

How Economic Expectations Shape Preferences for National Independence: Evidence from Greenland

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Abstract

This paper investigates how economic expectations shape voting intentions in a hypothetical independence referendum in Greenland, a self-governing region of the Kingdom of Denmark. I identify the causal effect of economic expectations by randomly exposing respondents to a prime informing on Greenland's current fiscal deficit. Respondents exposed to the information are 43% more likely to oppose independence, an effect I attribute to (a) worsened economic expectations and (b) greater political participation among pessimistic respondents. I further document that the impact of the prime depends on respondents' personal ties to the political union. While information exposure substantially increases opposition to independence among voters with strong ties to Denmark, voting intentions are essentially unchanged for respondents with weak ties to Denmark. Still, instrumental motives shape preferences for a sufficiently large proportion of voters for the information prime to alter the outcome of the independence referendum.

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1. Introduction

The independence referendum has been a frequently used democratic instrument in the Post-Cold War era (Mendez and Germann, 2018). Due to a global trend toward increased economic integration, secessionist pressure and, hence, independence referendums, could become even more common in the future (Alesina and Spolaore, 1997). Yet, we know little about the micro determinants of independence preferences. Economic motives is a key candidate determinant, not least since secession proponents and opponents often emphasize economic benefits of their respective agendas.¹ At the same time, independence movements often emerge in low income regions that would stand to lose economically from independence (Reynaerts and Vanschoonbeek, 2018) and scholars have therefore typically highlighted non-material drivers of secessionism (e.g., Blais and Nadeau, 1992; Rodon and Guinjoan, 2018). Consequently, whether and how economic motives affect voter stances on independence is an empirical question.

I investigate how economic expectations shape preferences for and against independence. To this end, I collect novel data on independence preferences in Greenland, a constituent country with strong secessionist pressure and significant economic reliance on its current political union, the Kingdom of Denmark. While there is little doubt that independence, at least in the short run, would hurt the Greenlandic economy, not all voters subscribe to this view. To the contrary, many Greenlanders believe that the nation would benefit economically from independence. This could potentially be explained by voters, regardless of whether they are pro or against independence, searching selectively for information that supports their respective positions. In other words, voters' economic expectations may reflect rationalizations of their pre-existing preferences (Howe, 1998). As a consequence, the relationship between economic

1. The Scottish government, for instance, stated that “...democracy, *prosperity* [my emphasis] and fairness are the principles at the heart of the case for independence” (Dalle Mulle and Serrano, 2019).

expectations and independence preferences would be endogenous, invalidating causal inference from observational data. However, the resulting misalignment between peoples' and experts' assessments of the economic consequences of independence can be leveraged in a survey experiment.

I overcome issues of endogeneity by exposing a random subset of respondents to a prime informing about Greenland's current fiscal deficit. The prime describes the yearly transfers that Greenland receives from Denmark, including indirect costs, such as public service provision funded directly by Denmark, which are generally overlooked in the discussion about the economic feasibility of Greenlandic independence. Accordingly, the prime outlines pessimistic economic conditions for national independence. By randomly assigning respondents to read the prime prior to voting in a hypothetical referendum on independence, I can document a causal effect of economic information on independence preferences. The results show that assignment to the information prime increases opposition to independence by 42.9%. The effect is, intuitively, larger for respondents that complied with the treatment (reported that they read the information contained in the prime). While voting respondents in the control group (who were not exposed to the information prime) predominantly favor independence, a majority of respondents exposed to the prime would vote against independence. In other words, the change induced by the prime is of such magnitude that it would alter the outcome of the independence referendum.

The survey experiment was designed also to track the mechanisms linking information to voting intentions. I propose three channels which potentially can account for the reduced form results. First, the prime could negatively affect voters' economic expectations of independence, which, in turn, could cause respondents to change their voting stance. I label this the *Expectations effect*. Second, if information that aligns with prior beliefs increases certainty, and certainty promotes political participation (e.g., Lassen, 2005), the prime could encourage voters with pre-existing pessimistic economic forecasts to participate in the hypothetical referendum, thereby shifting the voter composition to encompass more pessimistic voters. I denote this the *Rallying effect*. Third, the

prime could impact also in the absence of information updating. If voters are predominantly pessimistic regarding the economic feasibility of independence, exposure to the prime could trigger opposition simply by making salient the economic aspect of secession (see Cruz, Keefer, and Labonne (2021) for a recent exploration of the relevance of salience for information treatments).² This channel is henceforth referred to as the *Salience effect*. I find evidence of the first two mechanisms and a marginal, but statistically insignificant, Salience effect. Respondents exposed to economic information make more pessimistic prospective economic evaluations of independence. Moreover, conditional on making negative economic assessments, they are more likely to participate. In conjunction, these results suggest that information updating is the primary channel through which the prime impacts voter behavior.

Voters trade-off material and non-material motivations when deciding how to vote (Hillman, Metsuyanin, and Potrafke, 2015; Snower and Bosworth, 2021). In the context of secessionism, I conjecture that personal ties to the union vis-à-vis the secessionist region should influence the relative importance of material motives. More specifically, I hypothesize that voters with weaker ties to Denmark weigh non-material motives more, and material (economic) motives less, in their voting decisions. As a consequence, they should be less impacted by the information prime. I differentiate between voters with weak and strong ties to the political union by leveraging information on respondents' proficiency in Danish, family networks and former residency in Denmark. Voters who do not speak Danish, have no relatives in Denmark, and never have lived in Denmark, are defined as having weak ties to Denmark. The results confirm that voters with weaker ties to Denmark are less concerned with the economic consequences of independence and, accordingly, exhibit less voting intentions malleability. In fact, for this group of voters, the information prime has no significant impact

2. The intuition aligns with Issue Ownership Theory (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008), which posits that a political cause (e.g. opposition to independence) can gain from focus being shifted to an issue (in this case the economic aspects of secession) in which this cause is considered to have a comparative advantage.

on voting intentions.

The present paper contributes to the literatures on economic voting (Downs et al., 1957; Riker and Ordeshook, 1968; Peltzman, 1992; Aidt, 2000; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000), national sovereignty (Franck, 2005; Arnorsson and Zoega, 2018; Alabrese et al., 2019; Fetzer, 2019) and secessionism (Alesina and Spolaore, 1997; Bolton and Roland, 1997; Bordignon and Brusco, 2001; Leduc, 2002; Olofsgård, 2003; Collier and Hoeffler, 2011). I build on the burgeoning behavioral political economy literature (Schnellenbach and Schubert, 2015) and in particular on studies using randomized interventions to study causal determinants of political behavior (Tyran, 2004; Gerber, Karlan, and Bergan, 2009; Chiang and Knight, 2011; Bassi, Morton, and Williams, 2011; Alt, Lassen, and Marshall, 2016; Pons, 2018; Alesina, Stantcheva, and Teso, 2018; Cantoni et al., 2019; Goodwin, Hix, and Pickup, 2020; Cruz, Keefer, and Labonne, 2021). My theoretical framework links closely with research on the economics of secessionist conflicts (Le Billon, 2001; Lujala, 2009; Lujala, 2010; Hunziker and Cederman, 2017). But whereas the determinants of secessionist conflicts has attracted much academic attention, democratic secessionism has largely been exempted from quantitative study. By investigating voting intentions in a hypothetical independence referendum in Greenland, the present paper interlinks the small but growing empirical literature on the economics of democratic secessionism (Muñoz and Tormos, 2015; Gehring and Schneider, 2020; Hierro and Queralt, 2020) with the emergent literature on political behavior in the developing world (Vicente and Wantchekon, 2009; Banerjee et al., 2010; Collier and Vicente, 2014). Although most independence referendums take place in previously colonized regions (Mendez and Germann, 2018), quantitative micro-evidence on the underlying drivers of these processes is scarce. To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first to document a causal effect of economic expectations on democratic independence preferences in a post-colonial context.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature on the economics of democratic secessionism and presents voting behavior motiva-

tions in independence referendums. Section 3 introduces the empirical setting. In Section 4, the data and experimental design are described. Section 5 presents the main results. In Section 6, the conditioning role of ties to the union is investigated. Section 7 concludes.

2. Rationales for secession

All democratic independence movements rely on some regional particularities that distinguish the separatist region from the current political union, for instance language, history, or ethnicity (Lehning, 2005). A territorially linked identity can unite diverse expressions of secessionism as well as legitimize their end-goal (Buchanan, 1997). Hence, a distinguished regional identity appears to be a *necessary* condition for secessionist movements to form. It is not, however, a *sufficient* condition for secessionism to grow strong (Sorens, 2005). There is substantial variation in the intensity of secessionist pressure, both over time and across space, which cannot be explained by changes in identity aspects. For instance, both Scotland and Wales are nations distinct from their current political union, but independence is mainly topical in Scotland. According to Gehring and Schneider (2020), economic expectations of independence is a key factor explaining the intensive margin of secessionist pressures in Scotland. They outline how regional wealth shocks impact secessionist preferences by showing that oil discoveries and oil price shocks, which bolster the regional wealth of Scotland but not of Wales, enhanced support for the Scottish National Party (SNP). Meanwhile, Plaid Cymru, the main secessionist party in Wales, remained unaffected by oil wealth shocks. In line with this result, the coincidence of territorial identities and economic rationales has been shown to promote secessionism in the contexts of former Yugoslavia (Desmet et al., 2011) and armed secessionist conflicts (Morelli and Rohner, 2015). In conclusion, a territorially linked identity appears to be a pre-requisite for secessionism to form in the first place; beyond that, economic prospects are of first order importance.

Evidence on the micro determinants of independence aspirations is

scarce, but the evidence that exists aligns with the macro and meso level findings. In a hypothetical referendum in Catalonia, Muñoz and Tormos (2015) document an independent role for economic considerations in shaping voting intentions. In the same context, Hierro and Queralt (2020) explain differences in independence preferences by variation in trade exposure. People that work in sectors or for firms with strong dependence on the Spanish market are shown to be more opposed to Catalanian secession, a result which is attributed to independence contravening the economic interest of this group of voters. At the same time, however, more educated respondents, who according to the authors stand to lose economically from independence, are more in favor of secession. While Hierro and Queralt (2020) explain these apparent contradictory results by differences in political knowledge, an alternative explanation seems plausible: not all voters care equally about the economic implications of independence.

Consider a model where voters derive utility from two types of goods: non-material (e.g., the cultural pride associated with political independence) and material goods (e.g., the economic consequences of independence). Allowing voters to differentially weight material considerations (see, e.g., Snower and Bosworth (2021)) could help explain why economic motives link more closely with independence preferences for some voters than for others. Ties to the union vis-à-vis the secessionist region is a candidate factor conditioning the perceived importance of instrumental motives. Based on observational data, Muñoz and Tormos (2015) find that voters with *stronger* national identity exhibit a *weaker* correlation between economic expectations and independence preferences, an indication that voters with stronger national identity are less concerned by the economic effects when voting on independence. If ties to the political union shapes the relative importance of material motives, we should, accordingly, expect union ties to condition the link between economic information and voting intentions for or against secession.

3. Empirical setting

Secessionism in Greenland, the empirical setting of this study, is commonly discussed in the light of both territorial identity and economic factors. Some 3,500 kilometers separate the regional capital, Nuuk, from Denmark’s capital, Copenhagen, and the majority of the population in Greenland are Greenlandic Inuit. The distinct nationhood has nurtured an identity-based appeal for independence (Breum, 2015). But as a net-recipient of regional redistribution, independence would, at least in the short-run, entail substantial economic costs. The supposed trade-off between material and non-material motives for independence makes the present case ideal for studying the causal role of economic expectations in shaping independence preferences and to investigate how ties to the union condition this relationship.

