

Supplementary Material for:
“Are Policy Analogies Persuasive?
The Household Budget Analogy and Public Support for Austerity”

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A Details of Main Surveys

The primary evidence presented in this paper is based on data collected from two surveys fielded for us in the UK by YouGov – one in August 2018 and one in March 2019. For each survey, YouGov provided us with demographic ‘profile’ data for each respondent, including: income, age, past vote choices, and the like. Table A1 sets out the various survey instruments (i.e. questions and treatment texts) that we used across these two surveys.

Instrument Name	Text	Response Options
<i>Analogy</i>	“People have different views about how we should think about government budget balance, that is, what the government spends compared to its income from taxes. How useful do you find ideas about household budgets for understanding government budgets? Please place yourself on this 6-point scale.”	“The way we think about household budgets shows us how we should think about government budgets.”; 2; 3; 4; 5; “The way we think about household budgets is irrelevant for how we should think about government budgets.”; “Don’t know”
<i>Balance Budget</i>	“How appropriate do you think it is for the UK Government to spend more than its income in any given year?”	“Never appropriate”; “Rarely appropriate”; “Sometimes appropriate”; “Often appropriate”; “Always appropriate”; “Don’t know”
<i>Household Borrowing View</i>	“In Britain today, people borrow money for many different reasons. For example, people may borrow to invest for the future, to increase their personal spending, or to make ends meet when times are hard. How important should each of the following considerations be when households are thinking about borrowing money?”	
	“It allows for purchases that are beneficial in the long run, for example in the form of business or student loans, or mortgages”	“Not at all important”; “Not very important”; “Important”; “Very Important”
	“It allows people to get through temporary hard times”	“Not at all important”; “Not very important”; “Important”; “Very Important”
	“It seems like a good idea in the short run, but leads to difficulties later on”	“Not at all important”; “Not very important”; “Important”; “Very Important”
	“It encourages spending at unsustainable levels”	“Not at all important”; “Not very important”; “Important”; “Very Important”
	“Whatever the underlying reasons or consequences, it is better to avoid borrowing if possible”	“Not at all important”; “Not very important”; “Important”; “Very Important”
<i>Reason</i>	“A common way of thinking about government finances is that governments should not spend more than they earn in any given year because borrowing leads to major financial difficulties.”	
<i>Analogical Reason</i>	“A common way of thinking about government finances is that governments should not spend more than they earn in any given year because borrowing leads to major financial difficulties. Just like households, governments have creditors who worry about repayment. Just like households, governments have a credit score that may be downgraded. Just like households, governments borrowing too much can see their debts spiral out of control.”	
<i>Less Analogical Reason</i>	“A common way of thinking about government finances is that governments should not spend more than they earn in any given year because borrowing leads to major financial difficulties. Governments have creditors who worry about repayment. Governments have a credit rating that may be downgraded. Governments borrowing too much can see their debts spiral out of control.”	

Table A1: Question wordings.

A.1 August 2018 Survey

Table A2 shows the design of the August 2018 survey. Entries in the middle columns refer to the survey instruments set out in table A1. Table A3 shows the descriptive statistics for the variables – including those from YouGov’s profile data – obtained from this survey.

Group	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Probability	$\approx N$ Respondents
A	–	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	25%	567
B	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	25%	567
C	<i>Analogical Reason</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	25%	567
D	<i>Less Analogical Reason</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	25%	567

Table A2: The design of the survey fielded by YouGov in August 2018. The data from this survey are used in Section 5.

Variable	Levels	n	%
AgeGroup	: 18-25	215	10.0
	: 25-40	500	23.2
	: 40-55	567	26.4
	: 55-65	398	18.5
	: 65-100	471	21.9
	all		2151
Gender	: Female	1251	57.4
	: Male	929	42.6
	all	2180	100.0
HHInc	: <£5k	45	2.2
	: £5k-10k	83	4.2
	: £10k-15k	144	7.2
	: £15k-20k	154	7.7
	: £20k-25k	182	9.1
	: £25k-30k	151	7.5
	: £30k-35k	139	7.0
	: £35k-40k	105	5.2
	: £40k-45k	109	5.5
	: £45k-50k	105	5.2
	: £50k-60k	108	5.4
	: £60k-70k	62	3.1
	: £70k-100k	92	4.6
	: £100k-150k	40	2.0
	: >£150k	15	0.8
	: DK	108	5.4
: Declined	357	17.9	
all		1999	100.0
GEVote	: Con	765	42.2
	: Lab	679	37.5
	: LD	147	8.1
	: SNP	64	3.5
	: PC	11	0.6
	: UKIP	42	2.3
	: Green	32	1.8
	: N/A	0	0.0
	: Other	21	1.2

	: DK	52	2.9
	all	1813	100.0
EUVote	: Remain	924	43.1
	: DK/DNV	312	14.5
	: Leave	910	42.4
	all	2146	100.0
BalanceBudget	0	43	2.1
	1	198	9.8
	2	949	47.0
	3	555	27.5
	4	272	13.5
	all	2017	100.0
Analogy	1	377	18.9
	2	294	14.7
	3	395	19.8
	4	382	19.1
	5	195	9.8
	6	352	17.6
	all	1995	100.0

Table A3: Descriptive statistics of variables in the ‘analogical reasons’ survey experiment. HHInc denotes household income. GEVote denotes 2017 general election vote choice. EUVote denotes 2016 EU referendum vote choice.

A.2 March 2019 Survey

Table A4 shows the design for the March 2019 survey. Entries in the middle columns refer to the survey instruments set out in table A1. Table A5 and table A6 show the descriptive statistics for the variables – including those from YouGov’s profile data – obtained from this survey.

Group	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Probability	Target N
A	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	<i>Household Borrowing View</i>	2/6	1000
B	<i>Analogy</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Household Borrowing View</i>	2/6	1000
C	<i>Household Borrowing View</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	1/6	500
D	<i>Household Borrowing View</i>	<i>Analogy</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	1/6	500

Table A4: The design of the survey fielded by YouGov in March 2019. The data from this survey are used in Section 4 and Section 6.

