

# Voter Preferences for Candidates with Different Social Backgrounds and Programmatic Commitments\*

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Paper prepared for presentation at the  
Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association  
Washington, DC, August 29 - September 1, 2019

Very first draft:  
August 23, 2019

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\* This project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program [grant agreement no. 741538] and from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) [grant no. 100017\_166238].

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## Abstract

The party systems of many advanced democracies have experienced two major changes over the last two decades: an electoral decline of social democratic or center-left parties and, simultaneously, a rise in support for populist parties. Politicians and pundits frequently suggest that social democratic and center-left parties could regain popular support by (i) taking a tougher stance on immigration, (ii) adopting a more leftist economic policy platform, (iii) adopting a populist rhetoric, and (iv) recruiting more politicians from working-class backgrounds. In this paper, we analyze the validity of these claims using data from survey experiments that we conducted in Great Britain and the US. Our (preliminary) results show that the above actions, with the possible exception of a populist rhetoric, are unlikely to improve the electoral fortunes of social democratic and center-left parties in advanced democracies.

# 1 Introduction

Over the last two decades, the party systems of many advanced democracies have experienced two major changes: an electoral decline of social democratic parties and, simultaneously, a rise in support for populist parties. Politicians and pundits have engaged in much debate about the causes of these changes and their implications for the electoral strategies of mainstream—in particular social-democratic or center-left—parties and candidates. In an interview with the Guardian, Hillary Clinton recently declared that in order to win back voters from the populist radical right, center-left parties in Europe and the US need to take a tougher stance on immigration.<sup>1</sup> Eric Levitz, a political columnist at New York magazine, suggested that US Democrats can win voters’ hearts by waging a “class war,” which includes the adoption of more leftist economic policy positions such as higher taxes on high incomes as well as a rhetoric that pits ordinary working people against the rich.<sup>2</sup> And in a recent article in Der Spiegel on the German Social Democratic Party, journalists Christoph Hickmann and Veit Medick lamented that the SPD has become “elitist” and “a kind of left-leaning country club” dominated by college-educated politicians. To get back in touch with ordinary people, the authors of the article argued, the party needs to recruit more politicians from working-class backgrounds.<sup>3</sup>

These quotes illustrate four claims that are frequently made in public debates. They are: social democratic and center-left parties can regain popular support by (i) adopting more restrictive positions on immigration policy, (ii) adopting more leftist positions on economic policy, (iii) adopting a populist rhetoric, and (iv) recruiting more politicians from working-class backgrounds. The aim of this paper is to explore the validity of these claims. To do so, we will analyze data from survey experiments that we conducted in Great Britain and the US. Our results show that the above actions, with the possible exception of a populist rhetoric, are unlikely to improve the electoral fortunes of social democratic and center-left parties in advanced democracies.

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/22/hillary-clinton-europe-must-curb-immigration-stop-populists-trump-brexit> (last accessed on June 5, 2019.)

<sup>2</sup><http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/01/2020-primary-warren-biden-democrats-should-be-pragmatic-and-wage-class-war.html> (last accessed on June 6, 2019).

<sup>3</sup><https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-social-democrats-face-a-fateful-year-a-1249384.html> (last accessed on June 7, 2019).

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we provide an overview of the electoral performance of social democratic and populist parties in advanced democracies over the last decades and review literature that casts some doubt on whether the above actions will help the mainstream left to regain popular support. Section 3 describes the design of the conjoint survey experiments and Section 4 presents the results. Finally, Section 5 concludes the paper.

## 2 Party System Change and Voter Preferences

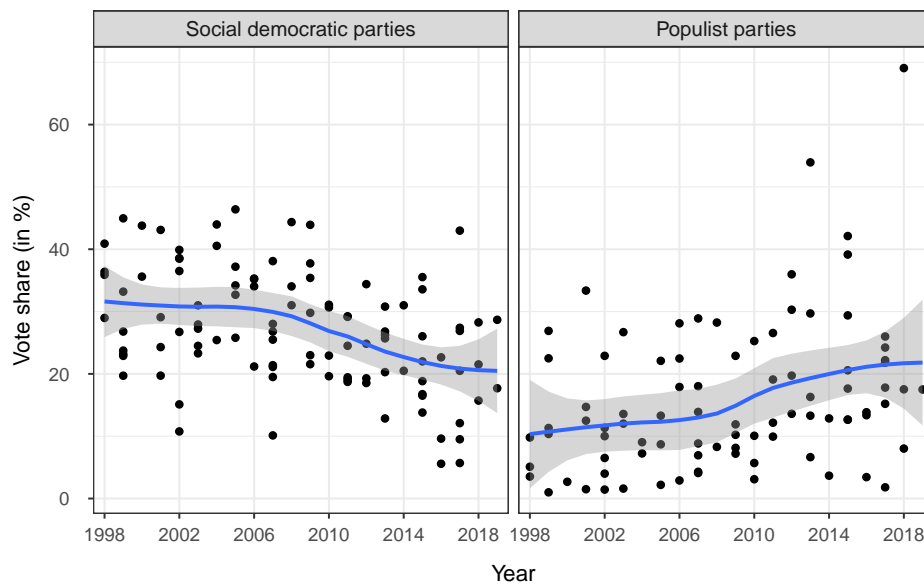
Much has been written about the electoral decline of social democratic parties, and the roughly simultaneous success of populist parties, that has occurred in advanced democracies over the last two decades. To illustrate these party system changes, Figure 1 shows the electoral performance of social democratic parties (in the left panel) and populist parties (in the right panel) in 103 elections that took place in 18 West European democracies between 1998 and 2019.<sup>4</sup> Each dot in the figure represents the percentage of votes that a particular party won in an election, while the blue line represents the LOESS fit and the gray area its 95% confidence interval.

These trends in the electoral performance of social democratic and populist parties have revived debates about the crisis of social democracy and the optimal behavior of mainstream—in particular social democratic or center-left—parties and candidates. As illustrated by the quotes in the introduction of this paper, there are (at least) four actions that center-left parties are recommended to take in order to improve their electoral fortunes: (i) adopt more restrictive positions

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<sup>4</sup>The countries (and respective election years) covered are: Austria (1999, 2002, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2017), Belgium (1999, 2003, 2007, 2010, 2014), Denmark (1998, 2001, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2015), Finland (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015, 2019), France (2002, 2007, 2012, 2017), Germany (1998, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017), Greece (2000, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2012 - two elections held in this year, 2015 - two elections held in this year), Iceland (1999, 2003, 2007, 2009, 2013, 2016, 2017), Ireland (2002, 2007, 2011, 2016), Italy (2001, 2006, 2008, 2013, 2018), Luxembourg (1999, 2004, 2009, 2013, 2018), Netherlands (1998, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2010, 2012, 2017), Norway (2001, 2005, 2009, 2013, 2017), Portugal (1999, 2002, 2005, 2009, 2011, 2015), Spain (2000, 2004, 2008, 2011, 2015, 2016, 2019), Sweden (1998, 2002, 2006, 2010, 2014, 2018), Switzerland (1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015), and United Kingdom (2001, 2005, 2010, 2015, 2017). Data on parties' vote shares are from ParlGov (Döring and Manow 2019). We consider a party as social democratic if it is identified as such in the ParlGov data set and as populist if it appears in the PopuList, a list of populist parties compiled by Rooduijn et al. (2019).

