Winners' Restraint or Affective Majoritarianism? Elections, Polarization and Political Support*

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Abstract

Research on the impact of elections on attitudes toward democracy has focused primarily on satisfaction with democracy. Building on this, we analyze how winning and losing elections, along with affective polarization, shapes citizens' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. We propose that partisan animus weakens the "reservoir of goodwill" that helps citizens accept democratic norms of restraint and consent that may go against their self-interest. However, a comparative study of 36 elections and two quasi-experimental case studies show that winners and losers do not differ significantly in their support for these key democratic norms. Even in highly polarized contexts, winners' restraint and losers' consent remain relatively robust. While satisfaction with democracy is shaped by winner-loser dynamics, especially when polarization is high, support for core democratic principles is not, despite increased partisan hostility. These findings have positive implications for our understanding of the role of citizens in democratic processes.

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1 Introduction

There are several indications that liberal democracy is currently facing significant challenges (Plattner, 2020). Election losers have reacted violently and stormed the legislative chambers of consolidated democracies such as Brazil and the US. Meanwhile, the governments of some EU member states, like Poland or Hungary, have introduced illiberal reforms, while still enjoying broad public support in elections. In fact, in 2021 the world witnessed a record-high number of democracies autocratizing, as well as an upward trend in polarization (Boese et al., 2022).

Against this backdrop, we propose that it is relevant to revisit the question of how winning and losing elections affects citizens' attitudes toward their political system, going beyond traditional measures of political support. Specifically, and in light of recent developments, there are three aspects that warrant our attention: citizens' openness to exercise restraint and forbearance when they stand on the winning side of elections (see Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018); the willingness of election losers to accept or consent that in democracies the winning majority might ultimately rule (Schattschneider, 1975; Nadeau and Blais, 1993); and how these winner loser dynamics might be influenced by heightened polarization.

Existing studies have extensively examined how being on the winning or losing side of an election affects political support. However, most previous work has focused on specific political support: most frequently satisfaction with democracy, alongside trust in political institutions (Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Anderson and LoTempio, 2002; Blais and Gélineau, 2007; Campbell, 2015; Curini et al., 2012; Dahlberg and Linde, 2017; Daoust et al., 2023; Esaiasson, 2011; Martini and Quaranta, 2019; Nemčok and Wass, 2021; Singh, 2023). One consistent finding from this vast body of literature is that winners tend to display higher levels of specific political support than losers.

When discussing the implications of the winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy, many of these studies equate this gap with a lack of consent on the part of the losers (Curini et al., 2012; Dahlberg and Linde, 2016, 2017; Martini and Quaranta, 2019; Nemčok and Wass, 2021). We shall argue, however, that these indicators are not en-

tirely adequate for these purposes, and that they overlook a key aspect of contemporary democracies: the willingness of citizens to exercise forbearance when they stand on the winning side of elections. While the consent of losers is important, democracy today is often subverted by ruling coalitions that dismantle the liberal elements of this political system. The need for winners to exercise forbearance and not abuse their position when in power has long been recognized (Linz and Stepan, 1978). However, only recently have empirical analyses of individual-level attitudes begun to focus explicitly on such "winners' restraint" alongside losers' consent (Werner et al., 2023). Focusing on the extent to which citizens accept the more granular rights and processes associated with democratic restraint and consent seems more appropriate in today's context of democratic backsliding (see Deglow and Fjelde, 2023; Mazepus and Toshkov, 2021; Moehler, 2009; Şaşmaz et al., 2022; Werner et al., 2023).

In addition, we propose that the implications of winning and losing for the support that citizens extend to principles related to democratic restraint and consent can be influenced by partisan animus. The heightened feelings of affection/disaffection towards one's political in-group/out-group that we have witnessed across advanced democracies are likely to exacerbate the winning and losing dynamics generated by electoral contests (Bassan-Nygate and Weiss, 2022; Hernández et al., 2021). Recent studies suggest that polarized environments can contribute to democratic instability by reducing individuals' willingness to hold co-partisans accountable for anti-democratic actions (Graham and Svolik, 2020; Saikkonen and Christensen, 2022). In a similar fashion, we propose that affective polarization can widen winner-loser gaps, not only in satisfaction with democracy, but also in their support for principles related to democratic restrain and consent (see Janssen, 2024).

Our analyses are based on the combination of an observational comparative study and two quasi-experimental case studies. In our first study, we draw on data for 31 countries and 36 elections from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). This dataset allows us to examine the impact of being a winner or loser on individuals' satisfaction with democracy (our benchmark), as well as their support for the primacy

of the will of the majority over the rights of minorities (unconstrained majoritarianism) and their opposition to strong political leaders who bend the rules. This observational evidence is complemented by two quasi-experimental case studies that we analyze through an unexpected event during survey design (Muñoz et al., 2020). In our second study, we exploit the unexpected shift in post-election coalitions during the CSES fieldwork corresponding to the 2017 New Zealand election to identify the effects of winning and losing on these attitudes. Similarly, in the third study we exploit the victory of Gabriel Boric in the "knife-edge" run-off vote of the 2021 Chilean presidential election, which overlaps with the fieldwork of the second wave of the TRI-POL panel survey (Torcal et al., 2023).

Using the gap in satisfaction with democracy and trust in government as a benchmark, the three studies consistently show that being on the winning or losing side of an election does not have a substantial effect on individuals' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. Moreover, our results also show that while affective polarization consistently and substantially increases the gap in specific political support (Ridge, 2022; Janssen, 2024), it only widens the winner-loser gap in support for norms of democratic restraint and consent to a very limited extent.

These findings have positive implications for our understanding of winners' restraint and losers' consent in contemporary democracies. Winners are unlikely to tolerate an abusive exercise of their privileged position, while losers also seem open to agreeing that while minorities must be protected, the majority can rule. Overall, this also seems to be generally the case even among those winners and losers who are highly polarized. These optimistic findings contrast with recent evidence on winners' limited commitment to horizontal accountability in European democracies (Mazepus and Toshkov, 2021), and with findings that affective polarization in Turkey significantly exacerbates winner-loser differences in tolerance of executive aggrandizement (Şaşmaz et al., 2022). In contrast, they are in line with evidence on winner restraint and loser consent in Asian democracies (Wu and Wu, 2022), as well as with Broockman et al. (2022), who highlight the negligible impact of affective polarization in shaping democratic norms.

2 Theory

2.1 Elections and political support

Elections are an essential feature of democracy that inevitably produce winners and losers. This winner-loser dynamic affects individuals' specific political support, mainly their satisfaction with democracy and their trust in political institutions. This winner-loser gap in political support is driven by two main factors: psychological and utilitarian.

Psychologically, winning–in any competitive activity–generates joy, happiness, and motivation, while losing generates frustration, shame, and anger (Wilson and Kerr, 1999). These same emotional dynamics are easily transferred from participants to observers. Football and basketball fans experience the same joy and excitement when their team wins and the same frustration and anger when they lose as the athletes themselves (Kerr et al., 2005). In extreme cases, these fans can become disillusioned with the sport altogether (Hirt et al., 1992).

The same mechanism applies to democracies and their inherent win-lose dynamics. After all, supporting a political party, like supporting a team, is rooted in social identity (Tajfel, 1982). If one consistently supports a losing party, one may be more likely to question the fairness or legitimacy of the system due to a "face-saving attribution bias". It would only make sense that one would be less satisfied with a system that one views as unfair or illegitimate.

Complementing this psychological mechanism, the *utilitarian perspective* is based on the relevance of self-interest for the formation and change of political support (Ferrín and Hernández, 2021). Elections determine the composition of government and influence policy outcomes, presumably to the benefit of the winners. Hence, winners will be more satisfied with a political system led by co-partisans who can realize their policy preferences. Indeed, previous research has found that winners expect their preferred policies to be implemented by incumbents (Daoust et al., 2023), suggesting that utilitarian considerations may influence their satisfaction with the political system. Conversely, losers are likely to be left with less or no representation, leading them to be less satisfied with

a political system that overlooks their preferences.

Overall, the existing evidence consistently points to a substantial gap in specific political support between winners and losers, especially when it comes to their satisfaction with democracy (e.g., Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Daoust et al., 2023). Some have also shown that this gap in support may extend to more diffuse measures of generic support for democracy (Anderson et al., 2005; Singh et al., 2011).

2.2 Winners' restraint and losers' consent

This persistent winner-loser gap in political support could cast doubts about losers' consent and winners' restraint, which are crucial for democracy (Linz and Stepan, 1978; Levitsky and Ziblatt, 2018). However, the literature has only recently begun to explicitly analyze citizens' willingness to comply with these democratic norms. Losers' consent involves accepting the results of the election, recognizing the incumbent's right to implement the policies they deem appropriate, and abiding by those policies (Anderson et al., 2005). The alternative would be to rebuff the policies and laws of the majority-supported government, to refuse a peaceful transition of power, or to revolt–as recently witnessed in Brazil and the United States (Kern and Kölln, 2022). A lack of consent from losers would therefore undermine the principle of majority rule.

In line with its importance for the stability and functioning of democracy, losers' consent figures prominently in the literature on the winner-loser gap (see, e.g., Anderson et al., 2005; Martini and Quaranta, 2019). However, most previous research tends to equate the winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy and political trust with a lack of losers' consent (Curini et al., 2012; Dahlberg and Linde, 2016, 2017; Martini and Quaranta, 2019; Nemčok and Wass, 2021). We would argue, however, that some disappointment on the part of the losers (and satisfaction on the part of the winners) is an inevitable feature of democracies. This should be especially so in established democracies, where power alternation is the norm, and if the gap in specific political support is not absolute (i.e., losers are not completely dissatisfied).

Some studies have instead examined the winner-loser gap in diffuse political support

using indicators of generic support for democracy. That is, they focus on the extent to which support for democracy as the "best" or "preferred" political system is lower among those who find themselves on the losing side of elections. However, the results of these studies are mixed. In Asian countries, there is no gap in the commitment to democratic norms of winners and losers (Jou, 2009). Conversely, the results of Singh et al. (2011) suggest that in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States, election losers are slightly less supportive of democracy. While informative for our purposes, the findings of these studies are limited by the generic nature of their indicators of democratic support, which provide us with a partial view of winners' restraint and losers' consent. This is especially true since citizens may have different understandings and interpretations of what democracy is (Hernández, 2016; Kirsch and Welzel, 2019). We must therefore go beyond generic indicators of diffuse political support and complement these measures with an analysis of the extent to which citizens embrace principles more closely related to democratic restraint and consent.

Even more relevant for our purposes is the limited attention paid to winners' restraint. When it comes to citizens on the winning side of elections, researchers have until recently paid little theoretical or empirical attention to their willingness to exercise and accept forbearance (c.f. Werner et al., 2023). The high level of political support observed among winners was implicitly assumed to be beneficial—or at least harmless—to the stability of political systems. In a democracy, however, it is crucial that governing majorities restrain themselves and do not dismantle the legal and constitutional provisions that constrain popular sovereignty or the "rule of the majority" (Linz and Stepan, 1978). The recent episodes of democratic backsliding experienced by several advanced democracies highlight the importance of paying more attention to winners. In today's democracies, the willingness of winners to accept constraints on their in-group's ability to rule may be as important, if not more important, than the consent of losers. If winners tolerate the dismantling of the institutions that constrain the power of the rulers they support, those rulers may be tempted to expand their power. This can pave the way for "executive agrandizement" (Bermeo, 2016). That is, a tentative commitment to democratic

principles could lead to tolerating instances of democratic backsliding or to (re)electing leaders with authoritarian tendencies (Wunsch et al., 2022).

Inspired by current developments in liberal democracies, recent studies primarily concentrate on winners' restraint regarding aspects related to horizontal accountability and executive powers. For example, winners are more likely to defend incumbents who undermine the powers of parliament, to allow incumbents to bypass other branches of government, or to condone government attacks on judicial independence (Moehler, 2009; Mazepus and Toshkov, 2021; Singer, 2018). Recent evidence from case studies in Turkey, Nigeria, and the UK also suggests that winners are more accepting of power enhancements of the executive vis-à-vis other branches of the state and to accept procedural violations (Deglow and Fjelde, 2023; Şaşmaz et al., 2022; Werner et al., 2023).

In our case, we propose to focus on two aspects related to democratic restraint and consent that are at the heart of the win-lose dynamics generated by elections. First, citizens' support for majoritarianism over the protection of minority rights. That is, the extent to which individuals believe that the majority should have the ultimate authority to make decisions and shape policy, even at the expense of minorities. Or conversely, their support for the notion that the rights of minorities should be safeguarded and protected, even if their preferences differ from those of the majority. Majority rule and the protection of minority rights are key democratic principles that must be balanced in some way (Dahl, 1989). Losers must accept the ability of winners to rule, and winners must accept their responsibility to protect minorities - even if it is not in the best interest of either to do so. Thus, this is an aspect that taps directly into norms related to both winners' restraint and losers' consent in a relational way.

The second aspect we focus on is mostly related to winners' restraint. Specifically, the openness of winners to accept political leaders who disregard the constraints imposed by the legal order and bend the rules and constitutional provisions to achieve their goals. This is a distinctive feature of current processes of democratic backsliding, in which strong elected leaders bend the rules and constitutional provisions to maximize the power of the executive branch and its leaders (Bermeo, 2016). These processes of executive

aggrandizement lead to powerful executives and unfettered majoritarianism.

Building upon utilitarian or institutional theories of political support (Mishler and Rose, 2002), we expect that, based on risk and utility calculations, winners and losers will exhibit contrasting attitudes regarding the principles associated with democratic restraint and consent. Our starting point is that self-interested winners and losers will have different stakes when it comes to the powers of majorities and the executive branch vis-à-vis minorities (see also Deglow and Fjelde, 2023; Ferrín and Hernández, 2021; Mazepus and Toshkov, 2021).

For losers, the protection of the rights of minorities can insulate them from decisions by the majority (i.e., winners) that may run counter to their interests. Akin to the role of consensual institutions in making losses more palatable by channeling the preferences of losers into the system, strong protection of minority rights can make the system less antagonistic to the demands of this group. In other words, losers are much more vulnerable to the potentially harmful consequences of unrestrained majoritarianism. We therefore expect losers to favor the protection of minority rights as well as limits on unrestrained executive power, precisely because these principles are crucial to protecting minorities from the potential risks associated with the abuse of the majoritarian principle.

Winners, instead, have more to gain from limiting those elements of democracy that constrain the realization of the demands of the majority. Since the executive will be aligned with the preferences of this group, unconstrained majoritarianism and a powerful executive are likely to be more appealing for self-interested winners (see also Deglow and Fjelde, 2023). Moreover, in most cases, this group will also hold a majority in other branches of the state (e.g., legislative chambers) and will probably be a numerical majority in society.[1] Hence, winners will have little to gain from a greater protection of minorities. In fact, this key democratic principle might, in some cases, stand in the way of the realization of the preferences of this group. We, therefore, expect that election winners will be more open to accept different forms of unconstrained majoritarianism and less favorable towards the protection of the rights of minorities.

[1]We discuss the relevance of being a numerical political majority or minority and the importance of controlling for this in the Data and Methods section of Study 1.

2.3 Affective polarization, winners' restraint and losers' consent

While we expect that winning and losing will generally affect political support and preferences about democratic restraint and consent, the extent to which they do might depend on partisan animus. Heightened feelings of affection/disaffection towards one's political in-group/out-group are likely to exacerbate the winning and losing dynamics generated by elections (Hernández et al., 2021).

Animosity toward political rivals is a key emotional response that should be incorporated into the psychological underpinnings of the winner-loser gap. Returning to the sports context, not all losses are the same. While losing is never the desired outcome, losing to a longtime rival is particularly painful. Conversely, while a win is always satisfying, the most valuable victories come from defeating tough opponents (Kilduff et al., 2016). Fans who identify strongly with their home team are even more likely to watch a rival play other neutral teams when the rival is expected to lose (Mahony and Moorman, 1999). Thus, when in-group affinity and out-group animosity are high, fans may derive satisfaction from the rival's loss (Leach et al., 2003).

We expect a similar logic to apply among those who have stronger affective feelings toward in- and out-parties. Recent studies show that partisan animus can widen the gap between winners and losers in specific political support. For example, in the United States, strong partisans feel more angry than weak partisans when threatened with electoral defeat (Huddy et al., 2015). Furthermore, Janssen (2024) finds that in the UK the effect of winner-loser status on political support is stronger among affectively polarized individuals. This evidence suggests that affective feelings toward parties may moderate the effects of being an election winner or loser.[2]

We would argue, however, that partisan animus may be even more relevant when it comes to norms related to democratic consent and restraint (see also Şaşmaz et al., 2022). As Easton (1975) proposed, diffuse political support is based on a "reservoir of goodwill". This reservoir of goodwill, nurtured through democratic experience, helps individuals to accept outcomes and procedures that may not be in their own self-interest. For example,

[2]See Ridge (2022) for a related argument based on "negative partisanship".

accepting constraints among winners or consenting to be ruled by the majority among losers. However, heightened affective polarization could deplete this reservoir of goodwill, leaving support for these democratic norms vulnerable to the effects of winning and losing elections.

Goodwill is likely to weaken in the presence of divisive political cleavages and high levels of out-party animus that heighten the utility and risks associated with being on the winning and losing sides of elections (Deglow and Fjelde, 2023). If losers perceive the "others" as existential enemies, or even as a threat, they will have more reasons to be hesitant in the granting of consent. In this case the stakes will be higher, and losers will have greater incentives to mistrust winners and oppose or restrict, as much as possible, the capacity of the majority to rule in an unfettered fashion. Similarly, when animosity towards losers runs high among winners, the latter group will have greater incentives to support different forms of unconstrained majoritarianism, as well as limitations on the rights and influence of minorities in policy-making. This can allow the winners to block "undersirable" partisan opponents from influencing political decisions (see Şaşmaz et al., 2022). Hence, we would expect that the impact of winning and losing elections on individuals' support for democratic norms of consent and restraint would be exacerbated among those individuals that are affectively polarized.

