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Working paper

Political polarization, wage inequality and preferences for redistribution

Political Polarization, Wage Inequality and Preferences for Redistribution*

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Abstract

Using nationally representative, randomized survey experiments, we investigate how beliefs about wage inequality impact preferences for redistribution. With more than 9,000 respondents in six high-income countries and a novel distribution builder tool, we elicit detailed beliefs about wage inequality and examine the impact of accurate information on support for redistribution. We find most respondents underestimate wage inequality and that information treatments have minimal effects, except for respondents on the far-right, who exhibit large increases in support for higher income taxes and social spending. Our findings suggest that far-right voters' attitudes toward redistribution may be more malleable than is often assumed.

JEL Classification: D04, D80, D90, H20, H30, H50

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1 Introduction

In recent years, economic inequality has gained increased prominence in global discourse. Of particular interest is the extent to which people accurately perceive inequality in their country and whether misperceptions undermine support for redistribution. Recent research in high-income countries has found that citizens systematically underestimate various types of inequality (e.g., wealth and income inequality) but that efforts to correct these misperceptions have limited effects on preferences for redistribution (Piketty, 2003; Norton and Ariely, 2011; Cruces et al., 2013; Kuziemko et al., 2015). These patterns across countries have important implications for understanding political polarization, especially given political debates typically occur along a left-right spectrum, where people’s preferences for the ideal levels of economic inequality and government-led redistribution are primary points of disagreement (Kitschelt, 1994; Persson and Tabellini, 2002). A potential explanation for the lack of effect from providing accurate information is that existing studies may not have focused on the types of inequality where people have the most significant misperceptions and/or care about the most. Wage inequality¹ is an important type of inequality that may be more relevant to citizens’ preferences for redistribution, given that there is an extensive body of literature suggesting that people’s utility is influenced by wage differentials (e.g., see Card et al. (2012); Mas (2006)). Although the influence of misperceptions about wage inequality on people’s support for redistribution is an intuitively appealing area of interest, a large-scale, cross-country randomized survey experiment has yet to examine this topic.

In this study, we examine beliefs about wage inequality, their effect on support for redistribution, and how this varies across the political spectrum in a diverse set of six high-income countries that are home to more than 650 million people. We utilized large-scale, randomized survey experiments with representative samples of at least 1,500 respondents per country

¹For this paper, we consider wages to be all kinds of remuneration earned from employment. This includes wage income, bonuses, and stock options.

in Australia, France, Japan, Sweden, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US). We collect a detailed elicitation of beliefs and preferences about the distribution of wages among full-time workers in each country with a distribution builder tool (Sharpe et al., 2000; Goldstein et al., 2008). This allows participants to quickly design a histogram of their beliefs about and preferences for the wage distribution in their country. We complement the distribution builder with more traditional questions capturing people’s beliefs and preferences about wages, such as Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) and full-time workers’ pay levels, sourced from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP 2009). Embedded within the survey was an experiment where respondents were randomly allocated to one of three conditions. Besides a control condition, one group received information about the ratio of the average pay of a CEO of a publicly listed company relative to the average full-time worker in their country, and the other received information about the ratio of the top decile to the bottom decile of full-time workers’ wages in their country. Respondents were then asked questions about their support for redistribution (both in terms of increasing taxes and government spending) and beliefs about meritocracy. This study design allowed us to answer three main questions. First, how accurate are people’s beliefs about the level of wage inequality in their country, and how different are these beliefs from their preferences? Second, how does providing accurate information about wage inequality affect support for redistribution and beliefs about meritocracy? Third, do these information treatment effects vary based on respondents’ prior beliefs and political ideology?

We find that most respondents underestimated the degree of wage inequality in their country, and they would prefer it to be even lower. The results of the distribution builder show that people underestimate the actual dispersion of wages in their country (particularly the skewness of the wage distribution). When asked about what distribution of wages people would prefer, on average, there was a clear desire for a smaller share of full-time workers earning low wages than what they believed to be the case. Traditional questions about wage

inequality, such as the estimated pay of various occupations, reveal a similar pattern. For example, the actual ratio of CEO to average full-time worker pay in the US is 269, whereas people thought it was 18 and would prefer it only to be 5. This widespread underestimation of wage inequality in both the distribution builder and traditional questions occurred across the political spectrum, countries, and income levels.

