**Strategic Interdependence in Political Movements
and Counter movements**

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Strategic Interdependence in Political Movements and Countermovements[*]

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Abstract

Collective action is the result of the efforts of groups consisting of many individuals. This gives rise to strategic interactions: the decision of an individual to participate in collective action may depend on the efforts of both like-minded and opposing activists. This paper causally studies such strategic interactions in the context of left- and right-wing protests in Germany. In an experiment, we investigated whether randomly varied information on turnout of both like-minded and opposing movements impacts activists' willingness to protest. In response to information about high turnout of their own group, left-wing activists increased their willingness to protest, consistent with theories of conditional cooperation. In contrast, right-wing activists decreased their willingness to protest, consistent with instrumental accounts and free-riding motives. For both groups, there was no significant reaction to information about turnout of the opposing movement. The results highlight substantial heterogeneity in strategic interactions and motives across the political spectrum.

Keywords: Political rallies, field experiment, strategic behavior, beliefs

1 Introduction

In theories of collective action, social and political outcomes are determined by the efforts of many individual actors who organize in political groups (Olson, 1965). This condition creates a situation of strategic interaction: when an activist participates in a movement, their impact depends on the group size and efforts of both like-minded and opposing activists. The theoretical and empirical study of such strategic interactions within and between political movements has received significant interest in various disciplines studying human behavior, including political science (Lohmann, 1994; Shadmehr, 2018; Shadmehr and Bernhardt, 2011; Tarrow, 1996), and sociology (Meyer and Staggenborg, 1996; Opp and Gern, 1993; Tilly, 1978). Yet, the existing empirical evidence is mostly correlational, ex-post, and does not rely on micro-level data on activists, but rather operates at aggregate levels which renders it difficult to identify strategic interactions between activists at the individual level. This article circumvents these identification problems by presenting an experiment to causally study at the individual level the qualitative nature and quantitative extent of strategic interactions between both like-minded and opposing political activists.

From a theoretical perspective, predictions regarding the nature of strategic interactions are ambiguous and fundamentally depend on the relative strength of different motivational forces.[1] In canonical models of collective action that posit instrumental considerations, free-riding incentives induce strategic substitutability among activists within the same movement (Hardin, 2015; Olson, 1965): an individual activist has a lower instrumental incentive to participate in collective action if the group size of like-minded peers increases. Vice versa, instrumental accounts predict strategic complementarity between activists of opposing movements (Coate and Conlin, 2004; Feddersen and Sandroni, 2006): activists of one movement have an additional instrumental incentive to participate in collective action if the group size of opposing activists becomes larger.

A purely instrumental account of political behavior is, however, unlikely to be complete (Green et al., 2004; Huddy et al., 2015). Various alternative models of collective

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[1] Appendix Section D provides a formal conceptual framework which discusses the relevant mechanisms driving effort choices.

action make predictions about the nature of strategic interactions between political activists which are in conflict with those of standard models. Theories that posit conditional cooperation (Dawes et al., 1986; Frey and Meier, 2004), reciprocity (Lubell and Scholz, 2001), the enforcement of social norms (Ostrom, 2000), and the quality of political participation as a relational good (Uhlaner, 1989b) predict strategic complementarity among like-minded activists within the same political movement. In these theories, individuals receive additional expressive benefits from participation when their peers contribute more to collective action.

Likewise, strategic interactions between activists of opposing movements do not necessarily exhibit strategic complementarity as predicted by standard instrumental accounts. For instance, in theories of social identity, threats to group identity can possibly discourage activists to take political action for their group (Brown, 2000; Hager et al., 2020; Huddy and Mason, 2008), giving rise to strategic substitutability in effort choices of activists of opposing movements. Similarly, bandwagon effects postulate that activists will shy away from taking political action for their movement if the opposing movement increases its dominance (McAllister and Studlar, 1991). Finally, threshold models of collective behavior can rationalize strategic substitutability between activists of different political movements in the case where one group consolidates its power (Granovetter, 1978). Given these conflicting theoretical predictions, the nature of strategic interactions of political activists is ultimately an empirical question.

This paper experimentally investigates strategic participation decisions in right-wing movements and left-wing countermovements in Germany. For both sides of the political spectrum, we study how individuals' decisions to attend a rally depend on both the expected turnout of the own political group and turnout of the competitor. Our study takes place in the context of two high-stakes rallies organized by the right-wing party *Alternative für Deutschland* (henceforth, AfD) in Berlin on May 27 2018 as well as in Erfurt on May 1 2019. In response to the announcements of these rallies, civil society organizations and political parties mobilized their followers to participate in left-wing counterrallies. A few days before the events, we recruited a sample of both supporters of the AfD rally and supporters of the counterrally, predominantly through social media. Within an on-

line survey, we randomly assigned respondents to receive either a high or low expert forecasts about the turnout separately for the AfD rally and the left-wing counterrally. We then study how this information provision afffects activists' willingness to participate in the rally.

By studying a setting of rallies and counterrallies, this paper presents the first causal investigation of individual participation in political activism in response to expected effort of both the own political group and the competitor. In standard models of collective action, participation is modeled as a simple public good game: private instrumental returns decrease in the effort of the own political group (Olson, 1965) and increase in that of the competitor (Coate and Conlin, 2004; Feddersen and Sandroni, 2006). Therefore, one's own turnout decision should exhibit strategic substitutability regarding peer turnout and strategic complementarity regarding competitor turnout. However, multiple alternative channels might mitigate or reverse these mechanisms. Social motives, for instance, may be a force for conditional cooperation within the own political camp (Ostrom, 2000), leading to strategic complementarity in own and peer turnout. Alternatively, participation costs may decrease in the size of the own group, similarly leading to strategic complementarity in peer turnout (Barbera and Jackson, 2020; Edmond, 2013). In addition, the enjoyment value of attending a rally may decrease in competitor turnout as people may prefer to be part of the bigger movement, thus inducing substitutability in own and competitor turnout. Importantly, there might be substantial variation in these forces between different political camps, generating heterogenous patterns of strategic interaction. Our experimental design and setting allow us to assess the aggregate effect of these forces on the individual turnout decision.

Our analysis yields three main findings. First, we find no evidence that respondents react to the turnout of the competitor rally. For both followers of the left-leaning countermovement and the right-wing movement, there is only a muted and insignificant increase in response to larger competitor turnout. By contrast there is substantial responsiveness to turnout within the own political group. Our second main finding reveals that for supporters of the left-wing countermovement, own and peer turnout are strategic complements. Left-leaning individuals who see high predicted turnout at their own rally

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are 5.8 percentage points (23%) more likely to be certain to participate. Third, for supporters of the right-wing rally, we find the reverse: supporters' own and peer turnout are strategic substitutes. Right-wing supporters who are presented high predicted turnout at the AfD rally are 6.1 percentage points (15%) less likely to report certain participation. Our evidence thus highlights that activists are responsive to the turnout of their own rally, but not to the turnout of the competitor rally. Moreover, within the same context, activists from the left and the right respond in different ways to information about the expected size of their own rally.

What explains differences in behavior across supporters of the right-wing rally and the left-wing counterrally? Based on additional survey evidence collected after the rallies had taken place, we find that left-wing activists know significantly more people that previously participated in a rally compared to right-wing activists. This suggests that left-leaning activists may have stronger social motives for participating in a rally and that motives for conditional cooperation are larger. Left-wing activists are also significantly more likely to agree with the statement that they "enjoy taking part in rallies." This suggests that incentives to free-ride are lower on the political left as activists place more weight on the consumption value of rallying. At the same time, we rule out differences in risk preferences, competitiveness, and beliefs about protest effectiveness as potential mechanisms underlying the heterogeneity across movements.

Our findings contribute to a long-standing literature analyzing the causes of political participation in democracies (Coate and Conlin, 2004; Downs, 1957; Enos and Hersh, 2015; Han, 2016; Holbein, 2017; McCarthy and Zald, 1977; Oberschall, 1994; Shadmehr, 2018; Shadmehr and Bernhardt, 2011; Uhlaner, 1989a). More specifically, we add to a literature studying the motivation of protesters (Bursztyn et al., 2020; Cantoni et al., 2019; González, 2020; Lohmann, 1994) and political activists (Enos and Hersh, 2015; Hager et al., 2019, 2020). Mcclendon (2014) provides field-experimental evidence that the promise of social esteem boosts participation at a gay and lesbian pride event. Cantoni et al. (2019) examine student protests against authoritarianism in Hong Kong and find that protesters' effort choices exhibit strategic substitutability.[2]

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[2]For a review of the literature on information provision experiments, see Haaland et al. (2020).

Compared to previous studies, our design and setting are novel in three key respects. First, our paper provides the first evidence on strategic interactions *within* and *between* political movements. Second, our setting allows us to study the heterogenous participation decisions of supporters of different movements within the same environment and employing the same treatment manipulation. The setting is therefore ideal to study heterogeneity in strategic interactions across political movements. Third, we exploit fully exogenous variation in beliefs by providing people with different expert forecasts about the likely turnout of the rallies. Previous studies provided control group respondents with no information, i.e., identification hinged on prior beliefs. Since prior beliefs may be measured with error and correlated with both observables and unobservables, causal identification and the interpretation of heterogeneous treatment effects are more difficult. Our study circumvents this issue by providing fully exogenous forecasts to all respondents.

Our paper proceeds as follows: Section 2 presents the setting and the experimental design. Section 3 presents the results before we conclude in Section 4. Appendix Section D provides a simple conceptual framework which discusses the relevant mechanisms driving substitutability and complementarity in effort choices.

2 Setting and Experimental Design

2.1 The Right-Wing "Alternative for Germany" (AfD)

Our study takes place in the context of two rallies organized by the "Alternative for Germany" (AfD), a German political party. Founded in 2013, the AfD falls on the right to far-right end of the political spectrum. During the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, the party shifted its traditionally economic platform to a more anti-immigration and socially conservative one. The shift saw a massive increase in support for the party, which took over 20 percent of the vote in regional elections in 2016. In the 2017 national election, the AfD gained 12.6 percent of the vote and secured 94 seats in the German parliament.

The AfD's current official party platform espouses conservative positions (e.g., tradi-

tional gender roles, restrictions on abortions) as well as explicitly racist ideas (e.g., the rejection of a multicultural Germany and of Islam). As such, scholars contend that the AfD activates and perpetuates deeply rooted xenophobic ideology from the Nazi regime (Arzheimer and Berning, 2019; Cantoni et al., 2020).

To advance its political influence, the AfD regularly organizes rallies against the federal government and its policies. AfD members are actively encouraged to participate. The success of the AfD in recent years as well as its mobilization efforts on the streets have been highly controversial. According to national polls, over 50% of Germans perceive the AfD as a threat for democracy.[3] As a consequence, rallies organized by the AfD typically attract counterrallies by left-wing parties and organizations who want to publicly voice their opposition to the AfD. Two influential rallies and counterrallies took place in Berlin on May 27 2018 and in Erfurt on May 1 2019. Both rallies generated significant media attention and constitute the setting of our experiment.