3 Study 1: Comparative Study of 36 Elections

3.1 Data and methods

In our first study we draw on data from the fifth module of the CSES, conducted between 2016 and 2021, for 31 countries.[3] CSES surveys are administered after national elections, making them particularly suitable for studying winner-loser dynamics. Due to the five-year fieldwork period, some countries have two elections—yielding a total of 36 national elections. Furthermore, together with measures of in- and out-party affection, the fifth module includes items measuring satisfaction with democracy, as well as support for

[3]While the original dataset includes 45 countries, we exclude the country-elections of countries that are undemocratic according to V-DEM (e.g., Hong Kong (2016), India (2019) and Thailand (2019)).

unconstrained majoritarianism and minorities' rights.[4]

Beginning with our outcome variables, we measure satisfaction with democracy, which we use as an informative benchmark for the winner-loser gap, using an item asking to what extent respondents are satisfied with the way democracy works in their country. This variable is measured on a 1-5 scale ranging from "not at all satisfied (1)" to "very satisfied (5)", with a sample average of 3.06.

Next, we measure citizens' attitudes towards norms of democratic restraint and consent through two variables. Both variables are measured on 1-5 agree-disagree scale ranging from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree (5)". First, we measure individuals' generic commitment to restraints on the executive's power. For this, we rely on an item that asks respondents to what extent they agree that having a strong leader is good, even if this leader "bends the rules to get things done". The sample average for this variable is 2.82. As we point out above, this could be considered an extreme manifestation of majoritarianism that is closely related to current processes of democratic backsliding. Hence, this item taps into the idea of citizens' lack of support for norms of forbearance and restraint. Second, we rely on an item that taps directly into the tension between majoritarianism vis-à-vis the protection of the rights of minorities. This question asks respondents to what degree they believe that the will of the majority should always prevail, even over the rights of minorities. The item taps support for the majoritarian democratic principle, while simultaneously highlighting that this particular principle might come into tension with the protection of minority rights—thus tapping the opposing "minoritarian" democratic principle. The sample average for this variable is 2.98, indicating a slight tendency to favor the realization of the will of the majority at the expense of the rights of minorities.[5]

Turning now to our main independent variable, we create a dummy variable in which 0 corresponds to being a loser and 1 corresponds to being a winner. This is based on the party the respondent voted for in the election preceding CSES fieldwork and the party (or

[4]Since the questions used to operationalize our outcomes were not asked in Greece (2015), Taiwan (2016, 2020) and Finland (2019), these countries are excluded from the analyses.

[5]Figure B1 in Appendix B summarizes the distribution of all the outcome variables.

parties) that formed the government following that election. To do so we followed a set of predetermined rules that aim to capture the winner-loser status of respondents at the time of their interview. Presidential systems (11 country elections) are straightforward to code. If someone voted for the party of the candidate that won the election, they are coded as winners, irrespective of when the president elect assumed office. All other voters are coded as losers. [6] In parliamentary systems, the coding is more intricate as it is influenced by the government formation process and the timing of the CSES fieldwork. If the government was announced before the fieldwork (10 country elections), we code all voters who voted for parties that are set to be part of the cabinet as winners. If the government was announced while the CSES was on the field (6 country elections), the sample is split into two groups. For those that were interviewed after the government was announced, they are coded according to the aforementioned rule. For those who were interviewed before the government was announced, we code as winners those who voted for the parties set to form the government according to our analysis of coalition talks. In certain instances, coalition talks fail at a given movement and new talks begin with other potential coalition members. In such instances we take into account the day when the respondent was interviewed to code them as winners if the party they voted for is explicitly included in the coalition talks at the time of the interview—regardless of the final composition of the government. We use this same approach for the final category of cases—when the government is announced after fieldwork has taken place (9 country elections). Lastly, we remove from the dataset those cases in which it was either unclear who the winner of the election was or which parties were likely to form the government at the time of the fieldwork (11 country elections). See Appendix A for details about the codding of each country-election.

We measure affective polarization through the like-dislike scores that respondents assign to the parties in their party system. Specifically, we implement Wagner's (2021) distance measure, which measures the average affective distance of other parties from one's most liked party (weighting each party by its vote share in the lower house of each

[6] Abstainers are excluded from all the analyses in the paper.

country).[7]

Given the observational nature of our data, all our analyses control for aspects that may be related to the probability of being a winner or loser and to individuals' attitudes towards democracy. Hence in all our models we control for ideological extremity (in the left-right dimension), age, gender, and education. Moreover, all our analyses are based on ordinary least squares estimations that include county-election fixed-effects to account for unobserved cross-election and cross-country heterogeneity.

Finally, our analyses also take into account the size (vote share) of the party respondents voted for. Due to psychological and utilitarian reasons, we expect that being a winner or loser will be relevant for the formation and change of attitudes related to democratic restraint and consent, and, more generally, for any variable related to political support. However, being a winner or loser is not the only aspect that affects whether or not one is part of the political majority. Political status as a majority or minority will also be crucially affected by the size of one's political in-group (Ferrín and Hernández, 2021). We therefore believe that it is important to control for the size of one's political in-group when studying winner-loser gaps in political support. We control for the lower house vote share of the party the respondent voted for in our models.

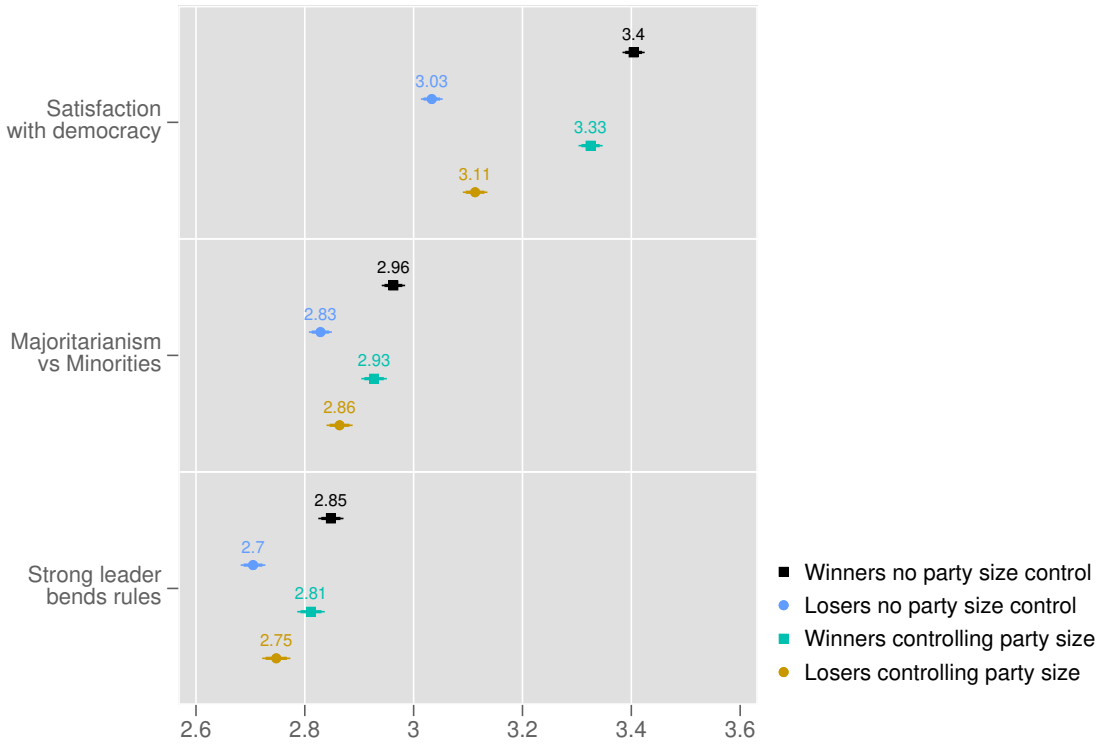
3.2 Results

We begin by examining the winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy and in attitudes toward norms of democratic consent and restraint. Figure 1 summarizes these results. In line with previous literature, the results show a substantial satisfaction gap, with winners being 0.37 points more satisfied with the way democracy works in their country (on a 5-point scale). However, when we control for the size of one's political in-group (i.e., the vote share of the party one voted for), the size of the winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy shrinks to 0.22 points.

This first set of results has two important implications. First, the effect of winning and losing on satisfaction with democracy identified in the previous literature appears to

[7] In Appendix B we replicate these analyses using the "spread" measure proposed by Wagner (2021). Our conclusions are not altered when using this alternative specification.

Figure 1: Winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table B1 summarized in Appendix B.

be partly driven by the size of one's political in-group. When controlling for the size (vote share) of the party for which respondents vote for, the gap in satisfaction with democracy diminishes substantially. Indeed, the additional analyses summarized in Figure B2 in Appendix B show that the vote share of the party one voted for has a substantial impact on individuals' satisfaction with democracy. The second key implication of these findings, however, is that even when controlling for the size of one's political in-group, there is still a moderate gap in satisfaction between winners and losers. It is this gap that we use as a benchmark for assessing the significance of a potential winner-loser gap in support for norms related to democratic restraint and consent.

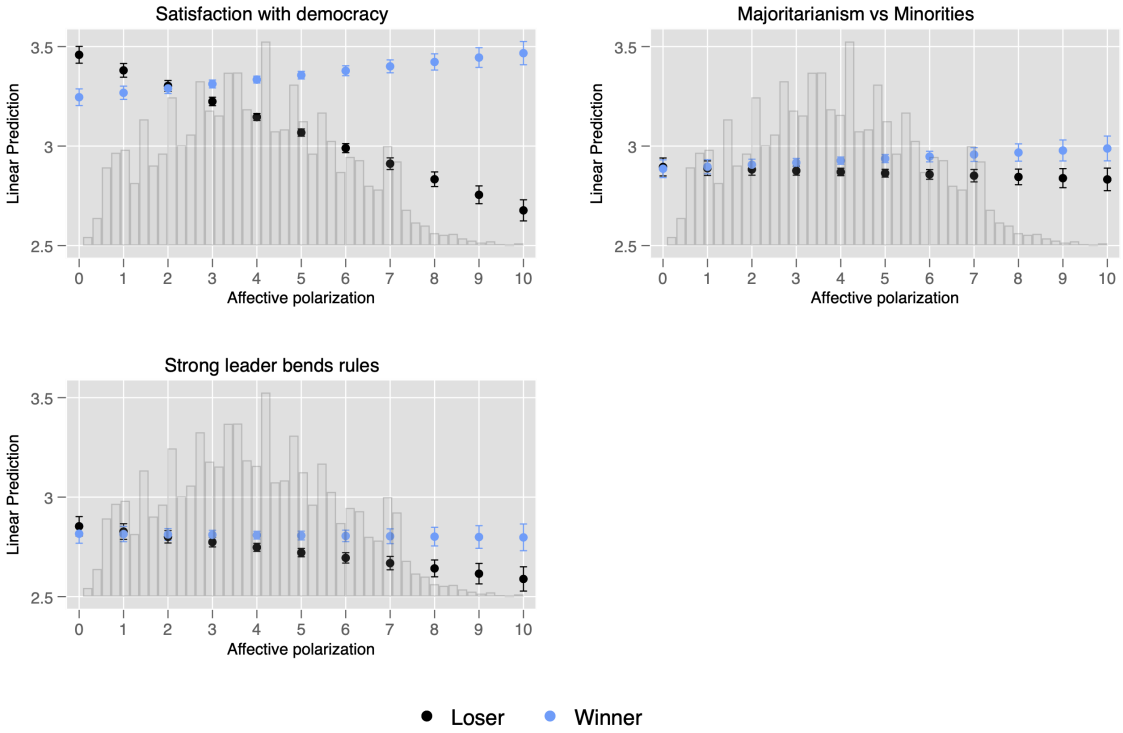
The second and third rows of Figure 1 summarize the winner-loser gap in citizens' support for majoritarianism versus the protection of minority rights, and in their support for strong leaders who bend the rules, respectively. In both cases, we find that the differences between winners and losers are very small, especially when controlling for the

size of one's political in-group. The differences between winners and losers are statistically significant in all cases and in the expected direction: winners are more likely than losers to support following the will of the majority at the potential expense of protecting minority rights and having a strong leader willing to bend the rules. However, these differences are negligible in substantive terms. The difference between winners and losers in supporting the will of the majority and having a leader above the law is less than one-third the difference in satisfaction with democracy (our benchmark). This is true whether or not we control for political status. In fact, when the size of one's political in-group is taken into account, the differences between winners and losers on majoritarianism versus minority rights and support for a strong leader who bends the rules are only 0.06 on a 5-point scale. Thus, it appears that being a winner or loser makes a significant difference for specific support, but not for more diffuse manifestations of political support related to democratic restraint and consent.[8]

The previous results do not take into account that winning and losing may have different implications depending on partisan animus. Figure 2 summarizes the gap between winners and losers as a function of their levels of affective polarization, with higher values indicating higher levels of affective polarization. The first panel of Figure 2 shows that affective polarization significantly moderates the effect of winning or losing elections on satisfaction with democracy. When affective polarization is low, there is no substantial gap in satisfaction with democracy between winners and losers. A gap emerges at moderate levels of affective polarization and it widens as affective polarization increases. At the peak of affective polarization, the gap between winners and losers is about 0.8 points on the 5-point scale—a difference that is both statistically and substantively significant. We also see that the moderating capacity of affective polarization acts disproportionately on losers. As affective polarization increases, losers become increasingly dissatisfied with democracy, while winners become only marginally more satisfied with democracy. Thus,

[8]Figure B2 in Appendix B reveals that respondents who voted for bigger parties (with a larger share of votes) tend to support following the will of the majority at the potential expense of protecting minority rights and having a strong leader willing to bypass the rules more so than voters of small parties. However, again the differences between voters of small and large parties are substantially smaller than those of satisfaction with democracy.

Figure 2: Predicted satisfaction with democracy and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent as a function of winner-loser status and affective polarization



Note: Whiskers represent 95% confidence intervals around the linear prediction. Based on Table B2 summarized in Appendix B. The histogram in the background summarizes the distribution of affective polarization

affective polarization has an effect on specific support for democracy that is particularly driven by losers. This is an important result in itself, highlighting another pernicious effect of affective polarization and complementing the recent findings of Janssen (2024) for the British case. Moreover, this result provides us with an informative benchmark against which we assess the importance of this moderation for democratic restraint and consent.

Turning now to the indicators of support for democratic restraint and consent, the second panel of Figure 2 reveals that as affective polarization heightens, the gap between winners and losers widens, with winners being more likely to believe that the will of majority should be respected even at the expense of minority rights. However, these differences between winners and losers are very small, even when they are affectively polarized. At the highest levels of affective polarization the gap between winners and

losers amounts to only 0.15 points on the 5-point scale. Hence, even if statistically significant, this difference is very small in substantive terms, especially when compared to the gap in satisfaction with democracy (our benchmark). Overall, these findings do not provide strong evidence in favor of our theoretical expectations, since we expected that at higher levels of partisan animus, the stakes would be higher, resulting in winners and losers substantially differing in their attitudes toward democratic restraint and consent.

A similar pattern emerges when we focus on individuals' propensity to support a strong leader willing to bypass the rules. The interaction between the winner/loser indicator and affective polarization is statistically significant at conventional levels (see Table B2 in Appendix B). At low levels of affective polarization, there are no differences between winners and losers. Only when polarization is high does a small gap emerge. Although this difference between winners and losers is statistically significant (see Figure B3 in Appendix B), it is, again, very small in substantive terms. Take as a comparison the gap in satisfaction with democracy. At the highest level of polarization, this gap amounts to 0.8 points on the 5-points scale. Conversely, the gap in support for a strong leader who bends the rules is only of 0.2 points on the 5-points scale. It is also worth noting that it is losers who become slightly less tolerant of strong leaders as their affective polarization increases. Winners, on the other hand, are no more likely to abuse their winner status when affective polarization is particularly high. We would argue that while the latter could pose significant risks to democracy, the former is not necessarily problematic.

While not quite in line with our theoretical arguments, these results offer some initial optimism about citizens' commitment to diffuse democratic principles related to democratic restraint and consent. We proposed that affective polarization would deplete the reservoir of goodwill that helps citizens accept outcomes and procedures that may go against their self-interest. This does not appear to be the case, especially when it comes to winners' restraint. While at high levels of polarization winners and losers differ slightly in their support for democratic restraint and consent, these differences are small. This is especially true when we compare these differences to our benchmark: the gap in satisfaction with democracy that is commonly discussed in the literature. Moreover, these

differences only become apparent at the highest levels of polarization. This is relevant because, as the histograms superimposed in Figure 2 show, only a handful of citizens harbor these extreme levels of polarization. In addition, only losers appear to be reactive to affective polarization in their support for these norms. Winners' commitment to democratic restraint appears solid since it is not swayed by their affective polarization. We would argue that this is particularly positive in a context where democratic erosion is characterized by executive aggrandizement, which may be facilitated by a lack of winners' restraint.

Finally, it is worth noting that the differences between winners and losers at high levels of polarization are even smaller when using an alternative measure of affective polarization based on Wagner's (2021) spread index of polarization. Using this alternative measure, the interaction between winner-loser status and affective polarization is statistically significant for satisfaction with democracy, but not for "majoritarianism vs. minorities" or for "strong leader who bends the rules" (see Figure B4 and Table B2 in Appendix B).

3.3 Robustness checks

Our findings about the limited differences between winners and losers in their support for norms of democratic restraint and consent may be driven by social desirability biases in survey responses. Respondents may falsify their true preferences for prioritizing the will of the majority at the expense of minority rights, or for a strong leader willing to bend the rules to gain social approval, and this may be especially true for winners (Harkness et al., 2003). To assess the threat this might pose to our conclusions, we capitalize on the fact that in five countries the CSES fieldwork was conducted in a multi-mode format, with some modes being public (face-to-face or telephone) and others private (online).[9] If social desirability biases the results, respondents should be more likely to support unconstrained types of majoritarianism in these private modes. These additional analyses

[9]The assignment to private or public modes of interviewing is not random. Therefore, the models in which we assess social desirability include the following control variables: age, gender, education, ideology, internal political efficacy, and political interest.

are summarized in Appendix B. Overall, we find no systematic evidence of social desirability. Differences between those interviews conducted in person (or by telephone) and those conducted in private are either statistically insignificant, substantively negligible, or in the opposite direction to that expected from a social desirability bias. This is the case when looking at the entire sample without distinguishing between winners and losers (Figure B6 Appendix B), and when distinguishing between winners and losers (Figure B7 Appendix B).