Figure 1: Electoral Performance of Social Democratic and Populist Parties in Western Europe, 1998-2019



*Note:* The figure shows the vote shares obtained by social democratic parties (in the left panel) and populist parties (in the right panel) in 103 elections that took place in 18 West European democracies between 1998 and 2019. The dots represent parties' vote shares and the blue line represents the LOESS fit (the gray area represents the 95% confidence interval of the smooth).

on immigration policy, (ii) adopt more leftist positions on economic policy, (iii) adopt a populist rhetoric, and (iv) recruit more politicians from working-class backgrounds.

However, recent literature and events cast some doubt on whether these actions will indeed increase the electoral chances of center-left parties. In a comparative case study of Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and Austria, Bale et al. (2010) argue that taking a tougher stance on immigration can hurt social democratic parties electorally if it leads progressive voters to vote for Green parties or other socially liberal competitors on the left. This is a real risk since new middle-class voters, who have become a core constituency of left parties (Oesch 2008; Gingrich and Häusermann 2015), hold distinctively liberal views on immigration and other cultural issues (Kitschelt and Rehm 2014; Gingrich 2017; Oesch and Rennwald 2018).

The preferences of new middle-class voters are also important for the electoral success of the adoption of more leftist positions on economic issues by social democratic parties. Several studies demonstrate that while compensatory social policies and redistribution are strongly supported by individuals with low income and education, these policies find only moderate support among members of the new middle class (Kitschelt and Rehm 2014; Garritzmann, Busemeyer and Neimanns 2018). Moreover, preferences over social investment policies have been shown to be a better predictor of voting for a left party than preferences over compensatory and redistribution policies (Fossati and Häusermann 2014).

To our knowledge, little research has focused on voters' preferences over the class background of politicians. In a survey experiment that we recently conducted among Swiss citizens (Wüest and Pontusson 2019), we found that middle-class respondents prefer candidates from the skilled working class, lower middle class, and upper middle class over candidates from the routine working class and candidates from the lower middle class over candidates from the skilled working class and upper middle class. In contrast, working-class respondents prefer candidates from the routine working class, skilled working class, and lower middle class over candidates from the upper middle class and candidates from the skilled working class over candidates from the routine working class and lower middle class. The implications of these results are twofold. First, the recruitment of candidates with routine working-class backgrounds is unlikely to be electorally rewarding.

Second, since the voters of left parties are now predominantly drawn from the middle class, social-democratic candidates with a lower middle-class background may perform better than those with a skilled working-class background.

In summary, previous literature casts doubt on whether, as is frequently asserted in public debates, social democratic parties can regain popular support by “getting tough” on immigration, waging a class war against high-income earners, adopting a populist rhetoric, and recruiting more working-class candidates. To study these questions more systematically, we conducted an online conjoint survey experiment in Great Britain and the US. The next section describes the design of our experiments.

### 3 Experimental Design

Our online conjoint survey experiments presented respondents with pairs of hypothetical candidates running for the UK House of Commons or the US House of Representatives for the first time.<sup>5</sup> Candidate profiles were composed of the following six attributes: sex, political party, current occupation, and answers to three questions about economic policy, immigration, and “problem with politics.”<sup>6</sup> Specifically, these questions were: (i) What should be the main objective of economic policy? (ii) When should immigrants have full access to social benefits? (iii) What is the main problem with politics? For each attribute, a value was randomly drawn from a set of possible values.

Table 1 shows all candidate attributes and corresponding sets of possible values. For each pair of candidates, the values for occupation were randomly drawn from either of two sets: {shop assistant, clerk at a law firm, solicitor (GB) / lawyer (US) with own practice, managing partner of a large (GB) / corporate (US) law firm} or {cleaner in a hospital, paramedic, general practitioner (GB) / primary care physician (US), cardiologist in a prestigious hospital}. Shop assistant and hospital cleaner are routine working-class occupations, law firm clerk and paramedic are skilled working-class occupations, self-employed solicitor/lawyer

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<sup>5</sup>Each pair of candidates was presented on a separate screen, while the profiles of a pair were presented side-by-side on the same screen.

<sup>6</sup>The attributes were presented in a randomized order for each respondent, but following Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2014, 4), we held the order of attributes constant for all profiles a respondent was exposed to in order to reduce cognitive burden.

and general practitioner/primary care physician are lower middle-class occupations, and managing partner and cardiologist are upper middle-class occupations.

For each candidate and each of the three questions, a value was randomly drawn from a set of three answers. The answers to “What should be the main objective of economic policy?” were: reduce income differences between rich and poor households (the leftist position), increase public investment in education and infrastructure (the center-left position), and reduce the size of government (the conservative position). The question “When should immigrants have full access to social benefits?” could be answered with: immediately (the liberal position), after paying income taxes for at least three years (the moderate position), and after they have become citizens (the welfare-chauvinist position). Finally, for “What is the main problem with politics?” the answers were: big business has too much power (the left-populist position), the political establishment does not represent the will of the British/American people (the right-populist position), and there is too much partisan polarization (the liberal position).

Table 1: Attributes and Possible Values in the Candidate Choice Experiments

Attribute	Possible Values (GB / US)
Sex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female</li> <li>• Male</li> </ul>
Political party	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Labour / Democrat</li> <li>• Conservative / Republican</li> </ul>
Current occupation	<p>Either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop assistant</li> <li>• Clerk at a law firm</li> <li>• Solicitor / Lawyer with own practice</li> <li>• Managing partner of a large / corporate law firm</li> </ul> <p>Or:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaner in a hospital</li> <li>• Paramedic</li> <li>• General practitioner / Primary care physician</li> <li>• Cardiologist in a prestigious hospital</li> </ul>
What should be the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce income differences between rich and</li> </ul>

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Attribute	Possible Values (GB / US)
main objective of economic policy?	poor households • Increase public investment in education and infrastructure • Reduce the size of government
When should immigrants have full access to social benefits?	• Immediately • After paying income taxes for at least three years • After they have become citizens
What is the main problem with politics?	• Big business has too much power • The political establishment does not represent the will of the British / American people • There is too much partisan polarization

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*Note:* The table shows the attributes and attribute levels we used to randomly generate the candidate profiles in our conjoint experiments in Great Britain and the US.