Our results also show that preferences for redistribution are greatly polarized in these countries, and providing information about wage inequality reduced this gap by increasing support among those on the far-right. In the control group, respondents on the far-left were the most supportive of redistribution, while those on the far-right were the least supportive (with left-wing, centrist, and right-wing respondents falling between these extremes, in that order). The treatments had no effects on most respondents, except for those on the far-right who exhibited large increases in support for redistribution across a wide range of measures. For example, the treatments increased the average share of far-right respondents who would support a tax increase to finance education for children from low-income households by 59.3 percent (15.6 percentage points). Further, the treatments came close to eliminating the gap in preferences between far-right and left-wing respondents across various measures of support for higher taxation. These general findings hold across countries and a series of robustness checks. A prediction survey by 100 experts illustrates how novel this insight is, as most experts predicted far-right respondents to be the least responsive to accurate information about wage inequality (even though they correctly predicted relatively lower levels of support for redistribution among far-right respondents in the control group).

This paper contributes to three strands of the literature. First, it adds to the cross-country literature of people’s beliefs about economic inequality. Studies have found that people tend to underestimate the extent of income and wealth inequality in their societies and overestimate upward mobility (Norton and Ariely, 2011; Chambers et al., 2014; Gimpelson and Treisman, 2018; Hauser and Norton, 2017; Alesina et al., 2018). They also tend to

misperceive their relative position, with poorer individuals believing they are closer to the middle of the distribution than is actually the case (Cruces et al., 2013; Hoy and Mager, 2021b). Our cross-country randomized survey experiment builds on this prior work by being among the first to focus on wage inequality and using a distribution builder that provides a novel approach for eliciting beliefs by reflecting different moments of the distribution, including the skewness and kurtosis of the wage distribution. In line with previous studies focusing on other aspects of economic inequality, we find systematic biases whereby people underestimate the dispersion of wages of full-time workers (particularly the skewness of the wage distribution). As such, our study extends established stylized facts in the literature that most people prefer lower levels of economic inequality than what they perceive to exist, and what they perceive to exist is already lower than what is actually the case, to wage inequality.

Second, this study contributes to empirical research about the factors influencing people’s preferences for redistribution (Fong, 2001; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005; Fong et al., 2006; Alesina and Giuliano, 2009; Isaksson and Lindskog, 2009; Hoy and Mager, 2021b; Stantcheva, 2021). Related studies find that perceived levels of inequality and mobility are stronger predictors of redistributive preferences than actual levels but that efforts to correct misperceptions have limited effects on preferences for redistribution (Gimpelson and Treisman, 2018; Alesina et al., 2018; Page and Goldstein, 2016; Hoy and Mager, 2021a; Moore et al., 2025). Our finding of limited average effects of information treatments also suggests that misperceptions of wage inequality are not the primary barrier to demand for redistribution among most of the population of high-income countries. Even when many people are made aware of the full extent of wage disparities, this does not translate into higher support for policies to reduce inequality. This is consistent with recent work suggesting many people’s preferences for redistribution are primarily shaped by concerns about fairness in the income generation process rather than by a snapshot of the distribution of resources in

their country (Alesina et al., 2018). The exception to our overall result is our finding about the strong, positive treatment effect among far-right respondents. Our study is one of the first nationally representative, cross-country randomized survey experiments to show that it is possible to increase support for redistribution among this population group by providing accurate information (a single-country study showing a similar pattern has been completed by Hoy et al. (2024)).