4 Study 2: New Zealand 2017 Election Coalition Negotiations

Study 1 provides comparative evidence on the winner-loser gap in support for norms of democratic restraint and consent from a diverse set of 31 democracies. While this enhances its external validity, this study is limited by its observational nature. We cannot rule out the possibility that attitudes toward democracy and its core principles between winners and losers may precede party choice and one's political position as a winner or loser. Furthermore, eventual winners and losers might predict the outcome before the election and adjust their voting behavior and attitudes accordingly (Blais and Gélineau, 2007). To address this limitation, we rely on a quasi-experimental design that exploits an unexpected event that occurred during post-election coalition negotiations in New Zealand in 2017.[10] A key advantage of this quasi-experimental case study is that it allows us to rely on the same survey and variables of Study 1.

4.1 Case description and methods

Following the 2017 New Zealand general election no party had enough seats to form a government, leaving the two largest parties (Labour and National) vying for a coalition with the party New Zealand First. The National party, the incumbent at the time, had won the election and was expected to form a coalition government with New Zealand First (Vowles, 2018). However, an unexpected decision by New Zealand First in the midst of

[10]The 2017 New Zealand election is not included in Study 1.

coalition negotiations resulted in Labour ultimately leading the government. On October 19, 2017, New Zealand First announced the formation of a minority coalition government with the Labour Party, along with a confidence and supply agreement with the Green Party. The announcement marked one of the greatest electoral upsets in New Zealand's democratic history and led to the election of Jacinda Ardern as Prime Minister. As we describe in detail in Appendix C, this was an unexpected outcome. Until 2017, the party that had won the election had always been part of the government since New Zealand adopted mixed-member proportional representation.

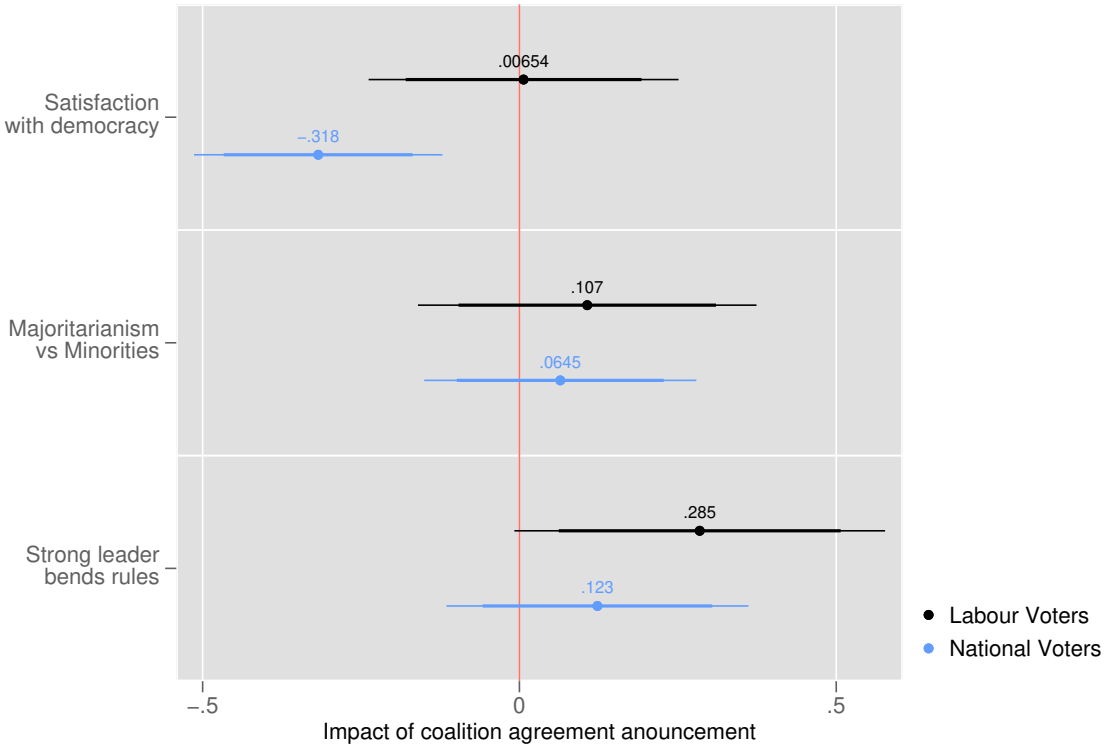
Given that this unexpected government announcement occurred while the CSES was in the field, we can compare the democratic support of Labour (the initial losers but then unexpected winners) and National voters (the initial winners but then unexpected losers) before and after the change in their status as winners and losers through an unexpected event during survey design (Muñoz et al., 2020). During the CSES fieldwork, 56 percent of the sample (1019 respondents) were interviewed before the coalition announcement and 44 percent (789 respondents) were interviewed after that date. Assuming that the day on which respondents were interviewed is *as-if random*, this allows us estimate the effect of being a winner or loser through an identification strategy that ameliorates some of the potential biases of Study 1. However, given differences in the *survey reachability* of respondents this might only be the case after accounting for characteristics that are related to such reachability (Muñoz et al., 2020). All our models of this case study control for such variables (age, education and sex).

4.2 Results

Figure 3 summarizes the impact of the coalition announcement on our variables of interest among Labour and National voters.[11] The results first show that, consistent with our observational evidence, the unexpected change in voters' winner-loser status has a significant impact on their level of satisfaction with democracy. As a difference from Study 1, this case study also allows us to disentangle the extent to which the observed

[11]The full set of analyses for this case study can be found in Appendix C.

Figure 3: Effect of coalition announcement on satisfaction with democracy and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent among voters of the Labour and National parties



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table C1 summarized in Appendix C.

increase in the gap in satisfaction with democracy after the election is driven by changes in the attitudes of either winners or losers. Figure C2 in Appendix C shows that before the coalition was announced, Labour and National supporters were about equally satisfied with the way democracy works (3.56 and 3.54 respectively). After the coalition was announced, we see a significant drop in satisfaction with democracy among National supporters, but no change among Labour supporters.

When it comes to support for norms of democratic restraint and consent, the results summarized in Figure 3 generally show limited variation in these attitudes as a result of changes in winner-loser status. In the case of majoritarianism over minority rights, we see no change in these attitudes among either the winners (Labour) or the losers (National). Similarly, there is no change in support for a strong leader who bends the rules among National supporters. However, there is a positive change in the extent to which Labour

voters support a strong leader who bends the rules. This change is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. While the size of this change is smaller than the decline in satisfaction with democracy among National voters (our benchmark), it is not negligible. It seems that after the sudden coalition agreement that turned Labour voters into winners, these voters became less favorable to some norms of democratic restraint that could limit the power of the new government led by their preferred party.

Overall, these results extend the findings of Study 1. Using an identification strategy based on an unexpected coalition change, we find that winning and losing appear to have substantial effects on satisfaction with democracy, but more limited effects on individuals' support for norms related to democratic restraint and consent. The only exception is that, in this particular case, election winners seem to be less open to accepting the legal constraints that their leaders may face.

5 Study 3: Chile 2021 Presidential Election

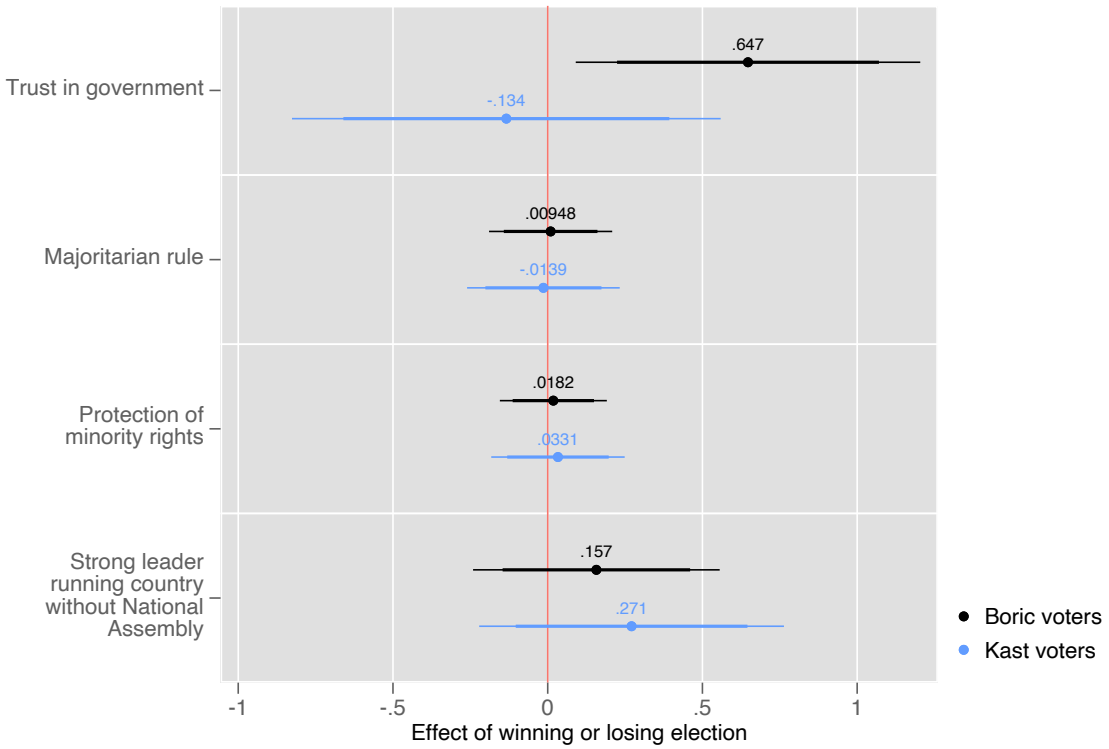
A key tenet of our theoretical framework is that the effects of winning and losing elections may be moderated by affective polarization. The observational results of Study 1 suggest that this is the case for satisfaction with democracy, and to a much more limited extent for individuals' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. Unfortunately, in Study 2 we were unable to take affective polarization into account. Being the winner or loser of an election may affect the affinity one feels towards parties (Hernández et al., 2021). Therefore, in Study 2 the levels of affective polarization are not comparable between those in the treatment and control groups within each partisan camp (National and Labour). In other words, these variables are measured before treatment for some respondents and after treatment for others, which is likely to lead to post-treatment bias in our estimates (see Muñoz et al., 2020). To overcome this limitation, in Study 3 we exploit Gabriel Boric's victory in the "knife-edge" run-off vote of the 2021 Chilean presidential election, alongside the data collected by the TRI-POL panel survey project (Torcal et al., 2023).

5.1 Case description and methods

In the second round of the 2021 presidential election that took place on December 19th, Gabriel Boric narrowly defeated Antonio Kast (see Appendix D for a detailed description of the case). At the same time, the second wave of the TRI-POL project was in the field. As with the New Zealand case, this feature of the 2021 Chilean presidential election is relevant because it allows us to implement an *Unexpected Event During Survey Design* to identify the impact of winning and losing in this election. Moreover, unlike Study 2, in this case we can also assess how these effects are moderated by affective polarization by combining data from the first two waves of the TRI-POL project online panel. The first wave (N=1,337) was conducted between September 23 and November 18, 2021, while the second wave (N=1,084) began on December 1 and ended on January 8, 2022. We rely on questions asked during the first wave, fielded before the first round of the election, to measure affective polarization without the threat of post-treament bias induced by the election results. We then use data from the second wave to identify the effects of winning or losing that election.

In the case of Chile, the wording of the outcome variables is slightly different from those used in Study 1 and Study 2. First, to measure citizens' attitudes toward norms of democratic restraint and consent we rely on an item that asks respondents to what extent aspects such as "Majority rule" and "The protection of the rights of minorities" are important for a society to be called democratic. Second, to gauge to what extent respondents think that winners' restraint is relevant we rely on an item that asks respondents if they believe that abolishing the National Assembly and having a strong leader running the country is a good way to govern the country. We would argue that these items still capture the essence of winners' restraint and losers consent. Moreover the survey does not include an item asking about satisfaction with democracy. Therefore, we use trust in the Chilean government as our measure for specific political support (i.e., our benchmark). The first three variables are measured using a 4-point scale that ranges from "Not important" to "Very important". Trust in the Government is measured using a 0-10 point scale.

Figure 4: Effect of Boric's victory on trust in government and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent among Boric's voters and Kast's voters.



Note: OLS estimation. Based on Table D1 summarized in subsection in Appendix D. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively.

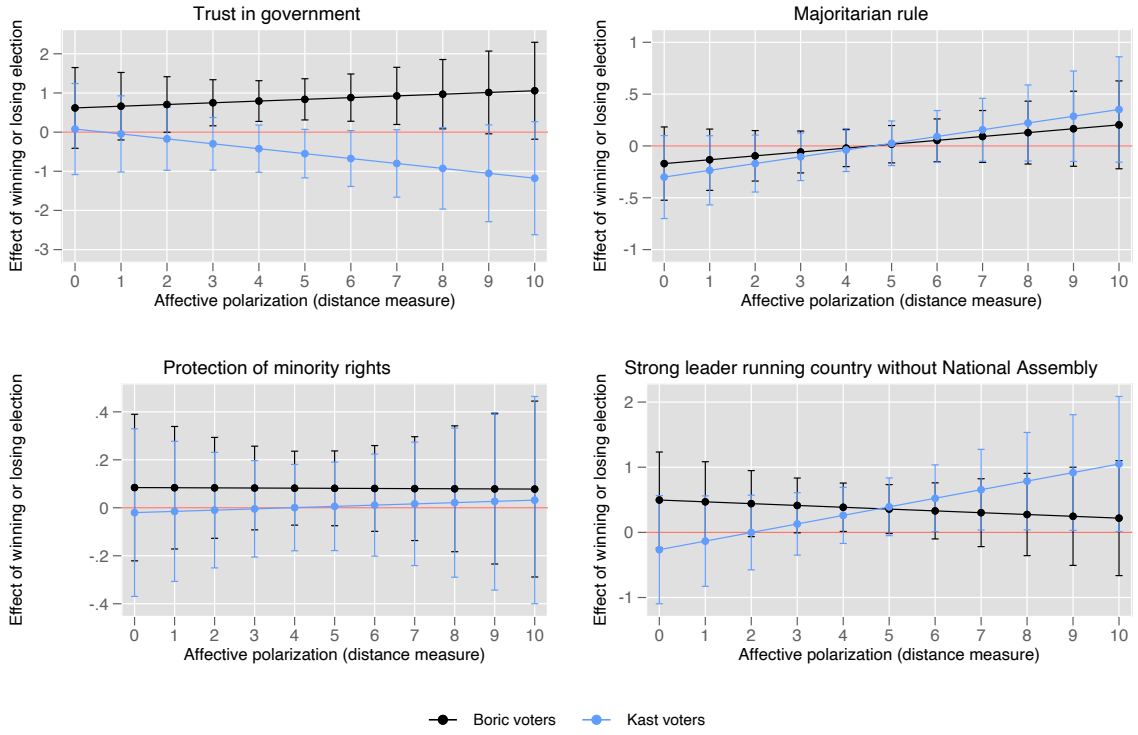
As for the main independent variables, we treat as winners those respondents who voted for Gabriel Boric in the second round of the presidential election and as losers those who voted for Jose Antonio Kast. To measure affective polarization we use Wagner's (2021) distance measure.

5.2 Results

In line with Study 1, the results in Figure 4 indicate that winning the election increased Boric voters' trust in government (our specific political support benchmark in this study) by 0.65 points (on a 10-points scale). We also see that that Kast voters remained stable in their trust in government despite losing the election.[12] However, Figure 4 clearly shows that when it comes to supporting norms of democratic restraint or consent, becoming a

[12] A noteworthy peculiarity of the Chilean case is that the size of the winner-loser gap in political trust decreased following elections. This is because Kast voters displayed higher trust in government prior to the elections. See Figure D1 in Appendix D.

Figure 5: Effects of Boric's victory on trust in government and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent as a function of winner-loser status and affective polarization



Note: Y-axes differ. OLS estimation. Based on Table D2 in Appendix D

winner or loser following the 2017 Chilean presidential election did not have a significant effect on any one of our indicators.

We now turn to examine how affective polarization may moderate the effect of winning and losing elections on support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. Figure 5 depicts the effect of winning (Boric's voters) and losing (Kast's voters) at different levels of affective polarization. In line with Study 1, the first panel reveals that, among losers the effect of losing on specific political support (trust in government in this case) intensifies as affective polarization increases. However, the effect of winning on trust is similar independently of one's levels of affective polarization.[13] In contrast, the effect of winning and losing on citizens' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent does not

[13]Among winners, the effect is not always significant due to different numbers of cases at different points of the affective polarization distribution. Among losers, even if the negative effect intensifies at higher levels of polarization the effect is not significant at any point of the affective polarization scale.

vary as a function of how affectively polarized they are.[14] All in all, the results from the Chilean case provide further evidence in line with the idea that while winning and losing is consequential for specific political support, its effect on citizens' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent is much more limited, even at high levels of affective polarization.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, we have theorized and analyzed how winning and losing elections, along with affective polarization, affects citizens' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. We did so by examining citizens' attitudes toward manifestations of norms of democratic restraint and consent such as citizens' views on the equilibrium between majority rule and the protection of minority rights, or their support for a strong leader who bends the rules or governs ignoring the national assembly. To assess the significance of the winner-loser gap on these attitudes, we used the well-documented winner-loser gap in specific political support (satisfaction with democracy and trust in government) as an informative benchmark.

Drawing on utilitarian and psychological arguments, we expected that winning and losing would affect citizens' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent, and that these winner-loser dynamics would be amplified by affective polarization. To test this argument, we combined observational data from 36 national elections in 31 countries with quasi-experimental data from two case studies.

Overall, we do not find consistent evidence in favor of our theoretical argument. Compared to its effect on specific political support (our benchmark), being on the winning or losing side of an election does not appear to significantly affect individuals' support for norms of democratic restraint and consent. The only exception to this pattern is that winners in New Zealand tend to show higher support for a strong leader who bends the rules as a result of their electoral victory. The overall pattern, however, is one of limited differences between winners and losers in their support for these norms of democratic

[14] As in Study 1, using Wagner's spread measure of affective polarization only provides further support for the findings outlined above (see Figure D2 in Appendix D).

restraint and consent. This is true even among highly polarized citizens. Even at the highest levels of affective polarization, the gap between winners and losers in their support for these democratic norms is small, especially when compared to the corresponding gap in satisfaction with democracy. Moreover, the results of Study 1 suggest that only losers appear to slightly reduce their support for these norms as they become more affectively polarized. Instead, among winners, their commitment to restraint and forbearance appears solid, as it is not affected by their affective polarization. The quasi-experimental results of Study 3 provide additional evidence in line with this conclusion. Overall, these findings remain fairly robust across different datasets, methods, and operationalizations of our key variables.

