1.63)	-0.43 (1.62)	0.09 (2.21)	0.23 (2.17)
Labour partisan		-3.07 (2.36)					
Homogeneous*Labour		5.70 (3.36)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			3.57 (3.26)				
University degree				-3.83 (2.61)	-4.49 * (1.90)		3.55 (2.47)
Gender=Male				-0.18 (1.64)	-0.09 (1.64)		-5.09 * (2.17)
Gender=Other				-13.38 (8.56)	-13.94 (8.28)		13.10 (19.36)
Age				0.03 (0.05)	0.03 (0.05)		0.16 * (0.07)
Discuss politics=Regularly				2.80 (1.67)	4.07 (2.31)		10.13 ** (2.18)
Homogeneous group: University degree				-1.38 (3.80)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					-2.67 (3.34)		
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.06
Adj. R ²	-0.00	-0.00	-0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05
Num. obs.	694	694	694	694	694	696	696
RMSE	21.49	21.47	21.49	21.43	21.42	29.10	28.43

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6h: Main results regression model: Positive partisanship (1-5 scale)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	0.06 *	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.05	3.17 **	2.90 **
	(0.03)	(0.04)	(0.03)	(0.09)	(0.09)	(0.04)	(0.11)
Homogeneous group	0.09 *	0.03	0.11 *	0.09	0.07	0.07	0.05
	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.08)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Non-discussion	0.06	0.07	0.06	0.06	0.06	-0.02	-0.02
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.10)
Low affect	-0.02	-0.02	0.01	-0.01	-0.01	-0.01	0.00
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)
Labour partisan		-0.03					
		(0.05)					
Homogeneous*Labour		0.10					
		(0.08)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			-0.05				
			(0.07)				
University degree				-0.03	-0.04		0.02
				(0.05)	(0.04)		(0.06)
Gender=Male				0.07	0.07		0.05
				(0.04)	(0.04)		(0.05)
Gender=Other				0.42 **	0.43 **		0.62 *
				(0.10)	(0.10)		(0.31)
Age				-0.00	-0.00		0.00
				(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
Discuss politics=Regularly				0.07	0.06		0.19 **
				(0.04)	(0.05)		(0.05)
Homogeneous group: University degree				-0.01			
				(0.09)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					0.03		
					(0.08)		
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.03
Adj. R ²	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	-0.00	0.02
Num. obs.	694	694	694	694	694	694	694
RMSE	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.65	0.64

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6i: Main results regression model: Positive partisan ingroup traits (1-5 scale)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	0.00 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.10)	0.02 (0.09)	3.71 ** (0.04)	3.45 ** (0.09)
Homogeneous group	0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.06)	0.06 (0.06)	0.08 (0.08)	-0.00 (0.06)	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)
Non-discussion	0.06 (0.06)	0.06 (0.07)	0.06 (0.06)	0.05 (0.07)	0.05 (0.06)	0.01 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)
Low affect	0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.05 (0.05)	0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.00 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Labour partisan		-0.03 (0.05)					
Homogeneous*Labour		0.16 * (0.08)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			-0.03 (0.08)				
University degree				0.04 (0.07)	0.02 (0.04)		-0.00 (0.05)
Gender=Male				-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)		-0.04 (0.04)
Gender=Other				-0.06 (0.26)	-0.03 (0.25)		0.44 (0.36)
Age				-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)		0.00 ** (0.00)
Discuss politics=Regularly				0.03 (0.04)	-0.01 (0.05)		0.12 ** (0.04)
Homogeneous group: University degree				-0.04 (0.09)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					0.09 (0.08)		
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.03
Adj. R ²	-0.00	0.00	-0.00	-0.01	-0.00	-0.00	0.02
Num. obs.	697	697	697	697	697	697	697
RMSE	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6j: Main results regression model: Negative partisanship (1-5 scale)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	0.09 *	0.14 **	0.08	0.12	0.10	3.18 **	2.72 **
	(0.04)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.11)	(0.11)	(0.06)	(0.14)
Homogeneous group	0.06	0.02	0.07	0.02	0.07	0.09	0.08
	(0.05)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.10)	(0.07)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Non-discussion	-0.03	-0.00	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03	-0.03
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.12)	(0.12)
Low affect	-0.04	-0.04	-0.03	-0.04	-0.04	-0.02	-0.01
	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.06)	(0.06)
Labour partisan		-0.11					
		(0.06)					
Homogeneous*Labour		0.09					
		(0.09)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			-0.02				
			(0.09)				
University degree				-0.01	0.01		0.18 *
				(0.08)	(0.05)		(0.07)
Gender=Male				0.05	0.05		-0.08
				(0.05)	(0.05)		(0.06)
Gender=Other				-0.01	-0.02		0.89 **
				(0.29)	(0.30)		(0.11)
Age				-0.00	-0.00		0.00 *
				(0.00)	(0.00)		(0.00)
Discuss politics=Regularly				0.01	0.02		0.25 **
				(0.05)	(0.06)		(0.06)
Homogeneous group: University degree				0.05			
				(0.11)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					-0.02		
					(0.09)		
R ²	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.05
Adj. R ²	-0.00	0.00	-0.00	-0.01	-0.01	-0.00	0.04
Num. obs.	697	697	697	697	697	698	698
RMSE	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.85	0.83