Third, our study contributes to the literature on the factors underlying the rise in dissatisfaction with mainstream political institutions in many Western countries and the growing appeal of far-right populism in nations as diverse as the US, France, Italy, Germany, Hungary, and Argentina (Berman, 2021; Inglehart and Norris, 2016; Rodrik, 2018). Our finding of significant heterogeneity by political views sheds new light on how ideology moderates informational treatment effects. Among the far-right, accurate information about wage inequality increases support for redistribution across a broad range of measures, including raising taxes on high-income earners. This finding is a clear departure from conventional wisdom, as seen by our expert prediction survey results, where the opposite findings were expected. As such, there may be more scope to convince far-right voters of the need for redistributive policies than is typically assumed to be the case. This finding is significant in the growing prominence of misperceptions about economic inequality as a rallying point for far-right populist parties.

The paper is structured as follows: Section 2 describes the survey methodology in detail, including survey design, data collection, and empirical analysis. Section 3 presents the descriptive findings about respondents' beliefs and preferences about wage inequality, and Section 4 shows the experimental results. Section 5 includes a discussion of the findings and their implications.

2 Study Design

2.1 Sample Selection and Sample Size

This study covers six high-income countries: Australia, France, Japan, Sweden, the UK, and the US. We selected this diverse set of countries so that we could adequately speak to the external validity of the findings. For example, there are significant variations in wage inequality across these countries, with the ratio of the average pay of a CEO of a publicly listed company relative to the average full-time worker ranging from 59 in Japan to 269 in the US in 2019 (Bloomberg (2019); OECD (2025)). In addition, these countries have radically different levels of government-led redistribution, with the difference between the market and disposable income Gini index ranging from 11.6 percentage points in the US to 22.7 percentage points in France (OECD (2025)).

We surveyed at least 1,500 respondents in each of the six countries (i.e., over 9,000 respondents in total), with at least 500 respondents per treatment group. This sample size is similar in each country to what was used in Kuziemko et al. (2015); Cruces et al. (2013); Karadja et al. (2017). As such, we had adequate statistical power to detect meaningful heterogeneous effects in line with existing studies, such as differences between people based on their political preferences (e.g., far-right respondents compared to those in the rest of the general population). The sample in each country was representative of the general population in terms of age, gender, and location and the survey was implemented by Qualtrics.

2.2 Survey Design

The survey consisted of five main sections that allowed us to investigate respondents' beliefs about the distribution of wages in their country and explore how views about wage inequality impact people's support for redistribution (see Appendix). The first collected people's de-

mographic characteristics, including their political views on a left-right wing spectrum.² The second collected respondents’ *beliefs* about wage inequality through a “distribution builder” (see next subsection for details) and standard questions in the literature, such as beliefs about the average wage for different professions (e.g., CEOs of publicly listed companies). The third collected respondents’ *preferences* about wage inequality through the same questions. The fourth collected respondents’ preferences for redistribution (both tax and non-tax measures) using identical questions as to what was asked in a seminal study (Alesina et al., 2018), such as whether the government should increase spending on low-income households and increase taxes on high-income households. The fifth collected respondents’ beliefs about meritocracy in their country, such as whether people are rich and/or poor due to luck.

Our survey includes several features that maximize data quality, consistent with guidance in Stantcheva (2021). First, we include a description at the start of the survey explaining that we are independent researchers, that the study is non-partisan, and that respondents must provide complete attention throughout (or risk missing out on compensation). Second, attention checks throughout the survey remind respondents that they must give their full attention or risk disqualification from the survey. Third, we randomize the ordering of questions within each survey section so responses should not be disproportionately driven by respondent fatigue. Fourth, logic checks exist throughout the survey, such as the zip/postal code respondents provide must exist in their country. Fifth, respondents must view the treatments for at least five seconds before they advance to the next stage of the survey.