Our surveys were in the field in May and June 2019. For each country, the sample consisted of somewhat more than 4,000 respondents between 18 and 69 years of age.<sup>7</sup> We presented each respondent with three pairs of hypothetical candidates running for parliament. Following the presentation of a candidate pair, we asked the respondent a number of questions about his or her voting intentions. First, we asked which candidate the respondent would be more likely to vote for if he or she had to vote for one of the two candidates (“forced choice”). Second, we asked how likely the respondent would be to vote for each candidate in an election to parliament (“vote propensity”). To explore mechanisms behind respondents’ preferences for different candidates, we also asked respondents to rate candidates on how qualified they are to serve as representatives and their ability to understand the problems facing “people like them.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Respondents were randomly recruited by a subcontractor from existing online panels. Based on census data from England/Wales, Scotland, and the US we defined interlocking quotas for sex and age group (18-24, 25-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60-69) and non-interlocking quotas for region (GB: East, East Midlands, London, North East, North West, South East, South West, Wales, West Midlands, Yorkshire and The Humber, and Scotland; US: Northeast, Midwest, South, and West).

<sup>8</sup>In addition to “don’t know,” the vote-propensity, understanding, and qualification questions

Following Hainmueller, Hopkins and Yamamoto (2014), we use the candidate profile as the unit of analysis and estimate an ordinary least-squares regression of the outcome variable (i.e., vote choice, vote propensity, candidate qualification, or candidate understanding) on dichotomous indicator variables for the attribute levels, with the exception of the baseline level for each attribute in the regression. This yields the average marginal component effect (AMCE) of each candidate attribute relative to the respective baseline. Standard errors are clustered by respondent because each respondent evaluated multiple candidate profiles.

## 4 Results

We first present the AMCEs of candidate attributes on respondents' vote choice.<sup>9</sup> The AMCE shows the average change in the probability that a respondent will choose a candidate. Figure 2 shows the results for respondents in the US and Figure 3 the results for respondents in Great Britain. On average, respondents in the US are indifferent between female and male candidates and between Democratic and Republican candidates, while respondents in Great Britain have a slight preference for female candidates over male candidates and a preference for Labour candidates over Conservative candidates. Respondents in both countries favor, on average, candidates from the skilled working class, lower middle class, and upper middle class over candidates from the routine working class. It is interesting to compare the latter results to those of Carnes and Lupu (2016). Carnes and Lupu conducted survey experiments in the US and Great Britain, presenting respondents with a choice between a working-class candidate (a "factory worker") and a white-collar candidate (a "business owner"). Their results show that respondents in both countries were indifferent between working-class candidates and white-collar candidates. Hence, our findings suggest that distinguishing between routine working-class and skilled working-class candidates (and, particularly in the case of the US, between lower middle-class and upper

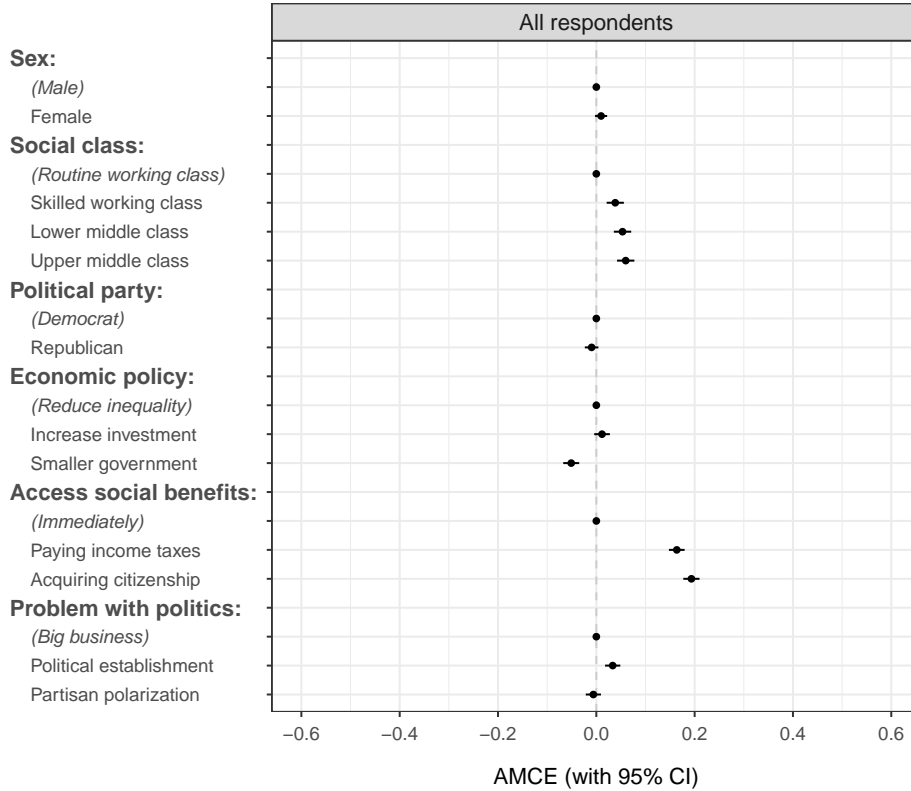
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had five response categories, ranging from "very likely" to "very unlikely" for the former two questions and from "very qualified" to "very unqualified" for the latter question.

<sup>9</sup>We present the AMCEs of candidate attributes on respondents' vote propensity in the appendix. Suffice it to note here that the results based on vote propensity are substantively very similar to the results based on forced vote choice. The appendix also presents the AMCEs of candidate attributes on respondents' evaluation of candidate qualification and candidate understanding. We will discuss these results in more detail in the next iteration of this paper.

middle-class candidates) leads to meaningful differences in voter preferences.