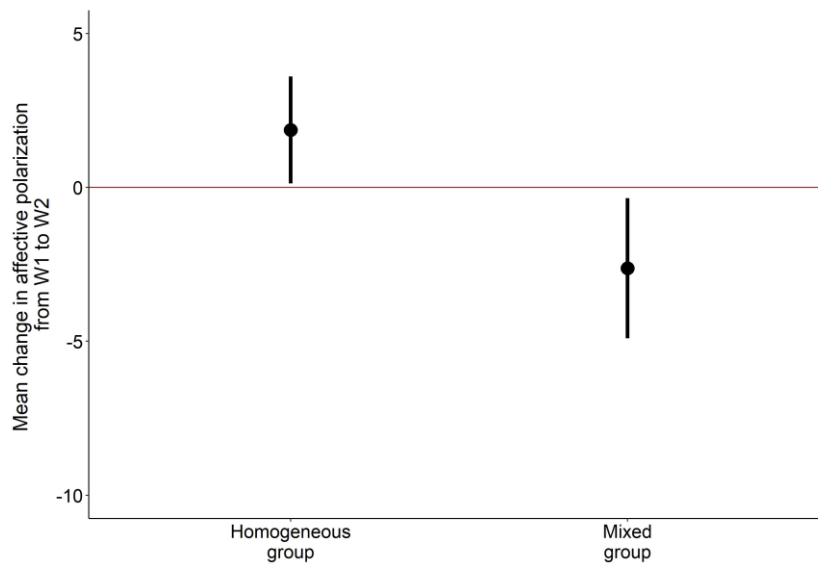
Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Table A6k: Main results regression model: Negative out-partisan traits (1-5 scale)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7
Intercept	-0.07 (0.04)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.05)	0.09 (0.11)	0.07 (0.11)	3.37 ** (0.05)	3.28 ** (0.12)
Homogeneous group	0.13 ** (0.05)	0.01 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)	0.08 (0.08)	0.12 (0.06)	0.25 ** (0.06)	0.24 ** (0.06)
Non-discussion	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	-0.03 (0.08)	0.20 * (0.10)	0.18 (0.10)
Low affect	0.04 (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)	-0.08 (0.06)	0.03 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.04 (0.06)	0.04 (0.06)
Labour partisan		-0.05 (0.06)					
Homogeneous*Labour		0.21 * (0.09)					
Homogeneous group: Low affect			0.25 ** (0.09)				
University degree				-0.10 (0.07)	-0.07 (0.05)		0.00 (0.06)
Gender=Male				-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)		-0.09 (0.06)
Gender=Other				-0.59 (0.51)	-0.59 (0.53)		-0.41 ** (0.14)
Age				-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)		0.00 (0.00)
Discuss politics=Regularly				0.03 (0.04)	0.02 (0.06)		0.25 ** (0.06)
Homogeneous group: University degree				0.08 (0.10)			
Homogeneous group: Discuss politics					0.02 (0.09)		
R ²	0.02	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.02	0.03	0.06
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.05
Num. obs.	697	697	697	697	697	698	698
RMSE	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.74	0.72

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05. For M1-M5, the dependent variable is the change from W1 (pre-treatment) to W2 (post-treatment) in the outcome. M6-M7 use the raw W2 post-treatment outcome as the DV. Reference category for group treatment: mixed group. Reference category for affect treatment: high affect. Reference category for partisanship: Conservative partisan. Reference category for education: no university degree. Reference category for gender: Female. Reference category for Discuss politics with friends and family (measured pre-treatment): rarely (incl. rarely, sometimes and not at all).

Figure A6l: Change in affective polarization towards parties (-100 to +100) by treatment



Note: Mean change in affective polarization (-100 to +100 scale) for the two treatment groups with 95 per cent confidence intervals.