Formerly a Danish colony, Greenland has gradually gained political autonomy over time. In a national referendum 2008, a majority of the Greenlandic electorate favored a proposal to extend self-determination, which resulted in the passing of the Self-government Act (Grydehøj, 2016). The new act replaced the Home Rule Act from 1978 and meant that the Greenlandic government would overtake some core administrative duties that up until then had been the responsibility of Danish authorities. The arrangement also provided the Greenlandic government the legal means to unilaterally call for a referendum on its separation from the present political union (Gad, 2014), stating that the “Decision regarding Greenland’s independence shall be taken by the people of Greenland”.³

Secessionism in Greenland has been closely linked to its natural resource wealth (Taagholt and Brooks, 2016), and the potential of commercial hydrocarbon deposits has recurrently been highlighted as a way toward economic independence. The then Prime Minister Kuupik Kleist stated in 2011 that “... possible findings of oil have increased the debate on the issue of in-

3. See Act on Greenland Self-government from June 12th 2009 (Naalakkersuisut, 2009).

dependence” (cross-referenced from Poppel, 2018). But hopes of substantial petroleum rents have yet to materialize, and as a result the secessionist pressure has somewhat dampened.⁴ As of now, Greenland relies on Denmark to finance its relatively large public sector. Besides an annual transfer of around 3,6 billion DKK,⁵ covering approximately half of Greenland’s budget, Denmark still administers a number of costly public services (Rosing, Mosbech, and Mortensen, 2014). Consequently, near-future political independence resulting in an immediate reduction or stop of Danish economic support would imply either dramatic cuts in welfare provision, sharp increases in tax rates, or both.

4. Data and experimental design

4.1. Sampling strategy

The empirical analysis builds on data from an original survey conducted on the ground in Greenland between July-September 2018. The selection of participants was determined by a two-stage random sampling procedure (a detailed account of the sampling procedure and data collection is outlined in Appendix Section A). First, 13 villages from all regions of Greenland were sampled using a stratified multi-stage cluster approach. Second, respondents were randomly sampled from the universe of adult residents in the selected villages using Greenlandic register data. As a result of the sampling procedure, the final sample approximates well the Greenlandic population, at least in terms of age (Appendix Figure B.1) and party affiliation (Appendix Table B.1). Figure 1 maps the sampled localities from which respondents were recruited.

In total, 1400 Greenlandic residents were invited and 622 provided information on their independence preferences (approximately 1.5% of the adult population in Greenland). The survey was in a pen-and-paper format, and participants completed it individually either at field sessions held at local schools

4. See The Economist (January 21st 2015).

5. The block grant varies slightly from year to year due to inflation.

and town halls or in their homes. Trained Greenlandic enumerators interviewed respondents who were not able to complete the survey on their own.

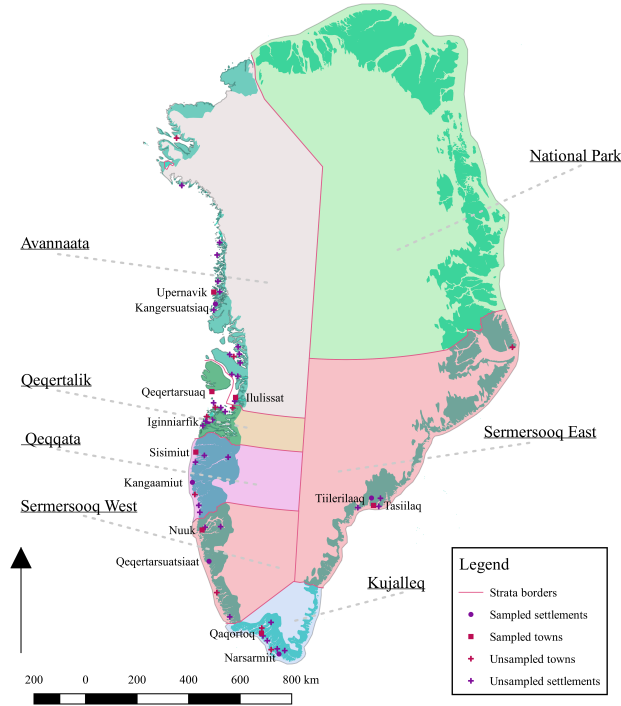


Figure 1: Map of Greenland

Notes: Map of Greenland displaying the 13 sampled villages. The well-balanced spatial and demographic distribution of sampled localities was ensured by means of stratification of villages before randomization.

4.2. Data

In this subsection, I present the data used in the empirical analyses. The main variables are presented along with descriptive statistics in Appendix Table C.1.

4.2.1. Outcome variables

The outcome variable of main interest is a dummy indicator for opposition to independence. The variable is based on survey item S1, from which the alternative “No” is defined as opposition to immediate independence. I further construct a variable that captures voter participation (respondent answered

“Yes” or “No” rather than “I don’t know” or “I would not vote”).

S1. Voting intentions

If there was a referendum on independence TODAY, asking if you wanted Greenland to leave the Kingdom of Denmark, how would you vote?
(Yes; No; I don’t know; I would not vote)

A mediating variable central to the analysis is respondents’ subjective economic expectations of independence, derived from survey item S2. The question was asked in likert-scale format in order to ensure comprehensibility.

S2. Economic expectations

If Greenland becomes independent within the next 10 years, this will impact Greenland’s economy...
(Very negatively; Somewhat negatively; Not at all; Somewhat positively; Very positively)

4.3. Measuring ties to the union

To measure ties to the union, I consider three objective dummy indicators of respondents’ ties to Denmark: language proficiency in Danish, former residence in Denmark, and having relatives in Denmark. I use a principal component analysis to extract information from the three indicators into one index. The principal component analysis entails a data driven derivation of each variable’s contribution to the index through the correlation of the respective variable with the latent factor (ties to the union). The factor loadings, the respective contributions to the principal component index, are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Factor loadings from principal component analysis

Variable	Speaks Danish	Lived in Den.	Relatives in Den.
Factor loading	0.8038	0.7968	0.5642

Notes: Factor loadings displaying each variable’s loading on the principal component index.

I define the resulting index as *Union ties*. The index is normalized between 0 and 1, where scoring 0 means that a respondent does not speak

Danish, has no relatives in Denmark, and has never lived in Denmark; 1 signifies that a respondent speaks Danish, has relatives in Denmark and has previously resided in Denmark. Union ties is derived for 589 respondents.⁶ The distribution of values is depicted in Appendix Figure D.2.

4.4. Experimental design

The survey contained a randomized component which intended to experimentally shift economic expectations. This was implemented by assigning respondents into one of three treatment groups: the Control Group (CG), the Salience Treatment (ST) or the Information Treatment (IT). The experimental design is summarized in Figure 2,

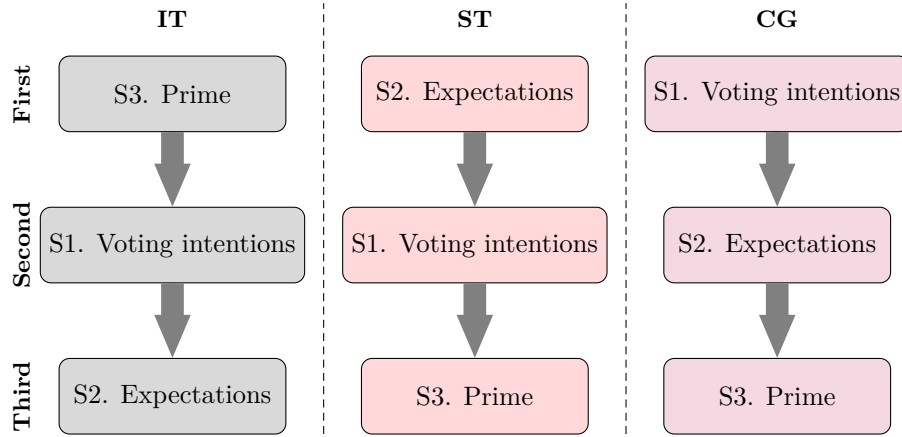


Figure 2: Flowchart describing the timing of survey components

where *Voting intentions* stands for answering questions on independence preferences (S1); *Prime* indicates the Information Treatment detailed in Subsection 4.4.1; and *Expectations* encompasses questions on the expected economic effects of independence (S2 as well as two additional questions detailed in Subsection 4.4.2). Note that all respondents were subject to the same three survey sections;

6. 23 respondents are missing because of a lack of data on at least one of the indicator variables. Moreover, 10 respondents who indicated national identities outside of the Kingdom of Denmark are excluded.

it was the timing of sections that differed between treatment conditions.

4.4.1. Information Treatment

Respondents in the Information Treatment (IT) group read the information prime shown in S3 before answering questions on voting intentions in the hypothetical independence referendum. The goal of the Information Treatment was to shift the economic expectations of treated respondents by means of truthful and credible information. To this end, the prime was an extract from a scientific report evaluating the economic challenges associated with independence in light of the current fiscal deficit (Rosing, Mosbech, and Mortensen, 2014). The exact wording is shown in S3.

S3. Information prime

The cost of an independent Greenlandic economy has been estimated to be at least 5 billion DKK. An independent Greenlandic economy would require. . .

- 3.6 billion DKK a year to compensate for the block grant that Greenland currently receives each year
- 800 million DKK annually to fund public services not yet transferred to Greenlandic responsibility
- 190 million DKK annually to phase out subsidies from the EU
- 456 million DKK a year to carry out new tasks if Greenland decides to withdraw entirely from the Kingdom of Denmark
- 800 million DKK in increased annual costs by 2040

5 billion DKK split between all Greenlanders is around 90 000 DKK per citizen.
(Source: “To the benefit of Greenland”, 2014)

While the public debate on independence in Greenland has been focused on how to compensate for the 3.6 billion DKK that the Danish state transfers each year, the report presented a more comprehensive assessment of the economic costs of independence. By including a number of additional costs that complete economic independence would entail, the assessment can be firmly positioned in the negative tail of impact assessments, and the information should thus be regarded as pessimistic economic information. The fact that the report was four years old at the time of surveying did not substantially impact the accuracy of the content, since the economic support that Greenland received

from Denmark was largely unchanged during this period. To the extent that respondents still perceived the information to be outdated and therefore of lesser relevance, this would induce a downward bias in the estimated treatment effect.

4.4.2. Salience Treatment

In order to separate information updating from a potential salience effect induced by the information prime, a subset of the participants was assigned the Salience Treatment (ST). The Salience Treatment entailed a positioning of questions on expected economic consequences of independence prior to the voting section (S1). Besides S2—the survey item on expected consequences for Greenland’s economy in case of independence—the Salience Treatment also included questions on the expected economic consequences for the village of residence and for the personal income.⁷ Answering questions on economic expectations enhances the salience of the economic aspect of independence without providing new information. By comparing voting intentions in the Information Treatment with the Salience Treatment, I am able to separate information updating from a mere salience effect in the aggregate treatment effect.

4.4.3. Control Group

The remaining respondents were not subject to any prime before stating their voting intentions. I label this the Control Group (CG). Naturally, the Control Group serves as the reference category in most specifications.

4.4.4. Identifying assumptions

Respondents were assigned to treatments by means of a Randomized Block Design,⁸ with the village as the block unit, and an equal likelihood of being assigned into either one of the treatments. Consequently, each treatment

7. The exact wordings read: “If Greenland becomes independent within the next 10 years, this will impact... my personal income / my town or settlement’s economy (very negatively; somewhat negatively; not at all; somewhat; positively; very positively)”. These questions are not further analyzed in this paper.