2.2 Setting

2018 Rally in Berlin   On May 27th 2018, the AfD organized a rally in Berlin under the slogan "Future Germany" (*Zukunft Deutschland*). The rally's stated goal was to express dissatisfaction with the policies of the current Merkel administration. The AfD's leadership officially encouraged its supporters to attend the rally and, to some extent, organized and subsidized transport from regions outside of Berlin. The rally was promoted to AfD members through internal communication channels and on social media. In response to the rally announcement of the AfD, the political alliance "Stop Hatred" (*Stoppt den Hass*) organized a counterrally on the same day in Berlin. *Stop Hatred* was supported by all major left-leaning parties, Germany's main trade-union association as well as a host of civil society organizations. In total, 5,000 people turned out for the AfD rally and 25,000 people joined the counterrally.

2019 Rally in Erfurt   Roughly a year later on May 1st, 2019, the AfD initiated another rally in Erfurt, the state capital of Thuringia. Labor day rallies are traditionally orga-

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[3]https://bit.ly/2OAThfv

nized by left-leaning organizations. The AfD rally was therefore arguably an attempt to set a counterpoint to left-wing rallies in Germany. As in Berlin, the Erfurt rally featured prominent AfD politicians and was advertised in regional AfD chapters. The rally was also part of the AfD's election campaign for the European elections held on May 26th 2019. The political alliance "Stand Together" (*Zusammenstehen*) responded to the announcement of the AfD by organizing a counterrally in Erfurt. Similar to the counterrally in Berlin, the Erfurt alliance was supported by major national and regional left-leaning parties, and the main union confederation. The alliance's mobilization effort focused on social media and targeted the members of supporting parties and civil society organizations within Thuringia. Roughly 1,000 AfD supporters turned out in total, who were opposed by about 4,000 activists in the counterraly.

2.3   Sample recruitment

The recruitment of political activists for an experimental intervention is challenging, particularly on the right end of the political spectrum. We therefore devised a targeted recruitment strategy using online ads distributed via Facebook. Facebook ads can be targeted to specific geographies as well as to individuals with particular political preferences, which enabled us to sample hard-to-reach respondents. Specifically, we used two separate ads: one targeted at potential supporters of the AfD rally and one targeted at supporters of the counterrally. The ads invited individuals to take part in a scientific survey regarding rally participation, which was incentivized using Amazon vouchers (Appendix section F shows screenshots and translations of the ads). To recruit a sample of likely rally participants, we targeted our ads to individuals that reside within 80 kilometers of Berlin or Erfurt, respectively, and only those residents who expressed interest in left-wing or right-wing politics in the past.[4]

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[4]On the right we targeted individuals who, according to Facebook, were interested in the following terms "Alternative for Germany AfD", "National Democratic Party of Germany", or "Right-wing politics." On left we targeted the following terms "Anti-Fascist Action", "Green party", "Green Youth (Germany)", Social Democratic Party of Germany", "Young Socialists in the SPD", "The Left (Germany)", "Left-wing politics", or "Anti-racism." For both groups we used Facebook's natural extension to also include individuals who did not meet these explicit criteria but are likely to be suitable participants of the survey.

2.4 Experimental Design

For each rally, we administered an online survey with the same treatment information to AfD supporters and supporters of left-leaning organizations in order to maximize comparability. The structure of the experimental manipulation was as follows: first, we measured respondents' prior beliefs about the turnout at their own rally and that at their competitor rally. Second, respondents were then provided with different forecasts about the turnout at the two rallies (more below). Third, we measured respondents' intended rally participation. For an overview of the experimental details, see Table A1.

Pre-treatment characteristics and beliefs   Before the experimental manipulation, we administered four background items on respondents' location, gender, education, and age. In addition, we also elicited respondents' motives to participate in a rally. Specifically, we measured (i) respondents' agreement with the statement that they 'primarily go rallying to ignite political change;' (ii) respondents' agreement with the statement that they 'primarily go rallying to express their views;' and (iii) respondents' view whether they think the AfD is a) 'an important opportunity for Germany' (only asked on the right) or b) 'a threat to democracy' (only asked on the left). Thereafter, the survey inquired about respondents' beliefs about the turnout at the AfD rally and the counter-rally.

Information treatment   After measuring the pre-treatment covariates and prior beliefs, we provided respondents with expert forecasts regarding turnout at their own and the competitor rally. For both rallies, we randomly provided one of two forecasts (either high or low) yielding in total four different treatment groups. The specific forecasts are shown in Table 1. In Berlin, the low turnout forecast for both rallies was 5,000, while the high estimate was 10,000. In Erfurt, the low forecast was 1,000, while the high estimate was 3,000.

	Berlin	**Erfurt**
AfD high, Counter low	AfD: 10,000 Counter: 5,000	AfD: 3,000 Counter: 1,000
AfD low, Counter high	AfD: 5,000 Counter: 10,000	AfD: 1,000 Counter: 3,000
AfD low, Counter low	AfD: 5,000 Counter: 5,000	AfD: 1,000 Counter: 1,000
AfD high, Counter high	AfD: 10,000 Counter: 10,000	AfD: 3,000 Counter: 3,000

Notes: Table 1 shows the four treatment conditions administered in Erfurt and Berlin, respectively. The numbers indicate the likely rally turnout, which were based on expert forecasts provided by the police, organizers, journalists and academics.

Ethical considerations Our intervention did not deceive respondents nor did it pose any risk to them. All forecasts were realistic, provided by reputable sources[5] and broadly captured actual turnout levels. Respondents were thus accurately informed. The right to protest is both de jure and de facto protected by authorities in Germany. Both rallies turned out to be peaceful and no participant was harmed.

Posterior beliefs about turnout and rally participation After providing the treatment information, we administered the main outcomes of interest. First, we elicited respondents' posterior beliefs about the turnout at the AfD rally as well as the turnout at the counterrally. Obtaining the posterior beliefs about rally participation allows us to verify that our treatment indeed shifted participants' beliefs. Second, we elicited a continuous measure of respondents' willingness to take part in their respective rally measured on a 4-point scale, ranging from certain non-participation (1) to certain participation (4). Based on this measure, we also construct a binary indicator for whether respondents were certain about participating in their respective rally. We standardize all

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[5]In order to obtain credible estimates of turnout, we contacted several sources familiar with the respective organizers (both partisan and neutral observers, such as the police) a few days before the survey.

variables at the rally-city level to make the effects comparable across contexts.[6]

2.5   Descriptives and integrity of randomization

Summary Statistics   Table A2 provides summary statistics for the pooled sample. Overall, we were able to recruit 1,464 respondents among both right- and left-wing activists. 71 percent of respondents are male, their average age is 44 years. On average, respondents participated in five previous rallies, suggesting that we recruited a set of politically active respondents. Tables A3 and A4 provide the summary statistics for the AfD and counteractivist sample separately. The AfD-sample includes 75 percent men compared to 64 percent in the left-leaning sample. The average age among AfD supporters is 49 years compared to 37 years in the left-wing counteractivist sample. 51 percent of AfD-supporters have completed university education, while this number is 49 percent in the left-wing counteractivist sample. On average, 41 percent of AfD-supporters plan to attend the rally, compared to 24 percent in the left-wing counteractivist sample.

Importantly, random assignment to treatment created excellent balance both in the pooled sample (Tables A7) as well as in the subsample of potential AfD supporters (Table A8) and supporters of the left-leaning organizations (Table A9).

3   Results

3.1   Correlates of rally participation

Before analyzing the experimental data, we explore the correlation of beliefs about rally turnout with intended rally participation. Panel A in Table 2 presents data for supporters of the left-wing counterrally, while Panel B presents data for supporters of the AfD rally. For supporters on both sides of the spectrum, prior beliefs about the size of the own rally positively predict respondents' intention to rally. By contrast, beliefs about the size of the competitor rally are negatively correlated with rally participation intentions. However,

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[6]While not pre-specified, this is a necessary step to make the size of treatment effects comparable across different contexts. Results are robust to not standardizing the outcome variables (Appendix Table A13).

the association of beliefs about turnout and intended rally participation are likely confounded because of reverse causality and omitted variable bias. For instance, protesters may hold motivated beliefs and might thus downplay the size of the competitor rally, while exaggerating the size of the own rally. To circumvent these concerns our study uses experimental variation in beliefs, which is discussed in the next subsection.

Table 2: Correlation between turnout beliefs and participation intentions

	Intention	Intention
	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest		
Prior: own (z)	0.285***	0.226***
	(0.043)	(0.045)
Prior: other (z)	-0.322***	-0.245***
	(0.046)	(0.039)
Observations	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest		
Prior: own (z)	0.197***	0.174***
	(0.035)	(0.037)
Prior: other (z)	-0.104***	-0.098***
	(0.035)	(0.036)
Observations	897	897

Notes: Table 2 presents the correlates of rally participation. Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Prior: own (z)" is respondents' z-scored pre-treatment belief about the size of their own rally. "Prior: other (z)" is respondents' z-scored pre-treatment belief about the size of the opposing rally.

3.2 Main experimental estimates

To estimate the impact of own and competitor rally turnout on participation intentions, we estimate the following equation:

$$y_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{own high}_i + \alpha_2 \text{competitor high}_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{1}$$

where y_i is respondent i's intention to participate in the rally. *own high$_i$* takes the value 1 if respondent i received the higher expert forecast for her own rally, and zero if she received the lower forecast. *competitor high$_i$* takes the value 1 if i received the higher expert forecast about competitor turnout, and zero if she received the lower forecast.[7] X_i is a vector of all available pre-determined control variables. It includes age, gender, a dummy for university education, a dummy if the respondent answered the left-wing-survey, a dummy for living near the city of the rally, a dummy indicating whether the rally took place in Berlin, a dummy for previous rally experience, a measure of perceptions about the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies, and a measure of whether the respondent mainly participates in rallies to express her opinion. In our main analysis, we pool data across both rallies, but separately analyze AfD-activists and counteractivists. We restrict our sample to individuals that could clearly be assigned as either a potential AfD activist or a potential counteractivist.

