

To lead or to follow? Mainstream parties' strategies and radical right success in Germany¹

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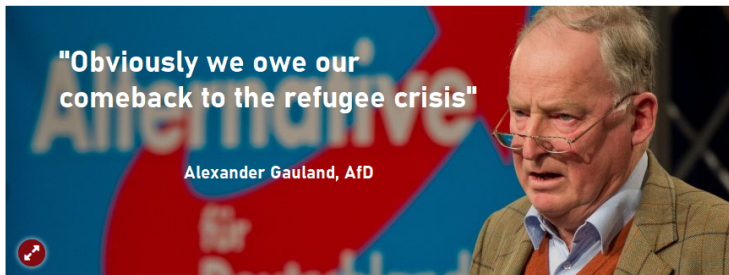
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¹Presentation prepared for the Hot Politics Lab

Introduction



... others have different explanations.



Research Questions

- Do mainstream parties (MPs) respond to competition from the radical right (RR) by addressing or ignoring the RR's main issue (immigration)?
- Does MPs attention to immigration affect support for the radical right?
- How does public salience of immigration affect these variables?

Overview

① Theory

- Theoretical expectations
- Hypotheses

② A Measure of Issue Emphasis

- Data Collection and Coding
- The Classifier
 - Training the Classifier
 - Performance

③ Time Series Analysis

- Variables
- Model Specifications
- Results

④ Conclusion

Issue emphasis

Mainstream parties emphasise issues...

- that are popular among the public (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1994; Klüver and Sagarzazu 2016).
- owned by challenger parties (Spoon, Hobolt, and Vries 2014; Abou-Chadi and Krause 2018)

Radical right performance

The radical right performs better electorally when...

- mainstream parties take up its issues (Meguid 2005).
- immigration is salient in the media (Boomgaarden and Vliegenthart 2006; Budge and Farlie 1983; Petrocik 1996).

Hypotheses

- H1 Public salience of the immigration increases MP attention to the issue (*riding-the-wave*)
- H2 Increasing electoral success of the RR increases mainstream party attention to immigration (*electoral threat*)
- H3 Mainstream party emphasis of immigration increases the electoral success of the RR (*issue emphasis*)
- H4 Public salience of immigration increases the electoral performance of the RR (*issue ownership*)

Data collection

Web scraping of nearly 30.000 press releases.

- SPD: 9,246 releases (Oct 2009 - May 2019) collected from website of parliamentary group.
- CDU/CSU: 20,290 releases (Jan 2000 - May 2019) of parliamentary group collected from website that collects press releases for journalists.

Hand-coding the data

Hand-coding of 1,000 randomly selected press releases.

- Does the PR talk about immigration?
 - Does the PR talk about the integration of foreigners into the German society?
 - Excluding:
 - humanitarian action for refugees in other countries,
 - war in other countries,
 - general border policy,
 - EU-integration,
 - German minorities outside of Germany,
- ... as long as they are not explicitly framed in terms of immigration.

Oversampling the minority class

Challenge: only $\sim 3\%$ of press releases on immigration.

- Train simple model on collected data to identify 500 more 'most-likely' cases
- results in 196 additional positive cases (hence in total $\sim 15\%$).

Preparation of text

- tokenizing
- stemming
- stopword removal
- POS-tagging for identification of adjectives & nouns
- using NLTK and spaCy `de_core_news_sm`

Training the classifier

- Count and tfidf-vectorizers.
- Once full (pre-processed) text, once only adjectives and nouns.
- Classifiers: Logistic Regression, Naive Bayes and Support Vector Machine (`scikit-learn`).
- training set with oversampled minority class (SMOTE).
- 5-fold cross-validation.

Comparing classifiers

Text	Vectorizer	Classifier		
		LR	NB	SVM
Full	Tfidf	X		
Adj&N				
Full	Count			
Adj&N				

The different classifiers.

'X' indicates the best performing classifier.

Performance I

		Classifier	
		F	T
Data	F	496	9
	T	14	78

Confusion matrix.

Performance II: metrics

Accuracy: 0.96

Precision: 0.9

Recall: 0.85

F1-Score: 0.87

Face value performance I

Weight?	Feature
+7.009	fluchtling
+5.710	integration
+4.309	ausland
+3.058	zuwander
+2.266	migrant
+2.031	kommun
+2.012	deutschland
+1.956	eu
+1.853	zuwanderungsgesetz
+1.792	zuwand
+1.692	wer
+1.665	illegal
+1.550	staatsangehor
+1.504	spataussiedl
+1.501	uns
+1.457	land
+1.379	migration
+1.372	sprach
+1.299	arbeitsmarkt
... 1486 more positive ...	
... 2343 more negative ...	
-1.906	<BIAS>

Best predictor words.