All in all, our findings can be interpreted as good news for democracy. While small differences may arise, the overall picture suggests that winners and losers remain equally committed to democratic norms of constraint and consent irrespective of how polarized they are. While winners and losers are likely to differ in their satisfaction with democracy, especially in polarized contexts, they seem to be equally committed to key norms that underpin democratic governance. There are two potential interpretations for these findings.

First, and more optimistically, citizens may be more principled than expected. They may uphold democratic norms even when it is not in their best (immediate) interest to do so. Indeed, in light of our findings, it appears that polarization does not deplete the "reservoir of goodwill" that can help citizens accept norms and procedures that go against their in-group interests. This is particularly true when it comes to winners and their restraint. This interpretation would challenge studies suggesting that polarization may contribute to democratic instability by increasing the likelihood that citizens will tolerate anti-democratic candidates and behavior (Graham and Svolik, 2020; Saikkonen and Christensen, 2022; Şaşmaz et al., 2022). But it is consistent with the more optimistic findings about winners' restraint and losers' consent in East Asia (Wu and Wu, 2022), and with US findings highlighting that affective polarization does not seem to undermine commitment to democratic norms (Broockman et al., 2022). In any case, given these

growing discrepancies between analyses that focus on citizens' overt support for democratic norms and analyses that focus on citizens' support for undemocratic candidates, future studies should aim to combine both approaches (see e.g., Kaftan and Gessler, 2024; Wunsch et al., 2022).

A second and less optimistic interpretation would be that citizens may simply be more shrewd than expected. After all, winners inevitably become losers at some point. Perceiving political rivals as existential enemies may increase the risks associated with granting greater powers to both majorities and the executive, as they may act against their preferences and violate their rights when the government eventually changes. As such, free, fair, and regular elections serve as a kind of democratic insurance policy that protects against abuses of power by the current majority out of fear of future retribution. Future research could examine which of these alternatives is more likely by testing the stability of citizens' commitment to abstract democratic principles. Longitudinal studies of citizens' support for democratic norms could be a potentially fruitful approach to understanding such dynamics (see e.g., Torcal et al., 2023).

Regardless of why citizens uphold democratic norms of restraint and consent, these findings contribute to our current understanding of processes of democratic erosion, at least from the demand side of these processes (Wunsch et al., 2022). Although there is a clear winner-loser gap in satisfaction with democracy, in general both winners and losers continue to adhere to democratic norms of restraint and consent. It appears that election-induced changes in specific political support (satisfaction and trust) do not permeate into more fundamental attitudes about key democratic norms. This suggests a degree of resilience in democratic attitudes (or diffuse political support) that may be stronger than previously assumed. This robust political support may help offset concerns about democratic backsliding. While something may be amiss with the current state of liberal democracy (Plattner, 2020), it does not seem to be electoral winners and losers diverging in their commitment to democratic norms of restraint and consent. Nor for that matter should we be too concerned about affective polarization when it comes to commitment to these norms. Even if affective polarization may be a negative byproduct of

elections (Bassan-Nygate and Weiss, 2022; Fasching et al., 2024; Hernández et al., 2021), these polarization dynamics do not necessarily translate into an erosion of the norms of democratic restraint and consent among the winners and losers of those elections.

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Supporting Information for: Winners' Restraint or Affective Majoritarianism? Elections, Polarization and Political Support

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Contents

A Study 1: Coding of winners and losers

This appendix summarizes the coding of winners and losers in each country-election considered in the paper. To code the winner-loser status as described in the paper we relied on news articles discussing official coalition talks to trace the government formation process for each election across all countries. We purposefully disregarded speculations of unofficial coalition talks that took place behind closed doors, as we doubted the degree to which the average citizen would be privy to such dynamics.

A.1 Countries with presidential elections

Brazil, 2018

The Brazilian presidential election of 2018 was conducted in two rounds, with the first round taking place on 7 October and the second on 28 October. Jair Bolsonaro, candidate of the Social Liberal Party (PSL), was ultimately elected, securing a victory over Fernando Haddad of the Workers' Party (PT). Therefore, we code as winners those respondents who voted for Jair Bolsonaro and the Social Liberal Party, while everyone else is coded as losers.

Chile, 2017

The Chilean presidential election of 2017 was conducted in two rounds, with the first round taking place on 19 November and the second on 17 December. Sebastián Piñera, representing the centre-right coalition Chile Vamos, was ultimately declared the winner, securing a victory over Alejandro Guillier, the candidate representing the centre-left coalition Nueva Mayoría. Consequently, we consider winners those respondents who voted for Sebastian Piñera in the second round and Chile Vamos, while everyone else is coded as losers.

Costa Rica, 2018

Costa Rica's 2018 presidential election was held in two rounds on February 4 and April 1. Carlos Alvarado Quesada of the Citizens' Action Party defeated Fabricio Alvarado Muñoz of the National Restoration Party in the second round with 60.6% of the popular

vote. Consequently, we consider winners those respondents who voted for Carlos Alvarado Quesada and the Citizens' Action Party, while everyone else is coded as losers.

France, 2017

The 2017 French presidential election was held in two rounds, on April 23 and May 7. Emmanuel Macron of La République En Marche! won the election, defeating Marine Le Pen of the National Front in the runoff with 66.1% of the vote. Therefore, we consider winners those respondents who voted for Emmanuel Macron and La République En Marche! in the second round, while everyone else is coded as losers.

Mexico, 2018

The general elections (including both the presidential and legislative, as well as several regional and local elections) took place on 1 July 2018. The presidential election was won by Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, leader of Morena and the coalition "Together We Will Make History". Lopez Obrador obtained 54.7% of votes, over 30 percentage points more than the runner up (Ricardo Anaya of PAN). Consequently, we consider the voters of the Juntos Haremos Historia coalition (consisting of Morena, the Labor Party and the Social Encounter Party) as winners. All other respondents are coded as losers.

Peru, 2021

The two rounds of presidential elections took place on 11 April 6 June 2021, with Pedro Castillo (Free Peru) ultimately emerging as the election winner. We, therefore, code Pedro Castillo and Free Peru voters as winners. All other respondents are coded as losers.

El Salvador, 2019

The 2019 El Salvador Presidential elections were held on February 3, 2019. The winner was Nayib Bukele (GANA) with 53.1% of the vote. The runner-up was Carlos Calleja (ARENA) with 31.7%, while Hugo Martinez (FMLN) came in third with 14.4% of the vote. Bukele's win brought to an end the three-decade-long hold on power by the Nationalist Republican Alliance (ARENA) and Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) parties.

Bukele was a member of FMLN, representing the party as the mayor of San Salvador,

the nation's capital, until the party expelled him, due to allegations of promoting internal party divisions. To contest the 2019 elections, Bukele formed a new party, Nuevas Ideas (New Ideas, NI). However, this new party failed to complete its registration with the Supreme Electoral Tribunal in time to contest the 2019 elections. Consequently, Bukele decided to run as a candidate of the Grand Alliance for National Unity (GANA), a party that held only 10 seats in the legislature.

Therefore, we code respondents who voted for Bukele (GANA) as winners and everyone else as losers.

Turkey, 2018

The Turkish presidential elections were held on 24 June 2018 as part of the 2018 general election, alongside parliamentary elections on the same day. The elections marked a turn in Turkey's political system, as the new Presidential system, which was adopted by referendum in April 2017, fully came into effect after the election. The 2017 referendum approved major constitutional changes, such as the abolition of the office of the Prime Minister, the strengthening of executive powers of the President, and the reduction of parliamentary oversight. Additionally, constitutional amendments increased the number of members of parliament from 550 to 600, resulting in two additional electoral districts (87 in total) and many districts gaining additional seats. Incumbent President and party leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan (AKP) won the election with 52.6% of the vote in the first round. Following the constitutional amendments adopted by the referendum in 2017, Erdogan became both the head of state and the head of government. As such, we code respondents who voted for Erdogan and AKP as winners, and everyone else as losers.

Uruguay, 2019

The 2019 Uruguayan general election took place on October 27, 2019 to elect the President and the General Assembly. As none of the Presidential candidates received a majority in the first round, a runoff was held on November 24, 2019. In a very tight race, the second round results disclosed Lacalle Pou as the winner with 48.88% of the votes, leaving Daniel Martinez with 47.36% of the votes.

As such, we code respondents who voted for Lacalle Pou (National Party) as winners

and everyone else as losers.

Unites States of America, 2016

The 2016 United States general election was held on November 8, 2016. Contesting the election for the Presidency were Hillary Clinton, nominated by the Democratic Party (DEM), and Donald Trump for the Republican Party (GOP). Although Clinton won the popular vote, obtaining 48.2% to Donald Trump's 46.1%, Trump won the electoral college, winning 304 to 228 electoral votes. He assumed office on January 20, 2017.

As such, we code respondents who voted for Trump (GOP) as winners and those who voted for Clinton (DEM) as losers.

Unites States of America, 2020

The 2020 United States general election was held on November 3, 2020. In the Presidential race, incumbent Republican Donald Trump faced Democratic challenger, former Vice President, Joe Biden. Democrat (DEM) Joe Biden won the election with 51% of the popular vote and the all-important electoral college vote by 306 to 232. Joe Biden took office as President and Vice President on January 20, 2021.

As such, we code respondents who voted for Biden (DEM) as winners and those who voted for Trump (GOP) as losers.

A.2 Countries where the government was appointed before the fieldwork

Albania, 2017

The Albanian parliamentary elections were held on 25 June. The Socialist Party of Albania, which were the incumbents, won the elections with 48.3% of support, nearly 20 percentage points ahead of the Democratic Party of Albania. On 13 September the president mandated the formation of government. As the Socialist Party had a majority of seats in the parliament, it formed government without a coalition. Therefore, we code respondents who voted for the Socialist Party of Albania party as winners and everyone else as losers.

Australia, 2019

The Australian federal election took place on May 18. The Liberal-National Coalition, led by Scott Morrison, emerged as the winner, securing Morrison a second term as Prime Minister. We consider winners those who voted the Liberal-National Coalition and losers all those who did not.

Great Britain, 2017

The 2017 general election was conducted across 533 constituencies on 8 June 2017. The Conservatives remained the largest single party in the House of Commons but lost their small overall majority. This led Theresa May to enter into a confidence and supply agreement with Northern Ireland's Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) to support a minority government. The agreement was announced on June 26, 2017, the same day the CSES fieldwork began. Therefore, we code as winners those respondents who voted for the Conservatives and as losers those who did not, regardless of when they were surveyed.

Great Britain, 2019

The 2019 British general election took place on December 12, 2019, to elect members of the House of Commons, two years after the previous general election in 2017.

The governing Conservative Party led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson won a landslide victory with 80 seats and 43.6% of the popular vote. The results gave the Conservative Party an overall majority in the House of Commons and allowed Boris Johnson to remain Prime Minister. As such, we code respondents who voted for the Conservative Party as winners and everyone else.

Greece, 2019

The 2019 Greek Parliamentary election was held on July 7. The 2019 elections were called earlier than anticipated after disappointing results for the incumbent SYRIZA government in European Parliament and local elections, held in May 2019.

The incumbent government, SYRIZA, led by Alexis Tsipras suffered losses in the election, receiving 31.5% of the popular their vote (down 4-points on their 2015 performance) and winning 86 seats (a loss of 59 seat). The main opposition party led by Kyriakos Mit-

sotakis, New Democracy (ND), won the election with 39.9% of the popular vote and an overall majority of seats (158). Coming in third place was Fofi Gennimata's Movement for Change (KINAL) with 8.1% and 17 seats, followed by the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) with 5.3% and 15 seats. The results of the election allowed the conservative New Democracy party to form a majority government and Kyriakos Mitsotakis was sworn in as Prime Minister on July 8, 2019.

As such, we code respondents who voted for New Democracy as winners and everyone else as losers.

Israel, 2020

The 2020 Israeli legislative election was held on March 2, 2020. The result was a stalemate. Likud, led by incumbent Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, received the most votes, scoring 29.5% and 36 seats. However, Blue and White, led by Benny Gantz, trailed closely behind, with 26.6% and 33 seats. Shortly after the election, negotiations began on the formation of a national unity government. On May 17, 2020, the thirty-fifth government of Israel, also known as the Netanyahu–Gantz government was announced. Benjamin Netanyahu was sworn in as Prime Minister, with Gantz receiving a rotating Prime Ministership. The unity government also included Shas, United Torah Judaism, Labor, Derekh Eretz, Gesher and the The Jewish Home.

The CSES Module 5 fieldwork began in Israel on June 07, 2020, and ended on August 06, 2020. Given that the Netanyahu-Gantz unity government had been sworn in nearly a month prior, we code as winners, regarded of the date of the interview, those who voted for the National Liberal Party (Netanyahu's party), Blue and White (Gantz's party), Shas, United Torah Judaism or Labor-Gesher-Meretz, which was an alliance consisting of the Israeli Labor Party, Gesher, Meretz and Democratic Union. The remaining respondents are coded as losers.

Japan, 2017

In October 2017, Japan held a snap election, called by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in response to rising tensions caused by missile launches and nuclear testing by North Korea. The election saw a decreased number of single-member constituencies and a

lowered voting age to 18. Additionally, the number of seats elected under the proportional segment decreased from 180 to 176. Shinzo Abe's Liberal Democratic Party and Komeito won a two-thirds majority, with Abe remaining Prime Minister and becoming the longest-serving Prime Minister in Japanese history.

As such, we code respondents who voted for Liberal Democratic Party as winners and everyone else as losers.

Lithuania, 2020

The Parliamentary elections took place on October 2020. The first round was held the 11th and the second round was held the 25th. Between the two rounds, the Homeland Union (TS–LKD, which eventually became the election winner), the Liberals' Movement (LS) and the Freedom Party (LP) stated that they would endorse Ingrida Šimonytė as their joint candidate to be Prime Minister of Lithuania, and they reached a coalition agreement on November 9. The 3 parties formed a government on 11 December 2020, before the CSES fieldwork started (21 January 2021).

Although Ingrida was formally an independent candidate, she was the unofficial leader of the TS-LKD. For this reason, we code TS-LKD voters, as well as LS and LP voters, as winners. All other respondents are coded as losers.

Montenegro, 2016

The 2016 Montenegrin Parliamentary elections were held on October 16, 2016. The dominant DPS, in power since Montenegro's first elections in 1991, won the elections, winning 41.4% of the vote and 36 seats, an increase of 3 on its 2012 performance. On November 9, 2016, Deputy Prime Minister Duško Marković was nominated as new Prime Minister by the president of Montenegro Filip Vujanović, and on November 28, a new government was elected by 41 out of 81 members of the parliament (the opposition boycotted the assembly), with the support of the Democratic Party of Socialists, Social Democrats of Montenegro and the Bosniak, Albanian and Croatian minority parties. The resulting Marković Cabinet had ministers from the Democratic Party of Socialists, the Bosniak Party, the Social Democrats, the Democratic Union of Albanians, the Croatian Civic Initiative and 2 Independents.

As such, we code as winners respondents who voted for the Democratic Party of Socialists, the Bosniak Party, the Social Democrats, the Democratic Union of Albanians or the Croatian Civic Initiative. All other respondents are coded as losers.

Slovakia, 2020

The 2020 general election in Slovakia took place on February 29 to elect 150 members of the Slovak National Council, the country's unicameral parliament. The Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (OLANO) movement won the most seats (53) and 25% of the vote. For the People, a centrist party, was a new entrant to parliament, winning 12 seats and 5.8% of the vote, while We are Family won 16 seats and 8.2% of the vote.

On March 13, Igor Matovic, leader of the OLANO movement, announced his party had reached a coalition agreement with We Are Family, Freedom and Solidarity, and For the People. Matovic became Prime Minister on March 21, 2020. Given that CSES fieldwork in Slovakia began on June 10, 2020, we code as winners those who voted for the OLANO movement, We Are Family, Freedom or Solidarity, and For the People. All other respondents are coded as losers.

A.3 Countries where the government was appointed after the fieldwork

Austria, 2017

The Austrian Federal lower house election was held on October 15. The Christian Democrats (ÖVP) clearly won the elections, both in terms of votes and seats. Sebastian Kurz (ÖVP) was officially instructed by Austrian President Alexander Van der Bellen to form a new government on October 20, 2017. There were three government options that remained under consideration: the formation of a grand coalition government between the ÖVP and SPÖ (Social democrats), a coalition government between the ÖVP and FPÖ (the Freedom Party of Austria), and a coalition government between the SPÖ and FPÖ. After talking with all party leaders, Kurz officially invited the FPÖ to coalition talks on October 24, 2017. The FPÖ accepted the offer, and the first talks began on

October 25, 2017. As a result of the negotiations, the new ÖVP-FPÖ government was officially presented at a press conference by Sebastian Kurz and Heinz-Christian Strache on 16 December.

The CSES Module 5 fieldwork began on October 19, 2017, and ended on November 30, 2017. Therefore, if respondents were interviewed before October 25 (when coalition talks officially begin), we consider winners only those who voted for the ÖVP. The rest of respondents are considered losers. If respondents were interviewed after October 25, we consider winners both those who voted for the ÖVP and those who voted for the FPÖ. Any other respondent is coded as a loser.

Canada, 2019

The 43rd general election was held on October 21 to select members of the lower house, known as The House of Commons. The Liberal Party, led by the incumbent Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, won the election with 157 seat, permitting a second consecutive term, though this time as a minority government.

CSES fieldwork in Canada took place from October 22 to November 21. While the new government was officially formed on November 20 (nearing the end of fieldwork), Trudeau had ruled out a coalition and announced that he would lead a single-party minority government right after the elections. As such, we treat as winners those who voted for the Liberal Party and losers those who did not, regardless of when they were surveyed.

Czechia, 2017

The 2017 Czech parliamentary elections were held on October 20 and 21. The populist Action of Dissatisfied Citizens (ANO 2011), under its leader Andrej Babis, who had been mired in accusations of financial impropriety when he had served as Finance Minister, won the elections. They won 29.6% of the vote and 78 seats.

Given that ANO was by far the largest party in the Chamber, with more than twice the vote share and three times as many seats as the second largest party, the day after the elections, President Miloš Zeman announced that he intended to ask Babiš to form a government.

However, many media outlets speculated that Babiš would encounter problems finding potential coalition partners due to his ongoing criminal fraud charges. Numerous parties stated their refusal to form a government with ANO as long as Babiš remained its leader and Babiš ruled out governing with SPD or the Communist Party.