Post-treatment beliefs about turnout We first qualify our information treatment by investigating whether the treatment changed respondents' beliefs about the turnout of their own as well as the competitor's rally. Columns 1 and 2 of Table 3 demonstrate that respondents' posterior beliefs are strongly and significantly affected by the expert forecasts. Among supporters of the counterrally, receiving a high forecast about the own rally increases beliefs about its size by 0.41 standard deviations relative to receiving a low forecast, while receiving a high forecast about the opposing rally increases beliefs about

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[7]An alternative way of analyzing the data involves the inclusion of an interaction term between receiving a high forecast for the own rally and a high forecast for the competitor rally. Table A10 shows that there are no significant interaction effects. To increase statistical power for the main effects of interest, we do not include the interaction term in our main specification.
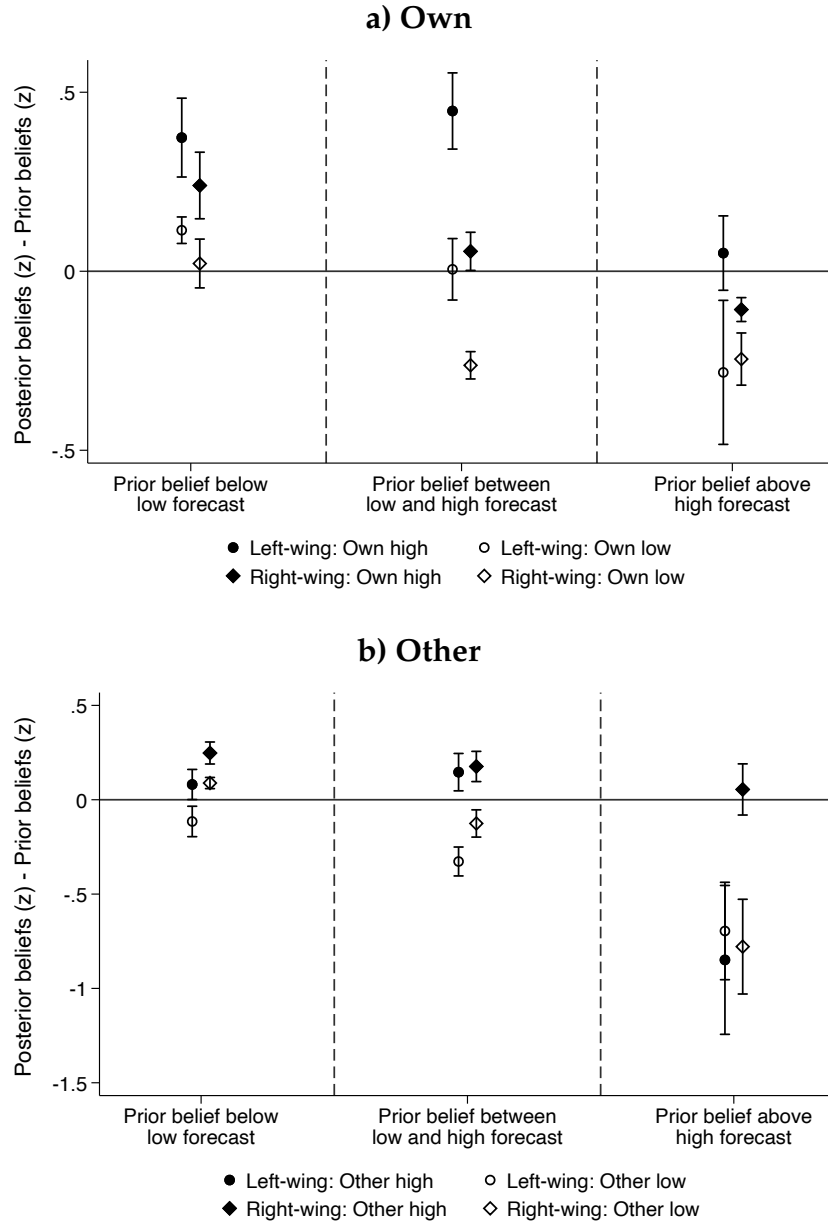
its size by 0.37 standard deviations relative to receiving a low forecast. We find a similar pattern on the political right: AfD supporters who receive a high forecast about their own rally increase their beliefs about its size by 0.16 standard deviations, while those who receive a high forecast about the opposing rally increase their beliefs about its size by 0.27 standard deviations.

Figure 1 shows differential belief updating for respondents who received a high or a low forecast for different segments of the prior belief distribution. We observe that respondents who received the high forecast in all but one case update more positively than respondents receiving the low forecast. This suggests that the treatment effects observed in Table 3 are not driven by respondents with specific prior beliefs about protest turnout.

Table 3 also shows little evidence of cross-learning: participants do not update their beliefs about the size of the opposing rally when receiving forecasts about the size of their own rally, and vice versa. In sum, our evidence highlights that the provision of expert forecasts significantly changed respondents' beliefs about the respective rally sizes.

Competitor turnout and rally participation   Did the treatment change respondents' intention to participate in the rally? We begin by analyzing how respondents' intended participation responds to receiving a forecast about high competitor turnout. Canonical theories of political contests predict that rally participation should increase in the perceived size of the competitor rally. At the same time, an activist's enjoyment value of attending a rally may decrease in competitor turnout because she may prefer to be part of the bigger movement. Table 3 shows small and statistically insignificant increases in intended rally participation of 0.08 standard deviations for potential supporters of the counterrally, and of approximately 0.04 standard deviations for potential supporters of the right-wing rally. Taken together, we thus find no significant increases in rally participation in response to perceived increases in competitor rally size. Importantly, the small coefficients are highly similar across both groups of the political spectrum.

Figure 1: Belief updating

a) Own

Legend:
- ● Left-wing: Own high
- ○ Left-wing: Own low
- ◆ Right-wing: Own high
- ◇ Right-wing: Own low

b) Other

Legend:
- ● Left-wing: Other high
- ○ Left-wing: Other low
- ◆ Right-wing: Other high
- ◇ Right-wing: Other low

Notes: Figure 1 plots the mean difference between standardized posterior and prior beliefs about rally attendance in different treatment groups against prior beliefs. Updating is plotted for three groups: respondents whose prior belief is below both the low and high forecast, respondents whose prior belief is between the low and high forecast, and respondents whose prior belief is above the low and the high forecast. Vertical bars represent two standard error intervals around the mean. Panel a) plots belief updating about turnout at a respondent's own rally. Panel b) plots belief updating about turnout at a respondent's opposing rally. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast.

Own movement turnout and rally participation Next, we investigate whether intentions to rally depend on the perception of the turnout of the own political camp. In this context, our setting furthermore allows us to study whether the nature of political coordination games differs between political movements. Standard models of collective action predict that rally turnout is a public goods game with incentives to free-ride (Olson, 1965). Activists should thus reduce their effort when fellow activists contribute more to the public good. Put differently, effort choices of activists are strategic substitutes. At the same time, the non-instrumental benefits from participating in a rally could increase when more fellow activists turn out as activists enjoy being surrounded by like-minded individuals. The cost of participation (e.g., being recognized by bystanders) could also be lower when the own rally is larger. Following these channels, one might expect strategic complementarity of effort choices within the same political movement (Barbera and Jackson, 2020; Edmond, 2013).

Table 3 shows that both left- and right-wing activists are highly responsive to the turnout of the own political camp. Importantly, however, the patterns of strategic interactions vary substantially between the left-leaning countermovement and the right-wing movement. For supporters of the left-wing counterrally own effort choices and those of peers are strategic complements. When left-wing respondents receive a forecast about higher turnout of the own rally, they increase their participation intentions by 0.17 standard deviations. By contrast, for right-wing respondents own effort choices and those of peers are strategic substitutes. When an AfD supporter receives a forecast about higher peer turnout, she decreases her participation intentions by 0.15 standard deviations. The effect size differences are highly statistically significant ($p < 0.01$). We obtain similar results when using a dummy for certain participation as dependent variable. This evidence highlights substantial differences in the strategic considerations by followers of different political movements. Our findings are consistent with the hypothesis that activists on the left exhibit stronger social motives, while activists on the right place more weight on instrumental motives, inducing free-rider behavior.

Table 3: Main experimental results

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Own high	0.408***	0.036	0.172**	0.138*
	(0.084)	(0.083)	(0.078)	(0.083)
Other high	0.113	0.370***	0.076	0.094
	(0.084)	(0.084)	(0.078)	(0.083)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Own high	0.159**	-0.047	-0.147**	-0.125**
	(0.067)	(0.068)	(0.062)	(0.062)
Other high	0.013	0.275***	0.039	0.065
	(0.068)	(0.069)	(0.062)	(0.062)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)				
Own high	0.02	0.43	0.00	0.01
Other high	0.35	0.38	0.70	0.78

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in the city of the rally, a dummy for the city in which the rally took place, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people mainly rally to express their opinion.

Perceptions of the relative size of rallies   An alternative way of analyzing the experimental data involves studying how relative rally sizes affect rally participation. In this regard, we estimate the following equation:

$$y_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{Difference}_i + X_i + \varepsilon_i \tag{2}$$

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where *Difference*$_i$ takes value -1 if the expert forecast predicts that the own rally is smaller than the competing rally, value 0 if the own rally and competing rally are forecasted to be of equal size, and value 1 if the own rally is forecasted to be larger than the competing rally. In line with the results from the previous section, Table 4 shows that for AfD supporters intended participation is lower if the expert forecast indicates that the AfD rally will be larger than the competitor rally. By contrast, intended participation increases when the expert forecasts indicate that the opposing rally will be bigger. This is in line with AfD supporters exhibiting instrumental motives. For left-wing activists, we observe no significant effect of the difference in forecasts. The null finding supports the reading that left-leaning activists are predominantly motivated by social motives within the own political group, as opposed to instrumental considerations.

3.3   Explaining the heterogeneity

Can the heterogeneity across movements be explained by differences in observable characteristics of the supporters? In Table A11 we interact *ownhigh* and *competitorhigh* with all pre-specified control variables. We find that the difference in the effect of *ownhigh* remains statistically significant, even when all other interaction terms are included.

Why then do we observe marked heterogeneity across left- and right-leaning respondents? In this section, we discuss three plausible channels. To adjudicate between the channels, we conducted an additional survey 7 weeks after the Erfurt rally in which we gathered a rich set of covariates for supporters of the AfD rally and the left-wing counterrally. In an effort to keep this new sample as comparable as possible to the two experimental samples, we recruited potential activists using the same Facebook ads and recruitment procedure described in section 2.3. In terms of attitudes and demographics, the sample appears highly similar to the experimental samples (Table A5).

Social motives   Influential theories of collective action problems posit that stronger social motives may lead to conditional cooperation (Ostrom, 2000). If such motives dominate instrumental concerns, activists increase their effort in response to an increase in the

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Table 4: Main results: difference in forecast

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Difference	0.148***	-0.167***	0.048	0.022
	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.049)	(0.052)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Difference	0.073*	-0.161***	-0.093**	-0.095**
	(0.044)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.041)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)				
Difference	0.33	0.91	0.13	0.23

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. Difference takes value -1 if the own rally is predicted to be smaller than the competing rally, takes value 0 if the own rally and competing rally are predicted to be of equal size and takes value 1 if the own rally is predicted to be larger than the competing rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in Berlin, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people mainly participate in rallies to express their opinion.

perceived size of the own rally.[8] Recent results by Hager et al. (2019) suggest that activists with stronger social motives are indeed less likely to exhibit strategic substitutability. Similarly, Bursztyn et al. (2020) provide evidence from the Hongkong protest movement that having stronger friendship networks increases sustained political engagement. In our context, one key distinguishing feature between supporters of the AfD and supporters of the left-wing organizations could thus be the tightness of their social network. This in turn could explain why left-leaning respondents are more likely to show a pattern of

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[8]In Appendix Section D we develop a theoretical framework that attributes these differences to differences in the importance of social and instrumental motives.

strategic complementarity.