Variable	Levels	n	%
AgeGroup	: 18-25	307	8.2
	: 25-40	871	23.1
	: 40-55	937	24.9
	: 55-65	722	19.2
	: 65-100	927	24.6
	all	3764	100.0
Gender	: Female	2152	56.5
	: Male	1658	43.5
	all	3810	100.0
SocialGrade	: A	519	13.6
	: B	648	17.0
	: C1	1122	29.4
	: C2	683	17.9
	: D	393	10.3
	: E	445	11.7
	all	3810	100.0
Housing	: Owner-occupier	2353	61.8
	: Other	386	10.1
	: Renter	1071	28.1
	all	3810	100.0
HHInc	: <£25k	1162	30.5
	: >£100k	132	3.5
	: £25k-50k	1081	28.4
	: £50k-100k	555	14.6
	: DK/NA	880	23.1
	all	3810	100.0
GEVote	: Con	1306	41.5
	: DK/DNV	102	3.2
	: Green	56	1.8
	: Lab	1216	38.6
	: LD	245	7.8

	: Other	157	5.0
	: UKIP	68	2.2
	all	3150	100.0
EUVote	: Remain	1715	45.0
	: DK/DNV	573	15.0
	: Leave	1522	40.0
	all	3810	100.0
BalanceBudget	1	60	1.7
	2	324	9.3
	3	1624	46.5
	4	984	28.2
	5	497	14.2
	all	3489	100.0
Analogy	1	651	20.4
	2	329	10.3
	3	611	19.2
	4	660	20.7
	5	452	14.2
	6	481	15.1
	all	3184	100.0

Table A5: Descriptive statistics of factor variables in the March 2019 survey. HHInc denotes household income. GEVote denotes 2017 general election vote choice. EUVote denotes 2016 EU referendum vote choice.

Variable	n	Min	\bar{x}	Max	s
Reads: Mail	3810	0	0.20	1	0.40
Reads: Sun	3810	0	0.04	1	0.20
Reads: Guardian	3810	0	0.12	1	0.32
Reads: Telegraph	3810	0	0.10	1	0.30
Reads: Times	3810	0	0.13	1	0.34
Reads: Express	3810	0	0.06	1	0.25
Reads: Mirror	3810	0	0.06	1	0.24
Reads: Star	3810	0	0.21	1	0.41
Reads: Record	3810	0	0.02	1	0.15
Reads: FT	3810	0	0.03	1	0.17

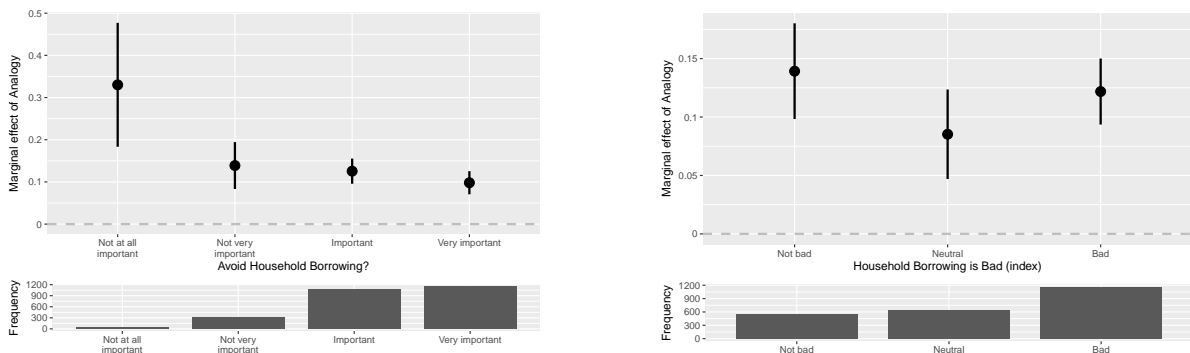
Table A6: Descriptive statistics of newspaper readership in the March 2019 survey.

B Extra Results for: “Observational Evidence”

This section provides some extra, and more detailed, results for the evidence presented in “Observational Evidence” of the main text. Table A7 shows the results of estimating a pair of models (by OLS) with $Analogy^N$ as the dependent variable and factorial predictors of various demographic and political variables as predictors. As such, it shows the (observational) correlates of the propensity to endorse the household budget analogy. Demographics explain relatively little of the variation, but there are some noteworthy patterns – e.g. those not enjoying owner-occupation of their housing are less likely to endorse the analogy, as are those who voted for more left-wing parties.

Table A8 and table A9 present models of the observational correlates of $BalanceBudget^N$, estimated by OLS and as ordered logistic regressions, respectively. Together, they demonstrate that our consistent finding of a positive correlation between $BalanceBudget^N$ and $Analogy^N$ survives a large set of controls and these alternative modeling approaches.

Table A10 provides the full estimation results for the moderation models underlying fig. 3 in the main text. table A11 provides the full estimation results for factorial moderation models underlying fig. A1 in this document. For the latter, the ‘household borrowing is bad’ index has been divided into three categories: respondents with negative values of the index (“Not bad”); respondents with a neutral/zero value of the index (“Neutral”), and; respondents with positive values of the index (“Bad”).



(a) Household borrowing is best avoided.

(b) An index of ‘Household borrowing is bad’.

Figure A1: Marginal effects of $Analogy_i^N$ on $BalanceBudget_i^N$, conditional on attitudes about household borrowing. Based on estimates from Table A11.

Table A7: Correlates of endorsing the household finance analogy. All models are estimated by OLS and include controls for dummy variables for experimental split (not shown). Omitted categories are: party vote: Conservative.

	Analogy	
	Model 1	Model 2
AgeGroup: 25-40	-0.277** (0.139)	-0.365** (0.168)
AgeGroup: 40-55	-0.268* (0.140)	-0.397** (0.169)
AgeGroup: 55-65	-0.195 (0.147)	-0.419** (0.177)
AgeGroup: 65-100	-0.123 (0.145)	-0.381** (0.176)
Gender: Male	-0.150** (0.061)	-0.187*** (0.065)
SocialGrade: B	0.012 (0.108)	0.096 (0.111)
SocialGrade: C1	0.049 (0.100)	0.108 (0.104)
SocialGrade: C2	-0.028 (0.111)	0.033 (0.117)
SocialGrade: D	0.088 (0.130)	0.168 (0.139)
SocialGrade: E	0.009 (0.131)	0.045 (0.139)
Housing: Other	-0.263** (0.130)	-0.334** (0.144)
Housing: Renter	-0.206*** (0.078)	-0.224*** (0.084)
HHInc: >£100k	-0.305* (0.175)	-0.270 (0.182)
HHInc: £25k-50k	-0.017 (0.083)	-0.009 (0.088)
HHInc: £50k-100k	-0.123 (0.105)	-0.074 (0.111)
HHInc: DK/NA	-0.129 (0.090)	-0.116 (0.096)
GEVote: DK/DNV		0.211 (0.202)
GEVote: Green		-0.748*** (0.245)
GEVote: Lab		-0.551*** (0.079)
GEVote: LD		-0.215* (0.127)
GEVote: Other		-0.595*** (0.156)
GEVote: UKIP		-0.744*** (0.226)
EUVote: DK/DNV		-0.054 (0.162)
EUVote: Leave		0.241*** (0.074)
Constant	3.874*** (0.176)	4.124*** (0.215)
N	3156	2732
R-squared	0.011	0.052

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1

Table A8: Correlates of balanced budget attitudes. All models are estimated by OLS. Omitted categories are: party vote: Conservative; newspaper: None/Other.