8. This approach tends to promote similarity of treatment groups in terms of pre-determined characteristics (Gerber and Green, 2012).

group contains roughly a third of the respondents, both in the total sample and in each village. The random placement of individuals into treatments assures that, in expectation, treatment groups do not differ in terms of background characteristics. Table 2 confirms that this is true also in practice. While respondents in the Information Treatment differ slightly from those in the Control Group in terms of gender and age, all other covariates are well balanced.

A concern with using voter choice in a hypothetical independence referendum as the dependent variable of interest is the ambiguity of what political independence entails. Respondents could potentially attribute different meanings to the word independence. Some respondents might, for instance, assume that independence means that all economic support from Denmark would immediately cease, while others count on the economic support to continue. If the Information Treatment affects respondents' interpretation of independence, it could induce changes in voter behavior for semantic reasons. In order to ensure that all respondents interpret independence in the same way, the survey section on voting preferences was therefore introduced by I1, which served to align respondents' understanding of "independence".

I1. Section Introduction

In following section, we refer to independence as complete political independence from the Kingdom of Denmark. It is assumed that this means that fiscal transfers (including the block grant) from Denmark to Greenland would stop.

Finally, voters might, purposefully or not, overlook the information prime. This means that a simple regression design with voting as the dependent variable and Information Treatment as the independent variable will only capture an intention-to-treat effect. In the survey section that followed the Information Treatment, respondents were therefore asked whether they read the information contained in the prime. This survey item allows for the estimation of the complier average treatment effect, since it enables me to define a subset of the respondents as "compliers". The survey also asked respondents if they trusted the information presented in the prime. I leverage this survey item to construct a placebo test of the Information Treatment.

Table 2: Balance table

Variable	Sample mean	IT vs. ST	IT vs. CG
Woman	0.518 (0.500)	0.077 (0.049)	0.082* (0.049)
Age	45.811 (15.148)	0.247 (1.494)	-3.563** (1.533)
Survey Taken at Home	0.638 (0.481)	0.087 (0.047)	0.032 (0.046)
Lives in Town	0.783 (0.413)	-0.033 (0.041)	-0.031 (0.041)
Greenlandic	0.833 (0.373)	0.008 (0.038)	-0.040 (0.035)
Survey Language: GRL	0.707 (0.455)	0.042 (0.045)	-0.019 (0.044)
Family in Denmark	0.897 (0.305)	-0.019 (0.030)	-0.005 (0.031)
Lived in Denmark	0.415 (0.493)	0.032 (0.049)	0.028 (0.049)
Perceived Income Status	5.124 (1.844)	-0.198 (0.184)	0.000 (0.186)
Pol. Pref.: Left-Right	4.786 (2.104)	0.245 (0.211)	0.286 (0.219)
Party pro-independence	0.606 (0.489)	0.049 (0.048)	-0.037 (0.048)
Party anti-independence	0.196 (0.398)	-0.043 (0.040)	-0.003 (0.038)
Trust Den. government	2.700 (1.035)	0.021 (0.108)	0.174 (0.117)
Trust Gre. government	2.828 (1.111)	0.052 (0.112)	-0.036 (0.120)
Internet	0.698 (0.460)	-0.035 (0.045)	0.004 (0.046)
TV	0.717 (0.451)	0.024 (0.045)	0.002 (0.044)
Radio	0.633 (0.482)	-0.055 (0.048)	-0.057 (0.048)
Newspaper or Magazine	0.321 (0.467)	-0.070 (0.046)	-0.043 (0.046)
HH Earnings < 200 K	0.413 (0.493)	0.035 (0.050)	-0.012 (0.051)
HH Earnings 200-500 K	0.370 (0.483)	0.007 (0.049)	-0.002 (0.049)
HH Earnings > 500 K	0.218 (0.413)	-0.042 (0.042)	0.013 (0.041)
Primary School	0.451 (0.498)	0.039 (0.050)	-0.022 (0.050)
High School/Professional	0.380 (0.486)	-0.052 (0.049)	-0.023 (0.049)
University Degree	0.169 (0.375)	0.012 (0.039)	0.045 (0.037)

Notes: Table 2 shows the sample means of relevant covariates, as well as balance tests comparing the Information Treatment with the other treatment groups. The tests are conducted by means of bivariate regressions. Woman is an indicator variable coded as 1 if the respondent is female and 0 otherwise; Age is the age of the respondent; Survey Taken at Home is an indicator variable coded as 1 if the respondent took the survey at home and 0 if it was taken at a field session; Lives in Town is a dummy for residing in a town (1) or settlement (0); Greenlandic is a dummy for having indicated Greenlandic as identity; Survey Language: GRL is a dummy on whether or not the Survey was taken in Greenlandic; Family in Denmark indicates if the respondent stated having at least one close relative in Denmark; Lived in Denmark is a dummy indicating if the respondent ever lived in Denmark; Perceived Income Status denotes the income decile in which the respondent placed her household; Party pro-independence is a dummy on whether the respondent voted for a party in favor of near-future independence; Party anti-independence is a dummy on whether the respondent voted for a party opposing near-future independence (herein I include Democrats and Cooperation Party); Trust Den. government indicates trust in the Danish government from “Not at all” (1) to “Greatly” (5); Trust Gre. government is the equivalent for trust in the Greenlandic government; Internet, TV, Radio and Newspaper or Magazine are dummies indicating whether the respondent consumes respective media; HH earnings stand for household earnings, and the ranges are in Danish Kroner; Primary School, High School/Professional and University Degree are dummies indicating the highest level of education obtained. * ($p < 0.10$), ** ($p < 0.05$), *** ($p < 0.01$)

4.5. Econometric specification

I set up simple empirical models to estimate the intention-to-treat effect and the complier average treatment effect of the Information Treatment on opposing independence. Due to the random assignment of treatments, the identification of the intention-to-treat effect is straightforward. The reduced form Equation (1) is estimated using Ordinary Least Squares (OLS):

$$(Vote = No)_i = \alpha + \beta_1 Z_i + X_i \gamma + \epsilon_i, \quad (1)$$

where Z is an indicator variable for assignment to the Information Treatment and X is a vector of control variables. In order to demonstrate that the results are robust to potential imbalances in relevant covariates, all models are presented in three steps: bivariate regressions, multivariate regressions with controls for Gender and Age (the imbalanced covariates), and multivariate regressions with an extensive set of controls (labeled “Additional Controls” in the tables). Additional Controls includes controls for (1) whether the participant filled in the survey at home or at a field session, (2) national identity fixed effects, (3) a dummy indicating whether the survey language was Greenlandic, (4) fixed effects on annual household income before taxes, (5) fixed effects on highest level of education achieved, (6) fixed effects on village of residence, and (7) fixed effects on party voted for in the last General Elections. The control variables are detailed in Appendix Table C.1.

I label respondents who indicated that they read the information “compliers”. Under the assumption that respondents reported truthfully whether they read the information and that being assigned to the information prime only shaped outcomes through compliance with the treatment (Angrist, Imbens, and Rubin, 1996),⁹ I can estimate the complier average causal effect (CACE) by

9. While the latter assumption is likely to be fulfilled for an information treatment, I cannot ensure that respondents reported truthfully whether they read the information contained in the prime. The complier average causal effect does not imply that anyone who complied with the treatment would react in a correspondent way but rather that the respondents that did comply with the treatment reacted in this particular way (Gerber and Green, 2012).

means of an instrumental variable approach (Gerber and Green, 2012). The estimated CACE complements the intention-to-treat results by showing the strength of the treatment effect for respondents that complied with the treatment. The first stage is shown in Equation (2), where *Treatment Complying* is a dummy for being assigned to *and* complying with the Information Treatment.

$$TreatmentComplying_i = \alpha + \beta_1(Z_i) + X_i\gamma + \epsilon_i. \quad (2)$$

The second stage regression estimates the average treatment effect among compliers. The specification is shown in Equation (3).

$$(Vote = No)_i = \alpha + \beta_1\widehat{TreatmentComplying}_i + X_i\gamma + \epsilon_i. \quad (3)$$

Finally, I study how ties to the union shapes the effect of the information prime on voting by estimating Equation (4):

$$(Vote = No)_i = \alpha + \beta_1(Z)_i + \beta_2(UnionTies)_i + \beta_3(UnionTies \times Z)_i + \epsilon_i, \quad (4)$$

where *UnionTies* is an index derived from the principal component analysis outlined in Subsection 4.3 and *Z* is an indicator variable for assignment to the Information Treatment.

5. Main results

5.1. Independence preferences by treatment group

I begin the analysis by presenting data on voting intentions in the hypothetical referendum on independence separately for each treatment group. In Table 3, the Control Group is shown to feature the strongest support for independence. In fact, for this group of respondents, the share favoring immediate independence is larger than the share opposing it. Opposition to independence is somewhat stronger among respondents in the Salience Treatment, who were subject to questions eliciting their expectations regarding the economic con-

sequences of independence prior to indicating their voting intentions. In the Information Treatment group, the majority of participating respondents, i.e. those who stated either “Yes” or “No” to independence, are opposed to independence. These simple descriptive statistics provide an indication that the Information Treatment influenced voting intentions.

Table 3: Independence preferences by treatment group

<i>If there was a referendum on independence TODAY, asking if you wanted Greenland to leave the Kingdom of Denmark, how would you vote?</i>			
	Control Group	Salience Treat.	Information Treat.
Yes	39.90 %	37.07 %	35.51 %
No	30.05 %	34.63 %	42.99 %
I don’t know	19.70 %	20.00 %	15.42 %
I wouldn’t vote	10.34 %	8.29 %	6.07 %

Notes: Table 3 displays the percentage of voters for each outcome in a hypothetical referendum on full political independence, separately for each treatment status.

5.2. Economic information and voting intentions

Next, I formally test the treatment effect by means of regression analyses. The random assignment of treatments allows for straightforward identification of the Information Treatment effect on voting intentions. Table 4 displays the results from regressions using a dummy for opposing independence as the dependent variable, a dummy for assignment to the Information Treatment as the independent variable of interest, and the Control Group (CG) as the reference group. Columns 1-3 show OLS regression estimates of the intention-to-treat effect (see Equation (1)). In columns 4-6, I present the average treatment effect for complying respondents, estimated using two-stage least squares regressions, where Treatment Complying is instrumented by assignment to the Information Treatment (see Equation (2) and Equation (3)).

Table 4: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voting Intentions: CG as reference

Dep. Var.:	Opposing Independence					
	OLS (1)	OLS (2)	OLS (3)	2SLS (4)	2SLS (5)	2SLS (6)
IT	0.129*** (0.0468)	0.112** (0.0486)	0.0968** (0.0481)			
IT Complying				0.175*** (0.0626)	0.152** (0.0652)	0.136** (0.0634)
Observations	417	395	359	417	395	359
R-squared	0.0180	0.0212	0.304	—	—	—
Dep. Var. Mean	0.367	0.375	0.393	0.367	0.375	0.393
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	600.9	540.9	409.5
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Control	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table 4 displays both Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence using the Control Group as reference. Columns 1-3 display OLS regressions and columns 4-6 show 2SLS regressions in which complying respondents in the Information Treatment are instrumented by having been assigned the Information Treatment. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Control comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs.

As can be seen in column 1 of Table 4, respondents in the Information Treatment are 12.9 percentage points (43%) more likely to oppose independence relative to respondents in the Control Group. The intention-to-treat effect is statistically significant at the 1% and 5% levels. The estimated effects are, intuitively, larger in the two-stage least squares regressions (columns 4-6). Complying respondents are 17.5 percentage points (58%) more likely to oppose independence when subject to the Information Treatment. In Appendix Table D.1, I show that the results are qualitatively similar when using both the Control Group and the Salience Treatment as the reference group.