To explore whether activists from the left and right differ in terms of the number of protesters they know, we collected a set of covariates in the aforementioned second survey. Table A6 shows that supporters of the left-wing rally know substantially more people who previously participated in rallies compared to supporters of the right-wing rally ($p = 0.057$). In turn, this may imply that people from the left have stronger social motives for participating in the rally and that conditional cooperation motives are higher. Table A6 also showcases that activists on the left have attended more rallies in the past, which again is consistent with the idea that left-wing activists are more closely connected to their peers.

Differences in enjoyment value Do activists from the left and the right differ in terms of their perceived enjoyment value of rallies? Table A6 demonstrates that left-wing activists are significantly more likely to agree to the statement that they enjoy taking part in rallies ($p = 0.002$). In turn, free-rider motives may be less pronounced among left-wing activists given that they receive a higher private consumption value from participating in political rallies. Left-wing respondents may thus place a higher relative weight on the enjoyment value of rallies compared to the instrumental benefits associated with rally participation.

Differences in preferences and beliefs Given the pronounced effect of preferences on political behavior, an alternative account for the differential response among respondents from the left and the right might be differences in preferences. Importantly, Table A6 shows that there are no significant differences in risk preferences ($p = 0.272$) and preferences for competition (Niederle and Vesterlund, 2007) ($p = 0.805$) across people from the left and the right. This in turn suggests that differences in preferences are less likely to drive differences in responses to the information. Finally, one other potential explanation for our heterogenous effects may be differences in the perceived effectiveness of rallies for igniting political change. However, our data suggest that activists on the left and the right do not differ significantly in terms of their beliefs about the effectiveness of

rallies ($p = 0.282$).

Rally versus counterrally   A final alternative explanation for the patterns of heterogeneity could be that strategic interactions fundamentally differ between movements and reactionary countermovements rather than the political left and the right. We find that the initiating movement (the right-wing movement) exhibits substitutability while the reacting countermovement (the left-wing movement) displays complementarity. A potential theoretical account for this pattern might be that activists of an initiating movement generally possess stronger instrumental motives. These activists are concerned with the goal of changing conditions relative to the status-quo and therefore might be more concerned with the resulting outcome of their activism.

3.4   Robustness

Behavioral outcome   In addition to the survey outcome, we also attempted to collect a behavioral outcome measure, namely respondents' willingness to provide the research team with their email address and send a photo from their participation in the rally. Specifically, respondents were informed that if they sent a photo to the research team, they would have the chance to win an Amazon voucher worth 50 Euros. Unfortunately, only a very small subset of respondents sent a photo for the rally in Berlin (3 percent of the sample, on average), while no photo was sent in the context of the rallies in Erfurt. One reason for the low number of pictures are privacy concerns, given that respondents were required to share their email address with the research team.

Still, we find broadly consistent patterns of treatment effects on behavior with respect to activists' own rally. Tables A15 and A16 show that for potential counteractivists we find large increases in the probability of sending the photo in response to learning that the own rally is larger and in response to learning that the competitor rally is larger. For respondents from the right-wing rally we find that the probability of sending in the photo decreases when the own rally is expected to be large, consistent with the treatment effects on self-reported intentions. The effect of learning that the competitor rally is larger decreases the likelihood of sending the photo, inconsistent with the direction of

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the treatment effect on intentions.

Experimenter demand effects A concern regarding our evidence might be that intended participation is self-reported. Estimated treatment effects may thus be confounded by experimenter demand effects. We believe that demand effects are unlikely for three reasons. First, recent evidence suggests that participants in online experiments respond only very moderately to explicit signals of experimenter expectations (de Quidt et al., 2018; Mummolo and Peterson, 2019). Second, it is not obivous how information about competitor and fellow activists' turnout should affect respondents, making it less likely that the experimental hypothesis is transparent. Moreover, the heterogeneous responses by whether activists are supporters of the right-wing rally or the counterrally are inconsistent with demand effects unless supporters from the right and from the left infer different experimenter demand from identical instructions. Third, we find qualitatively consistent treatment effects for the behavioral outcome, which is less likely to be confounded by demand effects.

4 Conclusion

We study strategic interactions in movements and countermovements. We experimentally manipulate beliefs about turnout at right-wing rallies and left-wing counterrallies among supporters of both rallies. Our evidence provides three key results. First, for both supporters of the right- and left-wing rallies, responses to the perceived size of their competitor rally are muted and insignificant. However, intended participation is responsive with respect to turnout within the own political camp. Our second result shows that turnout of right-wing activists and their peers exhibit strategic substitutability. Third, and by contrast, supporters of the counterrally and those of peers exhibit complementarity in their intention to participate.

Our evidence has implications for our understanding of the dynamics of political movements. First, activists seem not to be responsive to activism in the competitor group. This result helps understand how small fringe movements can obtain systematic power

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when not being met by countermovements from the opposite side of the political spectrum. Second, across different types of movements, there is substantial heterogeneity in the patterns of strategic interactions within the own political group. Across different settings of political activism, existing evidence in the literature has found contradictory patterns of substitutability (Cantoni et al., 2019; Hager et al., 2020) or complementarity (Bursztyn et al., 2020; González, 2020). We present within the same setting different patterns of strategic interactions across different political movements. Hence, our findings underscore that patterns of strategic interaction in political activism cannot be assumed to be universal. Rather, they might differ fundamentally across political groups with different motives.

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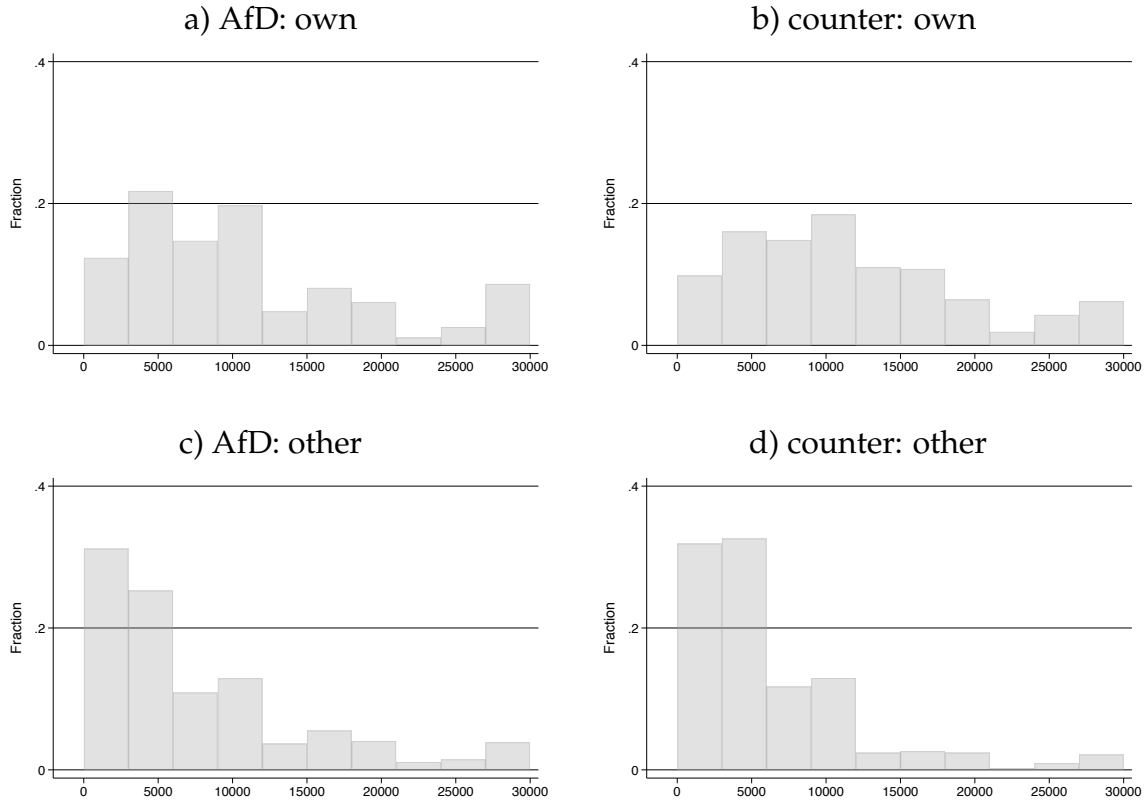
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Online Appendix

Online Appendix Section A contains additional figures. Online Appendix Section B contains additional tables. Online Appendix Section C describes deviations from the pre-analysis plan. Online Appendix Section D provides supplementary proofs and derivations. Online Appendix Section E provides the survey instrument, followed by Online Appendix Section F providing the invitation email.

A   Additional figures

Figure A1: Prior beliefs in Berlin

a) AfD: own

b) counter: own

c) AfD: other

d) counter: other

Notes: This figure plots the prior beliefs about rally attendance in Berlin by political affiliation. Panels a) and b) plot prior beliefs about attendance at respondents' own rally for the AfD and counterrally, respectively. Panels c) and d) prior beliefs about attendance at the opposing rally for the AfD and counterrally, respectively.

Figure A2: Prior beliefs in Erfurt

a) AfD: own

b) counter: own

c) AfD: other

d) counter: other

Notes: This figure plots the prior beliefs about rally attendance in Erfurt by political affiliation. Panels a) and b) plot prior beliefs about attendance at respondents' own rally for the AfD and counterrally, respectively. Panels c) and d) prior beliefs about attendance at the opposing rally for the AfD and counterrally, respectively.

Figure A3: Treatment

a) Own high

b) Other high

Notes: This figure plots the estimated treatment effects for the supporters of both the AfD rally and the left-wing counterrally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. The coefficients of "own high" are plotted in panel a) and the coefficients of "other high" are plotted in panel b). "own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in the city of the rally, a dummy for the city in which the rally took place, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people main participate in rallies to express their opinion.

Figure A4: Example screens of treatment: Berlin

Figure A5: Example screens of treatment: Erfurt

Notes: Figure A4 shows two example treatment screens for the experiments conducted in Berlin. Figure A5 shows two example treatment screens for the experiments conducted in Erfurt.

B Additional tables

Table A1: Overview of experiments

Experiment	Sample	Treatments Arms	Main outcomes
Experiment 1 (May 2018)	Facebook advertisement and email lists (N=959)	**Treatment 1**: Expected own rally size: 10000; Expected competitor rally size: 10000 **Treatment 2**: Expected own rally size: 5000; Expected competitor rally size: 10000 **Treatment 3**: Expected own rally size: 10000; Expected competitor rally size: 5000 **Treatment 4**: Expected own rally size: 5000; Expected competitor rally size: 5000	Intended rally participation; post-treatment beliefs about rally sizes
Experiment 2 (April/May 2019)	Facebook advertisement (N = 505)	**Treatment 1**: Expected own rally size: 3000; Expected competitor rally size: 3000 **Treatment 2**: Expected own rally size: 1000; Expected competitor rally size: 3000 **Treatment 3**: Expected own rally size: 3000; Expected competitor rally size: 1000 **Treatment 4**: Expected own rally size: 1000; Expected competitor rally size: 1000	Intended rally participation; post-treatment beliefs about rally sizes
Experiment 3 (June 2019)	Facebook advertisement (N=337)	No treatment administration	Rich set of co-variates on social motives, enjoyment value, and preferences

Notes: This table provides an overview of the different experiments conducted.