	BalanceBudget		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Analogy	0.136*** (0.009)	0.132*** (0.009)	0.123*** (0.010)
TreatmentGroup: B	-0.029 (0.038)	-0.028 (0.038)	-0.040 (0.039)
TreatmentGroup: C	-0.071 (0.047)	-0.066 (0.047)	-0.043 (0.048)
TreatmentGroup: D	-0.050 (0.047)	-0.040 (0.047)	-0.019 (0.048)
AgeStd		-0.008 (0.019)	-0.042** (0.021)
Gender: Male		-0.153*** (0.031)	-0.171*** (0.033)
SocialGrade: B		0.131** (0.055)	0.081 (0.056)
SocialGrade: C1		0.121** (0.051)	0.055 (0.053)
SocialGrade: C2		0.282*** (0.057)	0.183*** (0.059)
SocialGrade: D		0.341*** (0.066)	0.200*** (0.071)
SocialGrade: E		0.227*** (0.067)	0.223*** (0.070)
Housing: Other		-0.044 (0.065)	-0.071 (0.072)
Housing: Renter		0.001 (0.040)	-0.015 (0.043)
HHInc: >£100k		-0.206** (0.088)	-0.143 (0.091)
HHInc: £25k-50k		-0.021 (0.042)	-0.028 (0.044)
HHInc: £50k-100k		-0.062 (0.053)	-0.048 (0.056)
HHInc: DK/NA		0.031 (0.046)	0.010 (0.048)
GEVote: DK/DNV			0.088 (0.104)
GEVote: Green			-0.0001 (0.124)
GEVote: Lab			-0.164*** (0.042)
GEVote: LD			-0.148** (0.064)
GEVote: Other			-0.100 (0.080)
GEVote: UKIP			0.232** (0.112)
EUVote: DK/DNV			0.114 (0.082)
EUVote: Leave			0.194*** (0.038)
'Reads: FT'			-0.054 (0.094)
'Reads: Guardian'			-0.212*** (0.052)
'Reads: Telegraph'			0.083 (0.054)
'Reads: Times'			-0.086* (0.049)
'Reads: Sun'			-0.107 (0.081)
'Reads: Mail'			0.036 (0.042)
'Reads: Mirror'			-0.020 (0.069)
'Reads: Express'			0.070 (0.063)
'Reads: Star'			-0.018 (0.041)
'Reads: Record'			-0.030 (0.112)
Constant	2.974*** (0.042)	2.909*** (0.070)	3.009*** (0.081)
N	3084	3084	2660
R-squared	0.066	0.093	0.154

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1

Table A9: Correlates of balanced budget attitudes. All models are estimated as ordered logistic regressions. Omitted categories are: party vote: Conservative; newspaper: None/Other.

	BalanceBudget_f		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Analogy	0.315*** (0.021)	0.312*** (0.021)	0.306*** (0.024)
TreatmentGroup: B	-0.107 (0.082)	-0.099 (0.082)	-0.129 (0.090)
TreatmentGroup: C	-0.166 (0.102)	-0.161 (0.102)	-0.106 (0.111)
TreatmentGroup: D	-0.156 (0.102)	-0.140 (0.102)	-0.100 (0.112)
AgeStd		-0.033 (0.041)	-0.111** (0.049)
Gender: Male		-0.367*** (0.069)	-0.425*** (0.076)
SocialGrade: B		0.301** (0.120)	0.208 (0.129)
SocialGrade: C1		0.288*** (0.112)	0.152 (0.122)
SocialGrade: C2		0.627*** (0.125)	0.422*** (0.138)
SocialGrade: D		0.762*** (0.146)	0.485*** (0.164)
SocialGrade: E		0.540*** (0.148)	0.545*** (0.163)
Housing: Other		-0.088 (0.145)	-0.131 (0.170)
Housing: Renter		0.018 (0.089)	-0.002 (0.098)
HHInc: >£100k		-0.449** (0.195)	-0.300 (0.211)
HHInc: £25k-50k		-0.044 (0.093)	-0.040 (0.103)
HHInc: £50k-100k		-0.133 (0.117)	-0.078 (0.129)
HHInc: DK/NA		0.087 (0.101)	0.056 (0.112)
GEVVote: DK/DNV			0.198 (0.232)
GEVVote: Green			0.049 (0.280)
GEVVote: Lab			-0.385*** (0.097)
GEVVote: LD			-0.318** (0.148)
GEVVote: Other			-0.206 (0.192)
GEVVote: UKIP			0.567** (0.259)
EUVote: DK/DNV			0.283 (0.191)
EUVote: Leave			0.463*** (0.088)
'Reads: FT'			-0.177 (0.219)
'Reads: Guardian'			-0.552*** (0.122)
'Reads: Telegraph'			0.201 (0.124)
'Reads: Times'			-0.180 (0.113)
'Reads: Sun'			-0.260 (0.186)
'Reads: Mail'			0.091 (0.096)
'Reads: Mirror'			0.063 (0.160)
'Reads: Express'			0.140 (0.145)
'Reads: Star'			-0.032 (0.095)
'Reads: Record'			-0.072 (0.266)
N	3084	3084	2660

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1

Table A10: Correlates of balanced budget attitudes. All models are estimated by OLS and include controls for dummy variables for experimental split (not shown). Omitted categories are: party vote: Conservative; newspaper: None.

	BalanceBudget	
	Model 1	Model 2
Analogy	0.221*** (0.044)	0.115*** (0.011)
HHB_Avoid	0.311*** (0.048)	
HHB_Bad		0.065*** (0.024)
AgeStd	-0.051** (0.021)	-0.064*** (0.022)
Gender: Male	-0.166*** (0.033)	-0.182*** (0.034)
SocialGrade: B	0.101* (0.055)	0.107* (0.058)
SocialGrade: C1	0.081 (0.052)	0.084 (0.054)
SocialGrade: C2	0.179*** (0.058)	0.200*** (0.062)
SocialGrade: D	0.227*** (0.070)	0.232*** (0.074)
SocialGrade: E	0.249*** (0.069)	0.240*** (0.073)
Housing: Other	-0.049 (0.072)	-0.096 (0.077)
Housing: Renter	0.001 (0.043)	-0.031 (0.045)
HHInc: >£100k	-0.113 (0.091)	-0.082 (0.097)
HHInc: £25k-50k	0.0004 (0.044)	-0.020 (0.046)
HHInc: £50k-100k	-0.002 (0.056)	-0.047 (0.058)
HHInc: DK/NA	0.033 (0.048)	-0.013 (0.052)
GEVote: DK/DNV	0.093 (0.107)	0.043 (0.115)
GEVote: Green	-0.031 (0.122)	-0.012 (0.124)
GEVote: Lab	-0.183*** (0.040)	-0.161*** (0.042)
GEVote: LD	-0.166*** (0.063)	-0.150** (0.066)
GEVote: Other	-0.025 (0.079)	-0.100 (0.084)
GEVote: UKIP	0.259** (0.112)	0.257** (0.117)
EUVote: DK/DNV	0.136 (0.083)	0.194** (0.089)
EUVote: Leave	0.205*** (0.037)	0.237*** (0.039)
Analogy:HHB_Avoid	-0.031** (0.013)	
Analogy:HHB_Bad		0.001 (0.006)
Constant	1.904*** (0.174)	2.915*** (0.079)
N	2560	2359
R-squared	0.173	0.148

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

Table A11: Correlates of balanced budget attitudes. All models are estimated by OLS and include controls for dummy variables for experimental split (not shown). Omitted categories are: party vote: Conservative; newspaper: None.