5.3. Robustness checks

Next, I corroborate the baseline findings in a number of alternative specifications. First, I investigate whether the results are statistically significant in Randomization Inference tests.¹⁰ The approach entails randomly assign-

10. Randomization Inference, In difference to inference based on OLS regressions which relies on assumptions of asymptotic properties, provides exact p-values (Imbens and Wooldridge, 2009).

ing a subset of the respondents a “placebo treatment”¹¹ and estimating treatment effects for the placebo treatment allocation. By repeating this procedure 100,000 times, I derive a normal distribution (centered around 0) of Information Treatment-betas which could have been obtained by chance. In Figure 3, I plot kernel densities of Information Treatment-betas from the 100,000 permutations against the Information Treatment-beta obtained from the *actual* treatment assignment (the dashed vertical line). The corresponding p-values are estimated as the proportion of times that the (absolute value of the) placebo treatment effect was larger than the (absolute value of the) actual treatment effect. The probabilities of obtaining the actual treatment effects by chance are estimated at 0.38% and 0.24%, respectively for the full sample (column 1) and for complying respondents (column 2), and I thus conclude that the impact of the prime is strongly statistically significant also in Randomization Inference tests.

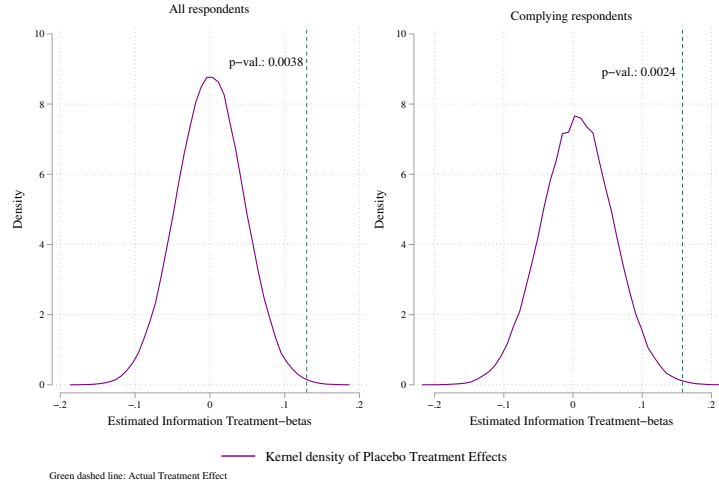


Figure 3: Randomization Inference: the effect of the information prime on opposition to independence

Notes: Kernel density plots from Randomization Inference estimations. Each Kernel displays a distribution of Information Treatment-betas obtained from 100,000 permutations of fictional treatment status. The vertical lines show the estimated effects of the Information Treatment in the actual treatment assignments, and the corresponding p-values indicate the probability that such extreme values would be estimated by chance. The reference group is the Control Group.

11. A fictional treatment, or, in other words, just a random re-shuffling of the actual Information Treatment allocation.

Next, I consider a number of additional robustness checks to corroborate the insights of the analysis thus far. In Appendix Table D.2, I replicate the baseline regressions using several alternative specifications; in Appendix Table D.3, I employ objective register based controls instead of survey based control variables;¹² in Appendix Table D.4, I conduct placebo tests of the Information Treatment by restricting the analysis to respondents who (1) did not read the prime and (2) did not trust the information. The results align with the baseline findings and, intuitively, I do not detect a treatment effect for respondents that did not read or trust the information presented in the prime. Finally, in Appendix Figure D.1, I investigate whether a double treatment in a number of surveys may have impacted the results. 26 (out of 622) respondents received both the Information Treatment and the Salience Treatment due to a misprint in these surveys. The results confirm that double treatment did not alter voter behavior relative to single treatment. In sum, the evidence shows a robust positive impact of the information prime on opposition toward independence. In what follows, I turn to an investigation of *why* we observe this pattern.

5.4. Mechanisms

The effect of the information prime could either be accounted for by (1) a salience effect, (2) information updating, or (3) a combination of the two. I start by investigating whether a salience shift toward the economic challenges associated with independence can account for the impact of the Information Treatment. Next, I test whether the treatment effect can be attributed to altered economic expectations and whether increased turnout among pessimistic voters played a role.

5.4.1. The Salience Effect

First, I study whether a shift in salience explains the impact of the prime. The underlying idea is that, given that respondents already are aware of

12. Register data for 154 respondents were not possible to retrieve due to missing identifying information (register keys).

the economic challenges that independence would entail, the information prime may influence voter behavior merely by making salient the economic aspect of independence (Cruz, Keefer, and Labonne, 2021). In order to test whether salience played a role, I present regressions using the Salience Treatment as the reference group in Table 5. The estimated effects are qualitatively similar, albeit somewhat smaller in magnitude, as when the Control Group is used as the reference group, but the bivariate relationship is now only borderline significant (at the 10% level). The relatively smaller treatment effect indicates that salience produced a minor increase in the opposition to independence. The opposition is, however, not significantly more pronounced in the Salience Treatment group relative to the Control Group,¹³ and the results thus indicate a small, but statistically insignificant, Salience effect.

Table 5: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voting Intentions: ST as reference

Dep. Var.:	Opposing Independence					
	OLS (1)	OLS (2)	OLS (3)	2SLS (4)	2SLS (5)	2SLS (6)
IT	0.0836*	0.0838*	0.112**			
IT Complying	(0.0475)	(0.0490)	(0.0462)	0.113* (0.0638)	0.114* (0.0659)	0.151** (0.0587)
Observations	419	396	365	419	396	365
R-squared	0.007	0.010	0.313	—	—	—
Dep. Var. Mean	0.389	0.391	0.397	0.389	0.391	0.397
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	600.9	549.2	494.7
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Control	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses						
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table 5 displays both Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence using the Salience Treatment as reference. Columns 1-3 display OLS regressions and columns 4-6 show 2SLS regressions in which complying respondents in the Information Treatment are instrumented by having been assigned the Information Treatment. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Control comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs.

13. Salience Treatment regression coefficient= 0.046; p-value= 0.323, in a bivariate regression with robust standard errors and the Control Group as the reference.

5.4.2. The Expectations Effect

Next, I turn to the potential role of altered economic expectations in influencing voter behavior. Since the prime includes costs not generally discussed in association with independence, the Information Treatment should induce more negative economic forecasts (given that voters are receptive of the information). This prediction aligns well with the observed pattern. In Figure 4, I plot distributions of respondents' economic expectations separately for the Control Group and the Information Treatment. The upper histogram shows the economic expectations of all respondents, whereas the lower histogram comprises only complying respondents.

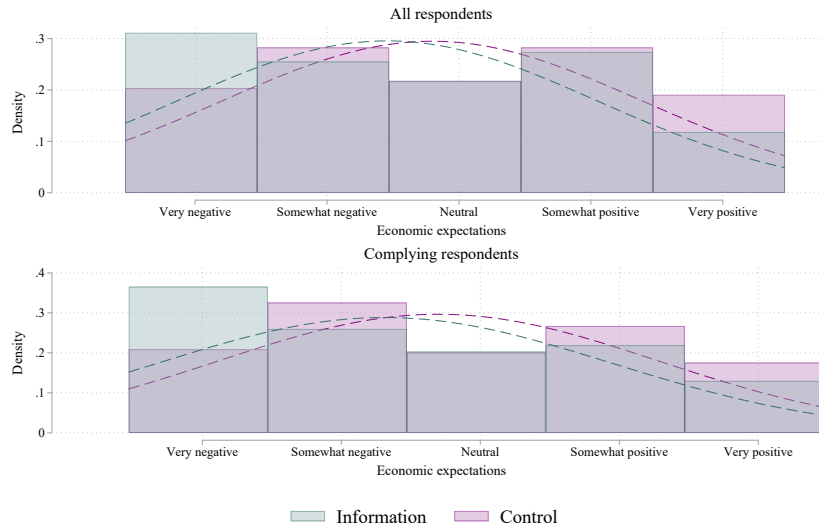


Figure 4: The effect of the Information Treatment on economic expectations

Notes: Distribution of economic expectations by treatment group. The upper plot displays histograms with corresponding kernel densities for all respondents in the Information Treatment and the Control Group. The lower plot shows histograms with corresponding kernel densities for complying respondents. The survey item from which economic expectations are derived reads: “If Greenland becomes independent within the next 10 years, this will impact Greenland’s economy... (Very negatively; Somewhat negatively; Not at all; Somewhat positively; Very positively)”.

The Information Treatment increased the prevalence of respondents believing that independence would affect the Greenlandic economy very negatively by approximately 50%. The effect is driven by complying respondents.

In this subgroup, the share of respondents indicating that the economy would be very negatively affected by independence increases by 69% when exposed to the Information Treatment. In Appendix Table D.5, I formally test the impact of the Information Treatment on economic expectations, both by means of Ordered Logit and OLS regressions. The analyses show that the prime significantly shifted the distribution of economic forecasts in the negative direction, and thus confirm an Expectations effect.

5.4.3. *The Rallying Effect*

Another channel through which the Information Treatment could increase opposition to independence is the potential of pessimistic information to inspire participation of voters with pre-existing pessimistic economic expectations. The underlying argument is that, for pessimistic voters, the prime should promote certainty regarding the economic effects of independence, which in turn should enhance their willingness to participate in the hypothetical referendum (see, e.g., Lassen, 2005; León, 2017; Kartal and Tyran, 2020).¹⁴ Conversely, the Information Treatment could make voters with optimistic expectations more insecure regarding their forecasts, thereby dissuading them from stating their voting intentions. The aggregate effect is a change in voter composition in favor of more voters with pessimistic economic expectations. In Figure 5, I plot the probability of participating in the hypothetical referendum by treatment group, separately for respondents who make negative (left) and positive (right) forecasts of the economic impact of independence. Voter participation is a dummy defined as 1 if the respondent indicated either “Yes” or “No” to S2, and 0 if the respondent indicated “I don’t know” or “I would not vote”.

14. The assumption that information promotes voting is also implicit in models on the cost of acquiring information as an impediment to voter participation (e.g, Blais, Young, and Lapp, 2000).

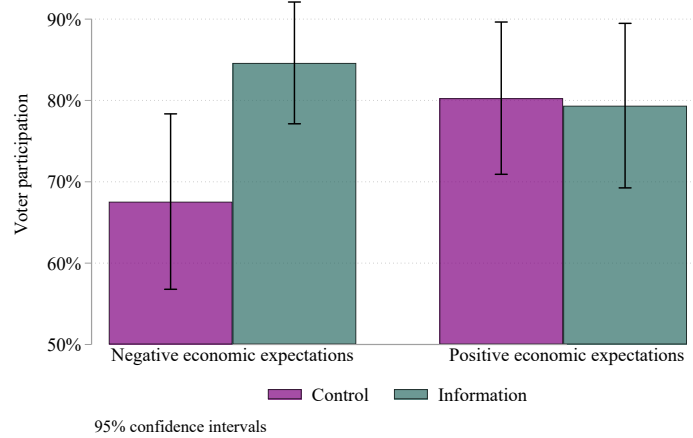


Figure 5: The effect of the Information Treatment on the probability of voting

Notes: Bar graphs showing the likelihood of voting in the Information Treatment and the Control Group split by expected economic impact of independence. The vertical lines represent corresponding 95% confidence intervals based on robust standard errors.

As shown in Figure 5, respondents who make negative economic assessments are more likely to participate when exposed to the Information Treatment. In other words, the Information Treatment appears to rally respondents with pessimistic economic expectations. Meanwhile, there is no rallying effect, but neither a dissuading effect, for respondents who exhibit positive expectations about the economic impact of independence: the participation rate among these voters is completely unaffected by the prime. Appendix Table D.6 shows that the Information Treatment increased voter participation by 17.1 percentage points (statistically significant at the 5% level) among respondents making negative prospective economic evaluations. Conversely, the voter participation rate of respondents with positive economic expectations was unaffected by exposure to the prime. As a consequence, the Information Treatment altered the voter composition in favor of respondents with pessimistic economic expectations, and I can conclude that the Rallying effect played a role in increasing opposition to independence.