As Babiš could not create a coalition government, he opted to form a minority government. His cabinet took power on 13 December 2017.

Given that it was clear that ANO would be part of the government, either alone or with coalition partners, while fieldwork was being conducted (October 23 to November 12), we code ANO voters as winner regardless of when a given responded completed the survey. Conversely, as it did not seem likely that another party would end up in a collation with ANO, we code the voters of all other parties as losers.

Czechia, 2021

In the Czech parliamentary elections held on 8 and 9 October 2021, the incumbent party, ANO, competed against two electoral alliances, SPOLU and PirStan. SPOLU was led by the main opposition party, ODS, and also comprised KDU-ČSL and TOP 09, while PirStan was composed of the Pirates and Mayors and Independents party (STAN).

The was one of the closest in Czech history. ANO won 72 seats and 27.13%, while SPOLU won 71 seats but 27.79% of the popular vote.

The two main opposition alliances (SPOLU and PirStan) stated that they would not negotiate with ANO and that they would instead try to form an alternative government. This made ANO's attempts to form a government mathematically impossible.

On 2 November, Spolu and PirStan agreed on the composition of the new government. SPOLU would have the Prime Minister and 10 ministers, while PirStan would have six ministers.

ODS and STAN approved the coalition agreement on 4 November. On 5 November, Zeman confirmed during an interview for Frekvence 1 that he would appoint Fiala the new Prime Minister, and would do everything he could for the new government to be formed as quickly as possible. KDU-ČSL and TOP 09 approved the agreement on 5 November. The leadership of the Pirate Party approved the agreement on 7 November.

The leaders of all five parties signed the coalition agreement on 8 November.

Fiala's cabinet was appointed by Zeman on 17 December 2021.

Fieldwork was conducted from October 11 to November 24, 2021. As a result of this, we have coded ODS (the leader of SPOLU) as the election winner since the beginning, and KDU-ČSL and TOP 09 as junior coalition members, as they had formed a pre-electoral alliance with ODS. Secondly, we have coded the two PirStan parties (Pirates and Majors and Independents) as junior coalition members since the 8 of November, as this was the date when the coalition agreement was signed.

Germany, 2017

The lower house election in Germany took place on September 24, 2017, with the CDU/CSU led by Angela Merke remaining the strongest parliamentary group (although they experienced a significant loss of votes). The SPD, the CDU's outgoing coalition partner, also suffered their worst electoral performance in post-war history, gaining only 20.5% of the vote. Due to the unsatisfactory election results, the SPD's leader and Chancellor candidate, Martin Schulz, announced that they would not continue the incumbent grand coalition government.

The media speculated that CDU/CSU would need to form a "Jamaica" coalition with the FDP and the Greens, instead of with the Left and AfD as both had been ruled out by Merkel as coalition partners before the election. On 9 October 2017, Merkel officially invited the Free Democrats and the Greens to participate in coalition talks, but preliminary talks between the parties collapsed on 20 November after the FDP withdrew.

The German President then appealed to the SPD to consider a grand coalition with the CDU/CSU, and on 6 December, the SPD held a convention to make a decision. Most of its delegates agreed to start talks. This decision was met with protests by the party's youth wing. On 12 January, the CDU/CSU and the SPD announced a breakthrough in preliminary talks and agreed to begin formal negotiations for the grand coalition. On 7 February, the final coalition agreement between the CDU/CSU and the SPD was announced.

The CSES Module 5 fieldwork began on September 25 and ended on November 30,

2017. Therefore, we code as winners those respondents who voted for the CDU/CSU, regardless of the date of interview. We further code as winners those respondents who voted for the FPD or the Greens only if they were interviewed between October 8 and November 20, 2017. Everyone else is coded as a loser.

Germany, 2021

The 2021 German Federal election was held on September 26, 2021. Long standing incumbent Chancellor, Angela Merkel (CDU), stood down after sixteen years in office, and did not run in the elections, the first time an incumbent Chancellor had not contested. The election marked the first time three parties put forward Chancellor candidates: The Greens nominating Annalena Baerbock, the SPD nominated Olaf Scholz, and the Union parties (CDU/CSU), nominated Armin Laschet of the CDU.

The SPD won a plurality of the vote, scoring 25.7%. The Union parties came second with 24.1%, its worst result ever, while the Greens recorded their best result in a federal contest, winning 14.8%. The Liberals (FDP) led by Christian Lindner, came fourth, winning 11.5% of the vote. Following the election, a three-party governing coalition with the FDP and the Greens joining either the SPD or the Union parties was widely expected. Particularly because representatives from both the SPD and The Union parties ruled out the continuance of the Grand Coalition (of the CDU/CSU and SPD) that had been in office since 2013.

On 17 October, the Greens voted to enter formal coalition talks with the SPD and FDP. The next day, the FDP voted to do the same. The 20th Bundestag was officially sworn in on 26 October and on December 8, it elected Olaf Scholz as the new Chancellor, bringing to an end sixteen years of The Union parties participation in government.

Fieldwork in Germany took place from September 27 to November 21, 2021. As such, we code respondents who voted for the Greens and FDP as winners, regardless of when they were interviewed, as these two parties had kingmaker positions that made their presence in the government nearly certain. We also code respondents who voted for the SPD as winners if they responded to the survey after 18 October, as this is the moment the Greens and FDP made public their preference to govern with the SPD instead of

with the Union parties.

Hungary, 2018

Hungarian parliamentary elections were held on 8 April 2018. The governing alliance of Fidesz and KDNP, which had previously been in power, emerged victorious with 49.3% of the vote. This enabled them to retain the two-thirds majority in parliament they had won in 2014.

The CSES Module 5 fieldwork started on 23 April 2018 and ended on 5 May 2018, while Orbán's new cabinet was then sworn in on 18 May. However, as Fidesz and KDNP won an absolute majority of the votes and it was clear following the elections that Viktor Orban would remain in office, we code as winners those respondents who voted for either Fidesz or KNDP, and as losers those who did not.

Netherlands, 2017

The 2017 Dutch general election was held on March 15, 2017, to elect all 150 members of the lower house. VVD lost seats but remained the largest party (with 33 seats), PVV came in second place (with 20 seats), CDA and D66 won 19 each, making it clear that at least four partners would be needed form a coalition with a parliamentary majority (at least 76 seats). Talks of the first proposed coalition with VVD, CDA, D66, and the Green Left (GroenLinks) failed on May 15. In late June 2017, discussions of another coalition began again between VVD, D66, CDA and CU. On October 9, after 208 days of negotiations, the VVD, D66, CDA and CU finally agreed to form a coalition. The new government granted Mark Rutte a third consecutive term as Prime Minister. He was sworn into office on October 26, 2017, closing the longest cabinet formation period in Dutch history at the time.

CSES fieldwork in the Netherlands lasted from March 16 to July 03, 2017. Over the course of the fieldwork, coalition talks begin and collapse on several occasions. Edith Schippers is initially appointed informateur but negotiations fail. She is then reappointed informateur but talks fail again and she resigns. Tjeenk Willink is then appointed informateur. All the while, although it was not clear which parties would end up being junior coalition partners, it was fairly clear that the government that would eventually emerged

would involve VVD as the senior partner. D66, CDA, PvdA, VVD, SP, GroenLinks and CU had already said that they would not collaborate with PVV, making it extremely unlikely for them to end up in government. As such, we take a conservative approach and only code as winners VVD voters, while all other respondents are coded as losers.

Norway, 2017

The 2017 Norwegian Parliamentary election took place on September 11, 2017. The non-socialist parties retained a reduced majority of 88 seats, allowing Prime Minister Erna Solberg's Conservative-Progress coalition to remain in government. Prime Minister Solberg set out to form a governing coalition between the the Conservative Party, the Progress Party, the Liberal Party, and the Christian Democrats. On September 17, 2017, the Christian Democrats left coalition talks due to the inclusion of the Progress Party. On 14 January, 2018, a government was formed by the Conservative Party, the Progress Party and the Liberal Party. Given that CSES fieldwork was conducted from September 20 to October 26, 2017, we code as winners those respondents who voter for Conservative Party, the Progress Party or the Liberal Party. All others are coded as losers, regardless of when they were interviewed.

A.4 Countries where the government was appointed during the fieldwork

Denmark, 2019

The Danish general election of 2019 took place on June 5th. The purpose of the election was to elect all 179 members of the Danish unicameral legislature, known as the Folketing. The "red bloc", a coalition of parties that supported Mette Frederiksen as Prime Minister (Social Democrats), won the election. The coalition consisted of the Social Democrats, the Social Liberals, the Socialist People's Party, the Red-Green Alliance, the Faroese Social Democratic Party, and the Greenlandic Siumut. The Social Democratic Party emerged as the largest party in Folketing, capturing 25.9% of the vote and 48 seats.

Following consultations with the political parties, Queen Margrethe II tasked Mette Frederiksen with forming a new government. Negotiations for the new government began

on June 7th, with the Social Democratic, Social Liberals, the Socialist People's Party and the Red–Green Alliance.

On June 25th, the Social Liberals, the Socialist People's Party and the Red–Green Alliance agreed to provide the Social Democratic Party with parliamentary support, allowing Mette Frederiksen to become Prime Minister as leader of a single-party Social Democratic government. On June 27th, the new cabinet was announced and took office the same day. CSES Module 5 fieldwork began on June 6 and ended on September 28, 2019, which means that some respondents were interviewed before the appointment of the new government while others were interviewed after the appointment. However, since the winning party, the Social Democrats, ultimately became the incumbent party, we treat those respondents who voted for it as winners and those who did not as losers, regardless of the date of interview.

Lithuania, 2016

The first round of Parliamentary elections in Lithuania was held on October 9, 2016. In constituencies where no candidate won the required majority, the second round of elections was held on October 23, 2016 (applicable to 68 out of 79 districts). The Lithuania Union of Farmers and Greens (LVZS) won the most seats for the first time in its history, winning 54 seats. The Homeland Union – Lithuanian Christian Democrats won 31 seats. The Social Democratic Party of Lithuania won 17 seats and the Liberal Movement (LRLS) won 14 seats, becoming the fourth largest group in parliament.

On November 9, 2016, the Lithuania Union of Farmers and Greens (LVZS) signed a coalition agreement with the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party (LSDP) to form a coalition government. Former Interior Minister Saulius Skvernelis was sworn in as Prime Minister on December 13, 2016.

CSES fieldwork in Lithuania took place from November 11 to December 10, 2016. Given that the Farmers and Greens signed a coalition agreement with the Social Democrats two days before fieldwork began, it was clear who would be in the government, even if it had not yet been appointed officially. As such, we code respondents who voted for Farmers and Greens or for the Social Democrats as winners and everyone else as losers,

regardless of the interview date.

New Zealand, 2017

The 2017 New Zealand general election is used in study 2 as a quasi-experimental case study. See Appendix D.1 for a detailed description of the case.

New Zealand, 2020

The 2020 New Zealand Parliamentary election was held on October 17. The election resulted in a landslide victory for Labour, who won 50% of the popular vote and 65 seats, making it possible for them to form the first Labour single-party majority government since 1946, and the first one-party administration since the adoption of the Mixed Member Proportional (MMP) voting system in 1996. New Zealand First (NZF), part of the incumbent coalition with Labour, had its worst result ever, failing to cross the electoral threshold and losing all its seats. On 31 October, Ardern announced that despite the Labour Party having won enough seats to continue the Sixth Labour Government on their own, they had invited the Greens to participate in a "cooperation agreement", seeking their input on matters such as the environment, climate change and child wellbeing, and that the Greens had accepted the offer.

CSES fieldwork in New Zealand lasted from October 21 to May 01, 2020. We split the sample into those who were interviewed before Ardern announced the cooperation agreement and those who were interviewed after the announcement. For those who were interviewed prior to the announced, we code only those who voted for Labour as winners, as they were expected to form a single-party government. For those who were interviewed after the announcement, we code both Labour voters and Green voters as winners. All others are coded as losers.

Portugal, 2019

The 2019 Portuguese lower house election took place on October 6, 2019. Before the election, Costa headed a minority government and relied on external support from the Left Bloc (BE), the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP) and the Greens (PEV). Costa's governing Socialist Party (SP) surpassed the Social Democratic Party (PPD/PSD) to become the strongest party. Shortly after the election, Costa declared that the SP will

not renew the "Geringonça" deal with the Left Bloc and the Communist Party, but will instead from a single-party minority government without any formal cooperation agreements. Costa officially resumed office as Prime Minister on October 26, 2019.

CSES fieldwork began on October 12 2019. Although the government was officially appointed two weeks later, it was already clear that Costa's Socialist Party would be the only party in government. As such, we code SP voters as winners and everyone else as losers, regardless of the interview date.

Poland, 2019

The 2019 Polish parliamentary election was held on October 13, 2019 to elect 460 members of the Sejm (the Polish lower house) and 100 Senators to the Upper House.

The Law and Justice Party (PiS), along with its United Right alliance members, led by incumbent Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki won the elections, receiving 43.6% of the popular vote and 235 seats in total. Meanwhile, The Civic Coalition alliance, spearheaded by the Civic Platform (PO) party, lost 32 seats compared to its 2015 performance. Coming in third-place was The Left Alliance, receiving 12.6% of the vote and 49 seats. The Polish Coalition Alliance fell back, however, on its 2015 performance, losing 28 seats and coming in fourth place.

The Second Cabinet of Mateusz Morawiecki was formed on 15 November 2019.

CSES fieldwork in Poland lasted from October 24 to November 17, 2019. While government formation occurred near the end of fieldwork, we consider it sufficiently clear that the incumbent PiS party had won the elections and would remain in power immediately following the elections to justify coding respondents that had voted for PiS as winners, and everyone else as losers, regardless of when they were interviewed.

Romania, 2016

The 2016 Romanian Parliamentary elections were held on December 11, 2016. Romanian voters elected all 329 members of the Lower House (Chamber of deputies) and all 136 seats in the Upper House (Senate). These parliamentary elections were the first held under a new electoral system adopted in 2015, which saw a return to a more proportional electoral system, last utilized in 2004.

The PSD, under the leadership of Liviu Dragnea, emerged victorious by winning 154 seats and 45.5% of the popular vote. The party also advanced in the Senate, winning 67 seats. The main opposition party, the PNL, won 20%, and 69 seats.

The PSD and ALDE signed an agreement on December 20 to come up with a joint cabinet, for which portfolios would be assigned to the two parties proportionally.

However, at the time, it was not clear who would be the Prime Minister. Liviu Dragnea was the obvious option, but the Romanian President Klaus Werner Iohannis had previously said he would not appoint any individual with previous convictions, which Dragnea had (for electoral fraud during a referendum three years earlier). Dragnea attempted to have his convictions expunged but failed. Several other long-term PSD arty members were being considered simultaneously. Ultimately, the PSD and their coalition partners nominated Sorin Mihai Grindeanu. President Iohannis designated Grindeanu as prime minister on 30 December 2016 and he was finally sworn in on 4 January 2017.

The CSES conducted fieldwork in Romania from December 13, 2016 to February 20, 2017. We code PSD voters as winners, regardless of when they were surveyed, as they clearly won the elections. While there might have been some speculation surrounding who the Prime Minister would be, it was always clear that it would be a member of PSD. Given that the announcement that ALDE would be joining PSD as part of the new government emerged on December 20, we also code as winners ALDE voters if they were surveyed after the announcement. All other are coded as losers.

A.5 Countries included in CSES Module 5 but excluded from analyses due to lack of clear winner

Belgium, 2019

Belgium held federal elections on May 26, 2019, alongside European and regional elections. The 150 members of the Chamber of Representatives were elected from eleven multi-member constituencies. The ruling parties, CD&V and Open Vld, lost votes, resulting in a decline in their support (having won 12 seats each). The New Flemish Alliance (N-VA), a party promoting Flemish separatism and nationalism won 25 seats,

although this represented a drop compared to its 2014 performance. The far-right party Vlaams Belang wone 18 seats. In Wallonia, the incumbent Reformist Movement (MR) lost six seats and came second in the popular vote, with the Parti Socialist (PS) coming out on top. The Belgian Workers' Party (PVDA-PTB) and the Green Ecolo party made significant gains in the Wallonia elections.

The linguistic, ethnic, and regional divisions of Belgium were exposed again, with Flanders voting strongly for right-wing Flemish nationalist and separatist parties, and Wallonia voting left.

On May 30, King Philippe appointed Johan Vande Lanotte (Socialistische Partij Anders, SP.A) and Didier Reynders (MR) as informateurs. They reported on their progress by June 6, and after several extensions, Didier Reynders was appointed as European Commissioner. On October 4, King Philippe announced the end of the first phase of government formation talks, with the informateurs advising that a government of N-VA, the Socialist Party, and the Greens was the best option to pursue.

The two new informateurs, Rudy Demotte and Geert Bourgeois, resigned on November 4, as they could not break the political deadlock. The Wilmès Government succeeded Michel II Government, and most parliamentary parties provided external support to manage the coronavirus pandemic. Informal talks on forming a new government began in June 2020, and the Wilmès II government was replaced by the permanent seven-party coalition — De Croo Government in October, with Wilmès becoming one of the deputy prime ministers.

Since the CSES Module 5 fieldwork began on May 24, 2019, and ended on September 24, 2019, the multiple informateurs and negotiations and actors involved in the process do not allow us to identify who the winners and losers were during that period. As a consequence, we decide to exclude the 2019 Belgian election from the analyses.

Iceland, 2016

Iceland held its parliamentary elections on October 29. The Progressive Party faced a significant setback, losing 11 seats and only securing 11.5% of the vote, a drop of almost 13 points from their performance in the 2013 election. The Independence Party maintained

its position as the party securing the most votes (29%) and seats (21), while the Pirate Party and the newly-formed Reform Party gained significant ground (winning 10 and 7 seats, respectively). Left-Green won 10 seats. The Social Democratic Alliance suffered a loss of six seats (having won 3 seats), resulting in their worst outcome since 1999, and came seventh in vote share.

None of the two primary groups — the outgoing coalition of the Independence Party and the Progressives, or the center-left opposition (Left-Greens, Pirates, Bright Future, and Social Democrats) — secured a majority, leaving the new centrist party Reform as possible kingmakers. The leader of the Independence Party, Bjarni Benediktsson, said he preferred a three-party coalition but without specifying which three parties. The Pirate Party suggested a five-party coalition, excluding the two outgoing coalition members. Later, they proposed a minority coalition of Left-Green Movement, Bright Future, and Reform, with outside support from the Social Democrats. The leader of Reform ruled out a right-leaning three-party coalition with the Independence Party and the Progressives but did not rule out supporting the center-left bloc.