	BalanceBudget	
	Model 1	Model 2
Analogy	0.330*** (0.075)	0.139*** (0.021)
Avoid borrow: Not v. imp.	0.964*** (0.292)	
Avoid borrow: Imp.	1.145*** (0.281)	
Avoid borrow: V. imp.	1.471*** (0.281)	
Borrow: Neutral		0.341*** (0.105)
Borrow: Bad		0.326*** (0.096)
AgeStd	-0.051** (0.021)	-0.066*** (0.022)
Gender: Male	-0.166*** (0.033)	-0.181*** (0.034)
SocialGrade: B	0.098* (0.055)	0.103* (0.058)
SocialGrade: C1	0.079 (0.052)	0.082 (0.054)
SocialGrade: C2	0.176*** (0.058)	0.192*** (0.062)
SocialGrade: D	0.227*** (0.070)	0.228*** (0.074)
SocialGrade: E	0.252*** (0.069)	0.236*** (0.073)
Housing: Other	-0.055 (0.072)	-0.087 (0.077)
Housing: Renter	0.001 (0.043)	-0.029 (0.045)
HHInc: >£100k	-0.125 (0.091)	-0.094 (0.097)
HHInc: £25k-50k	-0.0003 (0.044)	-0.031 (0.046)
HHInc: £50k-100k	-0.007 (0.056)	-0.055 (0.058)
HHInc: DK/NA	0.034 (0.048)	-0.023 (0.052)
GEVote: DK/DNV	0.085 (0.107)	0.039 (0.115)
GEVote: Green	-0.039 (0.122)	0.008 (0.126)
GEVote: Lab	-0.183*** (0.040)	-0.162*** (0.042)
GEVote: LD	-0.167*** (0.063)	-0.137** (0.066)
GEVote: Other	-0.025 (0.079)	-0.099 (0.084)
GEVote: UKIP	0.259** (0.112)	0.266** (0.117)
EUVote: DK/DNV	0.141* (0.083)	0.193** (0.089)
EUVote: Leave	0.204*** (0.037)	0.242*** (0.039)
Analogy *Avoid borrow: Not v. imp.	-0.191** (0.080)	
Analogy *Avoid borrow: Imp.	-0.205*** (0.076)	
Analogy *Avoid borrow: V. imp.	-0.232*** (0.076)	
Analogy *Borrow: Neutral		-0.054* (0.028)
Analogy *Borrow: Bad		-0.017 (0.025)
Constant	1.679*** (0.281)	2.694*** (0.102)
N	2560	2356
R-squared	0.175	0.150

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

C Observational and Experimental Evidence From an Extra Survey

Group	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	$\approx N$ Respondents
A	–	<i>Analogy^{Alt}</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	850
C	<i>Analogy Quiz</i>	<i>Analogy^{Alt}</i>	<i>Balance Budget</i>	425

Table A12: The design of the survey fielded by YouGov in June 2018. The data from this survey are used in only in this section.

Table A12 shows the parts of the design of the June 2018 survey that we use in this section. The *Balance Budget* question is as detailed in table A1. The *Analogy^{Alt}* question was as follows:

When a household’s income falls, they probably ought to cut their spending. On the other hand, when a household’s income increases, they can probably increase their spending. Some people think that this reasoning applies to governments, but others think that it does not. Where would you place yourself on this 6-point scale of the relevance of this household reasoning for governments?

The response options were: “The way we think about household budgets shows us how we should think about government budgets.”; 2; . . . ; 5; “The way we think about household budgets is irrelevant for how we should think about government budgets.”; “Don’t know”.

The *Analogy Quiz* instrument was as follows:

Please read the following statements, which indicate similarities between the financial situations of households and governments.

1. “Taxes paid by corporations to the government are like earnings are to households.”
2. “Government spending on national infrastructure is like households paying for home improvements.”
3. “Foreign aid spending by the government is like a donation to a charity focussing on overseas development by a household.”
4. “Government spending on the police is like a household buying a burglar alarm.”

How many of these statements do you agree with?

The response options were: 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, and “Don’t know”.

This survey design facilitates two extra analyses that are useful for building confidence in the core results presented in the main text of this paper. We discuss each of these, below.

C.1 Validating Analogy Endorsement Measurement

First, we can use Group C respondents to provide a validation check for our attempts to measure explicit analogy endorsement. If explicit analogy endorsement – either on the basis of the *Analogy^{Alt}* or very slightly different *Analogy* instruments – are valid measures, we would expect them to be positively correlated with responses to the the *Analogy Quiz* instrument that asks respondents how many of the analogical similarities they agree with.

Let us define a variable $AnalogySimilarities_i \in 0, 1, 2, 3, 4$ as non-DK responses to the *Analogy Quiz* survey instrument. Higher values of this variable thus provide a measure of the extent to which respondents agree with various explicit statements about the analogical similarities between

household and government finances. We can now assess whether these responses are correlated with the more abstract analogy endorsement scale that we construct. Table A13 shows the results of estimating a set of linear models of this correlation: first a bare bivariate model; then one also adjusting for demographic covariates; and finally one that further includes prior general election vote choice. The estimated coefficient for *AnalogySimilarities* is large and very stable across all specifications, indicating that the two are robustly correlated with each other.

Table A13: Correlates of analogy endorsement and balanced budget attitudes.