5.4.4. Documenting the underlying mechanisms

To show that the proposed mechanisms account for the treatment effect, I stepwise include economic expectations and voter participation as controls in the reduced form regressions. In Appendix Table D.7, the sample is restricted to respondents with data on economic expectations (S2). For this sub-sample, exposure to the Information Treatment increases the probability of opposing independence by 15.4 percentage points (significant at the 1% level). The estimated effect drops to 10.3 percentage points (significant at the 5% level) when I control for the Expectations effect by including a set of dummy variables indicating economic expectations. When I account for the Rallying effect by adding a dummy for voter participation, the treatment effect drops further to (a statistically insignificant) 5.2 percentage points. This exercise shows that the Information Treatment influences voting intentions by shifting respondents' economic evaluations and by encouraging voters with pessimistic economic expectations to participate.

5.5. The timing of independence

To conclude this section, I consider the effect of the Information Treatment on inter-temporal preferences for independence. Respondents who indicated that they want independence "at some point" (66.9% of the respondents) were asked to specify their preferred year of independence. In Figure 6, I plot the cumulative distribution function of 'favored year of independence' separately for each treatment.¹⁵ In line with the results on preferences for immediate independence, respondents in the Information Treatment prefer independence at a later point in time (average response=2043) compared with both the Control Group (average response=2036) and with the Salience Treatment (average response=2037). Appendix Table D.8 shows that the delaying effect of the Information Treatment on favored year of independence is estimated at conventional significance levels.

¹⁵ 5 outlier respondents that indicated a preferred year of independence later than 2118 were dropped in this exercise.

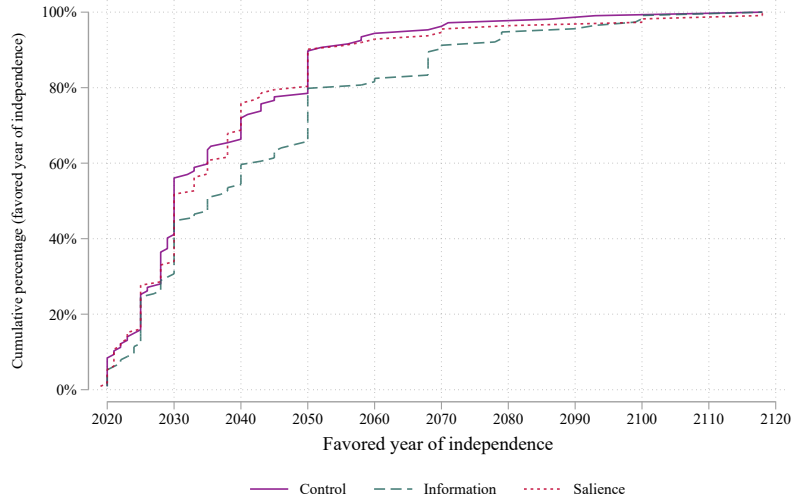


Figure 6: The effect of the IT on inter-temporal independence preferences

Notes: Cumulative distribution functions displaying the preferred timing of independence for respondents who favor independence at some point in time with each treatment group plotted separately.

6. Ties to the union and economic voting

In this section, I investigate the role of ties to the union in conditioning the effect of the Information Treatment. I hypothesize that voters with weaker ties to Denmark attach a smaller weight to the economic aspect of independence relative to voters with stronger ties to Denmark. As a consequence, voters with weaker ties to Denmark should be less impacted by the information presented in the information prime. To investigate the proposed voter heterogeneity, I proxy for ties to Denmark, or the political union, by using information on language proficiency, having relatives in Denmark and having resided in Denmark (see Section 4.3 for variable construction). Respondents that speak Danish, have family in Denmark, and previously have lived in Denmark are defined as having stronger ties to the political union (Union ties). First, I show that the association between economic expectations and opposing independence is stronger among respondents with closer ties to the union (Figure 7). In other words, this group of voters exhibit more economic voting (Holbrook and Garand, 1996).

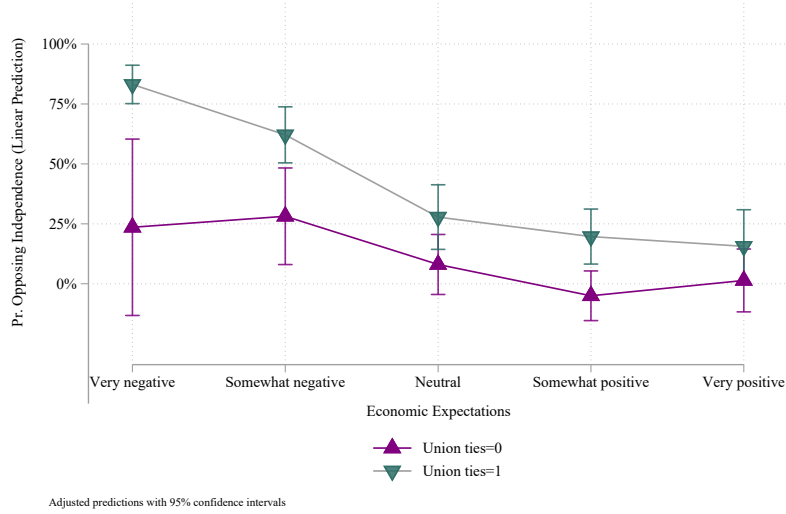


Figure 7: Union ties and the relationship between economic expectations and voting intentions

Notes: Interaction plot showing how the association between economic expectations and voting intentions differ for voters with weak (0) and strong (1) ties to the union.

To study whether differences in economic voting translate into different reactions to the information prime, I present estimations of Equation (4) in Table 6. Columns 1 and 4 show results from the SUT-sample, which stands for *Strong Union Ties* and encompasses 221 respondents who (1) speak Danish, (2) have family in Denmark, and (3) have lived in Denmark. In columns 2 and 5, the remaining 368 respondents with *Weak Union Ties* (WUT) are included.¹⁶ I present the results both with (columns 1-3) and without (columns 4-6) an extensive set of control variables.

Table 6 shows that whereas respondents with Strong Union Ties react to the Information Treatment by significantly increasing opposition to independence, the treatment effect is small and statistically insignificant for respondents with Weak Union Ties. The estimated coefficients are shown to be stable when including a large battery of control variables. The conditioning role of Union

16. In this sample, at least one of the indicator variables for ties to Denmark is 0.

ties is confirmed in the interaction specifications (columns 3 and 6), which show that increasing Union ties from 0 (the weakest) to 1 (the strongest) enhances the effect of the information prime on opposing independence by, respectively, 28.1 (no controls) and 22.3 (full controls) percentage points.

Table 6: Union Ties and Voting Intentions Malleability

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
Sample:	SUT (1)	WUT (2)	Full (3)	SUT (4)	WUT (5)	Full (6)
IT	0.139** (0.0678)	0.0575 (0.0491)	-0.101 (0.0751)	0.144* (0.0778)	0.0698 (0.0508)	-0.0614 (0.0818)
Union Ties			0.425*** (0.0760)			0.169* (0.0974)
IT × Union Ties			0.281** (0.112)			0.223* (0.122)
Observations	221	368	589	194	327	521
R-squared	0.0185	0.00394	0.130	0.287	0.218	0.289
Dep. Var. Mean	0.557	0.245	0.362	0.567	0.260	0.374
Gender & Age	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Table 6 displays Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions on the interaction effect between Union Ties and the Information Treatment without (columns 1-3) and with (columns 4-6) control variables. A dummy indicator for opposing independence is the outcome variable. Columns 1 and 4 display OLS regressions with the sample restricted to respondents with Strong Union Ties (SUT), defined as having all three indicator ties to Denmark (family, former residency and language), whereas columns 2 and 5 show results from regressions including respondents with Weak Union Ties (WUT), defined as having less than all 3 indicator ties to Denmark. In columns 3 and 6 the sample is pooled. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. In all specifications, both the Control Group and the Salience Treatment serve as the reference group.

Next, I document a close link between the objective indicators of union ties and a measure of “emotional ties to the union”, namely Parochial attachment. Parochial attachment is measured as respondents’ sense of belonging to the village of residence, municipality of residence and Greenland *divided* by their sense of belonging to Denmark (see Appendix Table C.1 for variable details). The resulting index is normalized between 0 and 1, where a higher value indicates a stronger attachment to local institutions vis-à-vis Denmark. In Appendix Figure D.3, I show that Union ties and Parochial attachment, as should be expected, are strongly negatively associated. Finally, in Appendix Table

D.9, I show that Parochial attachment conditions respondents’ sensitivity to economic information in a correspondent way as Union ties were shown to do.

6.1. Explaining the link between Union ties and voting intentions malleability

The findings presented above indicate important voter heterogeneity linked to respondents’ ties to the current political union. Respondents with strong and weak union ties differ in a range of potentially relevant factors (see Appendix Figure D.4) which could explain why union ties are associated with economic voting and information susceptibility. In what follows, I consider the role of (1) political knowledge, (2) economic status, (3) treatment adherence, and (4) institutional trust, and investigate whether respondents with weaker ties to the union are less susceptible to economic information because of differences in either of these factors.

6.1.1. Differences in political knowledge

Political knowledge could impact the the degree to which information updating influences voter choices (Alt, Lassen, and Marshall, 2016). I operationalize political knowledge in two ways: educational attainment and political interest.¹⁷ In Appendix Table D.10 columns 1-2, I account for one proxy of political knowledge at the time by interacting each variable with the Information Treatment. The estimated interaction effect between Union ties and the Information Treatment remains essentially unchanged and significant at the 5% level in the two specifications.

6.1.2. Differences in economic status

Economic status could influence voters’ susceptibility to economic information by altering the perceived risks and gains from political independence (Hierro and Queralt, 2020). If the information prime enhances perceived risks

17. Educational attainment is a dummy equal to 1 if the respondent had started or finalized a level of education beyond primary school; Political interest is a continuous variable ranging from 1 (“Not at all interested”) to 7 (“very interested”), based on the survey item: “How interested or uninterested are you in politics?”

relatively more for well-off participants, material motives could explain why respondents with strong ties to the union (who are richer on average) are more impacted by the prime. I proxy for economic status using two variables, namely household income and perceived wealth status.¹⁸ In Appendix Table D.10 columns 3-4, I investigate whether respondents with weak ties to the union react less to the Information Treatment because of differences in economic interests vested in independence. The results remain unchanged. While economic motives indeed correlate positively with opposition to independence, accounting for this does not alter the insight that Union ties condition information susceptibility.

6.1.3. Differences in treatment adherence

Respondents with weak ties to the union were less likely to comply with the treatment and to trust the information contained in the prime. In order to investigate whether this explains why Union ties condition voter malleability, in Appendix Table D.10 columns 5 and 6, I account for (1) a dummy indicating whether respondents stated that they read the Information Treatment and (2) whether respondents trusted the information presented in the Information Treatment. Although trusting the information is found to significantly influence the effect of the prime, the interaction effect between Union ties and the Information Treatment remains significant at conventional levels in both specifications.

6.1.4. Differences in institutional trust

Finally, I consider whether differences in institutional trust can account for the link between Union ties and voter malleability. I measure institutional trust in two ways: trust in the Greenlandic government and trust in the Danish

18. Household income is employed as a continuous variable, ranging from 1 (earning less than 100,000 DKK per year) to 7 (more than 1,000,000 DKK per year); Perceived wealth status is a continuous measure based on the survey item: “Please imagine a ten-step ladder where on the first step, stand the poorest people in Greenland, and on the highest step, the tenth, stand the richest people in Greenland. On which step of the ten is your household today?” (1 (poorest decile) to 10 (richest decile)).

government.¹⁹ Respondents with weaker ties to the union are more trusting of the Greenlandic government and less trusting of the Danish government. In Appendix Table D.10 columns 7-8, I show that differences in institutional trust account for some of the variability in the treatment effect. The estimated coefficient of the interaction term between Union ties and the Information Treatment drops somewhat in magnitude when I control for trust in the Greenlandic government, and, when I account for trust in the Danish government, the coefficient turns insignificant.