Face value performance II

y=1 (probability 0.962, score 3.236) top features

Contribution [?]	Feature
+5.142	Highlighted in text (sum)
-1.906	<BIAS>

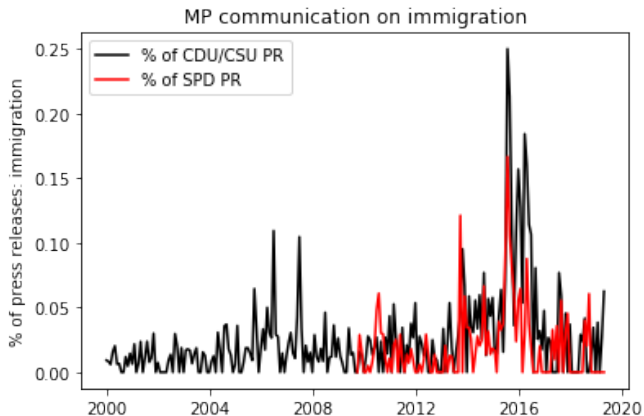
18.09.2015 – 15:10 gesetzentwurf der bundesregier weist in die richtig richtung zur bewalt der stark steigend asylbewerberzahl erarbeitet die bundesregier derzeit ein gesetzentwurf , der sich noch in der abstimm befindet . teil der opposition und vor all fluchtlingsorganisation kritisi die vorschlag . hierzu erklart der innenpolit sprech der cdu/csu-bundestagsfraktion stephan may : " die im koalitionsausschuss vereinbart massnahm sind die richtig reaktion auf die dramt steigend fluchtlingszahl . das zu ihr umsetz derzeit in der abstimm befind gesetzespaket setzt an den richtig punkt an . die kritik an den massnahm verkennt sowohl die herausforder vor der deutschland und europa steh als auch den sinn des asylrecht . im vordergrund steht die klar unterscheid von schutzbedarf und mensch , die aus wirtschaft grund nach deutschland woll . zu letzt gehor vor all die mensch aus dem westbalkan . wir muss deshalb die fehlanreiz fur asylfremd migration und die freie wahl des aufnahmeland konsequent verhind . nur so kann wir die handlungsfah des asylsystem zugun wirklich schutzbedarf erhalt . auch ein wirtschaft stark land wie deutschland kann nicht all aufnehmen , die sich ein bess leb erhoff und aus person grund gerad nach deutschland woll . uns bevölker hat ein anspruch auf sich und geordnet verhältnis . wir muss deshalb darauf acht , dass die humanitar hilf , die deutschland leistet , an den richtig stell ansetzt . wir hab ausserd ein verpflicht , rechtsstaat verfahr zu gewahreist . gleichzeit muss wir all fur die integration der mensch tun , die dauerhaft hier bleib darf . deutschland nimmt in der eu mit abstand am meist fluchtlng auf . es ist aber unrealist anzunehm , deutschland kann die aufgab des fluchtlingsschutz dauerhaft fur die mehrheit der and eu-staat mittleist . deshalb ist die festleg des koalitionsausschuss richtig , sekundarmigration , d.h. die migration von ein eu-staat in ein and , zu verhind . and hat ein lasten-vertell in der eu kein sinn . es kann nicht richtig sein , wenn fluchtlng sich aussuch , in welch eu-land sie schutz find mocht . vom grundsatz her muss klar sein , dass es fluchtlng zumutbar ist , in all eu-mitgliedstaat schutz zu find . ein wahlrecht kann es nicht geb . ein gerecht und solidar vertell von fluchtlng in erganz des geltend dublin-system , muss auch praktisch umsetzbar sein . ein ansatz hierfur sind die geplant leistungskurz . " pressekontakt : cdu/csu - bundestagsfraktion pressestell telefon : (030) 227-52360 fax : (030) 227-56660 internet : email : original-content von : cdu/csu - bundestagsfraktion , ubermittelt durch news aktuell

Example of coded press release.

Further steps

- Apply the classifier to 28,000 uncoded press releases.
 - Aggregate data monthly.
- Measure of parties' attention to immigration in a given month.
- Match with data about current electoral performance of AfD from poll of polls.
 - Match with data about immigration salience from Google Trends.