	Analogy		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
AnalogySimilarities	0.297*** (0.054)	0.287*** (0.056)	0.271*** (0.056)
Gender		-0.003 (0.162)	-0.013 (0.163)
AgeGroup: 29-45		0.210 (0.269)	0.210 (0.269)
AgeGroup: 45-65		0.020 (0.247)	-0.036 (0.251)
AgeGroup: 65-		0.048 (0.273)	-0.105 (0.285)
SES: B		0.601** (0.289)	0.596** (0.289)
SES: C1		0.378 (0.286)	0.367 (0.290)
SES: C2		0.678** (0.292)	0.644** (0.298)
SES: D		0.457 (0.356)	0.526 (0.359)
SES: E		0.391 (0.346)	0.404 (0.352)
EdQual: Non-GCSE		0.024 (0.409)	0.075 (0.408)
EdQual: GCSE		0.073 (0.415)	0.129 (0.418)
EdQual: A-Level		-0.108 (0.414)	-0.096 (0.414)
EdQual: Non-BA		0.093 (0.394)	0.173 (0.395)
EdQual: BA/MA/PhD		-0.316 (0.396)	-0.201 (0.399)
Vote: DK/DNV			-0.131 (0.259)
Vote: Green			-1.392* (0.738)
Vote: Labour			-0.413** (0.201)
Vote: LD			-0.447 (0.304)
Vote: Other			-0.706* (0.422)
Vote: UKIP			0.268 (0.733)
Constant	2.464*** (0.134)	2.045*** (0.539)	2.320*** (0.555)
N	352	334	334
R-squared	0.081	0.114	0.140

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

C.2 Further Null Findings Regarding the Effect of Analogical Reasoning on Balanced Budget Attitudes

The second way that we can make use of the June 2018 survey is by exploiting the random allocation of respondents to Groups A and C (as per Table A12). In this way, we can assess whether respondents who were randomly allocated to receive a treatment of *Analogy Quiz* before expressing analogy endorsement and attitudes regarding balanced budgets respond differently on the latter two than those from the control group (A). To be clear, the inferences under this design are driven by the treatment not the (observational) values of the *AnalogySimilarities_i* responses.

On the face of it, one might expect the *Analogy Quiz* treatment to yield higher endorsement of the household finance analogy as respondents will have just seen four concrete examples of the analogy in operation. On the other hand, there is ample scope for those concrete examples to lead respondents to reassess whatever (implicit) assumptions that would otherwise have made about the merits of the household analogy. Comparing taxes to earnings, national infrastructure to home improvements, and the police to burglar alarms, may actually lead respondents to see how stark the differences are in the operation of the two financial units.

The survey affords us the opportunity to assess whether the *Analogy Quiz* treatment has effects on analogy endorsement and also on balanced budget attitudes. Table A14 presents the results from two pairs of models. The first pair estimate the treatment effect on analogy endorsement and the second pair estimate the treatment effect on balanced budget attitudes. For each pair, we show the results for a ‘pure’ treatment effect model and then those from a model that makes use of a battery of demographic and prior vote choice covariates. Within each pair of models, the estimated treatment effects are very stable and the inferences are unaffected by the inclusion of covariates.

The notable aspects of the findings in Table A14 are that our treatment *did* have a statistically significant effect on analogy endorsement – a negative effect – but that we do not find a statistically significant effect on balanced budget preferences. While the sign of the estimated effect on the latter is consistent with the sign of the effect on analogy endorsement, the estimate is very far from distinguishable from statistical noise (p=0.52 for Model 3).

Table A14: Correlates of analogy endorsement and balanced budget attitudes.

	Analogy		BalanceBudget	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Treat: Analogy Quiz	-0.238** (0.094)	-0.222** (0.096)	-0.035 (0.055)	-0.041 (0.055)
Vote: DK/DNV		-0.132 (0.140)		-0.124 (0.078)
Vote: Green		-0.776* (0.403)		-0.555** (0.227)
Vote: Labour		-0.480*** (0.111)		-0.306*** (0.064)
Vote: LD		-0.338* (0.190)		-0.254** (0.109)
Vote: Other		-0.234 (0.241)		-0.031 (0.138)
Vote: UKIP		0.074 (0.359)		0.448** (0.199)
Gender		0.126 (0.092)		0.202*** (0.052)
AgeGroup: 29-45		-0.014 (0.154)		-0.074 (0.089)
AgeGroup: 45-65		-0.014 (0.149)		-0.229*** (0.086)
AgeGroup: 65-		0.107 (0.167)		-0.135 (0.096)
SES: B		0.462*** (0.162)		0.132 (0.093)
SES: C1		0.391** (0.152)		0.130 (0.087)
SES: C2		0.649*** (0.165)		0.100 (0.094)
SES: D		0.438** (0.196)		0.270** (0.112)
SES: E		0.246 (0.192)		0.047 (0.110)
EdQual: Non-GCSE		0.073 (0.223)		-0.188 (0.127)
EdQual: GCSE		-0.080 (0.224)		-0.183 (0.129)
EdQual: A-Level		-0.013 (0.223)		-0.367*** (0.127)
EdQual: Non-BA		0.122 (0.212)		-0.362*** (0.122)
EdQual: BA/MA/PhD		-0.075 (0.210)		-0.463*** (0.121)
Constant	3.292*** (0.054)	2.890*** (0.306)	3.383*** (0.031)	3.551*** (0.175)
N	1221	1166	1278	1218
R-squared	0.005	0.048	0.0003	0.078

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

D Extra Results for: “Experimental Evidence”

This section provides some extra, and more detailed, results for the evidence presented in “Experimental Evidence” of the main text. Table A15 and table A16 shows summary statistics for prior vote choice and household income, respectively, within the sample used for the main survey experiment in this section. The tables also provide evidence regarding the balance of the various treatment groups for the experiment across these variables. The evidence provides no reason to be concerned that there is a lack of balance on these observables across the treatment groups.

Table A15: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	B	C	D	p-value
GEVote: Lab	0.375	0.403	0.371	0.359	0.364	0.508
	0.011	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.022	
GEVote: LD	0.081	0.089	0.089	0.074	0.073	0.674
	0.006	0.013	0.014	0.012	0.012	
GEVote: SNP	0.035	0.037	0.041	0.033	0.030	0.823
	0.004	0.009	0.010	0.009	0.008	
GEVote: PC	0.006	0.011	0.007	0.004	0.002	0.353
	0.002	0.005	0.004	0.003	0.002	
GEVote: UKIP	0.023	0.020	0.016	0.029	0.028	0.486
	0.004	0.006	0.006	0.008	0.008	
GEVote: Green	0.018	0.015	0.016	0.020	0.019	0.929
	0.003	0.006	0.006	0.007	0.006	
GEVote: N/A	0	0	0	0	0	
	0	0	0	0	0	
GEVote: Other	0.012	0.013	0.014	0.009	0.011	0.902
	0.003	0.005	0.006	0.004	0.005	
GEVote: DK	0.029	0.026	0.018	0.038	0.032	0.321
	0.004	0.007	0.006	0.009	0.008	
PIId: Con	0.239	0.227	0.247	0.223	0.261	0.590
	0.011	0.022	0.023	0.022	0.023	
PIId: Lab	0.252	0.246	0.228	0.256	0.278	0.477
	0.012	0.023	0.022	0.023	0.024	
PIId: LD	0.087	0.105	0.081	0.082	0.081	0.617
	0.007	0.016	0.015	0.015	0.014	
PIId: SNP/PC	0.028	0.037	0.031	0.014	0.031	0.242
	0.004	0.010	0.009	0.006	0.009	
PIId: Other	0.094	0.071	0.101	0.104	0.100	0.363
	0.008	0.014	0.016	0.016	0.016	
PIId: DK	0.065	0.071	0.059	0.070	0.061	0.881
	0.007	0.014	0.013	0.014	0.013	

Table A17 presents the results of regressing the ‘reasons’ treatment dummies on each of *BalanceBudget*^N and *Analogy*^N. The former provide the full results for fig. 4 in the main text.