Table A6m: Robustness checks: affective polarization towards parties (-100 to +100)

	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5
Intercept	-2.01 (1.19)	11.15 (20.57)	37.04 * (18.24)	-2.01 (1.37)	55.62 * (1.85)
Homogeneous group	4.52 * (1.46)	5.63 * (1.49)	7.56 * (2.11)	4.52 * (1.55)	5.51 * (2.26)
Non-discussion	1.06 (2.49)	-2.37 (108.37)	-233.05 (147.30)	1.06 (2.50)	1.11 (3.67)
Low affect	-1.23 (1.36)	-0.25 (1.46)	0.84 (2.03)	-1.23 (1.43)	-1.27 (2.18)
Days since sessions began		-0.08 * (0.03)	-0.11 * (0.04)		
Group size		0.10 (1.20)	2.71 (1.63)		
Technical problems		5.52 (3.77)	3.02 (3.77)		
R ²	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.02	0.01
Adj. R ²	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.01
Num. obs.	701	701	702	701	702
RMSE	18.06	17.84	24.39	18.06	24.64
N Clusters				113	113

Note: *p<0.05. M1 predicts change in affective polarization from W1 to W2. M2 is M1 plus session related covariates, including the number of days since sessions began, the discussion group size, whether the participant had technical problems, the time of day the session took place (not shown), and the facilitator (not shown). The inclusion of these covariates does not weaken the treatment effects. M3 is the same model as M2 but predicting raw W2 affective polarization. M4 is the baseline model M1, but with Standard Errors clustered by small discussion group. M5 uses the the raw W2 affective polarization outcome as the DV and uses Standard Errors clustered by small discussion group. Clustering SEs by small discussion group does not alter the main results.

Appendix 7: Exploring differences between Conservative and Labour partisans

As discussed in the main text, there are two obvious possible individual-level explanations for the weaker effects of our treatment on the affective polarization of Conservative compared to Labour partisans. The first is that Labour partisans, at least in our sample, are stronger partisans than Conservatives and stronger partisans are more affected by the treatment. The second is that Labour partisans react more strongly to the treatment because they are the type of people who are likely to be more affected by group discussion. In particular, Labour partisans may differ in their personality traits to Conservatives with those traits moderating the effect of treatment on affective polarization.

In both cases, one part of the intuition is correct. As Table A7a below shows, Labour partisans in Wave 1 (who participate in Wave 2) identify more strongly than do Conservatives with their identity. Labour partisans also score differently on some personality traits. In terms of the Big Five (measured at Wave 1 using the 30 item BFI-2-S, Soto and John 2017), Labour partisans are higher than Conservatives in Neuroticism, Agreeableness, Openness to Experience and lower in Conscientiousness and Extraversion. They are also lower in Narcissism (measured using the 6 item NARQ scale, Back et al 2013).

Table A7a: Comparison of partisan strength and personality traits across partisanship

	<i>Labour</i>	<i>Conservative</i>
PID strength score (1-4)	2.74	2.4
Openness to Experience (1-5)	3.93	3.65
Conscientiousness (1-5)	3.45	3.78
Extraversion (1-5)	3.32	3.46
Agreeableness (1-5)	3.84	3.70
Neuroticism (1-5)	2.79	2.44
Narcissism (1-6)	2.33	2.60

Note: Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Only those who participated in the discussion sessions and identified consistently as the same partisanship are included here.

For these differences to impact the effect of treatment on affective polarization, partisan strength or relevant personality traits such as Conscientiousness would need to moderate the treatment effect. We find no evidence of this. Tables A7b to A7e show a) models (model 1) of positive and negative partisanship with interactions between treatment and partisanship and b) models (2-8) of positive and affective polarization with an added interaction between treatment and personality/ partisan strength. None of the latter interactions are statistically significant and almost none reduce the size of the treatment*partisanship interaction. Indeed, the size of these coefficients are extremely consistent across all the models. There is thus little evidence that differences in treatment response between Conservative and Labour partisans are due to obvious intrinsic differences between the two.

Table A7b: OLS models predicting change in positive partisanship by treatment

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Homogenous group	.09*	.15*	.25	.28	-.17	.14	.53*	.30*	.24
Mixed group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservative	-.01	.06	.05	.07	.10	.05	.06	.08	.06
Labour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homogenous*Conservative		-.14	-.16*	-.14	-.18*	-.13	-.15	-.16	-.13
PID strength score (1-4)			-.04						
Homogenous*PID strength			-.04						
Openness to Experience (1-5)				.04					
Homogenous*Openness				-.04					
Conscientiousness (1-5)					-.10*				
Homogenous*conscientiousness					.09				
Extraversion (1-5)						.01			
Homogenous*extraversion						-.00			
Agreeableness (1-5)							.04		
Homogenous*agreeableness							-.10		
Neuroticism (1-5)								.03	
Homogenous*neuroticism								-.06	
Narcissism (1-6)									.01
Homogenous*narcissism									-.04

Note: * p< 0.05. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Only those with a consistent party identification are included.