Table A2: Summary statistics: full sample

	Mean	SD	Median	Min.	Max.	Obs.
Panel A: Pooled sample						
Male	0.71	0.45	1.00	0	1	1464
Age	44.11	15.57	45.50	0	99	1464
High education	0.50	0.50	1.00	0	1	1464
Previous protest participation	5.29	3.92	5.00	0	10	1464
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.75	1.35	4.00	0	5	1464
Go to protest to express my view	2.80	1.37	3.00	0	5	1464
AfD perception	4.15	1.44	5.00	0	5	1464
Prior: left-wing protest	6527.81	7246.51	4000.00	0	30000	1464
Prior: right-wing protest	6457.31	6940.14	5000.00	0	30000	1464
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.58	0.49	1.00	0	1	1464
Social Democratic Party	0.05	0.21	0.00	0	1	1464
Christian Democratic Union	0.03	0.18	0.00	0	1	1464
The Left	0.15	0.36	0.00	0	1	1464
Greens	0.08	0.26	0.00	0	1	1464
None	0.05	0.22	0.00	0	1	1464
Other	0.06	0.25	0.00	0	1	1464
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	6637.57	6516.29	5000.00	0	30000	1464
Posterior: left-wing Protest	6239.21	6402.35	5000.00	0	30000	1464
Certain to go protesting	0.34	0.48	0.00	0	1	1464
Intention to go protesting	2.49	1.29	3.00	1	4	1464
Panel B: Berlin protest						
Male	0.67	0.47	1.00	0	1	959
Age	43.72	15.71	45.00	0	99	959
High education	0.65	0.48	1.00	0	1	959
Previous protest participation	5.44	3.89	5.00	0	10	959
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.74	1.37	4.00	0	5	959
Go to protest to express my view	2.81	1.39	3.00	0	5	959
AfD perception	4.05	1.51	5.00	0	5	959
Prior: left-wing protest	9066.74	7740.83	7000.00	0	30000	959
Prior: right-wing protest	8567.26	7672.13	6000.00	0	30000	959
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.51	0.50	1.00	0	1	959
Social Democratic Party	0.05	0.22	0.00	0	1	959
Christian Democratic Union	0.03	0.18	0.00	0	1	959
The Left	0.16	0.36	0.00	0	1	959
Greens	0.09	0.28	0.00	0	1	959
None	0.08	0.26	0.00	0	1	959
Other	0.08	0.27	0.00	0	1	959
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	8803.96	7049.57	7000.00	0	30000	959
Posterior: left-wing Protest	8633.99	6688.45	7000.00	0	30000	959
Certain to go protesting	0.38	0.48	0.00	0	1	959
Intention to go protesting	2.63	1.27	3.00	1	4	959
Provided e-mail address	0.18	0.39	0.00	0	1	959
Panel C: Erfurt protest						
Male	0.78	0.42	1.00	0	1	505
Age	44.87	15.27	46.00	16	95	505
High education	0.21	0.41	0.00	0	1	505
Previous protest participation	5.00	3.97	5.00	0	10	505
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.78	1.31	4.00	1	5	505
Go to protest to express my view	2.79	1.33	3.00	1	5	505
AfD perception	4.34	1.27	5.00	1	5	505
Prior: left-wing protest	1706.36	1725.19	1000.00	0	5000	505
Prior: right-wing protest	2450.49	1836.49	2000.00	0	5000	505
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.70	0.46	1.00	0	1	505
Social Democratic Party	0.04	0.19	0.00	0	1	505
Christian Democratic Union	0.03	0.16	0.00	0	1	505
The Left	0.13	0.34	0.00	0	1	505
Greens	0.06	0.23	0.00	0	1	505
None	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	505
Other	0.04	0.20	0.00	0	1	505
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	2523.56	1704.79	2000.00	0	5000	505
Posterior: left-wing Protest	1691.48	1522.21	1000.00	0	5000	505
Certain to go protesting	0.29	0.45	0.00	0	1	505
Intention to go protesting	2.24	1.29	2.00	1	4	505
Entered foto competition	0.04	0.19	0.00	0	1	505

Notes: This Table provides summary statistics for both the sample of potential supporters of the AfD rally and the counterrally.

Table A3: Summary statistics: AfD sample

	Mean	SD	Median	Min.	Max.	Obs.
Panel A: Pooled sample						
Male	0.75	0.43	1.00	0	1	897
Age	48.67	13.86	50.00	0	99	897
High education	0.51	0.50	1.00	0	1	897
Previous protest participation	4.77	3.85	4.00	0	10	897
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.91	1.38	4.00	0	5	897
Go to protest to express my view	2.74	1.43	3.00	0	5	897
AfD perception	4.46	1.22	5.00	0	5	897
Prior: left-wing protest	4972.31	6415.41	2000.00	0	30000	897
Prior: right-wing protest	7496.55	7553.46	5000.00	0	30000	897
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.95	0.23	1.00	0	1	897
Social Democratic Party	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	897
Christian Democratic Union	0.01	0.10	0.00	0	1	897
The Left	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	897
Greens	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	897
None	0.02	0.14	0.00	0	1	897
Other	0.02	0.14	0.00	0	1	897
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	7515.66	7127.41	5000.00	0	30000	897
Posterior: left-wing Protest	4910.28	5726.27	3000.00	0	30000	897
Certain to go protesting	0.41	0.49	0.00	0	1	897
Intention to go protesting	2.67	1.30	3.00	1	4	897
Panel B: Berlin protest						
Male	0.72	0.45	1.00	0	1	542
Age	48.76	13.85	50.00	0	99	542
High education	0.71	0.45	1.00	0	1	542
Previous protest participation	4.72	3.78	4.00	0	10	542
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.94	1.39	5.00	0	5	542
Go to protest to express my view	2.73	1.47	3.00	0	5	542
AfD perception	4.39	1.32	5.00	0	5	542
Prior: left-wing protest	7309.96	7258.36	5000.00	0	30000	542
Prior: right-wing protest	10619.93	8219.69	9000.00	0	30000	542
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.91	0.29	1.00	0	1	542
Social Democratic Party	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	542
Christian Democratic Union	0.02	0.13	0.00	0	1	542
The Left	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	542
Greens	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	542
None	0.04	0.18	0.00	0	1	542
Other	0.04	0.18	0.00	0	1	542
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	10571.96	7650.97	9000.00	0	30000	542
Posterior: left-wing Protest	7186.35	6313.17	5000.00	0	30000	542
Certain to go protesting	0.46	0.50	0.00	0	1	542
Intention to go protesting	2.84	1.25	3.00	1	4	542
Provided e-mail address	0.16	0.37	0.00	0	1	542
Panel C: Erfurt protest						
Male	0.79	0.40	1.00	0	1	355
Age	48.52	13.89	50.00	18	95	355
High education	0.19	0.39	0.00	0	1	355
Previous protest participation	4.85	3.95	4.00	0	10	355
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.85	1.36	4.00	1	5	355
Go to protest to express my view	2.77	1.38	3.00	1	5	355
AfD perception	4.56	1.05	5.00	1	5	355
Prior: left-wing protest	1403.26	1586.83	900.00	0	5000	355
Prior: right-wing protest	2727.89	1848.18	2500.00	0	5000	355
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	1.00	0.00	1.00	1	1	355
Social Democratic Party	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
Christian Democratic Union	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
The Left	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
Greens	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
None	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	355
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	2849.43	1726.82	2500.00	0	5000	355
Posterior: left-wing Protest	1435.27	1429.18	1000.00	0	5000	355
Certain to go protesting	0.34	0.48	0.00	0	1	355
Intention to go protesting	2.42	1.32	2.00	1	4	355
Entered foto competition	0.04	0.19	0.00	0	1	355

Notes: This Table provides summary statistics for the sample of potential supporters of the AfD rally.

Table A4: Summary statistics: counterrally sample

	Mean	SD	Median	Min.	Max.	Obs.
Panel A: Pooled sample						
Male	0.64	0.48	1.00	0	1	567
Age	36.91	15.41	34.00	0	99	567
High education	0.49	0.50	0.00	0	1	567
Previous protest participation	6.11	3.91	6.00	0	10	567
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.50	1.26	4.00	0	5	567
Go to protest to express my view	2.89	1.26	3.00	0	5	567
AfD perception	3.67	1.62	5.00	0	5	567
Prior: left-wing protest	8988.63	7789.63	7000.00	0	30000	567
Prior: right-wing protest	4813.22	5455.20	3000.00	0	30000	567
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	567
Social Democratic Party	0.12	0.33	0.00	0	1	567
Christian Democratic Union	0.07	0.25	0.00	0	1	567
The Left	0.38	0.49	0.00	0	1	567
Greens	0.19	0.40	0.00	0	1	567
None	0.09	0.29	0.00	0	1	567
Other	0.13	0.34	0.00	0	1	567
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	5248.42	5116.90	4000.00	0	30000	567
Posterior: left-wing Protest	8341.58	6842.28	7000.00	0	30000	567
Certain to go protesting	0.24	0.43	0.00	0	1	567
Intention to go protesting	2.21	1.24	2.00	1	4	567
Panel B: Berlin protest						
Male	0.61	0.49	1.00	0	1	417
Age	37.15	15.58	34.00	0	99	417
High education	0.58	0.49	1.00	0	1	417
Previous protest participation	6.37	3.84	7.00	0	10	417
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.47	1.29	4.00	0	5	417
Go to protest to express my view	2.91	1.28	3.00	0	5	417
AfD perception	3.62	1.63	4.00	0	5	417
Prior: left-wing protest	11350.12	7760.68	10000.00	0	30000	417
Prior: right-wing protest	5899.28	5921.31	4000.00	0	30000	417
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	417
Social Democratic Party	0.12	0.33	0.00	0	1	417
Christian Democratic Union	0.06	0.23	0.00	0	1	417
The Left	0.36	0.48	0.00	0	1	417
Greens	0.20	0.40	0.00	0	1	417
None	0.13	0.33	0.00	0	1	417
Other	0.13	0.34	0.00	0	1	417
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	6506.00	5380.75	5000.00	0	30000	417
Posterior: left-wing Protest	10515.59	6701.42	10000.00	0	30000	417
Certain to go protesting	0.27	0.44	0.00	0	1	417
Intention to go protesting	2.35	1.25	2.00	1	4	417
Provided e-mail address	0.21	0.41	0.00	0	1	417
Panel C: Erfurt protest						
Male	0.73	0.44	1.00	0	1	150
Age	36.22	14.93	33.50	16	72	150
High education	0.25	0.44	0.00	0	1	150
Previous protest participation	5.36	4.00	5.00	0	10	150
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.59	1.16	4.00	1	5	150
Go to protest to express my view	2.83	1.21	3.00	1	5	150
AfD perception	3.81	1.58	5.00	1	5	150
Prior: left-wing protest	2423.71	1829.78	1800.00	0	5000	150
Prior: right-wing protest	1793.96	1635.75	1000.00	0	5000	150
Party affiliation						
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	150
Social Democratic Party	0.13	0.33	0.00	0	1	150
Christian Democratic Union	0.09	0.29	0.00	0	1	150
The Left	0.45	0.50	0.00	0	1	150
Greens	0.19	0.39	0.00	0	1	150
None	0.00	0.00	0.00	0	0	150
Other	0.15	0.35	0.00	0	1	150
Outcomes						
Posterior: right-wing Protest	1752.35	1376.39	1000.50	0	5000	150
Posterior: left-wing Protest	2297.85	1567.95	2000.00	0	5000	150
Certain to go protesting	0.15	0.35	0.00	0	1	150
Intention to go protesting	1.83	1.14	1.00	1	4	150
Entered foto competition	0.03	0.18	0.00	0	1	150

Notes: This Table provides summary statistics for the sample of potential supporters of the counterrally.