Table A16: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	B	C	D	p-value
Gender: Male	0.426	0.449	0.399	0.410	0.446	0.221
	0.011	0.021	0.021	0.021	0.021	
HHInc: £5k-10k	0.042	0.047	0.059	0.038	0.024	0.036
	0.004	0.010	0.011	0.009	0.007	
HHInc: £10k-15k	0.072	0.065	0.095	0.072	0.057	0.124
	0.006	0.011	0.013	0.012	0.010	
HHInc: £15k-20k	0.077	0.067	0.087	0.078	0.077	0.708
	0.006	0.011	0.013	0.012	0.012	
HHInc: £20k-25k	0.091	0.097	0.089	0.074	0.104	0.351
	0.006	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.014	
HHInc: £25k-30k	0.076	0.077	0.071	0.076	0.079	0.968
	0.006	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	
HHInc: £30k-35k	0.070	0.067	0.061	0.070	0.081	0.654
	0.006	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.012	
HHInc: £35k-40k	0.053	0.053	0.059	0.052	0.047	0.884
	0.005	0.010	0.011	0.010	0.009	
HHInc: £40k-45k	0.055	0.069	0.042	0.056	0.051	0.322
	0.005	0.011	0.009	0.010	0.010	
HHInc: £45k-50k	0.053	0.047	0.048	0.060	0.055	0.782
	0.005	0.010	0.010	0.011	0.010	
HHInc: £50k-60k	0.054	0.049	0.051	0.062	0.055	0.810
	0.005	0.010	0.010	0.011	0.010	
HHInc: £60k-70k	0.031	0.032	0.028	0.032	0.031	0.982
	0.004	0.008	0.007	0.008	0.008	
HHInc: £70k-100k	0.046	0.055	0.046	0.050	0.033	0.396
	0.005	0.010	0.009	0.010	0.008	
HHInc: £100k-150k	0.020	0.016	0.018	0.020	0.026	0.750
	0.003	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.007	
HHInc: >£150k	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.006	0.008	0.973
	0.002	0.004	0.004	0.003	0.004	
HHInc: DK	0.054	0.049	0.053	0.044	0.071	0.262
	0.005	0.010	0.010	0.009	0.011	
HHInc: Declined	0.179	0.181	0.158	0.199	0.177	0.404
	0.009	0.017	0.016	0.018	0.017	

Table A17: Estimated effects of the various “reason” treatments on balanced budget attitudes (*BalanceBudget*) and household analogy endorsement (*Analogy_{i,t}*).

	<i>BalanceBudget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>
	Model 1	Model 2
Reason	-0.077 (0.057)	-0.137 (0.108)
Analogy Reason	-0.044 (0.057)	0.016 (0.108)
Less Analogy Reason	0.007 (0.057)	-0.155 (0.107)
Constant	2.432*** (0.040)	3.678*** (0.075)
N	2017	1995
R-squared	0.001	0.002

***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

E Extra Results for: “Explaining the Correlation Between Analogy and Budget Balance Attitudes”

This section provides some extra, and more detailed, results for the evidence presented in “Explaining the Correlation Between Analogy and Budget Balance Attitudes” of the main text. Table A18 and table A19 provide summary statistics of the variables used in the analysis sample in this section – also showing that there is no evidence of a lack of balance on covariates between the treatment groups.

Table A18: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	B	C	D	p-value
GEVote: DK/DNV	0.032	0.030	0.025	0.038	0.040	0.273
	0.003	0.008	0.005	0.006	0.009	
GEVote: Green	0.018	0.016	0.014	0.021	0.021	0.560
	0.002	0.006	0.004	0.004	0.006	
GEVote: Lab	0.386	0.417	0.388	0.385	0.354	0.221
	0.009	0.022	0.015	0.015	0.021	
GEVote: LD	0.078	0.089	0.069	0.078	0.084	0.537
	0.005	0.013	0.008	0.008	0.012	
GEVote: Other	0.050	0.040	0.052	0.048	0.059	0.524
	0.004	0.009	0.007	0.007	0.010	
GEVote: UKIP	0.022	0.024	0.025	0.019	0.017	0.686
	0.003	0.007	0.005	0.004	0.006	
PIId: Con	0.415	0.385	0.427	0.410	0.426	0.422
	0.009	0.022	0.015	0.015	0.022	
PIId: Green	0.018	0.016	0.014	0.021	0.021	0.560
	0.002	0.006	0.004	0.004	0.006	
PIId: Lab	0.386	0.417	0.388	0.385	0.354	0.221
	0.009	0.022	0.015	0.015	0.021	
PIId: LD	0.078	0.089	0.069	0.078	0.084	0.537
	0.005	0.013	0.008	0.008	0.012	
PIId: Other	0.050	0.040	0.052	0.048	0.059	0.524
	0.004	0.009	0.007	0.007	0.010	
PIId: UKIP	0.022	0.024	0.025	0.019	0.017	0.686
	0.003	0.007	0.005	0.004	0.006	

Table A19: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	B	C	D	p-value
Gender: Male	0.435	0.444	0.428	0.429	0.455	0.643
	0.008	0.020	0.014	0.014	0.020	
HHInc: >£100k	0.035	0.038	0.030	0.038	0.033	0.661
	0.003	0.008	0.005	0.005	0.007	
HHInc: £25k-50k	0.284	0.279	0.279	0.294	0.278	0.813
	0.007	0.018	0.012	0.013	0.018	
HHInc: £50k-100k	0.146	0.141	0.143	0.153	0.141	0.830
	0.006	0.014	0.010	0.010	0.014	
HHInc: DK/NA	0.231	0.213	0.234	0.228	0.248	0.514
	0.007	0.016	0.012	0.012	0.017	

Table A20 provides the full model results underlying fig. 6 in the main text. Similarly, table A21 provides the full model results underlying fig. 7 in the main text.

Table A20: Estimated effect of answering the balanced budget question first on balanced budget attitudes ($BalanceBudget_{i,t}$) and analogy endorsement ($Analogy_{i,t}$).