Figure 2: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Vote Choice in the US

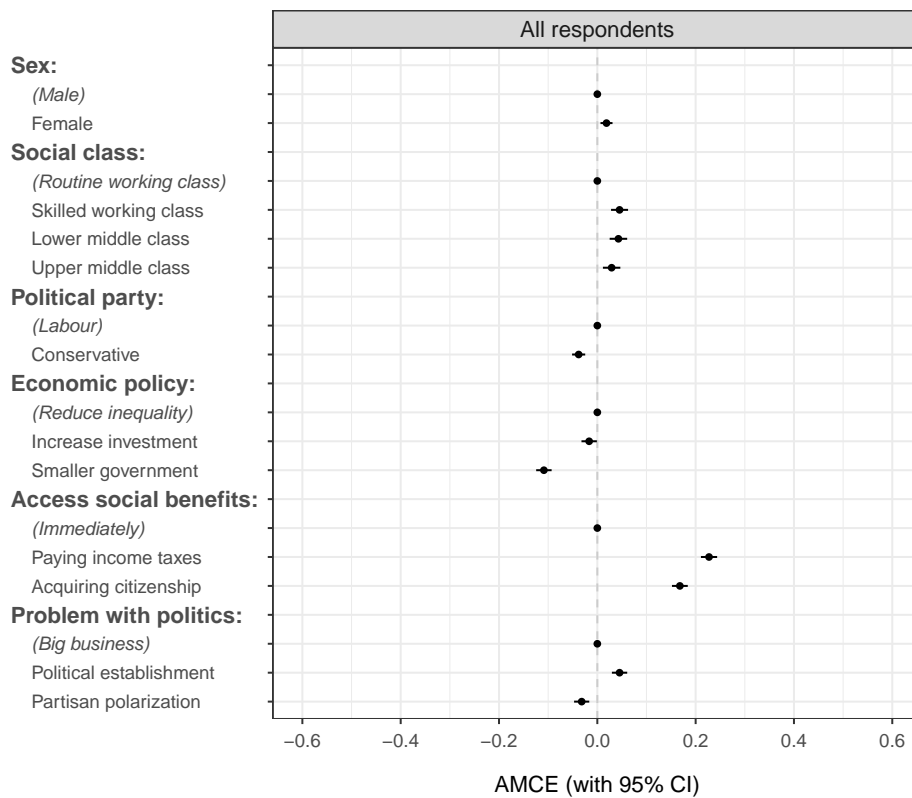


*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on US respondents' vote choice. The AMCE shows the average change in the probability that a respondent will choose a candidate. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

Turning to candidates' positions on economic policy, the results indicate that US and British respondents are fairly indifferent between candidates proposing to reduce income inequality between rich and poor households and candidates proposing to increase public investment in education and infrastructure. In contrast, respondents in both countries are clearly biased against candidates calling for smaller government: candidates that propose to reduce the size of government are, on average, about 0.05 points less likely to be chosen by US respondents and about 0.11 points less likely to be chosen by British respondents relative to candidates that aim at reducing income inequality or increasing investment in education and infrastructure (on a scale from 0 to 1).

With regard to the positions of candidates on immigrants' access to social

Figure 3: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Vote Choice in Great Britain



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on British respondents' vote choice. The AMCE shows the average change in the probability that a respondent will choose a candidate. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

benefits, US and British respondents are strongly biased against granting access immediately. Relative to candidates that want to grant full access immediately, respondents are about 0.16 points more likely to choose candidates that want to give immigrants access after three years of paying income taxes and about 0.19 points more likely to choose candidates that want to provide full access only to citizens. British respondents are about 0.23 points more likely to support candidates that propose granting access after three years of paying income taxes and about 0.17 points more likely to support candidates that propose restricting full benefits to citizens.

Finally, respondents in both countries are somewhat more likely to prefer candidates stating that the political establishment does not represent the will of the people over candidates stating that big business has too much power. In contrast, while respondents in the US are about equally likely to choose candidates stating that big business has too much power and candidates declaring that there is too much partisan polarization, respondents in Britain are somewhat more likely to choose the former rather than the latter.

Next, we distinguish between different “policy profiles” to explore how attractive various electoral strategies are for candidates. These policy profiles combine three dimensions: the candidate’s party, his or her position on economic policy, and his or her position on immigrants’ access to social benefits. Table 2 shows for each profile the values that candidates take on each of the three dimensions.

Table 2: Policy Profiles

<i>Profile Name</i>	Political Party	Economic Policy	Access Social Benefits
<i>Mainstream center left</i>	Democrat / Labour	Increase investment	After paying income taxes
<i>Progressive center left</i>	Democrat / Labour	Increase investment	Immediately
<i>Welfare chauvinist center left</i>	Democrat / Labour	Increase investment	After acquiring citizenship
<i>Classical left</i>	Democrat /	Reduce	After paying

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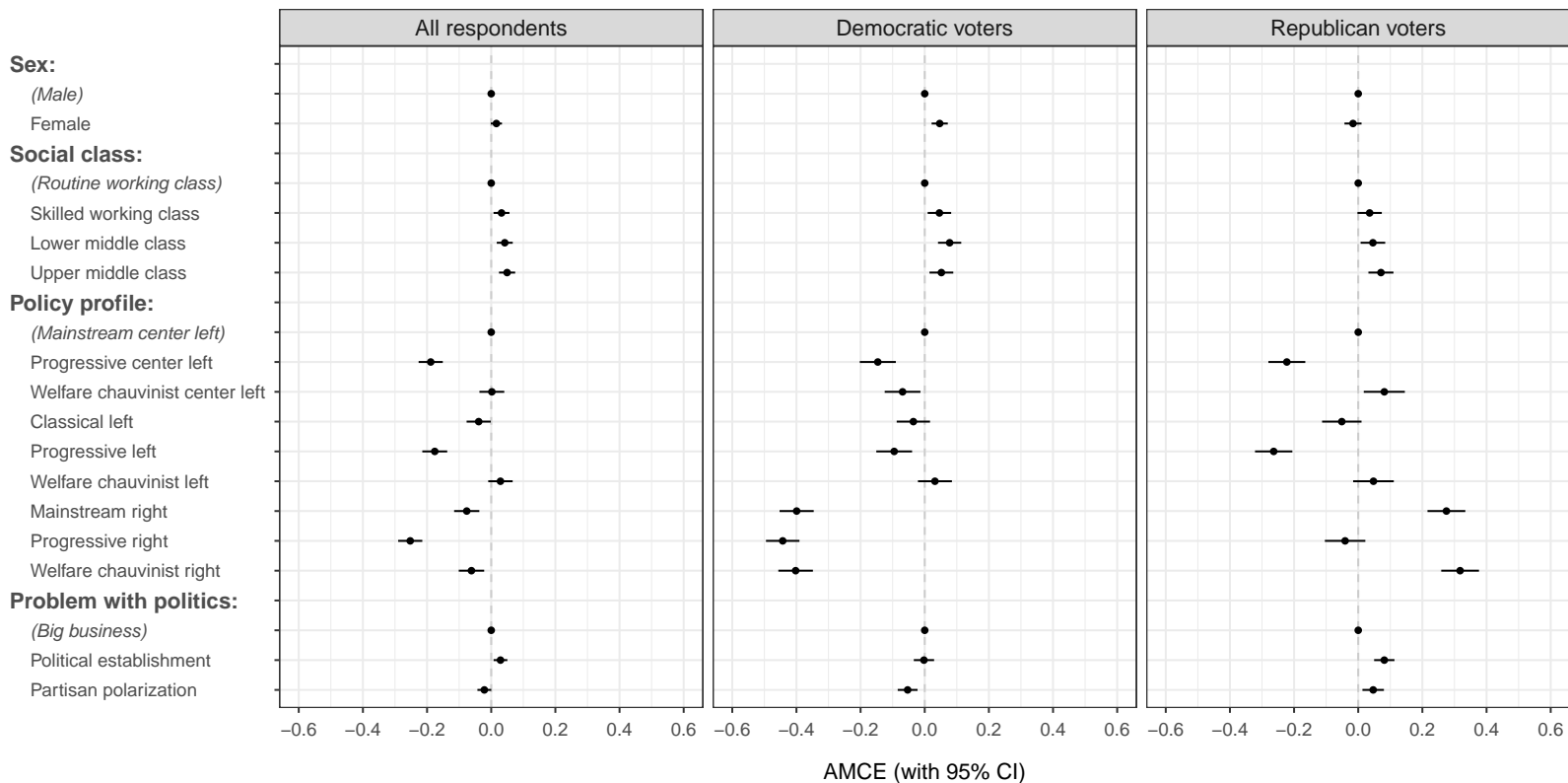
<i>Profile Name</i>	Political Party	Economic Policy	Access Social Benefits
	Labour	inequality	income taxes
<i>Progressive left</i>	Democrat / Labour	Reduce inequality	Immediately
<i>Welfare chauvinist left</i>	Democrat / Labour	Reduce inequality	After acquiring citizenship
<i>Mainstream right</i>	Republican / Conservative	Smaller government	After paying income taxes
<i>Progressive right</i>	Republican / Conservative	Smaller government	Immediately
<i>Welfare chauvinist right</i>	Republican / Conservative	Smaller government	After acquiring citizenship