Table A5: Demographics summary statistics: descriptive sample

	Mean	SD	Median	Min.	Max.	Obs.
Panel A: Left-wing sample						
Male	0.71	0.46	1.00	0	1	128
Age	44.50	16.83	45.00	18	112	128
High education	0.39	0.49	0.00	0	1	128
Previous protest participation	6.02	4.02	5.50	0	10	128
Protests are effective at igniting political change	3.79	1.25	4.00	1	5	128
Going to the protest to express my view	2.72	1.26	3.00	1	5	128
AfD perception	3.82	1.55	5.00	1	5	128
Panel B: Right-wing sample						
Male	0.75	0.44	1.00	0	1	209
Age	50.25	13.80	53.00	19	88	209
High education	0.25	0.43	0.00	0	1	209
Previous protest participation	5.22	3.98	5.00	0	10	209
Protests are effective at igniting political change	3.63	1.48	4.00	1	5	209
Going to the protest to express my view	2.84	1.49	3.00	1	5	209
AfD perception	4.51	1.09	5.00	1	5	209

Notes: This Table provides summary statistics for the sample recruited seven weeks after the Erfurt rally.

Table A6: Additional descriptives on differences in social motives, enjoyment value and preferences

	Right-wing	Left-wing	P-value of t-test
Degree of competitiveness	4.66	4.59	0.805
Risk-seeking	5.41	5.12	0.272
Number of friends who attended protests	14.22	15.88	0.508
Number of people known who attended protests	25.99	33.83	0.057
Visibility of attendance	3.07	3.04	0.853
Number of protests attended	13.52	19.81	0.040
Perceived effectiveness	3.63	3.79	0.282
Perceives protests as fun	2.56	2.97	0.002
Observations	209	128	

Notes: This Table provides evidence on differences in social motives, enjoyment value and preferences.

Table A7: Balance tests: pooled sample

	low-low	high-low	low-high	high-high	P-value - joint test
Male	0.69	0.74	0.70	0.71	0.217
Age	44.91	44.37	43.39	44.06	0.812
High education	0.47	0.47	0.51	0.53	0.287
Previous protest participation	5.05	5.24	5.30	5.48	0.889
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.76	3.82	3.72	3.73	0.349
Go to protest to express my view	2.83	2.79	2.76	2.83	0.837
AfD perception	4.15	4.27	4.04	4.19	0.115
Prior: left-wing protest	5996.98	6040.37	7004.59	6770.48	0.251
Prior: right-wing protest	6629.57	6272.59	6281.52	6621.24	0.597
Alternative for Germany (AfD)	0.60	0.62	0.54	0.58	0.189
Social Democratic Party	0.04	0.07	0.05	0.04	0.126
Christian Democratic Union	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.03	0.391
The Left	0.15	0.14	0.17	0.14	0.494
Greens	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.459
None	0.04	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.904
Other	0.02	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.942
F-stat	0.735	0.913	1.042	1.449	
p(F)	0.760	0.554	0.408	0.111	

Notes: This Table provides balance tests for both the sample of potential supporters of the AfD rally and the counterrally.

Table A8: Balance tests: AfD sample

	low-low	high-low	low-high	high-high	P-value - joint test
Male	0.72	0.79	0.72	0.76	0.129
Age	49.13	49.17	47.78	48.80	0.612
High education	0.50	0.46	0.50	0.55	0.142
Previous protest participation	4.39	4.74	4.66	5.18	0.987
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.92	3.97	3.89	3.88	0.528
Go to protest to express my view	2.85	2.76	2.69	2.70	0.903
AfD perception	4.46	4.53	4.39	4.46	0.324
Prior: left-wing protest	5191.82	4178.57	5300.84	5038.14	0.040
Prior: right-wing protest	7720.54	7059.99	7439.02	7673.06	0.362
F-stat	0.628	0.581	0.863	0.909	
p(F)	0.774	0.813	0.558	0.516	

Notes: This Table provides balance tests for the sample of potential supporters of the AfD rally.

Table A9: Balance tests: counterrally sample

	low-low	high-low	low-high	high-high	P-value - joint test
Male	0.64	0.64	0.67	0.61	0.991
Age	37.87	35.82	37.39	36.34	0.423
High education	0.43	0.50	0.52	0.50	0.856
Previous protest participation	6.15	6.14	6.17	5.98	0.929
Protest are effective at igniting political change	3.49	3.55	3.49	3.49	0.629
Go to protest to express my view	2.80	2.83	2.84	3.04	0.654
AfD perception	3.63	3.80	3.57	3.73	0.368
Prior: left-wing protest	7341.15	9358.42	9333.06	9594.71	0.511
Prior: right-wing protest	4808.26	4869.31	4699.61	4906.45	0.917
Social Democratic Party	0.11	0.19	0.12	0.10	0.058
Christian Democratic Union	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.04	0.952
The Left	0.39	0.38	0.41	0.36	0.887
Greens	0.17	0.18	0.14	0.28	0.672
None	0.08	0.07	0.12	0.09	0.342
Other	0.03	0.08	0.06	0.02	0.143
F-stat	1.323	0.752	1.272	1.137	
p(F)	0.183	0.731	0.215	0.319	

Notes: This Table provides balance tests for the sample of potential supporters of the counterrally.

B.1 Robustness

Table A10: Main results including interaction terms

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Own high	0.374***	-0.037	0.111	0.109
	(0.118)	(0.106)	(0.106)	(0.111)
Other high	0.079	0.299***	0.018	0.066
	(0.116)	(0.115)	(0.103)	(0.106)
Own high × other high	0.072	0.151	0.125	0.059
	(0.172)	(0.171)	(0.156)	(0.168)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Own high	0.087	-0.193**	-0.184**	-0.173**
	(0.097)	(0.085)	(0.086)	(0.087)
Other high	-0.062	0.123	-0.000	0.015
	(0.098)	(0.100)	(0.087)	(0.089)
Own high × other high	0.152	0.307**	0.080	0.102
	(0.136)	(0.139)	(0.123)	(0.124)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)				
Own high	0.06	0.25	0.03	0.04
Other high	0.35	0.25	0.89	0.71
Own high × other high	0.71	0.47	0.82	0.84

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in the city of the rally, a dummy for the city in which the rally took place, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people main participate in rallies to express their opinion.

Table A11: Main results including all interaction terms

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Own high	0.032	0.339	0.048	0.127
	(0.252)	(0.254)	(0.255)	(0.256)
Own high × AfD protest	-0.272**	-0.008	-0.242**	-0.225**
	(0.123)	(0.127)	(0.107)	(0.108)
Own high × High education	0.139	0.349***	0.021	0.003
	(0.120)	(0.130)	(0.107)	(0.110)
Own high × Male	0.009	-0.210*	0.084	-0.008
	(0.123)	(0.119)	(0.111)	(0.117)
Own high × Age	-0.001	-0.009**	-0.004	0.001
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Own high × Local	0.172	0.065	0.110	0.118
	(0.118)	(0.116)	(0.114)	(0.115)
Own high × # prev. protests	-0.004	-0.015	0.010	0.014
	(0.014)	(0.014)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Own high × Erfurt	0.350***	0.359***	-0.036	-0.040
	(0.129)	(0.138)	(0.120)	(0.125)
Own high × Protest effectiveness	0.019	-0.024	-0.005	-0.021
	(0.041)	(0.044)	(0.040)	(0.039)
Own high × Expressive motives	0.029	0.002	0.030	-0.033
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.037)
Other high	-0.100	0.461*	-0.013	-0.067
	(0.251)	(0.260)	(0.252)	(0.252)
Other high × AfD protest	-0.050	-0.014	0.013	0.030
	(0.123)	(0.128)	(0.107)	(0.107)
Other high × High education	0.149	0.101	0.090	0.151
	(0.120)	(0.130)	(0.108)	(0.110)
Other high × Male	-0.241*	-0.087	0.027	0.019
	(0.123)	(0.121)	(0.109)	(0.116)
Other high × Age	0.003	-0.007*	0.000	-0.000
	(0.004)	(0.004)	(0.003)	(0.003)
Other high × Local	0.073	-0.123	0.164	0.101
	(0.119)	(0.118)	(0.113)	(0.114)
Other high × # prev. protests	0.027*	0.006	0.024*	0.028**
	(0.014)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.013)
Other high × Erfurt	0.129	0.190	0.005	0.009
	(0.130)	(0.137)	(0.120)	(0.125)
Other high × Protest effectiveness	-0.050	-0.019	-0.035	-0.021
	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.040)	(0.039)
Other high × Expressive motives	0.035	0.071*	-0.041	-0.032
	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.036)	(0.037)
Number of observations	1464	1464	1464	1464

Notes: This table presents the main results including interaction terms with all control variables. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. In addition to the displayed coefficients, we control for the levels of age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in the city of the rally, a dummy for the city in which the rally took place, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people main participate in rallies to express their opinion.

Table A12: Main experimental results – no controls

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Own high	0.413***	0.037	0.198**	0.157*
	(0.083)	(0.085)	(0.086)	(0.087)
Other high	0.113	0.370***	0.098	0.108
	(0.083)	(0.085)	(0.085)	(0.086)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Own high	0.170**	-0.046	-0.101	-0.078
	(0.067)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.068)
Other high	0.006	0.273***	0.012	0.040
	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.068)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)				
Own high	0.02	0.44	0.01	0.03
Other high	0.31	0.37	0.43	0.54

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast.

Table A13: Main experimental results – not standardized

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own	Other	Attend	Yes
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Own high	1757.936***	-91.700	0.210**	0.058*
	(483.479)	(387.866)	(0.095)	(0.035)
Other high	631.543	1639.053***	0.092	0.041
	(487.753)	(394.397)	(0.094)	(0.035)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Own high	558.840	-474.852	-0.189**	-0.061**
	(402.126)	(339.935)	(0.079)	(0.030)
Other high	-198.403	779.860**	0.049	0.032
	(403.955)	(337.876)	(0.079)	(0.030)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality in A and B (p-value)				
Own high	0.05	0.45	0.00	0.01
Other high	0.19	0.10	0.72	0.85

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend" are intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes" is a dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. "Own high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the own group, and value zero if they received the low forecast. "Other high" takes value 1 if respondents received the high forecast for the opposing group, and value zero if they received the low forecast.