	<i>BalanceBudget</i>	<i>Analogy</i>
	Model 1	Model 2
<i>BBFirst</i>	-0.008 (0.044)	0.195** (0.078)
Constant	3.383*** (0.031)	3.292*** (0.055)
N	1711	1622
R-squared	0.00002	0.004

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1

F The Additional ‘Priming Personal Austerity’ Experiment

In section 5.1 of the main text, we briefly discuss an additional survey experiment that we conducted that provides further evidence against the hypothesis that the null findings that we obtain in section 5 are driven by wide-scale pre-treatment of our sample. We provide more detail about that experiment, here.

The experiment described in this section is based on the assumption that the household analogy logic was relatively widespread amongst British voters when the survey was fielded in 2016. If that assumption holds, we can think of respondents as being disproportionately pre-treated with the analogy. On this basis, the experiment had a very simple design: we sought to prime a random subset of our respondents with the idea that faced with a drop in incomes, households would need to think about curbing expenditure in order to balance their budgets. Meanwhile, the control group is left unprimed. All respondents – treated or control – then answered a question tapping their attitudes about government borrowing.

The idea is that, to the extent that respondents use the household analogy, priming the idea of austerity (cutting spending in response to an income drop) at the household level should affect views on government borrowing given the presence of the analogy. In order to try to avoid the issue that arises if respondents analogise from a favorable view of personal borrowing, our priming treatment leans on the budget constraint aspect of personal finances in bad times. As such, we refer to this as the “personal austerity” prime.

The specific wording for the personal austerity prime is, “If your monthly income were to unexpectedly fall by 10%, how do you think this would affect your monthly expenditure, if at all?”, with response options of: “Reduce monthly spending by 10% or more”; “Reduce monthly spending by less than 10%”; “No change”; “Increase monthly spending by less than 10%”; “Increase monthly spending by 10% or more”; “Don’t know”.

The question wording for the dependent variable capturing attitudes regarding government borrowing is drawn from a long-running series of Eurobarometer surveys. This question asks respondents for their (dis)agreement with the following statement: “Measures to reduce the public deficit and debt in the UK are not a priority for now”, where the response options are: “Totally agree”; “Tend to

Table A21: Estimated effect of answering the balanced budget question first on analogy endorsement ($Analogy_{i,t}$).

	<i>Analogy</i>		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 2	-0.541 (0.422)	-0.434 (0.436)	0.171 (0.518)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 3	0.398 (0.398)	0.519 (0.411)	0.968** (0.493)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 4	0.828** (0.403)	1.002** (0.416)	1.461*** (0.500)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 5	0.703* (0.420)	0.745* (0.436)	1.259** (0.519)
<i>BBFirst</i>	-0.922* (0.528)	-0.748 (0.552)	-0.418 (0.646)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 2 × <i>BBFirst</i>	1.124* (0.575)	1.000* (0.601)	0.526 (0.700)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 3 × <i>BBFirst</i>	1.008* (0.540)	0.833 (0.564)	0.528 (0.660)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 4 × <i>BBFirst</i>	1.218** (0.548)	1.105* (0.573)	0.859 (0.669)
<i>BalanceBudget</i> = 5 × <i>BBFirst</i>	1.475*** (0.572)	1.401** (0.597)	1.154* (0.696)
Constant	2.867*** (0.390)	1.943*** (0.480)	1.651*** (0.633)
Age	No	Yes	Yes
Household Income	No	Yes	Yes
Gender	No	Yes	Yes
Vote Choice (2017)	No	No	Yes
Brexit Vote Choice	No	No	Yes
Party-id	No	No	Yes
N	1567	1457	1121
R-squared	0.093	0.123	0.161

*** p < .01; ** p < .05; * p < .1

agree”; “Tend to disagree”; “Totally disagree”.¹ Responses to this question are captured in a variable we denote as $DefPriority_i$.

Table A22 sets out the full design of the experiment. It was fielded to 3400 UK respondents July 2016 by YouGov. Table A23 and table A24 provide summary statistics for the prior vote choice and household income for the sample used in this experiment, as well as evidence consistent with adequate balance on these observables across the treatment groups.

Group	Step 1	Step 2	Probability	$\approx N$
A	–	$DefPriority$	50%	1,700
B	$PersonalAusterity$	$DefPriority$	50%	1,700

Table A22: Design for the priming personal austerity experiment.

Table A23: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	PAPrime	p-value
Vote2015: Lab	0.250 0.007	0.245 0.010	0.255 0.011	0.501
Vote2015: LD	0.068 0.004	0.060 0.006	0.076 0.006	0.054
Vote2015: SNP	0.036 0.003	0.041 0.005	0.032 0.004	0.132
Vote2015: PC	0.004 0.001	0.005 0.002	0.004 0.001	0.582
Vote2015: UKIP	0.100 0.005	0.096 0.007	0.104 0.007	0.429
Vote2015: Green	0.041 0.003	0.045 0.005	0.038 0.005	0.281
Vote2015: BNP	0.001 0.0004	0 0	0.001 0.001	0.097
Vote2015: Other	0.019 0.002	0.022 0.004	0.017 0.003	0.306
Vote2015: DK	0.050 0.004	0.052 0.005	0.048 0.005	0.603
Vote2015: NA	0.149 0.006	0.156 0.009	0.142 0.008	0.233
PId: Con	0.261 0.008	0.260 0.011	0.263 0.011	0.880
PId: Lab	0.270 0.008	0.277 0.011	0.263 0.011	0.349
PId: LD	0.071 0.004	0.066 0.006	0.077 0.006	0.201
PId: SNP	0.026 0.003	0.027 0.004	0.025 0.004	0.722
PId: PC	0.003 0.001	0.003 0.001	0.003 0.001	0.991
PId: UKIP	0.068 0.004	0.065 0.006	0.072 0.006	0.447
PId: Green	0.038 0.003	0.038 0.005	0.038 0.005	0.896
PId: BNP	0.002 0.001	0.001 0.001	0.002 0.001	0.414
PId: Other	0.016 0.002	0.018 0.003	0.015 0.003	0.480
PId: DK	0.073 0.004	0.075 0.006	0.072 0.006	0.699

¹There was no “Don’t know” response in the survey we fielded.

Table A24: Summary statistics: means (odd rows) and standard errors of the means (even rows). First column: full sample. Middle columns: each of the experimental treatment conditions. Final column: test of whether we can reject the null that treatment dummies do not belong in a bare model predicting each respective row variable — such that low p-values indicate a worrying lack of balance across treatment conditions.