In sum, the evidence presented in Appendix Table D.10 indicates that heterogeneity linked to ties to the union cannot be accounted for by differences in political knowledge, economic motives or treatment adherence. Rather, differences in institutional trust is the strongest candidate explanation. The independent associations between opposing independence and, respectively, trust in the Greenlandic government (negative), and trust in the Danish government (positive), underscore the centrality of trust in shaping voter behavior. The fact that the interaction term between Union ties and the Information Treatment turns insignificant when I control for trust in the Danish government shows that at least some of the Union ties-induced heterogeneity in treatment reactions can be accounted for by differences in institutional trust.

7. Conclusions

In this study, I have documented significant voter susceptibility to pessimistic economic information in a hypothetical independence referendum. For theorists of secession, this finding highlights the need to consider how financial (dis)incentives influence independence aspirations. It also stresses that, in addition to objective economic prospects of a secessionist region, we ought to acknowledge the importance of subjective perceptions in shaping independence

19. Trust in the Greenlandic government is a continuous measure ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Greatly); similarly, Trust in the Danish government also ranges from 1 (Not at all) to 5 (Greatly).

preferences. Given that economic motives play a central role in a context with relatively certain economic impediments to political independence, it is likely to play an even larger role in settings where the economic consequences are more uncertain and the stakes are higher.

Material motives did not impact equally the stance of all voters: respondents with weak ties to the union were completely unaffected by the information prime. This voter heterogeneity is, at least to some extent, explained by differences in institutional trust. Respondents with strong ties to the union, on the other end, exhibit a substantially larger voting intentions malleability compared to similar studies conducted in the more commonly studied western contexts (e.g. Muñoz and Tormos, 2015 and Goodwin, Hix, and Pickup, 2020). The high degree of voter preference malleability in the Greenlandic electorate calls for a diversification of the environments studied by political economists.

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Data availability

Data which do not threaten to reveal the identity of participants and allow for the reproduction of the baseline findings will be deposited in Mendeley Data.

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Appendix

A. Sampling strategy

The Greenlandic Perspectives Survey was a nationwide survey project conducted between July-September 2018. In order to obtain a representative sample of the Greenlandic population, we used the stratified multi-stage cluster sampling procedure detailed below. Compared to sampling by means of pure randomization, stratified sampling generally decreases sampling bias by ensuring that each stratum is represented in the final sample (Deaton, 1997). Employing official administrative divisions and data reduces concerns of convenience sampling and ensures that each resident has the same likelihood of being sampled.

First, Greenland was divided into geographic strata. As of 2018, there are 5 municipalities in Greenland: Sermersooq, Avannaata, Kujalleq, Qeqertalik and Qeqqata. These municipalities differ from each other economically, culturally and politically speaking. Within the municipality borders, the similarities are more apparent (except for a strong urban-rural divide which we address below). The exception is Sermersooq, the most populous municipality, which spans both the East and the West coasts, and thereby contains villages which differ for instance in terms of language. West Greenlandic, or Kalaallisut, is spoken on the West coast, whereas East Greenlandic, or Tunumiit Oraasiat, is spoken on the East coast. To account for the marked differences within Sermersooq, we decided to split the municipality into East and West, and used the resulting 6 geographic divisions as the first level of stratification.

Second, the differences between urban towns and rural settlements were accounted for by classifying all localities as either settlements or towns using the categorization operated by Statistics Greenland (the cut-off is approximately at 500 inhabitants). This village division ensured that we would sample both rural and urban contexts in each geographic stratum. In combination, our two levels of stratification yielded 12 strata: settlements and towns of

each geographic region. All regions contain at least two towns and a number of settlements.

Third, we sampled one locality from each stratum. In all but two strata, we randomly selected villages to be covered by the survey. We made two exceptions from the within-stratum randomization to ensure a comprehensive final sample. Due to the uniqueness of Nuuk—the capital and by far the most populous town—we decided to fix its inclusion in the final sample. We also fixed the inclusion of Upernavik, a town from the northern-most part of Greenland, to account for the vast geographic reach of Avannaata municipality. The other 11 localities were randomly drawn from the subset of villages in the respective strata. The sampled localities are displayed in Appendix Table A1.

Table A1: Sampled villages

Village	Geographic strata	Demographic strata	Sample	Percent
Qaqortoq	Kujalleq	Town	48	7.72%
Narsarmiit	Kujalleq	Settlement	20	3.22%
Nuuk	West Sermersooq	Town	167	26.85%
Qeqertarsuatsiaat	West Sermersooq	Settlement	16	2.57%
Tasiilaq	East Sermersooq	Town	26	4.18%
Tiilerilaaq	East Sermersooq	Settlement	21	3.38%
Sisimiut	Qeqqata	Town	85	13.67%
Kangaamiut	Qeqqata	Settlement	19	3.05%
Qeqertarsuaq	Qeqertalik	Town	63	10.13%
Iginniarfik	Qeqertalik	Settlement	24	3.86%
Ilulissat	Avannaata	Town	83	13.34%
Upernavik	Avannaata	Town	15	2.41%
Kangersuatsiaq	Avannaata	Settlement	35	5.63%

Notes: Table A1 displays the strata, the sampled villages, as well as the sample size and corresponding sample share.

Finally, we randomly drew a number of residents (age 18 and above) from each sampled village. The sample size of each locality was determined by the relative size of the adult population in the stratum that the locality represented. Settlements were slightly oversampled, in order to ensure statistical power for estimations on this relatively smaller sub-population. The randomization of respondents was carried out by Statistics Greenland, ensuring a truly random selection of participants.

In total, 1400 respondents were drawn from the Greenlandic adult

population (which numbered 42,145 in 2018 (Statistics Greenland, 2020)). All residents, including foreigners (who constitute a relatively small proportion of the population), were considered. Out of a gross-sample of 1400, we reached and collected data from 589²⁰ residents during field visits to the 13 sampled localities in July-September 2018. The respondents were visited 3 times in order to increase the chance of finding sampled respondents. In case the sampled respondent was not available, another (randomly chosen) adult member of the household would be asked to participate. In case there was no other adult member in the household, or the house was empty, the most proximate neighbor would be asked to participate.

In order to reach more of the non-respondents, we invited by mail participants who were absent during the field visits to take the survey online. 33 participants filled out the survey this way. The response rate was 44.4% and the final count 622 respondents—approximately 1.5% of the total adult population of Greenland in 2018. Surveys were administered as physical paper copies, and were printed in Greenlandic, Danish and English. The enumerators were fluent in all three languages. If needed, they would assist respondents who were not physically or mentally capable of completing the survey on their own. The survey took between half an hour to one hour to complete. Participation was incentivized by voluntary enrollment into a lottery in which the prize was 10 000 DKK (\$ 1500) and by small monetary rewards.

B. Representativeness of the sample

This section compares the sampled respondents in the Greenlandic Perspectives Survey to the total Greenlandic populations by two relevant characteristics: age (Appendix Figure B.1) and voting in the general elections 2018 (Appendix Table B.1). Younger respondents were slightly underrepresented, and respondents from the major parties slightly overrepresented. In general,

20. This number excludes 22 respondents who did not respond to the independence section.

however, both Appendix Figure B.1 and Appendix Table B.1 show that the randomly selected survey respondents well approximate the adult population of Greenland.

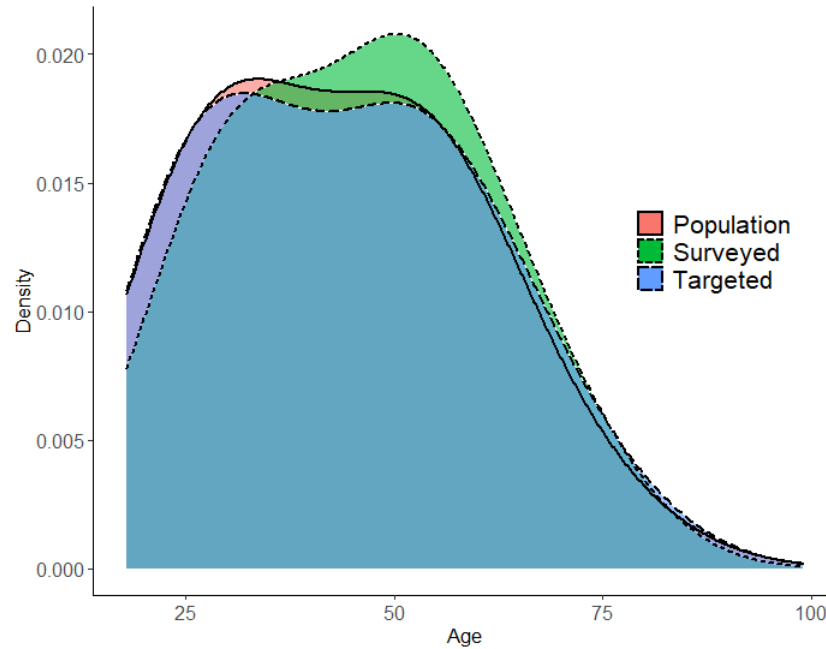


Figure B.1: Age distribution

Notes: Density plot of the age in (1) the Greenlandic population (2) the targeted survey participants (3) the final sample of respondents participating in the survey.

Table B.1: Party shares in the General Elections 2018 and the survey data

Party	Election	Survey data
Forward / Siumut (S)	27.2%	28.1%
Community of the People / Inuit Ataqatigiit (IA)	25.5%	27.5%
Democrats / Demokraatit (D)	19.5%	20.5%
Point of Orientation Party / Partii Naleraq (PN)	11.5%	11.0%
Solidarity / Atassut (A)	5.9%	6.1 %
Cooperation Party / Suleqatigiissitsisut (SA)	4.1%	4.1%
Descendants of Our Country / Nunatta Qitornai (NQ)	3.4%	2.2%

Notes: Table B.1 compares the actual party shares in the Greenlandic elections 2018 (column 1) with the shares of each party in the present study (column 2). Both data are from 2018.