Table A14: Main results: difference in forecast – no controls

	Posterior Beliefs		Intention	Intention
	Own (z)	Other (z)	Attend (z)	Yes (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest				
Difference	0.150***	-0.167***	0.050	0.024
	(0.054)	(0.053)	(0.054)	(0.053)
Observations	567	567	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest				
Difference	0.082*	-0.159***	-0.056	-0.059
	(0.044)	(0.042)	(0.044)	(0.044)
Observations	897	897	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)				
Difference	0.33	0.91	0.13	0.23

Notes: Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Attend (z)" are standardized intentions to participate in the rally reported on a four point scale (4, Yes; 3, uncertain but probably; 2 uncertain, but probably not; 1, no). "Yes (z)" is a standardized dummy variable that indicates answering yes to the same question. Difference takes value -1 if the own rally is predicted to be smaller than the competing rally, takes value 0 if the own rally and competing rally are predicted to be of equal size and takes value 1 if the own rally is predicted to be larger than the competing rally.

Table A15: Main results: behavioral measure of rally participation (Berlin)

	Left email (z)	Sent photo (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest		
Own high	0.088	0.192*
	(0.102)	(0.114)
Other high	0.099	0.200*
	(0.103)	(0.110)
Observations	417	417
Panel B: Right-wing protest		
Own high	-0.017	-0.085
	(0.093)	(0.104)
Other high	-0.007	-0.142*
	(0.091)	(0.085)
Observations	542	542
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)		
Own high	0.44	0.07
Other high	0.51	0.01

Notes: This table uses data only from the rally in Berlin. Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Left email (z)" is the standardized value of a dummy variable that takes value one for respondents who provided us with their email address in order to participate in the lottery of the photo competition". "Sent photo (z)" is the standardized value of a dummy variable that takes value one if respondents actually sent us a photo of their participation in the rally. We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in Berlin, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people mainly participate in rallies to express their opinion.

Table A16: Main results: behavioral measure of rally participation (pooled)

	Left email (z)	Sent photo (z)
Panel A: Left-wing protest		
Own high	0.018	0.119
	(0.085)	(0.074)
Other high	0.075	0.133*
	(0.086)	(0.074)
Observations	567	567
Panel B: Right-wing protest		
Own high	-0.021	-0.046
	(0.069)	(0.059)
Other high	-0.038	-0.086*
	(0.069)	(0.050)
Observations	897	897
Panel C: Test for equality of coefficients in A and B (p-values)		
Own high	0.66	0.10
Other high	0.28	0.01

Notes: This table uses data from the rallies in Berlin and Erfurt. Panel A shows data from supporters of the counterrally. Panel B shows data from supporters of the AfD rally. "Left email (z)" is the standardized value of a dummy variable that takes value one for respondents who provided us with their email address in order to participate in the lottery of the photo competition". "Sent photo (z)" is the standardized value of a dummy variable that takes value one if respondents actually sent us a photo of their participation in the rally ("Sent photo (z)" is set to zero for respondents from Erfurt where we did not receive any photos). We control for age, gender, whether an individual completed university education, whether the respondent answered the survey targeted at the left, a dummy for living in Berlin, previous rally experience, a measure of perception of the AfD, a measure of beliefs about the effectiveness of rallies and a measure of whether people mainly participate in rallies to express their opinion.

C Deviations from the pre-analysis plan

We pre-registered the trial based on the Berlin rally on the AEA RCT registry under the trial id. Given the very similar design of the Berlin and Erfurt trials, we decided to no submit a second pre-analysis plan prior to the Erfurt rally. For our final analysis, we deviate from the pre-analysis plan in the following ways:

- Throughout the analysis we display the treatment effects for the AfD and the left-wing sample separately and do not pool across the two samples.

- We z-scored all outcomes to facilitate interpretation across the two rally contexts.

- We do not include whether individuals entered the email address in the main results Table because of too little variation. We display the treatment effects on leaving the email and on sending a picture in Tables A15 and A16. We do not show the results separately for the Erfurt rally because of the low response rate. For the same reason we also do not present treatment effects on an index of the outcomes.

- We did not pre-register the survey in the context of the Erfurt rallies as the rallies were only announced 3 days before they took place, and we did not have any time to register the analysis before collecting the data.

D Conceptual framework

D.1 Setup

This section describes a stylized framework of how an individual i decides whether to attend the rally. We assume that there are two rallies, *own* and *other*, where individual i is considering whether to attend her own rally.

i's utility function takes the following form:

$$u_i(n_i) = \alpha_i \underbrace{f(n_{own} + n_i, n_{other})}_{\text{instrumental motives}} + (1 - \alpha_i) \underbrace{g(n_{own})n_i}_{\text{social motives}} - c_i \cdot n_i \tag{3}$$

With n_{own} being turnout on i's side excluding i, and n_{other} being turnout on the opposing side. We take n_{own} and n_{other} as fixed as we experimentally manipulate beliefs about these numbers. n_i is 1 if i turns out at the rally and 0 otherwise.[9] $\alpha_i \in [0,1]$ represents the relative weight i puts on instrumental relative to social motives. $c_i \geq 0$ is the individual cost of attending the rally which we assume to be distributed with continuous and differentiable CDF $\Psi(c_i)$.

Instrumental motives i gains utility from having a large rally on her side, regardless of whether she personally attends. We model this through the function $f(n_{own} + n_i, n_{other})$ which we assume to be continuous and twice differentiable. The production function captures the fact that rallies can influence political decisions and that size of rallies matters for the strength of subsequent political outcomes (Madestam et al., 2013). In line with these stylized facts, we assume that the utility gained from the rally is increasing in total attendance at one's own rally ($f'_{n_{own}} > 0$). As the setting here is one of confrontational rallies, it seems plausible that the number of participants of the competitor rally matters for the success of i's side. The more counterprotesters turn out, the lower the overall utility gained for a given level of own turnout ($f'_{n_{other}} < 0$). We further assume that the return to own turnout is increasing in the opposition turnout ($f''_{n_{own},n_{other}} > 0$) and that there are decreasing returns to turnout on i's side ($f''_{n_{own}} < 0$).

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[9]While individual i faces a discrete choice, we approximate n_{own} as beeing continuous as the number of participants on both sides is large in our context.

Social motives Social motives are increasing in turnout on i's side ($g'_{n_{own}}$) but i only experiences these returns if she decides to attend the rally. This specification reflects the notion that rallies can be thought of as relational goods whose consumption value increases when consumed jointly (Uhlaner, 1989a). Specifically, both rallies in our setting exhibited aspects of street parties with cheerful music being played throughout the day and relatively well-known bands playing on stage.[10] We assume that turnout at the competitor rally does not influence the social returns to attending the rally as rallies were strictly separated by the police.

D.2 Strategic interactions with activist on i's own side

How does individual i's ex-ante probability of attending the rally change with changes in turnout at i's own rally? Result 1 implies that the effect of n_{own} on i's probability to attend the rally is ambiguous.

Result 1. *For each combination of n_{own} and n_{other} there exist an α^* such that the probability of attending a rally is locally decreasing in n_{own} if $\alpha_i > \alpha^*$ and locally increasing in n_{own} if $\alpha_i < \alpha^*$.*

Result 1 emphasizes the crucial role of the relative strength of social and instrumental motives for the nature of the strategic interaction between activists on the same side. In particular, individuals with strong instrumental concerns will exhibit strategic substitutability, while individuals with strong social motives will exhibit strategic complementarity in attendance on their own side.

Proof of Result 1 i will attend the rally iff $u_i(n_i = 1) > u_i(n_i = 0)$. Using equation 3 yields.

$$\alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other}) \right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own}) > c_i \qquad (4)$$

We can calculate the probability of i attending the rally as

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[10]Note that this description of rallies differs fundamentally from protests in autocratic countries where the possibility of a crackdown is an important driver of participation decisions (see for example Cantoni et al., 2019).

$$p(n_i = 1) = P(\alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other}) \right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own}) \geq c_i)$$

$$= \Psi \left(\alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other}) \right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own}) \right)$$

To assess the role of expected turnout on one's own side define

$z = \alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other}) \right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own})$ and take the derivatives of $P(n_i = 1)$ with respect to n_{own}.

$$\frac{\partial P(n_i = 1)}{\partial n_{own}} = \underbrace{\frac{\partial \Psi(z)}{\partial z}}_{>0} \left(\alpha_i \underbrace{\left(\frac{\partial f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other})}{\partial n_{own}} - \frac{\partial f(n_{own}, n_{other})}{\partial n_{own}} \right)}_{<0, \text{ because of decreasing returns}} + (1 - \alpha_i) \underbrace{\frac{dg(n_{own})}{dn_{own}}}_{>0} \right)$$

(5)

The sign of $\frac{\partial P(n_i = 1)}{\partial n_{own}}$ is thus determined the remainder of the equation.

$\alpha_i \left(\frac{\partial f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other})}{\partial n_{own}} - \frac{\partial f(n_{own}, n_{other})}{\partial n_{own}} \right) + (1 - \alpha_i) \frac{dg(n_{own})}{dn_{own}}$ is a linear combination of a negative and positive term. Applying the mean value theorem yields Result 1.

D.3 Strategic interactions with the opposing side

Our framework also yields predictions about the nature of the strategic interaction with the opposing side. As i does not have any social motives with respect to the competitor rally, the effect of n_{other} on the probability to participate is unambiguous.

Result 2. *The probability of attending the rally is globally increasing in n_{other}. Thus, own attendance and turnout at the opposing rally are strategic complements.*

One corrolary of Result 2 is that the relative strength of instrumental and social concerns should not matter for the nature of strategic interactions between different rally groups.

Proof of Result 2 We can calculate the probability of i attending the rally as

$$P(n_i = 1) = \quad P(\alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other})\right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own}) \geq c_i)$$

$$= \quad \Psi\left(\alpha_i \left(f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other}) - f(n_{own}, n_{other})\right) + (1 - \alpha_i)g(n_{own})\right)$$

To assess the role of expected turnout on one's own side take the derivatives of $P(n_i = 1)$ with respect to n_{other}.

$$\frac{\partial P(n_i = 1)}{\partial n_{other}} = \underbrace{\frac{\partial \Psi(z)}{\partial z}}_{>0} \left(\alpha_i \underbrace{\left(\frac{\partial f(n_{own} + 1, n_{other})}{\partial n_{other}} - \frac{\partial f(n_{own}, n_{other})}{\partial n_{other}} \right)}_{>0, \text{ by assumption}} \right) > 0$$

E Experimental instructions in English

E.1 Berlin: AfD supporter survey

Questionnaire about Protests for the AfD Thank you for your interest in our questionnaire! The goal of this study is to examine participation in political protests. This study is conducted by researchers at the Universities of Oxford and Konstanz.