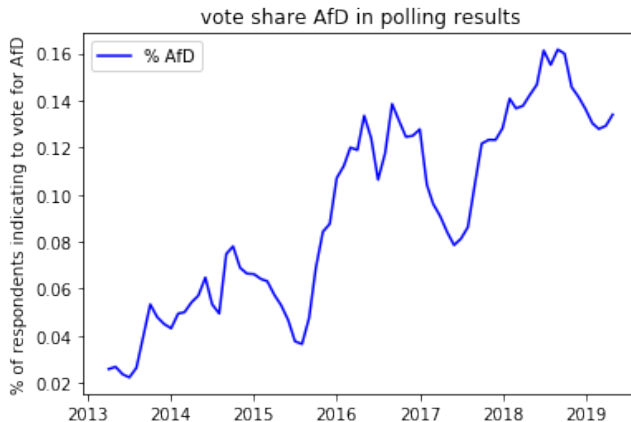
Measure



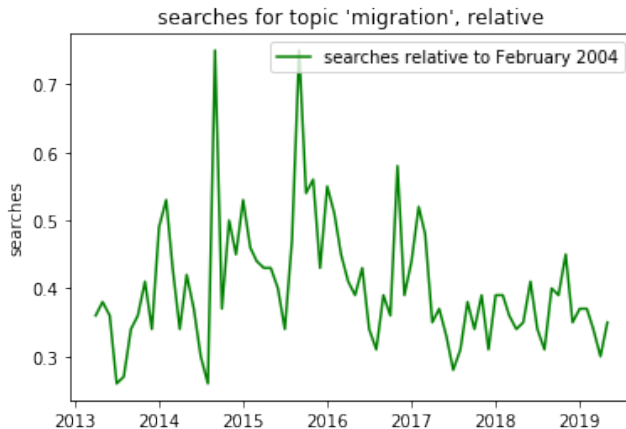
Recap: hypotheses

- H1 Public salience of the immigration increases MP attention to the issue (*riding-the-wave*)
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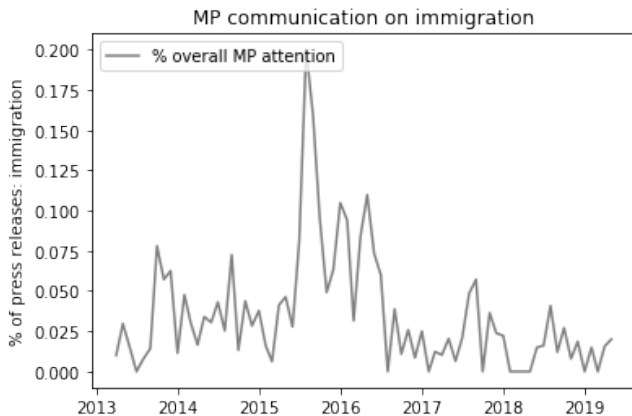
AfD performance in polls



Google searches related to immigration



Mainstream party emphasis of immigration

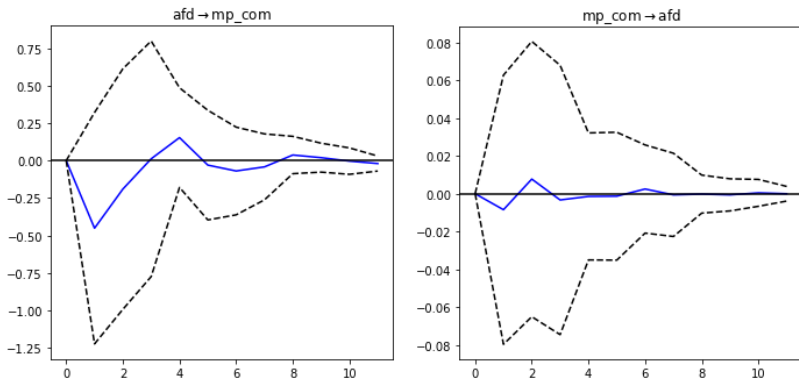


Model specifications

- VAR-model using statsmodels.
 - $Y_t = \nu + A_1 Y_{t-1} + \dots + A_p Y_{t-p} + u_t$
 - Includes lags of dependent & independent variables.
 - p = number of lags
 - Predicts every included variable.
- First difference of time series.
- Number of lags (p) decided based on best fit.

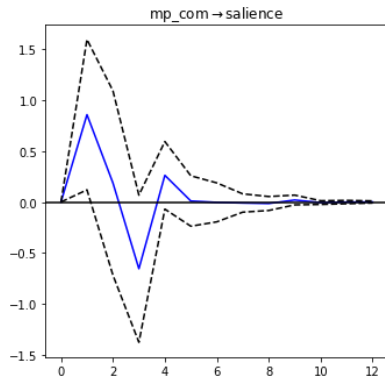
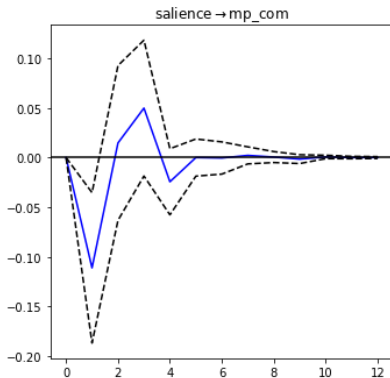
AfD vote share \leftrightarrow MP communication