On November 2, President Guni Th. Jóhannesson gave the mandate to Bjarni to form a majority government. The Independence Party, Reform, and Bright Future entered formal coalition talks on November 11, but the three parties failed to agree with a new market-based fishing quota system and an EU referendum as the main stumbling blocks.

On November 17, the mandate to form a majority government was given to the leader of the Left-Greens, Katrín Jakobsdóttir. She initiated talks with Reform, Bright Future, the Pirates, and Social Democrats, and on November 19, the five parties agreed to begin formal coalition talks. However, the coalition talks fell through on November 24, and Katrín formally renounced the Presidential mandate to form a government.

On December 2, the mandate to form a majority government was given to the leader of the Pirate Party, Birgitta Jónsdóttir. However, the party failed to form a government, and the President chose not to give a new mandate to form a government to anyone but to ask the party leaders to discuss the matter informally. On January 2, 2017, the Independence Party began official talks about a potential coalition deal with the Reform

Party and Bright Future. Morgunblai reported that the Left-Green Movement and the Progressive Party had also discussed possible coalition deals with the Independence Party. Following lengthy coalition negotiations, the Independence Party, the Reform Party, and Bright Future agreed to form a three-party coalition, with former Finance Minister and Independence Party leader Bjarni Benediktsson becoming the Prime Minister on the 11th of January, 2017.

As the previous paragraphs show, at no point was it clear who the winners and losers were. We, therefore, decided to exclude this case from our analyses.

Iceland, 2017

On October 28, 2017, Iceland held its second lower house election of the year, following the collapse of the incumbent three-party government - Independence Party, Reform Party, and Bright Future - due to a scandal in September. The Independence Party's performance was its weakest since 2009, losing five seats but remaining the largest party in parliament with 16 seats and 25.2% of the vote. Meanwhile, the Social Democratic Alliance won four additional seats with 12.1% of the vote, and the newly formed Center Party, led by former Prime Minister Sigmundur Gunnlaugsson, won 7 seats with 10.9% of the vote. However, Bright Future lost all of its seats after losing four fifths of its popular support.

Eight parties gained representation in the lower house, with many expressing vague positions on possible coalition governments. After talks with party leaders, President Guni Th. Jóhannesson granted Katrín Jakobsdóttir, leader of the Left-Green Movement, the mandate to form a coalition government comprising her party, the Progressives, Social Democratic Alliance, and Pirates on November 2. The four parties agreed to begin formal coalition talks the following day, but the Progressive Party eventually deemed the coalition too slim to cooperate on major issues on November 6, leading to the collapse of negotiations.

Katrín then met with Guni to discuss alternative possibilities, and the leaders of the Left-Greens, Independence Party, and Progressive Party began talks about forming a coalition together. However, the youth organization of the Left-Greens and some mem-

bers of the party opposed governing with the Independence Party. Despite this, talks concluded quickly, and on November 28, Guni formally granted Katrín the mandate to lead a government with the Independence Party and Progressive Party, pending their support. The new government was seated on November 30, after party committees approved the government agreement.

While in this case a government eventually emerged as a result of coalition negotiations, CSES Module 5 fieldwork in Iceland began on 30 October 2017, weeks before such negotiations would prove fruitful. At the time of the fieldwork, it was not clear who the winners and losers were, as the party leading the negotiations and its potential coalition partners were constantly changing. We therefore exclude Iceland 2017 from the analyses.

Ireland, 2016

The 2016 Irish general election took place on February 26, 2016. The election resulted in significant losses for the incumbent Fine Gael (FG)/Labour (Lab) coalition. The outgoing coalition, swept to office with a record majority in 2011, lost 57 seats. Fine Gael lost 11-points in vote share but still managed to secure the most votes (25.5%), with 50 seats, down 26 on its 2011 performance. There were also significant gains for the Nationalist Sinn Fein (SF) and independent candidates.

The government formation following the election lasted for 63 days as Fine Gael (FG) struggled to secure a government partner. After three failed attempts to elect a Taoiseach (Irish PM), Fine Gael finally secured support from nine independent candidates and agreed to a confidence and supply deal with the main opposition party, Fianna Fail (FF). Enda Kenny was re-elected Taoiseach on May 6, 2016, the first FG Prime Minister to secure a second successive term since 1927.

CSES fieldwork in Ireland lasted from March 01 to March 06, 2016. During this time, the largest party (Fine Gael) and the second largest (Fianna Fáil) engaged in informal negotiations with smaller parties. However, they abandoned this process in mid-April. As such, there were no clear winners during the fieldwork, forcing us to drop this case.

Italy, 2018

The 2018 Italian general election, involving elections to both the lower and upper house, took place on March 4, 2018. The elections were the first held under the new electoral system, approved in late 2017 by parliament, which involved both houses being elected using a parallel voting system.

In the Chamber of Deputies (Lower House), the Five Star Movement (M5S) won the most seats, securing 265 out of the 630 total seats, and receiving 32.7% of the vote, but the center-right coalition emerged with the most votes and seats when counted together. As such, no political group or party won an outright majority, resulting in a hung parliament. Government formation lasted three months and the first Conte government was formed on June 1 between the M5S and the League, whose leaders both became deputy prime ministers in a populist coalition government led by the M5S-linked independent Giuseppe Conte as Prime Minister of Italy.

CSES fieldwork took place from March 8 to May 2, 2018. At the time, there were a few public statements, proposals and rejections, but all were informal. Given that there was no clear winners at the time of fieldwork, we were obliged to drop the case.

Latvia, 2018

The parliamentary elections that were held on the 6 October 2018 eventually resulted in the formation of a coalition government composed by "Who Owns the State?", the New Conservative Party, Development/For!, the National Alliance and New Unity, with Arturs Krišjānis (from the National Alliance, the smallest coalition party) acting as prime minister. However, during the CSES fieldwork (which lasted from November 14 to December 1) it was not clear who was the winner. The Social Democratic party "Harmony" had won the elections, but on their first meeting with the president of Latvia on October 18, the opposition leaders reiterated their intention to form a coalition government excluding Harmony, even if it required forming a 5- or 6-party coalition. This led the president to ask Jānis Bordāns, from the New Conservative Party, to form a coalition government.

However, on November 14, the day that the CSES fieldwork started, the coalition

talks collapsed, leading the Latvian president to nominate Aldis Gobzems, from "Who Owns the State?" as the next prime minister on 26 November. In the following weeks (coinciding with the fieldwork), Gobzems proposed several coalitions that did not prosper due to tensions among the potential coalition partners that led to a breakdown in the negotiations. This resulted in the president revoking Gobzems' nomination on December 10, 2018.

Due to the uncertainty that characterized the fieldwork period, we could not define winner and loser and had to drop the case.

South Korea, 2016

The 2016 South Korean lower house election was held on April 13, 2016 with all 300 members of the National Assembly up for election. The election unexpectedly marked a significant shift in the South Korean political landscape, with the incumbent Saenuri Party (SP) led by Kim Moo-sung losing 35 seats and its parliamentary majority (retaining 122 seats). The election saw an upset victory for the liberal Democratic Party, which defied opinion polls by winning a plurality of seats (123). In votes for party lists, however, the Democratic Party came in third, behind the Saenuri Party, in first place, and the new People Party, in second.

In sum, the election resulted in a hung parliament with a three-party system. As such, we could not accurately code winners and losers and had to exclude the case from analyses.

Sweden, 2017

On September 9, 2018, Sweden held its lower house election. The incumbent minority government, comprised of the Social Democrats and the Greens, and supported by the Left Party, secured 144 seats, narrowly defeating the four-party Alliance coalition by a single seat, with the Sweden Democrats winning the remaining 62 seats. This election saw the Social Democrats' vote share drop to 28.3 percent, its lowest level of support since 1911. The Moderates, the main opposition party, also lost support, while the Sweden Democrats made some gains, albeit less than expected.

Following the election, Prime Minister Stefan Löfven faced a vote of no-confidence

on September 25, resulting in a constitutional procedure where the Riksdag had four chances to vote on a new Prime Minister. If all four attempts failed to elect a new Prime Minister, a snap election would be mandatory. Despite this, Löfven's government remained in power as a caretaker government. Party negotiations for forming a new government began on September 27, but neither Löfven nor Kristersson were able to construct a stable coalition, resulting in a deadlock.

Speaker Andreas Norlén nominated Moderate leader Ulf Kristersson to form a government on November 9. On November 14, Kristersson was nominated as Prime Minister, but lost the confidence vote as the Center and Liberal parties refused to support him, unwilling to work in a government that relied on the Sweden Democrats.

At the time of the fieldwork of the CSES Module 5 (from September 10 to November 6, 2018) it was not possible to clearly identify winners and losers due candidates failing to secure support for their investiture and the impossibility of tracking and checking whether party negotiations were formal or informal and whether they were intended to form a coalition government or a single-party minority government with external support. Therefore, we exclude the Swedish 2017 election from the analyses.

Switzerland, 2019

The Swiss Federal Elections took place on October 20, 2019. However, as the Federal Council (the executive branch) consists of members of the four largest parties, it is not clear how to code winners and losers. As such, we had to exclude Switzerland 2019 from our analyses.

Tunisia, 2019

The 2019 presidential election was held in two rounds, the first on September 15, and the second on October 13, 2019. Kais Saied won the second round of elections with 73% of the vote, defeating opponent Nabil Karoui, who won 27% of the vote. However, Kais Saied was an independent. Therefore, we cannot assign winners and loser on the basis of the party respondents voted for, since the president elect did not belong to any party. Furthermore, this precludes the possibility of calculating affective polarization scores. As such, we are obliged to exclude Tunisia.

Netherlands, 2021

The 2021 Dutch general election was held on March 17 (with additional voting taking place March 15 and 16 as the election took place during the COVID-19 pandemic). Furthermore, the opportunity to vote by mail was granted temporarily to older citizens, due to the pandemic. All 150 members of the Dutch lower house were up for election.

Two months before the March 2021 elections, the outgoing government comprising incumbent Prime Minister Mark Rutte's People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), the Christian Democrats (CDA), Liberals Democrats 66 (D66), and the Christian Union (CU) resigned after a parliamentary inquiry found authorities wrongly accused thousands of parents of making fraudulent child benefit claims. Until the election in March, the government remained in office in a caretaker capacity. VVD topped the poll, winning 21.9% of the vote and 34 seats. D66 became the second-largest party by receiving 15% of the vote and winning 24 seats. The Forum for Democracy (FvD) entered parliament for the first time with 5% of the vote and six seats. In the end, seventeen parties gained representation in parliament, the highest number in recent history.

Following the elections, lengthy coalition negotiations began that would ultimately last 299 days. On January 10, 2022, the VVD, D66, CDA and CU reformed a coalition, with Mark Rutte becoming Prime Minister for the fourth time.

The CSES conducted fieldwork in the Netherlands form March 18 to May 16, 2021. This period was marked by speculation and scandal. There were possibilities of Rutte forming a coalition with the new right-wing party JA21, CU and left-wing parties, such as the SP, PvdA, GL or Volt, if other attempts failed.

Around this time, informateur Kajsa Ollongren was photographed as she was leaving Parliament with a document from the coalition negotiations under her arm that contained the note "position elsewhere" next to the name of Pieter Omtzigt of the CDA, who has been a vocal critic of Rutte and played a key role in exposing the child welfare scandal that forced the resignation of Rutte's previous cabinet. This photograph caused speculation about whether Rutte was planning to sideline Omtzigt. Rutte initially denied any involvement in the matter. However, as further notes emerged confirming he had

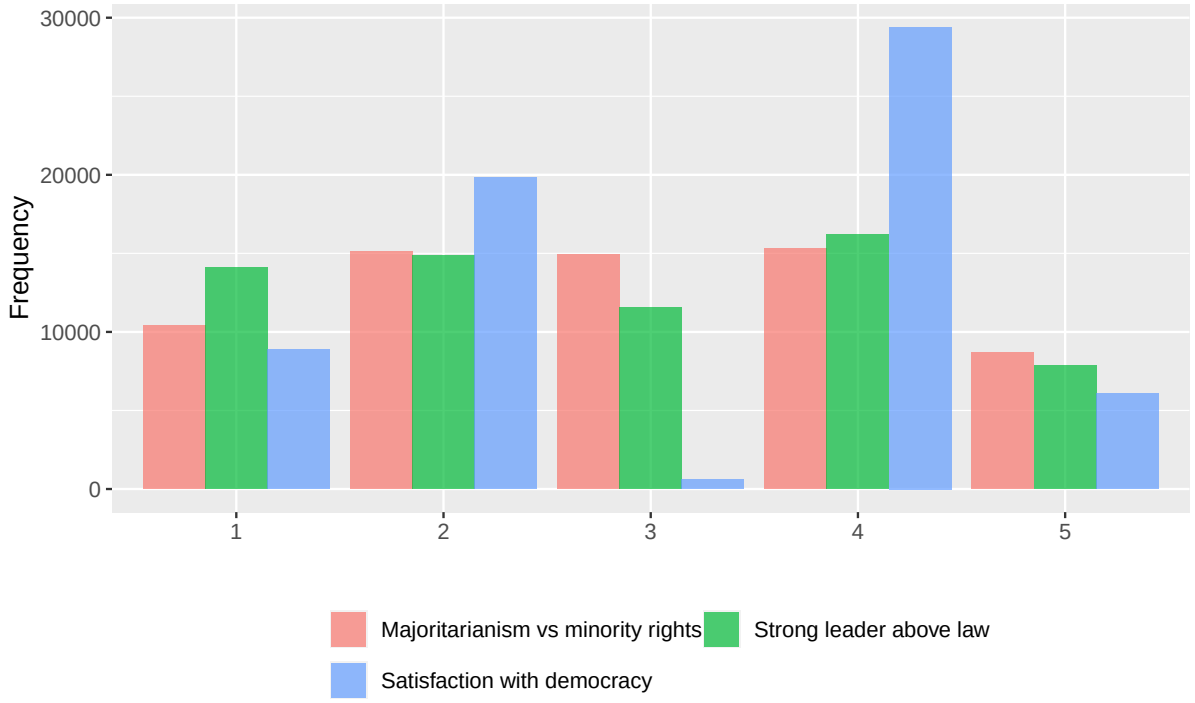
discussed the possibility of Omtzigt as minister, he said he had "misremembered" and was accused by numerous opposition leaders of having lied to the media and the Dutch people. Parliament then held a vote of no-confidence in Rutte as prime minister, which narrowly failed. D66 and the CDA, which served in Rutte's previous cabinet, instead submitted a motion of censure against Rutte as parliamentary leader, which was passed by a large majority. As a result of the scandal, informateurs Wouter Koolmees and Tamara van Ark resigned after the scandal.

Due to the unexpected events and the unpredictable nature of the government formation process during the CSES fieldwork, it was not clear which parties would end up in government and, as result, we have no accurate way of coding winners and losers. Therefore, we exclude the Netherlands, 2021.

B Study 1: Additional results

B.1 Descriptive statistics and regression tables

Figure B1: Distribution of outcome variables



Note: "Majoritarianism vs Minority rights" and "Strong leader above law" are measured on a scale from "strongly disagree (1)" to "strongly agree" (5). Satisfaction with democracy is measured from "not at all satissfied" (1) to "very satisfied (5). For this variable the third point of the scale corresponding to the category "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" was only included in some countries.

Table B1: Impact of winning and losing on political support (OLS estimation)

	(1) SWD	(2) SWD	(3) Majority	(4) Majority	(5) Leader	(6) Leader
Winner	0.37**	0.21**	0.13**	0.06**	0.14**	0.06**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)
Age	0.00**	0.00**	0.01**	0.01**	0.00**	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	-0.01	-0.02	-0.10**	-0.11**	-0.06**	-0.07**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Education	0.02**	0.03**	-0.11**	-0.11**	-0.11**	-0.11**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Ideological extremity	-0.02**	-0.02**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**	0.02**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Vote share party voted		0.01**		0.01**		0.01**
		(0.00)		(0.00)		(0.00)
Constant	1.62**	1.14**	3.01**	2.81**	2.95**	2.72**
	(0.05)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Observations	43384	41897	43103	41621	43181	41704
R^2	0.208	0.217	0.150	0.152	0.110	0.112
Country-election fixed-effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table B2: Impact of winning and losing on political support moderated by affective polarization (OLS estimation)

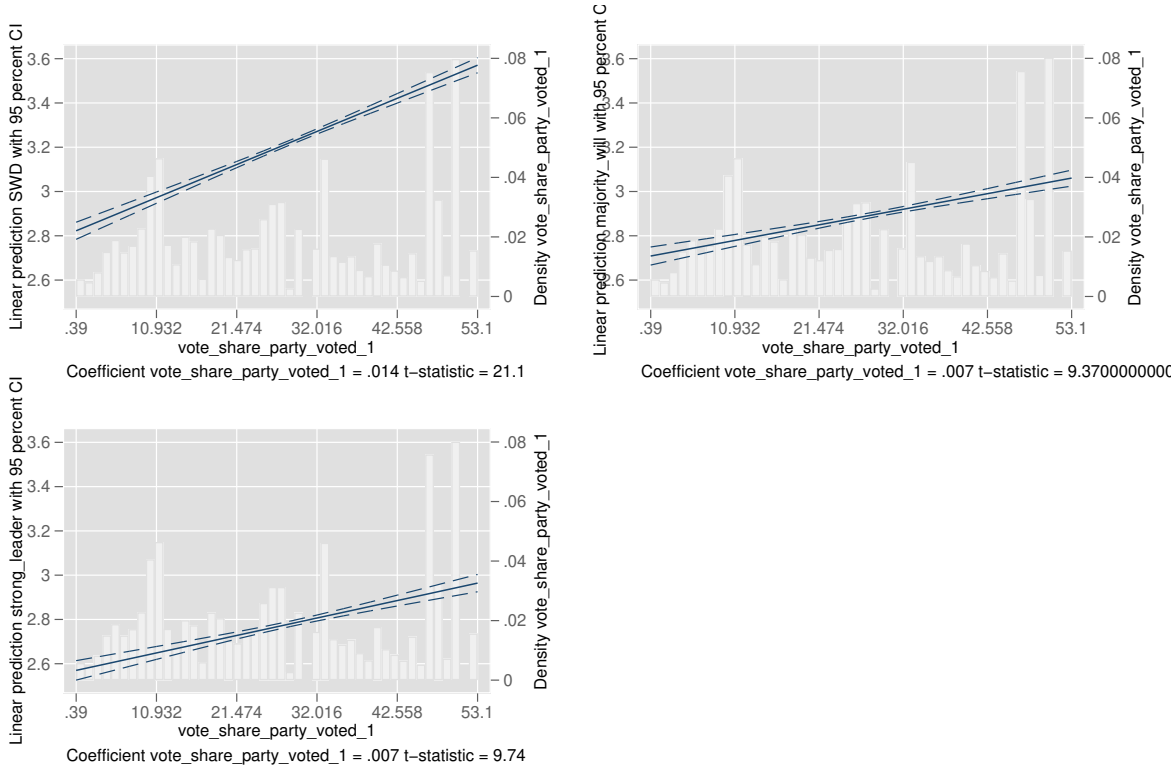
	(1) SWD	(2) Majority	(3) Leader
Winner	-0.21**	-0.01	-0.04
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Affective polarization	-0.08**	-0.01	-0.03**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Winner X Affective polarization	0.10**	0.02*	0.02**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote share party voted	0.01**	0.01**	0.01**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Ideological extremity	-0.01	0.02**	0.03**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age	0.00**	0.01**	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	-0.02	-0.11**	-0.07**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Education	0.03**	-0.11**	-0.11**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	1.42**	2.84**	2.80**
	(0.06)	(0.07)	(0.07)
Observations	40690	40420	40499
R^2	0.224	0.156	0.114
Country-election fixed-effects	✓	✓	✓