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Figure 4 shows how US respondents evaluate each of the policy profiles distinguished in Table 2. We present the results separately for all respondents, Democratic voters, and Republican voters. Likewise, Figure 5 shows the results for British respondents, but we now distinguish between all respondents, Labour voters, Conservative voters, Liberal Democratic voters, voters of the Green Party, Scottish National Party (SNP), or Plaid Cymru, and UKIP voters.

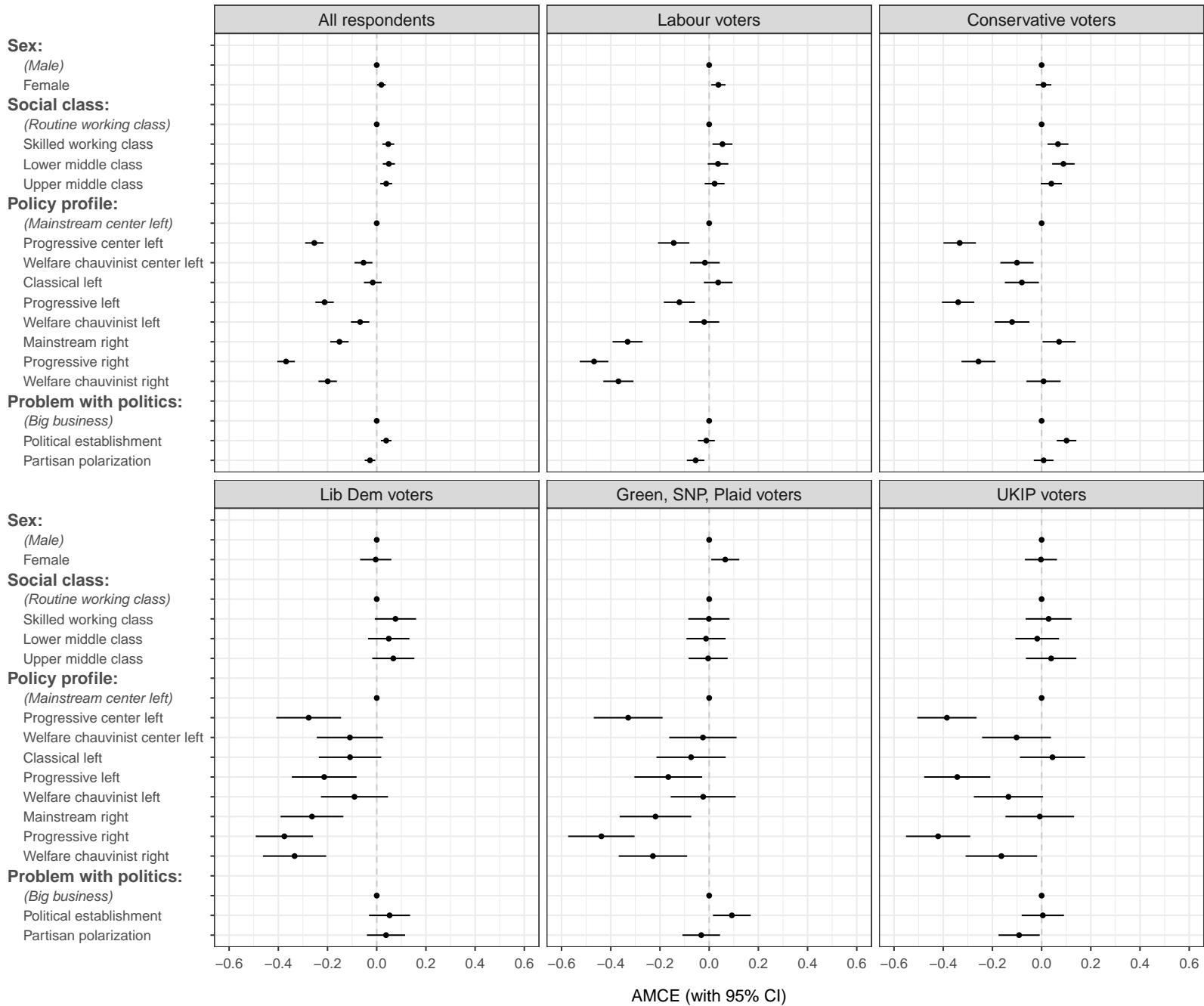
The results presented in Figure 4 indicate that Democratic voters are most likely to support mainstream center-left candidates and welfare chauvinist left candidates. All other policy profiles receive less support among Democratic voters. Not surprisingly, Republican voters prefer mainstream right candidates and welfare chauvinist right candidates over any of the other policy profiles. Republican voters also have a slight preference for welfare chauvinist center left candidates over mainstream center left candidates, but since Democratic voters prefer the latter over the former and Republican voters rather vote for mainstream right and welfare chauvinist right candidates than for welfare chauvinist center left candidates, getting tough on immigration is unlikely to be electorally beneficial for current Democratic party candidates.