Impulse responses



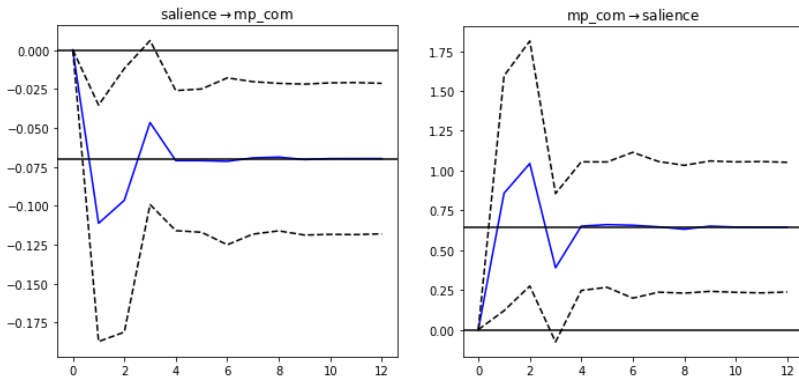
Salience \leftrightarrow MP communication I

Impulse responses



Salience \leftrightarrow MP communication II

Cumulative responses



Findings

- Mainstream party communication through press releases does not seem to affect the AfD's vote share.
- Similarly, the AfD vote share does not seem to lead mainstream parties to compete on the same issue.
- However, parties seem to control public issue salience.
- Lastly, parties seem to emphasise an issue less when it is already salient.
- Public salience does *not* increase the AfD's polling performance.

Robustness

Findings (and non-findings) hold in several robustness tests:

- Granger causality tests
- Event control and split samples for August 2015
- CDU/CSU-only model
- Different lags

Limitations

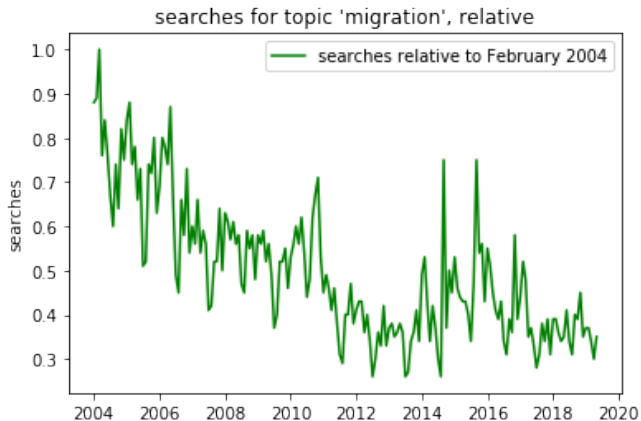
BUT:

- Level of aggregation (monthly) too crude?
- Weak measure of public salience?
- Correct model?
- Is Germany a special case?
- Wrong issue? Should I look at MP-owned issues?
- Moderating factors?

... that's all folks!

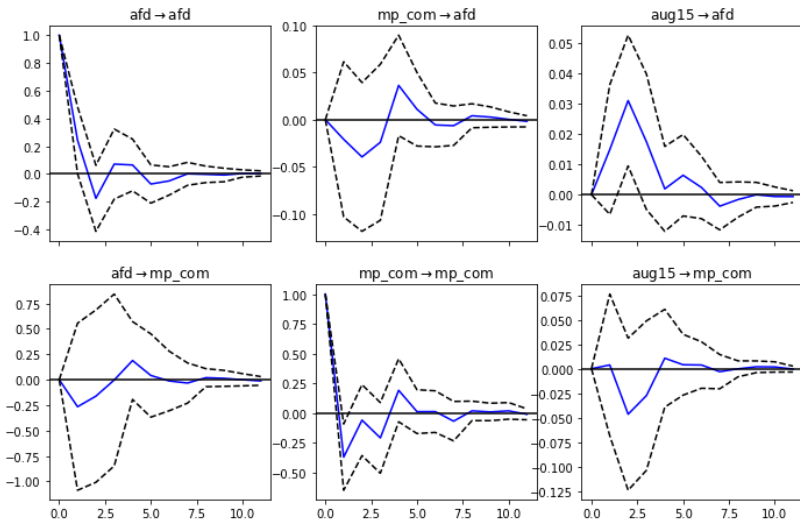
Thank you!

Full time frame google searches



Robustness test: including event control

Impulse responses



References I



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Sources of politicians' pictures

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Frederiksen <https://www.tv2fyn.dk/profil/mette-frederiksen-1>