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

B.2 Relationship between size of party voted for and political support

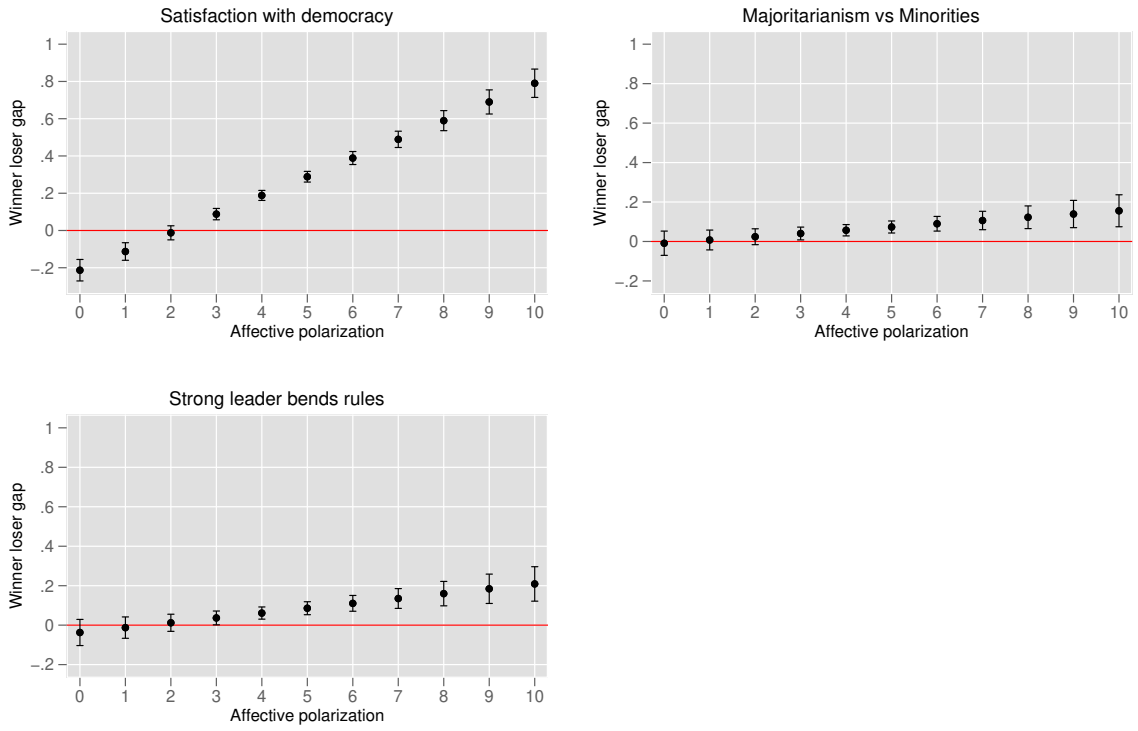
Figure B2: Relationship between size (vote share) party voted for and political support



Note: OLS estimation. 95% confidence intervals around linear prediction. Based on Table B1 summarized in Appendix B

B.3 Differences between winners and losers as a function of affective polarization

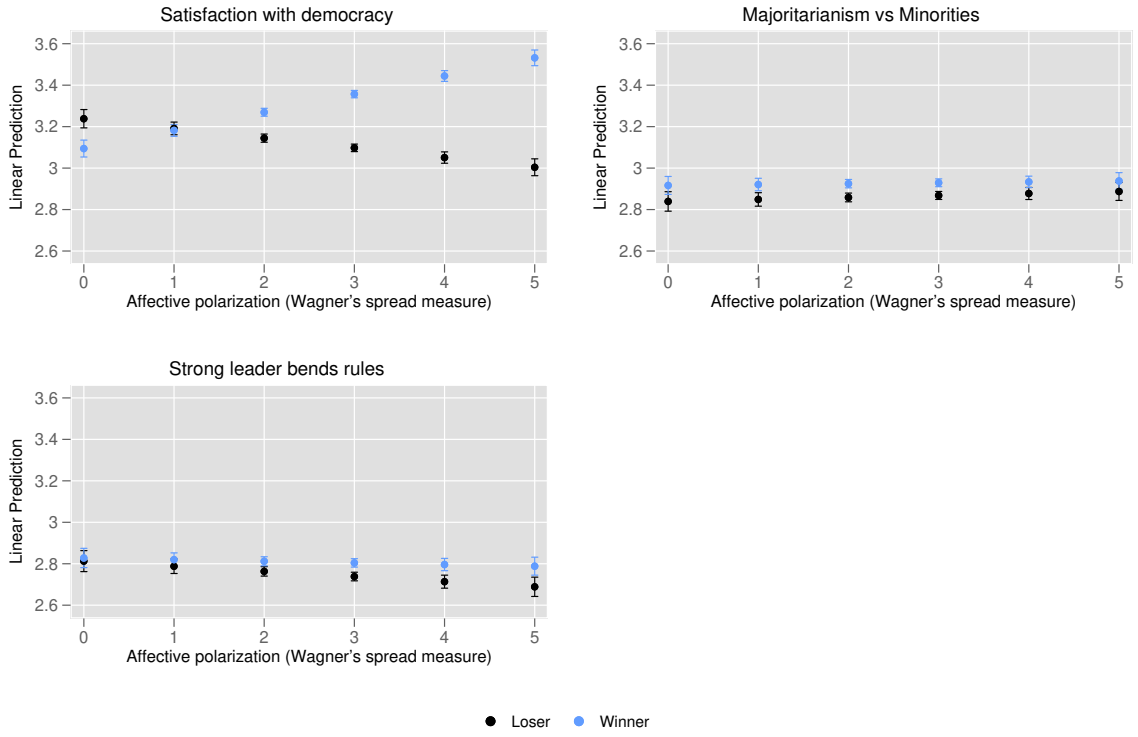
Figure B3: Differences in political support among winners and losers as a function of affective polarization



Note: Whiskers summarize 95% confidence intervals for the difference between winners and losers. Based on Table B2 summarized in Appendix B

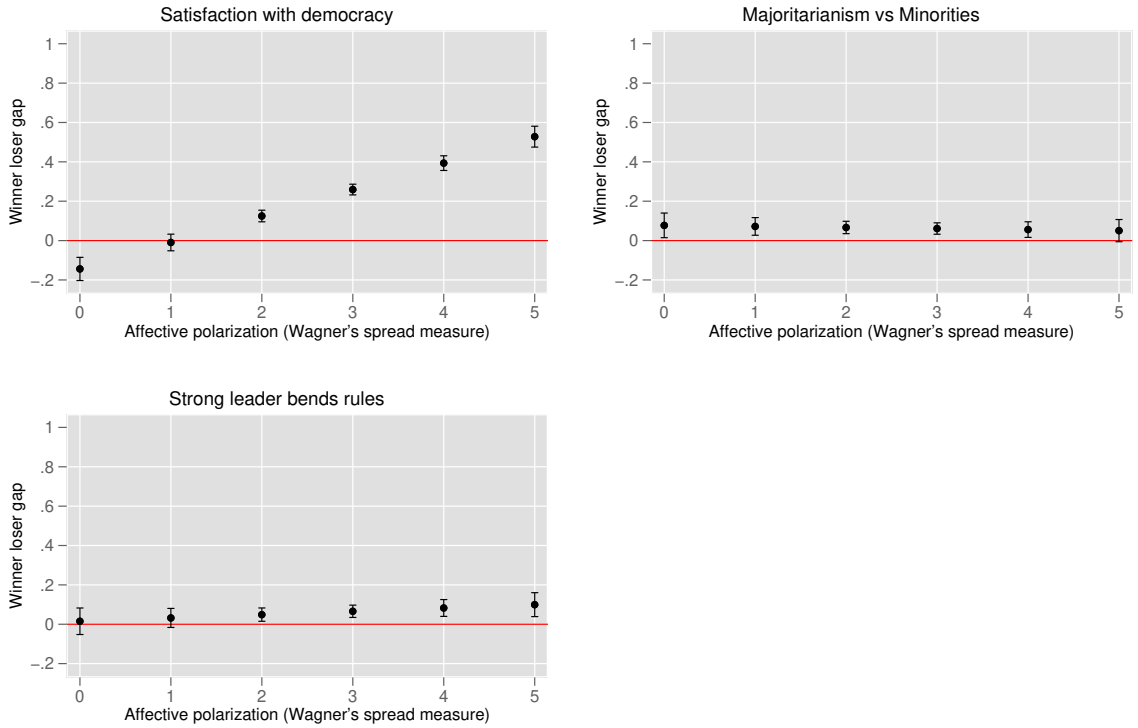
B.4 Alternative estimation: affective polarization spread measure

Figure B4: Satisfaction with democracy and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent as a function of winner and loser status and affective polarization (spread index)



Note: Whiskers represent 95% confidence intervals around the linear prediction.

Figure B5: Differences in political support among winners and losers as a function of affective polarization (spread index)



Note: Whiskers summarize 95% confidence intervals for the difference between winners and losers.

Table B3: Impact of winning and losing on political support moderated by affective polarization spread index (OLS estimation)

	(1) SWD	(2) Majority	(3) Leader
Winner	-0.14**	0.08*	0.02
	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Affective polarization (Wagner's spread measure)	-0.05**	0.01	-0.02**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Winner X Affective polarization (Wagner's spread measure)	0.13**	-0.01	0.02
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Vote share party voted	0.01**	0.01**	0.01**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Ideological extremity	-0.02**	0.02**	0.03**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Age	0.00**	0.01**	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	-0.02	-0.11**	-0.07**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Education	0.03**	-0.11**	-0.11**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	1.25**	2.81**	2.75**
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Observations	41690	41411	41491
R^2	0.220	0.153	0.112
Country-election fixed-effects	✓	✓	✓

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

B.5 Social desirability

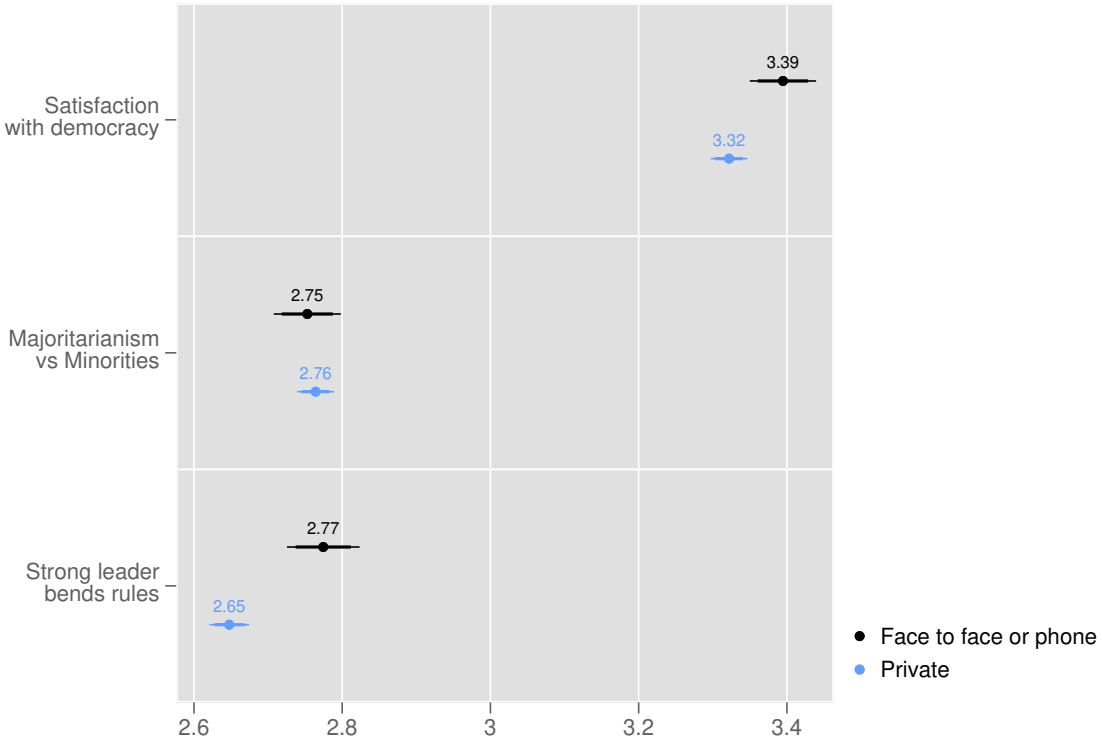
Table B4: Social desirability, winners and losers and political support (OLS estimation)

	(1) SWD	(2) SWD	(3) Majority	(4) Majority	(5) Leader	(6) Leader
Face to face or phone	0.07**	-0.01	0.13**	-0.02	-0.06*	-0.05
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.03)
Age	0.01**	0.01**	0.00**	0.01**	0.01**	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	0.00	-0.12**	-0.07**	-0.01	-0.12**	-0.08**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Education	0.03**	-0.11**	-0.10**	0.03**	-0.11**	-0.11**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Ideology	-0.00**	0.00**	0.00**	-0.00	0.00**	0.00**
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
I. Efficacy	-0.01	-0.01	0.02	-0.02*	-0.02	0.02*
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Political interest	-0.01	0.11**	0.12**	0.03*	0.11**	0.13**
	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Winner				0.22**	0.01	-0.10**
				(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Winner X Face to face or phone				0.23**	0.09*	0.45**
				(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)
Constant	3.33**	2.91**	3.19**	3.24**	2.88**	3.16**
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Observations	25833	25797	25822	21427	21346	21415
R^2	0.077	0.154	0.103	0.088	0.154	0.115
Country-election fixed-effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Standard errors in parentheses

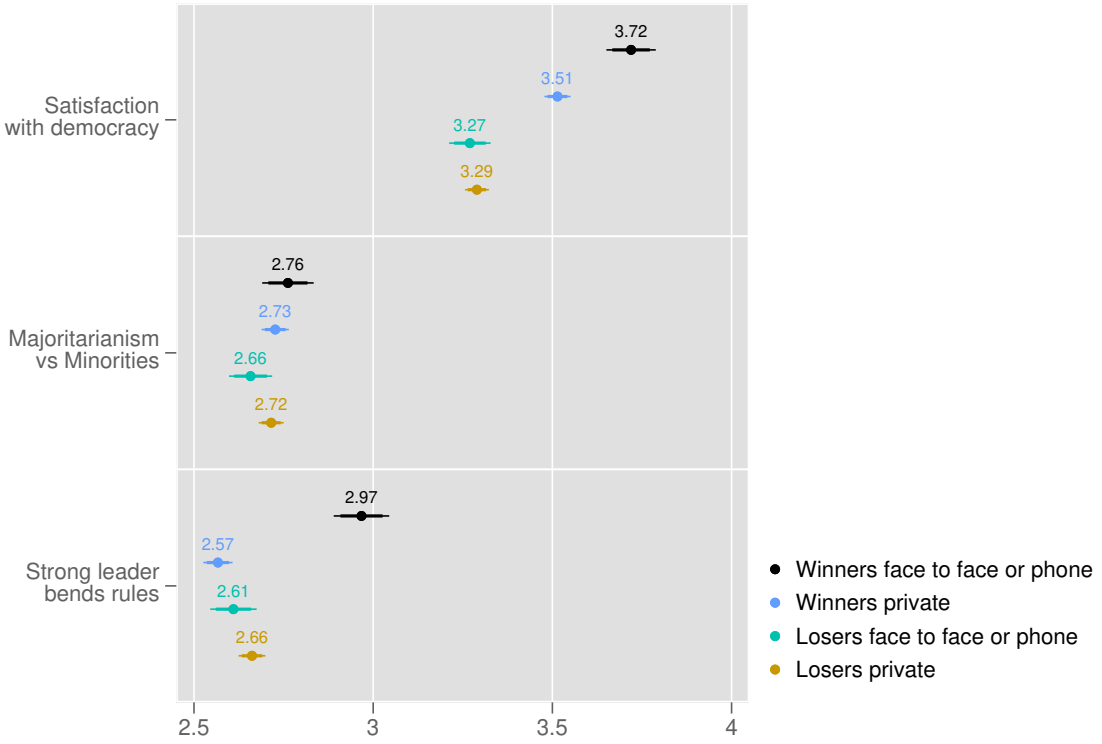
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Figure B6: Outcome variables as a function of interview mode



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table B4 summarized in Appendix B

Figure B7: winner-loser differences as a function of interview mode



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table B4 summarized in Appendix B

C Study 2: Quasi-experimental case study New Zealand 2017

C.1 Case description

Prior to the 2017 New Zealand general election, the National Party led by Prime Minister Bill English had governed since 2008[1]. All the while, the main opposition party to the National government had been the Labour party. However, just seven weeks prior to the election, the Labour party, Andrew Little, suddenly resigned amidst historically low opinion polling of his party[2]. With no one willing to take over the party in times of such low popularity, Jacinda Ardern reluctantly ran, having previously sworn that did not want to be leader or prime minister (Chapman, 2020). Having run unopposed, the relatively inexperienced Ardern became the youngest ever Labour party leader at the age of 37. During her first press conference as Labour party leader, she quipped that she had just accepted the worst job in politics but vowed to run the campaign of a lifetime[3].