Figure 4: AMCEs of Policy Profiles on Vote Choice in the US



Note: The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidates' sex, social class, policy profile, and problem with politics on US respondents' vote choice. The reference categories are shown italicized in parentheses.

Figure 5: AMCEs of Policy Profiles on Vote Choice in Great Britain



Note: The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidates' sex, social class, policy profile, and problem with politics on British respondents' vote choice. The reference categories are shown italicized in parentheses.



The results presented in Figure 5 are similar to the ones presented in Figure 4. Among centrist and left voters, there is no policy profile that would garner more voter support than the mainstream center-left profile. Conservative voters are more likely to vote for mainstream right candidates than for mainstream center left candidates, but among the left and center-left profiles, the mainstream center left profile is the most preferred one. Taken together, these results suggest that center-left candidates in the US and Great Britain have little to gain from the adoption of more leftist economic policy positions, the adoption of more restrictive immigration policy positions, or the recruitment of more working-class politicians. There is some evidence, however, that a populist rhetoric targeted against big business or the political establishment allows candidates to increase their popularity among voters of center-left parties relative to a rhetoric focusing on partisan polarization.

## 5 Conclusion

Over the last two decades, social democratic parties have suffered electoral decline while populist parties have experienced a surge in popular support in many advanced democracies. These changes have revived debates about the crisis of social democracy and the optimal behavior of mainstream—in particular social democratic or center-left—parties and candidates. Pundits and politicians have offered at least four actions that center-left parties and candidates should take in order to improve their electoral fortunes: (i) adopt more restrictive positions on immigration policy, (ii) adopt more leftist positions on economic policy, (iii) adopt a populist rhetoric, and (iv) recruit more working-class politicians.

Recent literature on the preferences of social classes casts some doubt on whether these actions will indeed increase popular support for center-left parties. To explore this question more systematically, we conducted survey experiments in Great Britain and the US, presenting voters with hypothetical candidates running for parliament. The candidate profiles in our experiments varied in terms of sex, political party, current occupation, position on economic policy, position on immigrants' access to social benefits, and perception of the main problem with politics.

The results we presented in this paper add to the skepticism about the electoral efficacy of the above-mentioned actions. According to our data from the

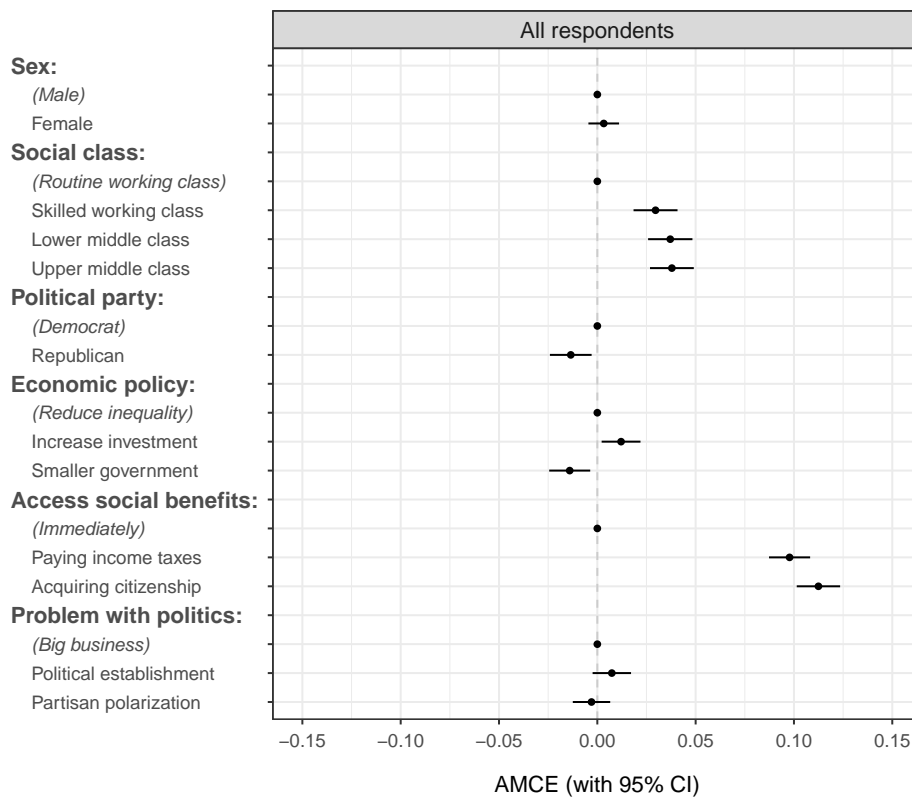
US and Great Britain, center-left parties are unlikely to increase their electoral fortunes by adopting more leftist policy positions, adopting more restrictive immigration policy positions, or recruiting more candidates from working-class backgrounds. The only exception to this pattern is a populist rhetoric since candidates attacking big business or the political establishment appear to be somewhat more popular among voters of center-left parties than candidates with a liberal rhetoric focusing on partisan polarization.