The questionnaire will not take longer than 5 minutes. The results will be used exclusively for scientific purposes and will not be shared with a third party. You can end your participation in this study at any time by closing the browser window. The survey is authorized by the central ethics committee of the University of Oxford. Thank you for your time and support. Would you like to participate in the study? Yes, No Should you have any questions about the study, you can email the researchers at fragen.proteststudie@gmail.com or the ethics committee of the social science faculty at `ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk`.

Next we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself. How old are you?

What is your sex?

Male, Female

What is the highest diploma or degree you have obtained?

No diploma, Hauptschule, Realschule, Abitur, Completed vocational training, Completed degree at higher learning institution

Do you currently live in Berlin or its surrounding area?

To what degree do you agree with the following statements?

I go to protests primarily to express my opinions rather than to achieve something.

Protests are an effective means to cause political change.

The AfD is an opportunity for a positive transformation in Germany.

Disagree, Rather not agree, Neutral, Rather agree, Agree

Political Attitudes

How many political demonstrations have you already attended?

Which party do you most closely align with? CDU, SPD, AfD, FDP, The Left, Bündnis 90/Greens, CSU, None, Other

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) has called for a demonstration on May 27th in Berlin. How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

In reaction to the demonstration by the AfD, the alliance Stop the Hate has called for a counterdemonstration also on May 27th. The alliance is supported by the national associations of the Greens, the Left and the SPD, among others. How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Expert Opinions

We asked various experts about the turnout of participants to both demonstrations. One expert estimates that around 10,000 pro-AfD demonstrators will participate. Another expert estimates that around 10,000 counterdemonstrators will turn out.

This means that the experts believe that the number of demonstrators at the counter-demonstration will be exactly as large as that of the pro-AfD protest.

In light of the opinion of the experts, how many demonstrators do you believe will take part in each protest?

Pro-AfD Protest

How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Participation in the Protest

The AfD demonstration will occur this Sunday, the 27th of May at 12:00 at Washington-Platz in front of the Berlin Central Station. You can find more information by under the following link: www.afd.de/demo-berlin Do you plan to participation in the demonstration organized by the AfD on May 27th?

Yes, uncertain but probably, uncertain but probably not, no

Photo Competition

We would like to better understand how many people will participate in the demonstration. To that end, we want to collect pictures taken by the demonstrators of the protest. We would be pleased if you sent us a photo of the demonstration. You can send the photo to the following email address: proteststudie@gmail.com

If you would like to participate in this competition, please note down this email address.

Photo Competition

All participants who send a picture and register their email address will be entered into a raffle to win one of five Amazon giftcards in the amount of 50 euros.

In order to ensure that all participants only enter once, we request that you enter the email-address from which you will send the photo below. We will use the email address exclusively for the study. Submissions from unregistered email addresses can unfortunately not be entered into the raffle for the Amazon-gift cards.

Your email address?

E.2   Berlin: counterrally

Thank you for your interest in our questionnaire! The goal of this study is to examine participation in political protests. This study is conducted by researchers at the Univer-

sities of Oxford and Konstanz.

The questionnaire will not take longer than 5 minutes. The results will be used exclusively for scientific purposes and will not be shared with a third party.

You can end your participation in this study at any time by closing the browser window.

The survey is authorized by the central ethics committee of the University of Oxford.

Thank you for your time and support.

Would you like to participate in the study?

Yes, No

Should you have any questions about the study, you can email the researchers at fragen.proteststudie@gmail.com or the ethics committee of the social science faculty at ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk.

Next we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself.

How old are you?

What is your sex? Male, Female, Other, I don't want to say

What is the highest diploma or degree you have obtained?

No diploma, Hauptschule, Realschule, Abitur, Completed vocational training, Completed degree at higher learning institution

Do you currently live in Berlin or its surrounding area? Yes, No

To what degree do you agree with the following statements?

I go to protests primarily to express my opinions rather than to achieve something.

Protests are an effective means to cause political change.

The AfD poses a serious threat to democracy in Germany.

Answers: Disagree, Rather disagree than agree, Neutral, Rather agree than disagree, Agree

How many political demonstrations have you already attended?

Which party do you most closely align with? CDU, SPD, AfD, FDP, The Left, Bündnis 90/Greens, CSU, None, Other

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) has called for a demonstration on May 27th in Berlin.

How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

In reaction to the demonstration by the AfD, the alliance Stop the Hate has called for a counterdemonstration on May 27. The alliance is supported by the national associations of the Greens, the Left and the SPD, among others. How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Expert Opinions

We asked various experts about the turnout of participants at both demonstrations. One expert estimates, that approximately 5000 pro-AfD demonstrators will participate. Another expert estimates that approximately 10,000 counterdemonstrators will take part. This means the experts believe that the number of counterdemonstrators will be larger than that of the pro-AfD demonstrators.

In light of the opinion of the experts, how many demonstrators do you believe will take part in each protest?

Pro-AfD Protest

How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate for the AfD demonstration?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate for the counterprotest?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Participation in the Demonstration

The alliance Stop the Hate's demonstration will occur this Sunday, the 27th of May at 11:30 at the Reichstagswiese in front of the Bundestag. You can find more information under the following link: `stopptdenhass.org`

Do you plan to participate in the demonstration organized by the alliance Stop the Hate?

Yes, uncertain but probably, uncertain but probably not, no

Photo Competition

We would like to better understand how many people will participate in the demonstration. To that end, we want to collect pictures taken by the demonstrators of the protest. We would be pleased if you sent us a photo of the demonstration. You can send the photo to the following email address: proteststudie@gmail.com

If you would like to participate in this competition, please note down this email address.

Photo Competition

All participants who send a picture and register their email address will be entered into a raffle to win one of five Amazon giftcards in the amount of 50 euros.

In order to ensure that all participants only enter once, we request that you enter the email-address from which you will send the photo below. We will use the email address exclusively for the study. Submissions from unregistered email addresses can unfortunately not be entered into the raffle for the Amazon-gift cards.

Your email address?

E.3 Erfurt rally

Questionnaire about political demonstrations

Thank you for your interest in our questionnaire! The goal of this study is to examine the participation in political protests. This study is conducted by researchers at the Universities of Oxford and Konstanz.

The survey will not take longer than 5 minutes. The results will exclusively be used for scientific purposes and will not be shared with a third party.

You can end your participation in this study at any time by closing the browser window.

The survey is authorized by the central ethics committee of the University of Oxford.

Thank you for your time and support. Would you like to participate in the study?

Yes No

Should you have any questions about the study, you can email the researchers at fragen.proteststudie@gmail.com or the ethics committee of the social science faculty at `ethics@socsci.ox.ac.uk`.

Next we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself.

How old are you?

What is your sex? Male, Female, Other, I don't want to say

What is the highest diploma or degree you have obtained? No diploma, Hauptschule, Realschule, Abitur, Completed vocational training, Completed degree at higher learning institution

Do you currently live in Erfurt or its surrounding area? Yes, No

To what degree do you agree with the following statements?

I go to protests primarily to express my opinions rather than to achieve something.

Protests are an effective means to cause political change.

The AfD poses a serious threat to democracy in Germany.

The AfD is an opportunity for a positive transformation in Germany.

Disagree, Rather disagree, Neutral, Rather agree, Agree

Political Attitudes

How many political demonstrations have you already attended?

Which party do you most closely align with? CDU, SPD, AfD, FDP, The Left, Bündnis 90/Greens, CSU, None, Other

The Alternative for Germany (AfD) has called for a demonstration on May 1st in Erfurt.

Among others, Alexander Gauland and Björn Hocke are expected to speak.

How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

In reaction to the demonstration by the AfD, the alliance Stand Together! has called for a counterdemonstration also on May 1st. The alliance is supported by the national associations of the Greens, the Left and the SPD, as well as the local branch of the CDU, among others.

How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

Your estimate:

How certain are you about your estimate?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Expert Opinions

We asked various experts about the turnout of participants to both demonstrations. One expert estimates that around 3,000 pro-AfD demonstrators will participate. Another expert estimates that around 1,000 counterdemonstrators will turn out.

This means that the experts believe that the number of demonstrators at the counterdemonstration would be smaller than that of the pro-AfD demonstration.

In light of the opinion of the experts, how many demonstrators do you believe will take part in each protest? Pro-AfD Protest

How many demonstrators do you believe will protest for the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate for the AfD demonstration?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

How many counterdemonstrators do you believe will protest against the AfD?

How certain are you about your estimate for the counterdemonstration?

Very uncertain, uncertain, relatively uncertain, relatively certain, certain, very certain

Participation in the Demonstration

The alliance Stand Together!'s demonstration will occur this Wednesday, the 1st of May, at 10:00 in front of the state chancellery in Erfurt (Regierungsstraße 73). You can find more information under the following link: `http://zusammenstehen.eu` Do you plan to participate in the demonstration organized by the alliance Stand Together on this Wednesday, May 1st? Yes, uncertain but probably, uncertain but probably not, no

Participation in the Demonstration

The first of May demonstration of the AfD will occur this Wednesday, the 1st of May, at 10:30 on Juri-Gagarin-Ring Ecke Lüberstraße in Erfurt. You can find more information under the following link: `afd-thueringen.de/`

E.4 Additional descriptive survey

Next we would like to ask you a few questions about yourself.

How old are you?

What is your sex? Male, Female, Other, I don't want to say

What is the highest diploma or degree you have obtained? No diploma, Hauptschule, Realschule, Abitur, Completed vocational training, Completed degree at higher learning institution

Do you currently live in Berlin or its surrounding area?

Personal Attitudes

Are you overall a risk-seeking person or do you try to avoid risk?

Please answer using the following scale, where the value 0 means not at all risk-seeking and the value 10 means very risk-seeking. The in-between values can be used to temper your responses.

Your Answer: Not at all risk-seeking, Very risk-seeking

Do you like to participate in competitions or do you rather avoid them?

Please answer using the following scale, where the value 0 means you avoid competitions at all costs and the value 10 means you actively seek out competition. The in-between values can be used to temper your responses.

Your Answer: Avoid competition at all costs, Actively seek out competition

To what degree do you agree with the following statements?

I go to protests primarily to express my opinion rather than to achieve something.

Protests are an effective means to cause political change.

It's fun to participate in political demonstrations.

Attending political demonstrations shows my friends and acquaintances that I am politically engaged.

The AfD poses a serious threat to democracy in Germany.

The AfD is an opportunity for a positive transformation in Germany.

How many political demonstrations have you already attended?

How many of your friends have attended at least one political demonstration?

How many people do you know that have attended at least one political demonstration?

Which party do you most closely align with? CDU, SPD, AfD, FDP, The Left, Bündnis 90/Greens, CSU, None, Other

F Facebook adverts

Figure A6: Right-wing Facebook advert

Notes: This figure shows the Facebook advert targeted at AfD supporters. The text translates as: "Why do people protest to support the AfD? Take part in our five-minute scientific survey. As a thank you, we will distribute Amazon vouchers worth 150 Euros."

Figure A7: Right-wing Facebook advert

Notes: This figure shows the Facebook advert targeted at left-wing activists. The text translates as: "Why do people protest against right-wing tendencies? Take part in our five-minute scientific survey. As a thank you, we will distribute Amazon vouchers worth 150 Euros."