On the eve of the election, the National Party officially won a plurality of the seats with 56 and 44 percent of the votes. Nevertheless, the National Party was 5 seats short of a majority, forcing them to enter into talks with New Zealand First, which became "kingmaker" with 9 seats (Vowles, 2018). This left Labour with a potential opportunity to form a government of their own with New Zealand First, if they could get the support of the Green Party. Such an eventuality was considered highly unlikely, given that the winning party had always become a part of the resulting government, since New Zealand adopted mixed member proportional representation[4]. Nevertheless, the Labour Party provided New Zealand First with a proposal dossier to counter that of the Nation Party.

On October 19, 2017, New Zealand First announced the formation of a minority coalition government with Labour, alongside a confidence and supply agreement with the Green Party. The announcement marked the greatest electoral upset in New Zealand's democratic history and made Jacinda Ardern the youngest female head of government in

[1]Source: The New Zealand Herald
[2]Source: The Guardian
[3]Source: The BBC
[4]Source: The Economist

the world[5].

C.2 Additional results and robustness checks

Table C1: Impact of coalition announcement on political support (OLS estimation)

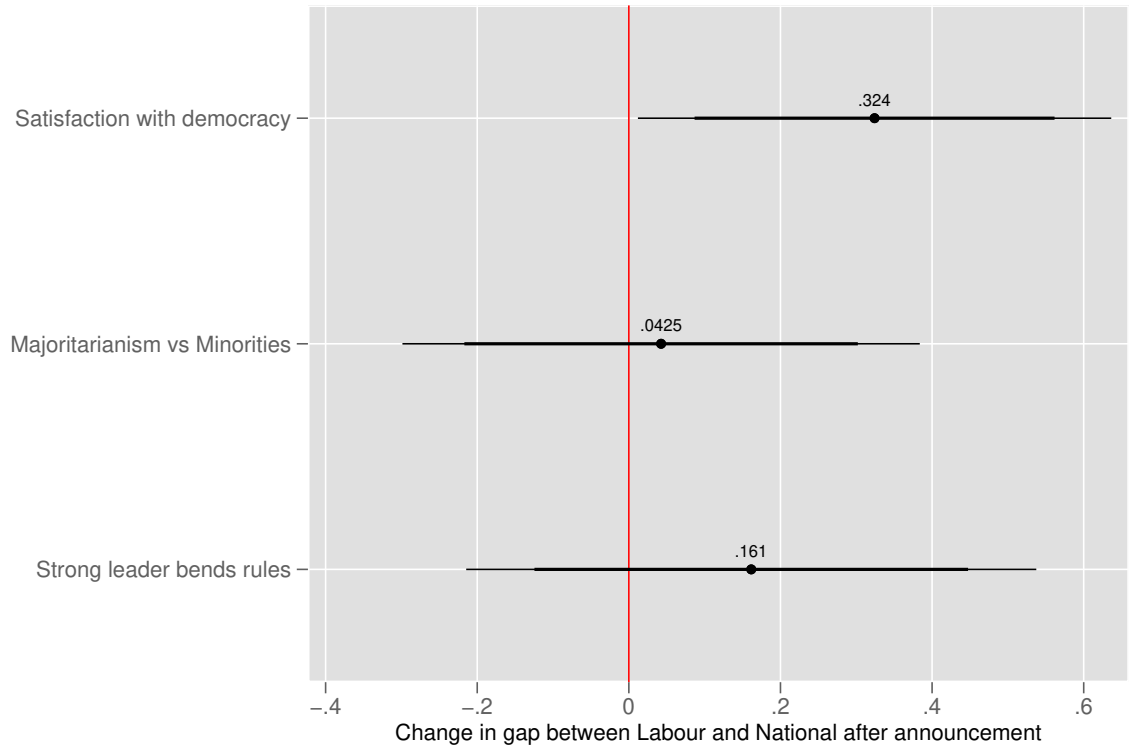
	(1) SWD	(2) Majority	(3) Leader
Labor	0.02	-0.39**	-0.37**
	(0.08)	(0.09)	(0.10)
After announcement	-0.32**	0.06	0.12
	(0.08)	(0.08)	(0.09)
Labor X After announcement	0.32**	0.04	0.16
	(0.12)	(0.13)	(0.15)
Age	0.00	0.01**	0.00+
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Female	0.02	-0.15*	-0.13+
	(0.06)	(0.06)	(0.07)
Education	0.04*	-0.12**	-0.14**
	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.02)
Constant	3.23**	2.72**	3.48**
	(0.15)	(0.17)	(0.18)
Observations	1475	1489	1508
R^2	0.020	0.107	0.065

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

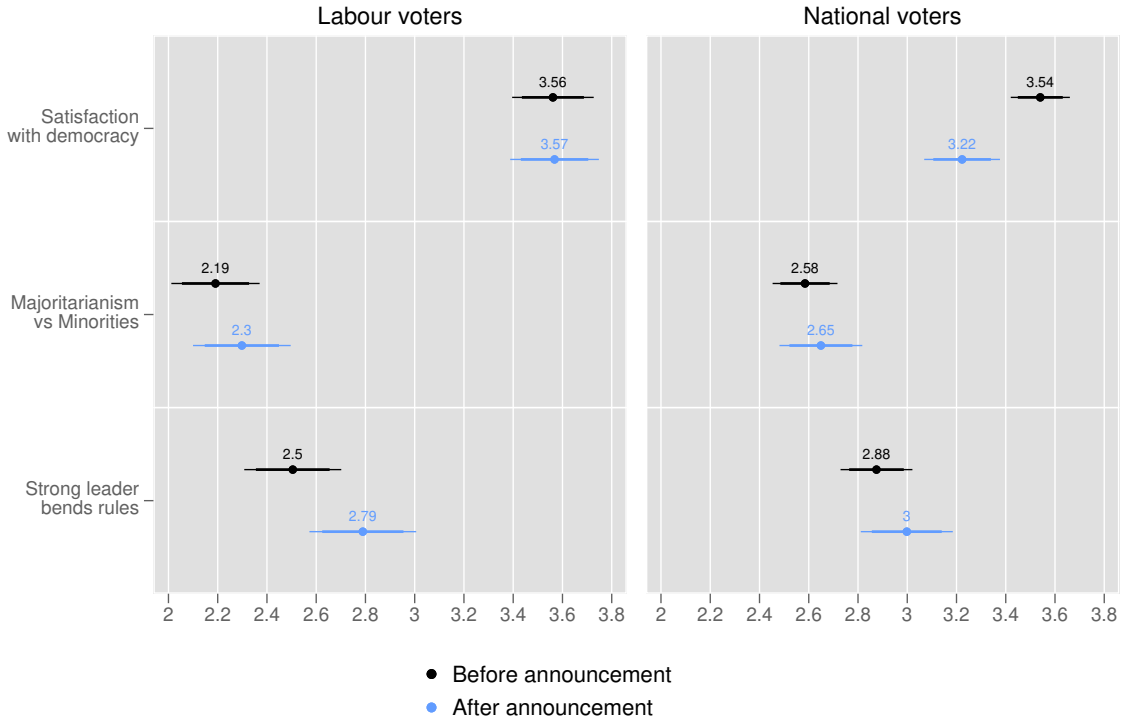
[5]Source: The Times

Figure C1: Effect of coalition announcement in gaps in satisfaction with democracy and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent between voters of the Labour and National parties



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table C1 summarized in Appendix C

Figure C2: Predicted value of outcome variables among voters of Labour and National parties



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table C1 summarized in Appendix C

D Study 3: Quasi-experimental case study Chile 2021

D.1 Case description

The 2021 presidential election in Chile was held on the 21st of November. This election was conducted concurrently with elections to the Chamber of Deputies (lower house), to the Senate and to regional chambers. In the first round of the presidential election Jose Antonio Kast (Christian Social Front) and Gabriel Boric (Approve Dignity) became the two most voted candidates, receiving 27.9% and 25.75% of the votes respectively. Since both candidates fell short of the majority needed to win in the first round, a second round was held on December 19. Sebastián Michel, an independent candidate who run under the coalition "Let's go Chile", which included the party of the former President Sebastián Piñera, received the 12.79% of the votes and did not qualify for the second round. In the second round of the presidential election, Gabriel Boric emerged as the winner with an unexpected 55.87% of the vote, becoming the youngest president ever elected in Chile. The margin of his victory was significantly larger than expected, since most pre-electoral polls predicted a very tight race [6].

[6]Sources: BBC and The New York Times.

D.2 Additional results

Table D1: Impact of becoming a winner or loser on political support (OLS estimation)

	(1) Trust	(2) Majority	(3) Minorities	(4) Assembly
Boric voters	-2.42**	0.29**	0.52**	0.60**
	(0.21)	(0.08)	(0.07)	(0.15)
After announcement	-0.13	-0.01	0.03	0.27
	(0.27)	(0.10)	(0.08)	(0.19)
Boric voters X After announcement	0.78*	0.02	-0.01	-0.11
	(0.34)	(0.12)	(0.11)	(0.24)
Gender	-0.20	0.02	0.12*	-0.40**
	(0.17)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.12)
Age	-0.00	0.01**	0.00*	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	0.08	0.05*	0.02	0.19**
	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
Constant	4.19**	2.34**	2.60**	2.15**
	(0.58)	(0.21)	(0.18)	(0.41)
Observations	821	806	814	806
R^2	0.179	0.053	0.109	0.081

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

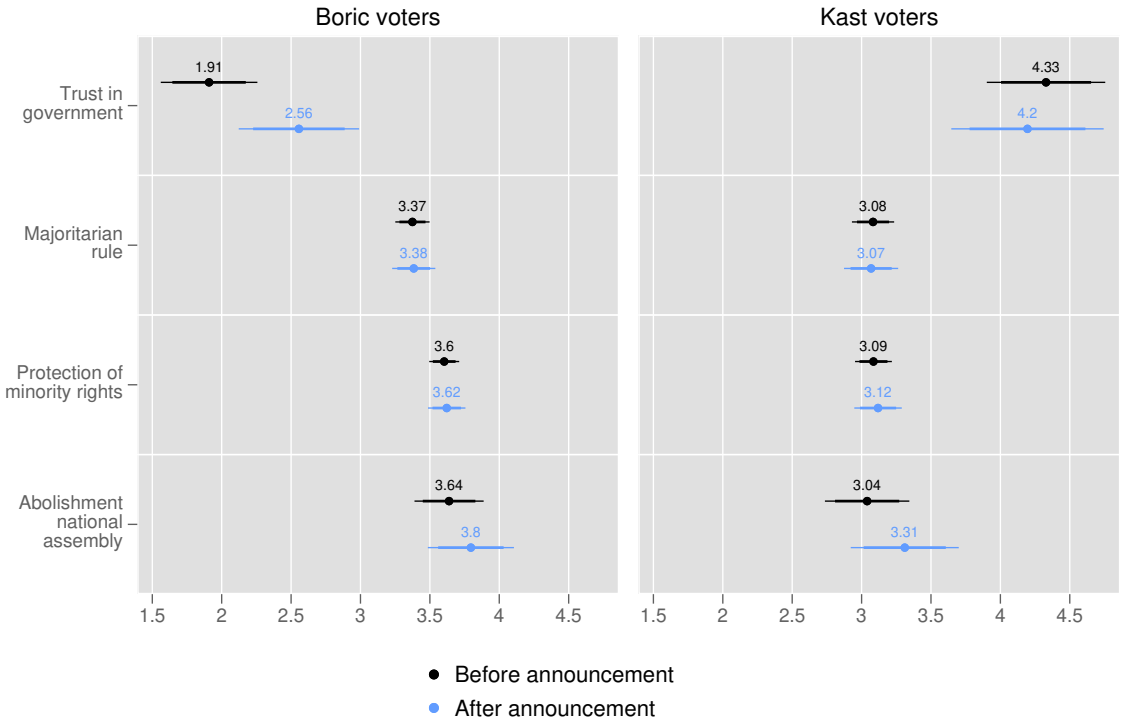
Table D2: Impact of becoming a winner or loser on political support conditional on affective polarization (OLS estimation)

	(1) Trust	(2) Majority	(3) Minorities	(4) Assembly
Boric voters	-1.53**	0.03	0.11	-0.21
	(0.49)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.35)
After announcement	0.08	-0.30	-0.02	-0.27
	(0.59)	(0.20)	(0.18)	(0.42)
Boric voters X After announcement	0.54	0.13	0.10	0.76
	(0.79)	(0.27)	(0.24)	(0.56)
APO	0.05	-0.02	-0.04^{+}	-0.04
	(0.08)	(0.03)	(0.02)	(0.06)
Boric voters X APO	-0.27**	0.06	0.09**	0.16*
	(0.10)	(0.03)	(0.03)	(0.07)
After announcement X APO	-0.13	0.07	0.01	0.13
	(0.12)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.08)
Boric voters X After announcement X APO	0.17	-0.03	-0.01	-0.16
	(0.16)	(0.05)	(0.05)	(0.11)
Gender	-0.09	-0.01	0.12*	-0.32*
	(0.20)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.15)
Age	-0.00	0.01**	0.00^{+}	0.01
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	0.06	0.04^{+}	0.00	0.17**
	(0.06)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.05)
Constant	4.12**	2.66**	2.95**	2.27**
	(0.74)	(0.26)	(0.22)	(0.53)
Observations	582	576	580	576
R^2	0.218	0.070	0.154	0.100

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Figure D1: Predicted value of outcome variables among Boric and Kast voters



Note: OLS estimation. Thick and thin lines are 95 and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Based on Table D1 summarized in Appendix D

D.3 Alternative estimation: affective polarization spread measure

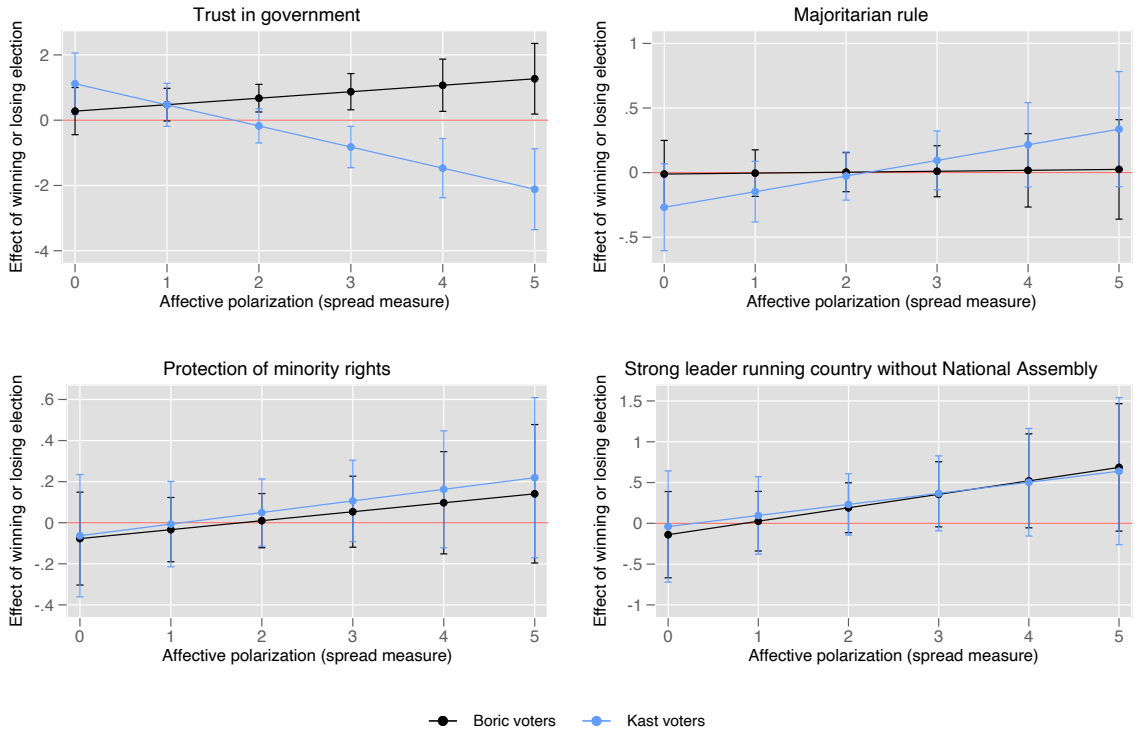
Table D3: Impact of becoming a winner or loser on political support conditional on affective polarization spread measure (OLS estimation)

	(1) Trust	(2) Majority	(3) Minorities	(4) Assembly
Boric voters	-0.70^{+}	0.06	0.20^{+}	0.60*
	(0.37)	(0.13)	(0.11)	(0.27)
After announcement	1.12*	-0.27	-0.06	-0.04
	(0.48)	(0.17)	(0.15)	(0.35)
Boric voters X After announcement	-0.84	0.26	-0.01	-0.10
	(0.60)	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.44)
APO	0.52**	-0.02	-0.10*	0.09
	(0.13)	(0.05)	(0.04)	(0.09)
Boric voters X APO	-0.92**	0.12*	0.17**	-0.02
	(0.16)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.12)
After announcement X APO	-0.65**	0.12^{+}	0.06	0.14
	(0.19)	(0.07)	(0.06)	(0.14)
Boric voters X After announcement X APO	0.84**	-0.11	-0.01	0.03
	(0.25)	(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.18)
Gender	-0.19	0.03	0.13*	-0.37**
	(0.17)	(0.06)	(0.05)	(0.12)
Age	-0.00	0.01**	0.00**	0.00
	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Education	0.09^{+}	0.04*	0.01	0.17**
	(0.05)	(0.02)	(0.02)	(0.04)
Constant	3.14**	2.48**	2.79**	2.25**
	(0.61)	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.44)
Observations	808	795	802	796
R^2	0.214	0.071	0.133	0.093

Standard errors in parentheses

$^{+}$ $p < 0.10$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Figure D2: Effects of Boric's victory on trust in government and support for norms of democratic restraint and consent as a function of winner and loser status and affective polarization (spread measure)



Note: OLS estimation. Based on Table D3 summarized in Appendix D.