C. Variable descriptions

Table C.1: Descriptive Statistics

Panel A: Categorical variables						
Label	Definition	Category	Freq.	Percent	Cum.	
S1: Voting intention	If there was a referendum on independence TODAY, asking if you wanted Greenland to leave the Kingdom of Denmark, how would you vote?	Yes	233	37.46	37.46	
		No	224	36.01	73.47	
		I don't know	114	18.33	91.8	
		I wouldn't vote	51	8.2	100	
Read prime	Have you read and understood the above [S3] info.?	No	127	21.20	21.20	
		Yes	472	78.80	100	
Trust prime	Do you trust the above [S3] info.?	No	218	37.46	37.46	
		Yes	364	62.54	100	
S2: Econ. Exp.	If Greenland becomes independent within the next 10 years, this will impact Greenland's economy...	Very negatively	123	22.40	22.40	
		Somewhat negatively	147	26.78	49.18	
		Not at all (Neutral)	99	18.03	67.21	
		Somewhat positively	113	20.58	87.8	
		Very positively	67	12.20	100	
Gender	What is your gender?	Male	300	48.23	48.23	
		Female	322	51.77	100	
Survey Taken at Home	Enumerator indicates if survey was taken at field session or at participants' homes	Survey session	225	36.17	36.17	
		Home	397	63.83	100	
National identity	What do you identify yourself as?	Other	10	1.62	1.62	
		Both GRL and DAN	60	9.72	11.35	
		Danish	29	4.70	16.05	
		Greenlandic	518	83.95	100	
Family in Denmark	Do any of your family members live in Denmark now?	No	62	10.33	10.33	
		Yes	538	89.67	100	
Lived in Denmark	Have you ever lived in Denmark?	No	352	58.47	58.47	
		Yes	250	41.53	100	
Language	Which language(s) do you speak?	Greenlandic	571	91.80	91.80	
		Danish	414	66.56	66.56	
		Other	182	29.26	29.26	
		Greenlandic	440	70.74	100	
Income	What is your total annual household income, from all sources, before taxes?	0 - 100 000 DKK	132	22.80	22.80	
		100 000 - 200 000 DKK	107	18.48	41.28	
		200 000 - 300 000 DKK	86	14.85	56.13	
		300 000 - 400 000 DKK	73	12.61	68.74	
		400 000 - 500 000 DKK	55	9.50	78.24	
		500 000 - 1 000 000 DKK	97	16.75	94.99	
		1 000 000 DKK or more	29	5.01	100	
Education	What is the highest level of education that you have achieved?	No education	90	15.20	15.20	
		Some years of primary	20	3.38	18.58	
		Primary school	157	26.52	45.10	
		Currently at high school	6	1.01	46.11	
		High School	22	3.72	49.83	
		Vocational Training	197	33.28	83.11	
		Currently at the University	8	1.35	84.46	
		Bachelor degree	61	10.30	94.76	
		Masters degree	29	4.90	99.66	
		Ph.D.	2	0.34	100	
Village	Enumerator indicates participants' village of residence	Ilulissat	83	13.34	13.34	
		Upernavik	15	2.41	15.76	
		Kangersuatsiaq	35	5.63	21.38	
		Tasiilaq	26	4.18	25.56	
		Tilerililaaq	21	3.38	28.94	
		Nuuk	167	26.85	55.79	
		Qeqertarsuatsiaat	16	2.57	58.36	
		Qaqortoq	48	7.72	66.08	
		Narsarmiut	20	3.22	69.29	
		Sisimiut	85	13.67	82.96	
		Kangaamiut	19	3.05	86.01	
		Qeqertarsuaq	63	10.13	96.14	
		Iginniarfik	24	3.86	100	
Party	Which party did you vote for in the 2018 election?	Atassut	30	4.87	4.87	
		Demokraatit	101	16.40	21.27	
		Inuit Ataqatigiit	136	22.08	43.34	
		Nunatta Qitornai	11	1.79	45.13	
		Partii Naleraq	57	9.25	54.38	
		Samarbejdspartiet	20	3.25	57.63	
		Siumut	139	22.56	80.19	
		Not disclose	122	19.81	100	
Wants independence	Do you think that Greenland should become an independent country at some point in the future?	No	204	33.06	33.06	
		Yes	413	66.94	100	
Panel B: Discrete and continuous variables			Freq.	Mean	Min	Max
Independence year	If yes [Greenland should be independent in the future], what year do you think Greenland should become independent?	333	2038.9	2019	2118	
Age	What is your age?	588	45.81	18	85	
Political interest	How interested or uninterested are you in politics?	614	4.74	1	7	
Parochial Attachment	On a scale from 1 to 5, to what extent do you feel a weak or a strong sense of belonging to each of the following areas? (Your town or settlement + Your municipality + Greenland) / Denmark	391	0.339	0	1	

Notes: Descriptions of relevant variables with corresponding descriptive statistics.

D. Additional results

Table D.1: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voting Intentions: Full sample

Dep. Var.:	Opposing Independence					
	OLS (1)	OLS (2)	OLS (3)	2SLS (4)	2SLS (5)	2SLS (6)
Information IT	0.106*** (0.0411)	0.101** (0.0423)	0.106*** (0.0398)			
IT Complying				0.144*** (0.0549)	0.137** (0.0567)	0.145*** (0.0521)
Observations	622	588	536	622	588	536
R-squared	0.0111	0.0115	0.280	—	—	—
Dep. Var. Mean	0.360	0.366	0.377	0.360	0.366	0.377
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	546.3	559.7	601.8
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Control	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table D.1 displays both Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence using both the Control Group and Salience Treatment as reference. Columns 1-3 display OLS regressions and columns 4-6 show 2SLS regressions in which complying respondents in the Information Treatment are instrumented by having been assigned the Information Treatment. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Control comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs.

Table D.2: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voting Intentions:
Alternative Specifications

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
Method:	Only GRL	Only GRL	Clustered	Weighted	Logit	LASSO
Panel A: Full Sample	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.0977** (0.0433)	0.0905** (0.0443)	0.106** (0.0428)	0.127*** (0.0421)	0.606*** (0.231)	0.121*** (0.0399)
Observations	518	451	622	536	513	536
R-squared	0.0103	0.216	0.0111	0.270	–	–
Dep. Var. Mean	0.293	0.310	0.360	0.410	0.390	0.377
Gender & Age	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panel B: CG as reference	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.118** (0.0486)	0.0902* (0.0515)	0.129** (0.0573)	0.118** (0.0489)	0.588** (0.281)	0.113** (0.0463)
Observations	351	304	417	359	333	359
R-squared	0.0166	0.254	0.0180	0.285	–	–
Dep. Var. Mean	0.299	0.322	0.367	0.430	0.420	0.393
Gender & Age	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Panel C: ST as reference	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.0765 (0.0503)	0.0895* (0.0526)	0.0836** (0.0336)	0.128*** (0.0486)	0.668** (0.295)	0.115** (0.0459)
Observations	343	304	419	365	347	365
R-squared	0.00671	0.265	0.00734	0.291	–	–
Dep. Var. Mean	0.321	0.329	0.389	0.433	0.412	0.397
Gender & Age	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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

Notes: Table D.2 displays estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence using a range of alternative statistical specifications. In columns 1 and 2, only respondents who consider their primary identity to be Greenlandic are included. In column 3, I bootstrap standard errors clustered at the village level, to account for the potential observations within localities are inter-dependent. Column 4 provides weighted estimates in order to adjust for under/over sampling of the different strata. In column 5, I relax the linearity assumption by estimating the treatment effect using Logistic Regressions. Column 6 show estimates from Post-Double-Selection (PDS) Least Absolute Shrinkage and Selection Operator (LASSO) models (see the discussion in Section 5.3). In columns 3-6, Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. In columns 1-2, National identity FEs are redundant and therefore not included.

Table D.3: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voting Intentions:
Register-Based Controls

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
	OLS	OLS	OLS	2SLS	2SLS	2SLS
Panel A: Full Sample	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.124*** (0.0480)	0.126*** (0.0483)	0.111** (0.0459)			
IT Complying				0.162*** (0.0618)	0.164*** (0.0621)	0.145** (0.0571)
Observations	468	468	461	468	468	461
R-squared	0.0150	0.0151	0.244	0.0238	0.0241	0.245
Dep. var. Mean	0.346	0.346	0.345	0.346	0.346	0.345
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	498.3	489.4	464.1
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Panel B: CG as reference	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.137** (0.0544)	0.136** (0.0553)	0.145*** (0.0532)			
IT Complying				0.179** (0.0701)	0.177** (0.0712)	0.189*** (0.0652)
Observations	308	308	301	308	308	301
R-squared	0.0205	0.0228	0.293	0.0339	0.0355	0.291
Dep. Var. Mean	0.360	0.360	0.359	0.360	0.360	0.359
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	497.2	469.4	403.3
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Panel C: ST as reference	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.112** (0.0548)	0.113** (0.0549)	0.102* (0.0532)			
IT Complying				0.145** (0.0706)	0.147** (0.0707)	0.134** (0.0647)
Observations	311	311	305	311	311	305
R-squared	0.0133	0.0138	0.302	0.0258	0.0264	0.305
Dep. Var. Mean	0.373	0.373	0.370	0.373	0.373	0.370
First Stage F-value	—	—	—	497.2	484.9	399.1
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table D.3 displays both Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) and Two-Stage Least Squares (2SLS) regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence. Columns 1-3 display OLS regressions with the full sample in Panel A (using both the Control Group and the Salience Treatment as the reference group), the Control Group as reference (Panel B) and the Salience Treatment as reference in Panel C. Columns 4-6 show 2SLS regressions with complying (having read the information prime) \times having been assigned the Information Treatment instrumented by having been assigned the Information Treatment. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for gender and age (register based) were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) Nationality FEs (register based), (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs (register based), (5) Education FEs (register based), (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs.

26 participants in the Information Treatment group read both the information prime and the economic expectation items before answering questions about independence (due to a misprint of a few of the Danish surveys). I include them as respondents in the Information Treatment group based on both theoretical and empirical arguments. Since the information prime enhances focus on the economic problems of independence in itself, the salience prime should have no impact over and above the information prime, i.e. the effects are assumed not be additive. I demonstrate the invariance of the double treatment empirically by comparing the probability of opposing independence among respondents subject only to information with those exposed to both information and the Salience Treatment by means of two-sided t-tests. Opposition to independence is indistinguishable between the “single treated” and the “double treated” (full sample: coefficient = -0.063, p-value= 0.590); complying respondents: coefficient = 0.017, p-value= 0.890).

Figure D.1: Double treatment

Table D.4: Effect of the Information Treatment on Opposing Independence: Treatment effects for respondents who did not Read or Trust the information

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
Sample:	Not read (1)	Not read (2)	Not read (3)	Not trust (4)	Not trust (5)	Not trust (6)
IT	0.0557 (0.0926)	0.0359 (0.0989)	0.0621 (0.146)	-0.00964 (0.0773)	-0.0331 (0.0797)	0.000432 (0.0830)
Observations	85	80	71	146	141	130
R-squared	0.00429	0.00523	0.458	0.000108	0.0105	0.475
Dep. Var. Mean	0.235	0.250	0.254	0.308	0.319	0.315
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table D.4 displays OLS regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence. Columns 1-3 present regressions where only respondents who did not read the treatment are included, whereas columns 4-6 show the estimates when only participants who did not trust the information prime are considered. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. The reference group is the Control Group.

Table D.5: Effect of the Information Treatment on Economic Expectations

Dep. Var.:	Economic expectations							
	Ologit (1)	Ologit (2)	Ologit (3)	OLS (4)	OLS (5)	OLS (6)	Not Comply (7)	Comply (8)
IT	-0.380** (0.186)	-0.436** (0.193)	-0.368* (0.223)	-0.290** (0.141)	-0.324** (0.146)	-0.240* (0.142)	-0.199 (0.280)	-0.328** (0.161)
Observations	368	349	325	368	349	325	82	286
R-squared	—	—	—	0.0114	0.0203	0.351	0.00637	0.0143
Dep. Var. Mean	2.829	2.811	2.797	2.829	2.811	2.797	3.183	2.727
Gender & Age	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Additional Controls	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1								

Notes: Table D.5 displays regression estimates of the effect of the Information Treatment on different measures of economic expectations of independence. Columns 1-3 report Ordered Logistic Regressions estimations with Economic expectations (see Table C.1) as the dependent variable. Columns 4-6 present the equivalent OLS regressions. Finally, in column 7 the sample is restricted to include only participants who did not comply with the treatment, whereas column 8 presents the treatment effect for those who reported complying with the treatment. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. The reference group is the Control Group.