# Appendix

## Results for the Effects on Vote Propensity

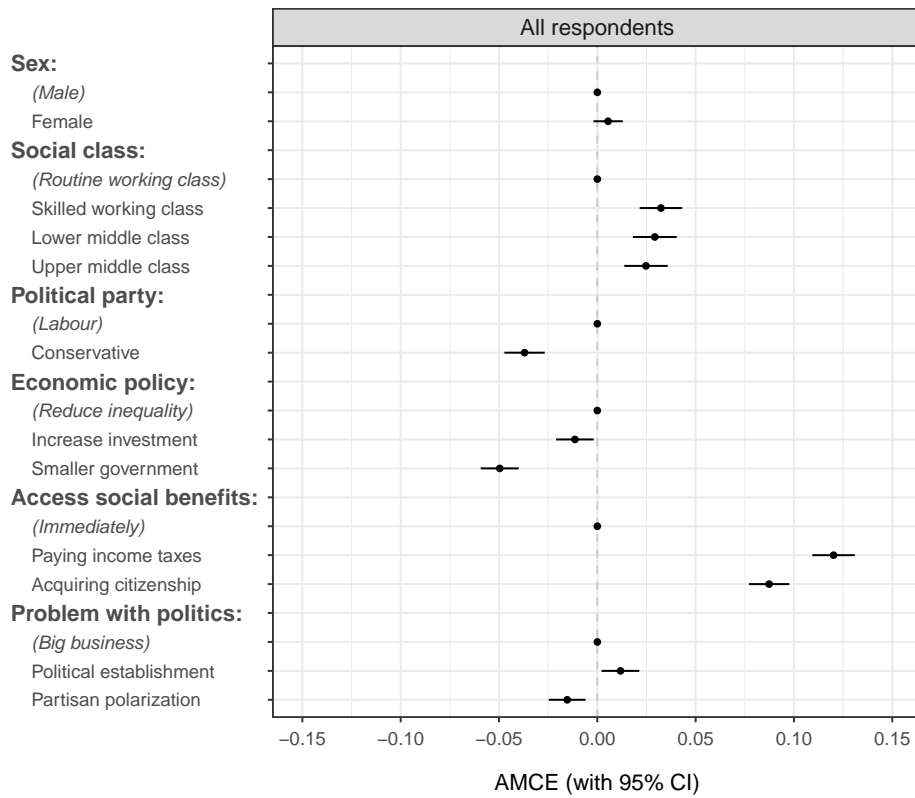
Figure 6 shows the AMCEs of candidate attributes on respondents' vote propensity for the US. Figure 7 shows the AMCEs of candidate attributes on respondents' vote propensity for Great Britain.

Figure 6: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Vote Propensity in the US



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on US respondents' vote propensity. Vote propensity was rescaled to range from 0 (very unlikely to vote for a candidate) to 1 (very likely to vote for a candidate), so that the AMCE shows the average change in the likelihood that a respondent will vote for a candidate on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

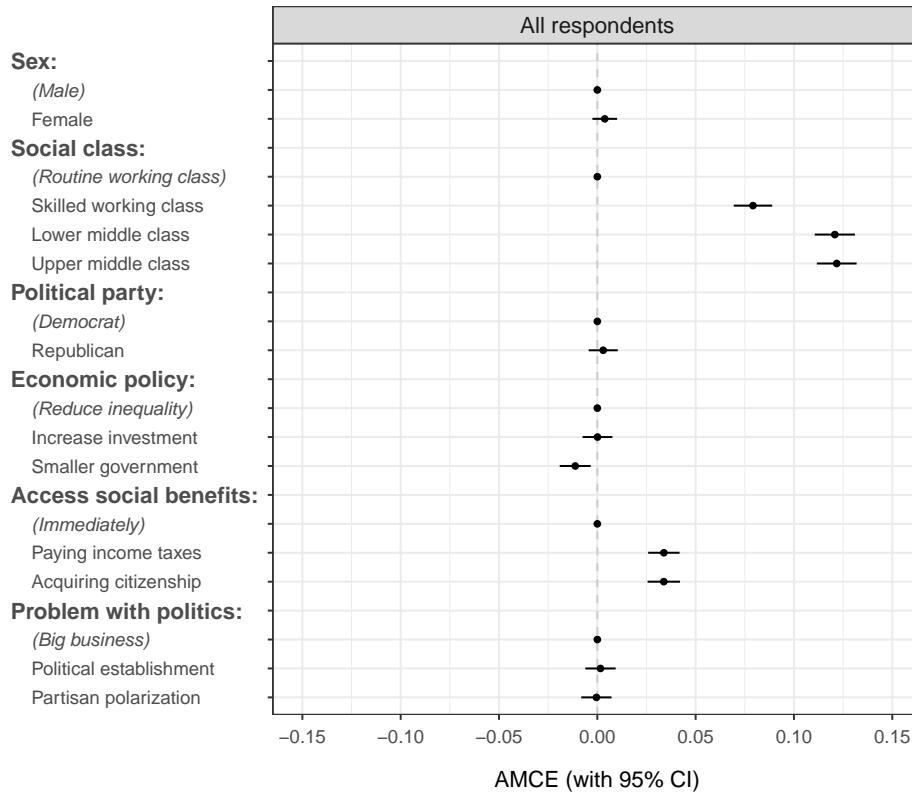
Figure 7: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Vote Propensity in Great Britain



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on British respondents' vote propensity. Vote propensity was rescaled to range from 0 (very unlikely to vote for a candidate) to 1 (very likely to vote for a candidate), so that the AMCE shows the average change in the likelihood that a respondent will vote for a candidate on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

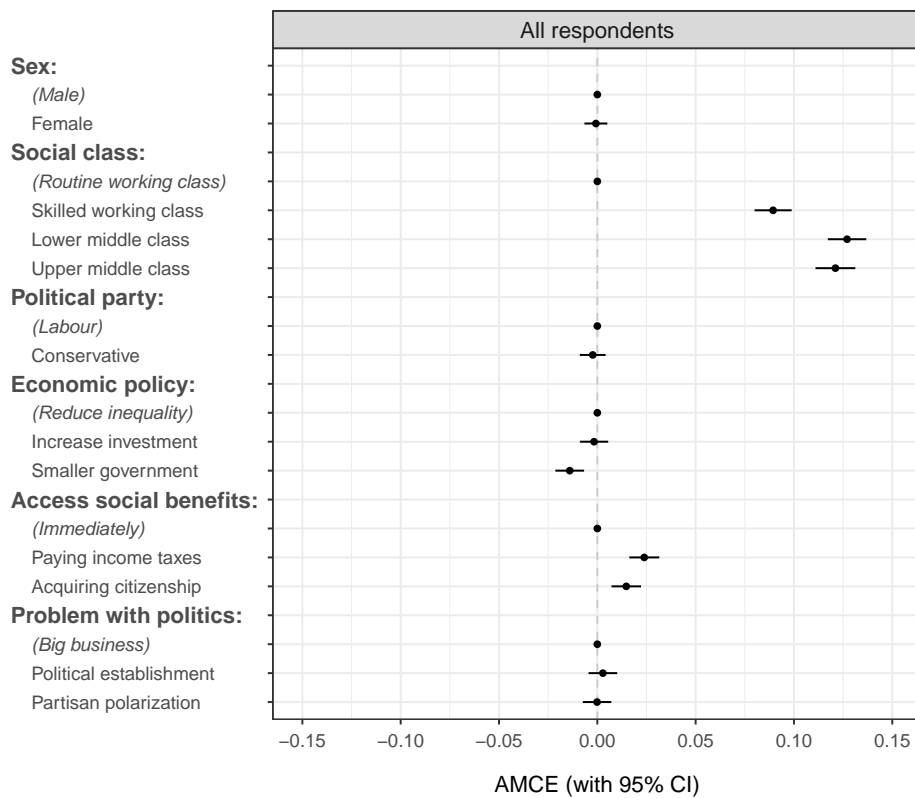
## Results for the Effects on Candidate Qualification