2.3 Details about the Distributional builder

We included in the survey a “distribution builder,” which uses an interactive approach for eliciting beliefs and preferences by reflecting different moments of the distribution (including

²Specifically, respondents were asked, “On economic policy matters, where do you see yourself on the left/right wing spectrum? Far-left, Left, Center, Right, Far-right.” This question is identical to what has been used in existing studies, e.g., (Alesina et al., 2018; Stantcheva, 2021).

the skewness and kurtosis). The distribution builder was a modified version of what has been used in previous studies to collect beliefs about other forms of economic inequality (Page and Goldstein, 2016; Sharpe et al., 2000; Goldstein et al., 2008). Specifically, respondents were asked to allocate “balls” representing shares of the population of full-time workers across “bins” of wage levels (see example in Figure A1 in the Appendix). There were 11 bins, each with equally spaced, round-number intervals of annual pre-tax wage levels, starting from zero, with the lowest bin capturing approximately the bottom five percentiles of the full-time wage distribution in that country in 2021, and the highest bin capturing roughly the top two percentiles of the full-time wage distribution.³ Each “ball” represented five percent of the full-time worker population (i.e., 20 balls in total), as this is a reasonable compromise between ensuring granularity of data about beliefs and managing respondent fatigue. The maximum number of “balls” that could be allocated to any single “bin” was eight (i.e., 40 percent), while there was no minimum. However, all 20 “balls” (i.e., 100 percent) had to be allocated across the distribution. These design features align with best practices in the literature (Page and Goldstein, 2016) and were fine-tuned through extensive piloting across countries. When respondents were asked about their preferred distribution of full-time workers across wage levels, the starting point for the distribution builder was what they said their beliefs were. This approach minimizes the risk that differences between beliefs and preferences are due to measurement error or respondent fatigue, as respondents were directly asked whether/how their preferences for the wage distribution differs from what they believe to be the case. As such, at a minimum, this novel tool provided a standardized way of capturing the difference between each respondent’s beliefs and preferences regarding the shape of the full-time worker wage distribution in their country.

³For example, in the US, the bins were as follows: USD0-19,999; USD20,000-39,999; USD40,000-59,999; USD60,000-79,999; USD80,000-99,999; USD100,000-119,999; USD120,000-139,999; USD140,000-159,999; USD160,000-179,999; USD180,000-199,999; USD200,000 or above.

2.4 Treatments

Respondents were randomly assigned to one of three conditions (each with a similar sample size of at least 500 respondents). Treatment group A was provided information about the ratio between the 90th and 10th percentiles of full-time worker wages in their country (see Figure A2 in the Appendix). Treatment group B was provided information about the ratio between the average pay of a CEO of a publicly listed company relative to the average full-time worker in their country (see Figure A3 in the Appendix). The control group received no information. The treatments were based on what has been used in existing studies to portray other forms of economic inequality, such as the degree of inter-generational mobility (Alesina et al., 2018). The data used in the treatments was sourced from the OECD employment database and the Bloomberg Global CEO Pay Index. In addition to the content of the treatment, respondents were also randomly allocated to receive the treatment before or after they expressed their beliefs about and preferred levels of wage inequality in their country. This design allowed us to test whether the treatments impacted people’s beliefs about and preferred level of the wage distribution and whether heterogeneous treatment effects existed based on respondents’ prior beliefs about and preferences for the distribution of wages in their country. In addition, we could examine whether there was variation in treatment effects based on the timing of when the information was provided.

2.5 Empirical Model

To estimate the causal effect of the informational treatments, we compare mean outcomes between the treatment and control groups using OLS regressions of the form:

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_A + \beta_2 T_B + X_i \gamma + \theta_j + \epsilon_{ij} \quad (1)$$

where Y_i is the outcome of interest for individual i , β_1 captures the mean difference in outcome of interest (Y) between the treatment group A (T_A) and the control group, β_2 captures the mean difference in outcome of interest (Y) between the treatment group B (T_B) and the control group, X_i is a vector that controls for any imbalance between groups (balance table is shown as Table A1 in the Appendix), θ_j country-level fixed effects and ϵ_{ij} robust standard errors (clustered at the country level).