Table D.6: Effect of the Information Treatment on Voter Participation

Dep. Var.:	Voter participation					
	Negative Expectations		Positive Expectations		Pooled	
Sample:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.170** (0.0667)	0.230*** (0.0739)	-0.00917 (0.0700)	-0.00760 (0.0865)	-0.00917 (0.0700)	-0.0177 (0.0767)
Neg. Expectations					-0.127* (0.0725)	-0.202** (0.0800)
IT × Neg. Expectations					0.180* (0.0967)	0.237** (0.107)
Observations	165	151	134	118	299	269
R-squared	0.0406	0.370	0.0001	0.375	0.0246	0.274
Dep. Var. Mean	0.770	0.775	0.799	0.805	0.783	0.788
Gender & Age	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Additional Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Robust standard errors in parentheses *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1						

Notes: Table D.6 displays OLS regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of voting, separately for respondents with negative economic expectations of independence and respondents with positive economic expectations. Voter participation is defined as answering either “Yes” or “No” to S2. Columns 1 and 2 present regressions confined to respondents stating negative economic expectations, while columns 3 and 4 present the same regressions for respondents with positive economic expectations. Columns 5-6, where the sample is pooled, present regressions with an interaction between the Information Treatment and a dummy for having negative economic expectations. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. The reference group is the Control Group.

Table D.7: The Expectations and Rallying effects link information to voter behavior

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
IT	0.153*** (0.0505)	0.102** (0.0425)	0.0523 (0.0352)	0.125** (0.0516)	0.0973** (0.0471)	0.0279 (0.0403)
Observations	366	366	366	324	324	324
R-squared	0.0247	0.364	0.560	0.316	0.429	0.612
Dep. Var. Mean	0.393	0.393	0.393	0.414	0.414	0.414
Gender & Age	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Economic Expectations	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Voter Participation	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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

Notes: Table D.7 displays OLS regression estimates of the effect of information on the probability of opposing independence. Columns 1 and 4 are baseline regressions where only respondents with non-missing data for economic expectations are included. In columns 2 and 5, economic expectations are controlled for. In columns 3 and 6, both dummies for economic expectations and a dummy for voter participation are included. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. The reference group is the Control Group.

Table D.8: The timing of independence

Dep. Var.:	Preferred Year of Independence					
	CG (1)	ST (2)	CG (3)	ST (4)	CG (5)	ST (6)
IT	6.278** (2.499)	5.363** (2.613)	6.299** (2.628)	5.668** (2.702)	6.634** (2.954)	7.061** (2.762)
Observations	221	226	213	216	203	207
R-squared	0.0276	0.0184	0.0287	0.0201	0.334	0.378
Dep. Var. Mean	2039.6	2040.0	2039.7	2040.1	2039.8	2040.4
Gender & Age	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses

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

Notes: Table D.8 displays OLS regression estimates of the effect of information on the preference for the year of independence. Columns 1, 3 and 5 use the Control Group as the reference group, whereas columns 2, 4 and 6 use the Salience Treatment as the reference group.⁵ outlier observations, who stated a preferred year of independence later than 2119, are excluded from all regressions. Gender & Age indicates whether controls for age and gender were included. Additional Controls comprises (1) Survey taken at home or at field session, (2) National identity FEs, (3) Greenlandic language survey dummy, (4) Income FEs, (5) Education FEs, (6) Village FEs and (7) Party FEs. All regressions include robust standard errors.

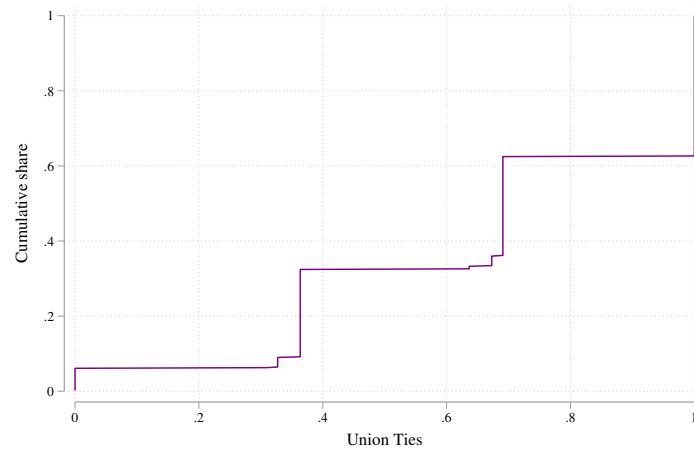


Figure D.2: Union ties

Notes: Cumulative distribution plot of values of Union Ties, derived from a principal component analysis.

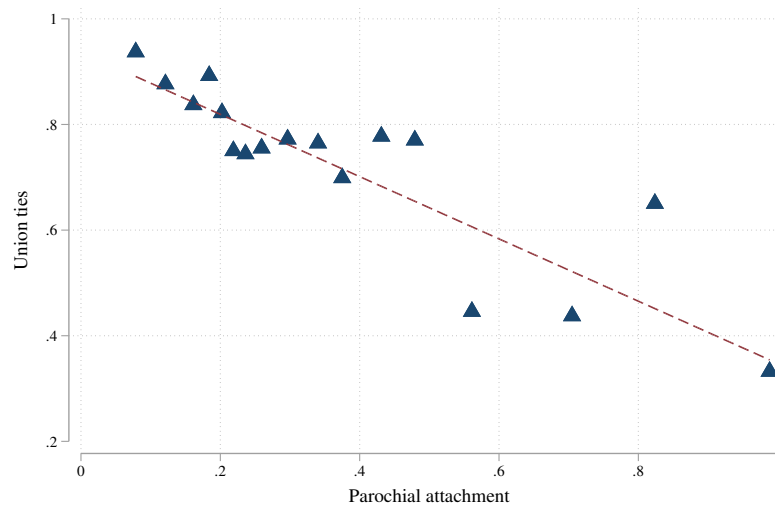


Figure D.3: Union ties and Parochial Attachment

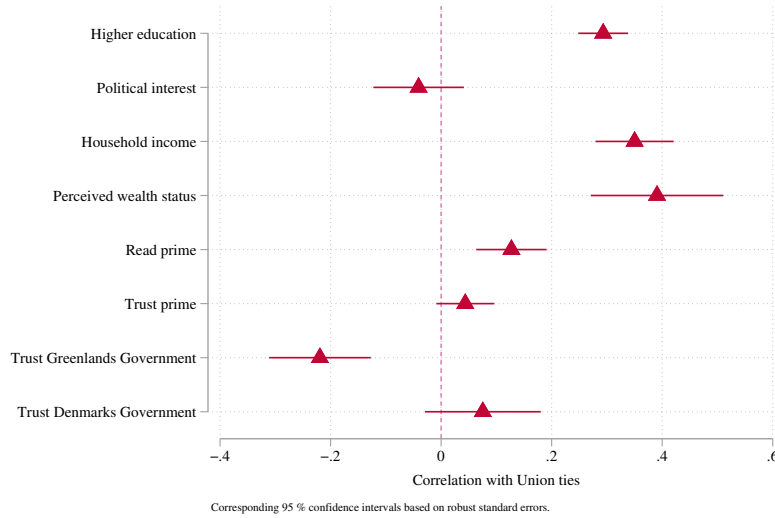
Notes: Binned scatterplot showing the relationship between Union Ties and Parochial Attachment.

Table D.9: Parochial Attachment and Voting Intentions Malleability

Dep. Var.:	Opposing independence					
Sample:	WPA (1)	SPA (2)	Full (3)	WPA (4)	SPA (5)	Full (6)
IT	0.152** (0.0753)	0.127* (0.0746)	0.272*** (0.0905)	0.205*** (0.0770)	0.0930 (0.0751)	0.263*** (0.0923)
Parochial Attachment			-0.290** (0.129)			-0.0592 (0.130)
IT × Parochial Attachment			-0.389* (0.207)			-0.359* (0.208)
Observations	185	193	391	165	180	357
R-squared	0.0215	0.0158	0.0635	0.395	0.356	0.284
Dep. Var. Mean	0.530	0.352	0.445	0.558	0.361	0.462
Gender & Age	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Additional Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Notes: Table D.9 displays Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions on the interaction effect between Parochial Attachment and the Information Treatment without (columns 1-3) and with (columns 4-6) control variables. Parochial Attachment is A dummy indicator for opposing independence is the outcome variable. Columns 1 and 4 display OLS regressions with the sample restricted to respondents with Weak Parochial Attachment (WPA), defined as having lower than median parochial attachment, whereas columns 2 and 5 show results from regressions including respondents with a Strong Parochial Attachment (SPA), defined as having higher than median parochial attachment. In columns 3 and 6 the sample is pooled. In all specifications, both the Control Group and the Salience Treatment serve as the reference group.

**Figure D.4:** Union ties and correlations with relevant covariates

Notes: Coefficient plot showing the relationships between Union Ties and a number of covariates. In order to enable meaningful comparisons, all variables in this graph have been normalized between 0 and 1.

Table D.10: Union ties and voter malleability: candidate explanations

Dep. Var.: Mechanism:	Opposing independence							
	Political knowledge		Economic motives		Treatment adherence		Institutional trust	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Information Treatment	-0.111 (0.0737)	-0.00997 (0.139)	-0.125 (0.0984)	-0.171* (0.0928)	-0.0968 (0.0818)	-0.176 (0.110)	-0.161 (0.153)	-0.113 (0.135)
Union Ties	0.257*** (0.0881)	0.434*** (0.0765)	0.419*** (0.0758)	0.472*** (0.0753)	0.317*** (0.0844)	0.394*** (0.0809)	0.486*** (0.0705)	0.540*** (0.0786)
Information Treatment × Union Ties	0.314** (0.131)	0.264** (0.114)	0.248** (0.117)	0.234** (0.114)	0.300** (0.127)	0.253** (0.120)	0.207* (0.118)	0.128 (0.125)
Higher education	0.211*** (0.0521)							
Information Treatment × Higher education	-0.0237 (0.0891)							
Political interest		0.00586 (0.0130)						
Information Treatment × Political interest		-0.0179 (0.0216)						
Household income			0.0534*** (0.0137)					
Information Treatment × Household income			-0.00347 (0.0219)					
Perceived wealth status				0.0198 (0.0133)				
Information Treatment × Perceived wealth status				0.0196 (0.0217)				
Read prime					0.0701 (0.0559)			
Information Treatment × Read prime					0.0649 (0.0962)			
Trust prime						0.0285 (0.0497)		
Information Treatment × Trust prime						0.168** (0.0824)		
Trust Greenlands government							-0.0889*** (0.0201)	
Information Treatment × Trust Greenlands government							0.0443 (0.0361)	
Trust Denmark's government								0.0496** (0.0229)
Information Treatment × Trust Denmark's government								0.0435 (0.0405)
Observations	576	586	573	556	562	571	533	488
R-squared	0.164	0.133	0.135	0.157	0.175	0.140	0.190	0.165
Dep. Var. Mean	0.366	0.363	0.363	0.369	0.368	0.366	0.377	0.395

Notes: Table D.10 displays OLS regressions with a dummy for opposing independence as the dependent variable, and the interaction between the Information Treatment and Union ties as the independent variable of interest. Each column introduces one potentially confounding variable interacted with the Information Treatment. In columns 1-2, I account for proxies of Political knowledge through (1) a dummy for higher education (coded as 1 for educational attainment higher than primary schooling) and (2) political interest (scale from 1-7). In columns 3-4, I control for Economic motives operationalized as (3) Household income and (4) Perceived wealth status (scale from 1 to 10). Columns 5-6 account for Treatment adherence by controlling for, respectively, (5) a dummy indicating whether the respondent stated that s/he read the information prime and (6) a dummy indicating whether the respondent stated that s/he trusted the information prime or not. Columns 7 and 8 control for Institutional trust by accounting for (7) trust in the Greenlandic government (scale from 1 to 5) and (8) trust in the Danish government (scale from 1 to 5). All regressions include robust standard errors. The reference group is the Salience Treatment and the Control Group. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.