Figure 8: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Candidate Qualification in the US



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on US respondents' evaluation of candidate qualification. Candidate qualification was rescaled to range from 0 (candidate is very unqualified for the office) to 1 (candidate is very qualified for the office), so that the AMCE shows the average change in respondents' evaluation of candidate qualification on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

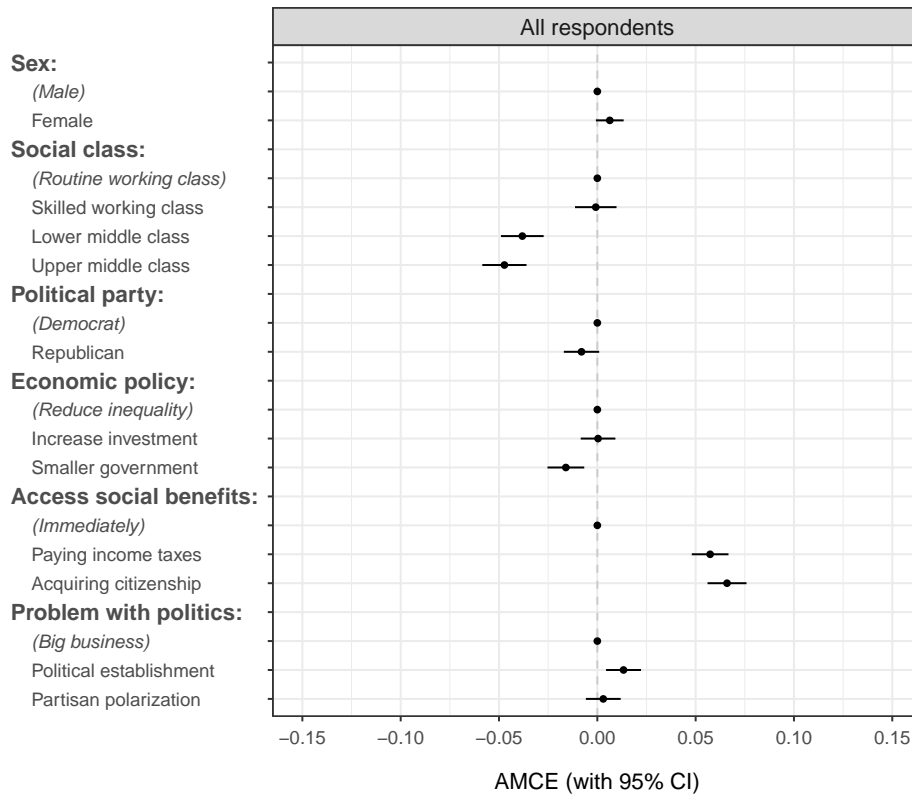
Figure 9: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Candidate Qualification in Great Britain



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on British respondents' evaluation of candidate qualification. Candidate qualification was rescaled to range from 0 (candidate is very unqualified for the office) to 1 (candidate is very qualified for the office), so that the AMCE shows the average change in respondents' evaluation of candidate qualification on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

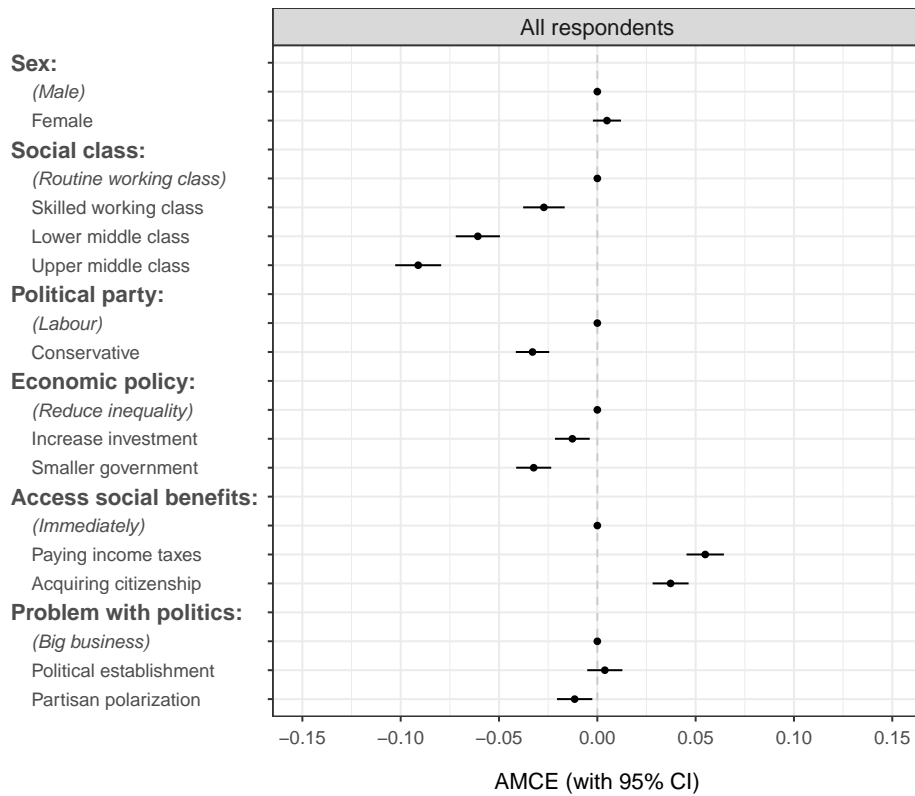
## Results for the Effects on Candidate Understanding

Figure 10: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Candidate Understanding in the US



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on US respondents' evaluation of candidate understanding. Candidate understanding was rescaled to range from 0 (candidate is very unlikely to understand the problems facing people like the respondent) to 1 (candidate is very likely understand the problems facing people like the respondent), so that the AMCE shows the average change in respondents' evaluation of candidate understanding on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.

Figure 11: AMCEs of Candidate Attributes on Candidate Understanding in Great Britain



*Note:* The figure shows the point estimates and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) for the average marginal component effects (AMCEs) of candidate attributes on British respondents' evaluation of candidate understanding. Candidate understanding was rescaled to range from 0 (candidate is very unlikely to understand the problems facing people like the respondent) to 1 (candidate is very likely understand the problems facing people like the respondent), so that the AMCE shows the average change in respondents' evaluation of candidate understanding on a 0 to 1 scale. Respondents who answered "don't know" were excluded from the analysis. The reference category for each attribute is shown italicized in parentheses.



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