Variable	All	Control	PAPrime	p-value
Gender: Male	0.455	0.465	0.445	0.249
	0.009	0.012	0.012	
HHInc: £5k-10k	0.049	0.047	0.050	0.667
	0.004	0.005	0.005	
HHInc: £10k-15k	0.066	0.062	0.070	0.327
	0.004	0.006	0.006	
HHInc: £15k-20k	0.065	0.064	0.066	0.823
	0.004	0.006	0.006	
HHInc: £20k-25k	0.076	0.071	0.082	0.218
	0.005	0.006	0.007	
HHInc: £25k-30k	0.067	0.064	0.070	0.443
	0.004	0.006	0.006	
HHInc: £30k-35k	0.053	0.057	0.050	0.374
	0.004	0.006	0.005	
HHInc: £35k-40k	0.051	0.057	0.046	0.171
	0.004	0.006	0.005	
HHInc: £40k-45k	0.051	0.043	0.060	0.027
	0.004	0.005	0.006	
HHInc: £45k-50k	0.036	0.033	0.039	0.377
	0.003	0.004	0.005	
HHInc: £50k-60k	0.054	0.058	0.050	0.267
	0.004	0.006	0.005	
HHInc: £60k-70k	0.031	0.030	0.033	0.515
	0.003	0.004	0.004	
HHInc: £70k-100k	0.044	0.042	0.045	0.645
	0.003	0.005	0.005	
HHInc: £100k-150k	0.017	0.019	0.015	0.411
	0.002	0.003	0.003	
HHInc: >£150k	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.841
	0.002	0.002	0.002	
HHInc: DK	0.061	0.063	0.058	0.530
	0.004	0.006	0.006	
HHInc: Declined	0.179	0.188	0.169	0.138
	0.007	0.010	0.009	
HHInc: NA	0.070	0.074	0.067	0.427
	0.004	0.006	0.006	

The results of this experiment are summarized in the coefficient plot presented in fig. A2, which shows the estimated treatment effect of having been assigned to the *PersonalAusterity* question. The estimates are based on OLS applied to an interval-scale version of the *DefPriority_i* question, ranging 1–4, and the full results are shown in table A25.² The base specification simply has a dummy for the treatment (as well as a constant), while the second specification includes (pre-treatment) controls for gross household income, party-id, and past general election vote.³

We find *no* evidence to support the existence of a treatment effect that is distinguishable from zero. Moreover, this does not seem to be because we have an unduly noisy estimate of the treatment effect: as shown, the (95%) confidence intervals are rather narrow. The figure is plotted on a scale of $-1-1$ in order to correspond with unit changes in *DefPriority_i*. We can also compare the estimated treatment effects and associated confidence intervals to the variation in the dependent variable. From the data, $StdDev(DefPriority_i) = 0.83$, and so on this metric, too, we feel comfortable inferring that the estimated treatment effects really are, essentially, zero.

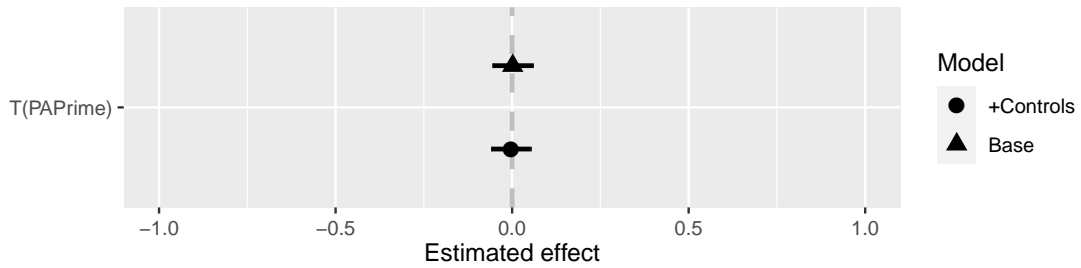


Figure A2: Estimated treatment effect of the “personal austerity” prime ($T(PersonalAusterity)$) on balanced budget attitudes, measured using *DefPriority_i*.

Table A25: Estimated effect of the “personal austerity” prime on balanced budget attitudes.

	<i>DefPriority</i>	
	Model 1	Model 2
<i>T(PersonalAusterity)</i>	0.002 (0.029)	−0.003 (0.028)
Constant	2.417*** (0.020)	2.442*** (0.113)
Vote Choice (2015)	No	No
Party-id (2015)	No	No
Household Income	No	No
N	3400	3400
R-squared	0.00000	0.063

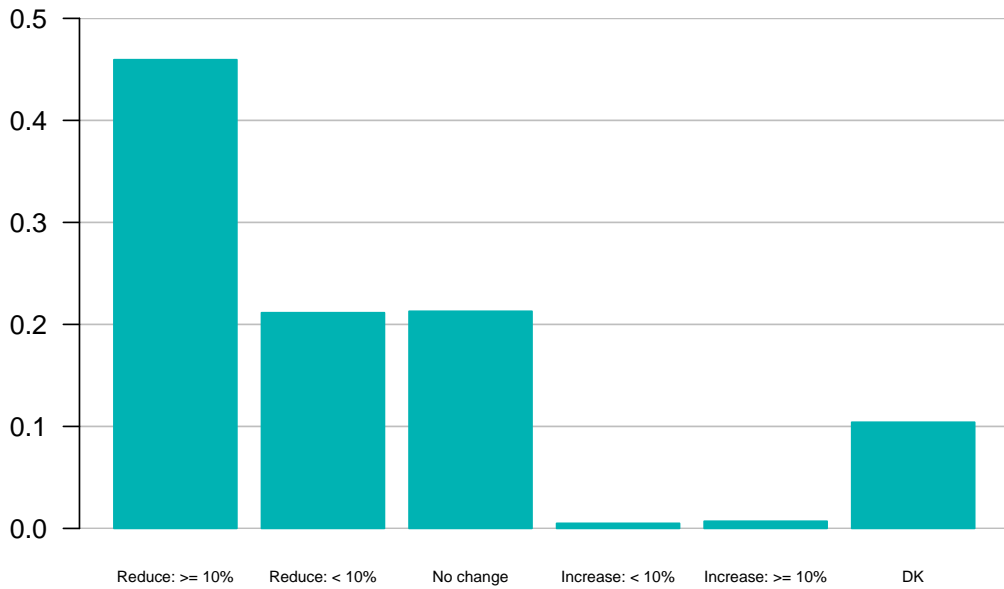
***p < .01; **p < .05; *p < .1

One explanation for these null results could be that the personal austerity prime is not working to make people focus on a binding household budget, for example if it reminded people just how little they would in fact adjust their spending if their incomes fell. We can assess the extent to which this is true by examining the responses that we obtained to our personal austerity priming question.

²The inferences are unchanged if we switch to an ordered logit model.

³All controls are entered using dummies for all-but-one of the factor levels, allowing full flexibility on functional form.

Figure A3 plots the (weighted) distribution of these respondents and shows that respondents do lean strongly towards reductions in their own spending when faced with a hypothetical reduction in their incomes. We take this as evidence that the prime does raise a real awareness of household budget constraints.



If your monthly income were to unexpectedly fall by 10%, how do you think this would affect your monthly expenditure, if at all?

Figure A3: Distribution of responses to the personal austerity priming question.