Table A7c: OLS models predicting changes in positive trait perceptions by treatment

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Homogenous group	.04	.12*	.11	.14	.23	-.17	.19	.05	.12
Mixed group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservative	-.04	.06	.06	.05	.05	.07	.06	.06	.05
Labour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homogenous*Conservative		-.19*	-.20*	-.20*	-.18*	-.21*	-.19*	-.18*	-.20*
PID strength score (1-4)			-.01						
Homogenous*PID strength			.00						
Openness to Experience (1-5)				-.04					
Homogenous*Openness				-.00					
Conscientiousness (1-5)					.02				
Homogenous*conscientiousness					-.03				
Extraversion (1-5)						-.03			
Homogenous*extraversion						.09			
Agreeableness (1-5)							.00		
Homogenous*agreeableness							-.02		
Neuroticism (1-5)								.01	
Homogenous*neuroticism								.03	
Narcissism (1-6)									.06
Homogenous*narcissism									.01

Note: * p< 0.05. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Only those with a consistent party identification are included.

Table A7d: OLS models predicting change in negative partisanship by treatment

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Homogenous group	.07	.09	.29	.38	.50*	.08	.44	-.03	-.00
Mixed group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservative	.05	.08	.09	.09	.03	.07	.08	.07	.09
Labour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homogenous*Conservative		-.06	-.08	-.08	-.01	-.06	-.06	-.05	-.07
PID strength score (1-4)			.04						
Homogenous*PID strength			-.07						
Openness to Experience (1-5)				.07					
Homogenous*Openness				-.07					
Conscientiousness (1-5)					.13*				
Homogenous*conscientiousness					-.12				
Extraversion (1-5)						.03			
Homogenous*extraversion						.00			
Agreeableness (1-5)							.11		
Homogenous*agreeableness							-.09		
Neuroticism (1-5)								-.02	
Homogenous*neuroticism								.04	
Narcissism (1-6)									-.06
Homogenous*narcissism									.04

Note: * p < 0.05. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Only those with a consistent party identification are included.

Table A7e: OLS models predicting change in negative trait perceptions by treatment

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Homogenous group	.12*	.22*	.21	-.02	.09	-.07	-.27	.26	.20
Mixed group	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Conservative	-.05	.06	.05	.05	.05	.07	.06	.06	.06
Labour	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Homogenous*Conservative		-.21*	-.20*	-.19	-.21*	-.22*	-.18	-.21*	-.21*
PID strength score (1-4)			.01						
Homogenous*PID strength			-.00						
Openness to Experience (1-5)				-.01					
Homogenous*Openness				.06					
Conscientiousness (1-5)					.02				
Homogenous*conscientiousness					.04				
Extraversion (1-5)						-.07			
Homogenous*extraversion						.09			
Agreeableness (1-5)							.01		
Homogenous*agreeableness							.13		
Neuroticism (1-5)								.01	
Homogenous*neuroticism								-.01	
Narcissism (1-6)									-.03
Homogenous*narcissism									.00

Note: * p < 0.05. Partisans include those who initially gave no identity but identified themselves as Conservative and Labour in response to a follow up. Only those with a consistent party identification are included.

Appendix 8: Ethics

This study was granted prior ethics approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the London School of Economics and Political Science (number 25671) and the Ethics Committee of the Centre for Experimental Social Sciences at the University of Oxford (number OE_0061). The study adheres to APSA's *Principles and Guidance for Human Subjects Research*.

We only recruited participants for our study who were over the age of 18. The participants were given full information about the study and asked for their informed consent before taking part in the study. Participants were informed that they could withdraw at any point and were not forced to express their views if they preferred not to do so. Only individuals who gave their explicit consent in all areas of the consent form were eligible to participate in the study.

Payments for the online discussion sessions did not differ between participants. All participants who attended an online discussion session and filled in the post-treatment survey received the same payment of £20. This was compensation for around 45 minutes of their time. This is in line with *CESS* guidelines for participant payments. In addition, all individuals completing the pre-discussion survey received £3 each, regardless of whether they took part in the online discussion sessions. This survey took around 10 minutes to complete.

The researchers did not have access to personally identifying information, such as full names, email or home addresses. Only *CESS* had access to the data with personally identifying information and data storage and processing were done in accordance with GDPR regulations and UK data protection laws.

This study was funded by the UK's Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), which is the UK's primary public funder of social science, and the European Research Council (ERC), which is the European Union's primary funder of research.