In line with our pre-registration, we run these regressions for each country and treatment separately and pool them across countries and treatments. The pooled treatment analysis assesses whether providing any information about wage inequality influences preferences toward redistribution. In the body of the paper, we present the results with a combined treatment group, and in the Appendix, we examine the effects of the treatments separately (see Figures A4-A7). In addition, consistent with our pre-analysis plan, we examine heterogeneity in treatment effects by respondents' prior beliefs about inequality (elicited before the treatment) and by political views (on a left-right spectrum) (see Figures A8-A11 in the Appendix). Specifically, we examine the treatment effects for five main groups of political views (far-right, right, center, left, and far-left). In the body of the paper, we focus our attention on heterogeneous treatment effects between far-right respondents and the rest of the population, as this is the primary dimension in which heterogeneity exists.

Following Alesina et al. (2018) and Karadja et al. (2017) and in line with our pre-registration, we create indexes for groups of outcome questions, which are the unweighted average of z-scores. The main groups of outcome questions are non-tax measures of redistribution (e.g., support for increases in government spending on low-income households) and tax-related measures of redistribution (e.g., support for increases in taxation on high-income households). Each index is oriented so that higher means more support for redistribution. We present the answers to each question and the relevant index in the results tables. We also create a "meritocracy" index and present the results in the Appendix (see Table A2).

2.6 Soliciting Expert Predictions

We collected expert predictions of the results of our study to provide evidence about whether our findings substantially add to the existing knowledge base. We use the Social Science Prediction Platform to solicit expert predictions in a coordinated, systematic way (DellaVigna et al. (2019)). This platform has a panel of academic experts who regularly make predictions about the outcomes of survey experiments by economists. In addition, we solicited predictions from World Bank research staff (in general, the existing panel of academic experts and World Bank research staff provided similar predictions). In total, we had a sample of 100 experts provide predictions, which is a larger sample size than most other studies employing this approach (Ajzenman et al. (2024)). These experts were introduced to the study, provided information about the treatments, and then asked to make three main types of predictions. First, they were asked to predict the levels of support for redistribution (both tax and non-tax measures)⁴ in the control group across the political spectrum based on specific outcome questions. Second, they were asked to provide quantitative predictions about the treatment effects for specific outcome questions. Third, they were asked to make ordinal predictions about how the treatments varied across the political spectrum (by ranking the groups far-left, center-left, center-right, and far-right) for each specific outcome question. For example, experts were asked about the share of respondents that they believed would support policies to increase opportunities for children born in low-income families (even if this resulted in higher taxes) in the control group, how this varied across the political spectrum, how much the treatments would increase support, and the relative size of the treatment effects across the political spectrum.

⁴A subset of experts were also asked to make predictions about respondents' beliefs about meritocracy.

3 Findings

3.1 Descriptive Results

3.1.1 Beliefs and preferences about wage inequality

Respondents underestimate wage inequality among full-time workers, specifically the skewness of the wage distribution, and would prefer less dispersion in wages than what they believe is the case. This can be seen in Figure 1, which summarizes the main results of the distribution builder questions across countries. The primary difference between respondents' beliefs and preferences is regarding the proportion of full-time workers earning low wages. Specifically, on average across countries, respondents would prefer around half of the share of full-time workers earning in the lowest two bins in the distribution builder than what they believe to be the case. There is far less divergence between respondents' beliefs and preferences at higher wages. This finding suggests that across countries, people clearly prefer fewer full-time workers earning low wages (relative to what they believe is the case) as opposed to fewer full-time workers earning high wages (relative to what they believe is the case).

[Figure 1]

Respondents also show a strong preference for lower wage inequality based on questions about the wage levels of different professions. On average, respondents prefer CEO pay to be around one-third of what they believe they currently receive (except for those in Japan, where the difference is not as substantial). In addition, there is a clear preference across countries for average full-time workers to receive higher wages than what respondents believe they actually receive (see Figure A12 in the Appendix). These differences between beliefs and preferences is particularly notable when considering what they imply for the

ratio of CEO pay relative to the average full-time worker. This can be seen in Figure 2, which shows respondents dramatically underestimated this ratio and still preferred it to be much lower than what they thought it was. For example, the actual ratio of CEO to average full-time worker pay in the US is 269, whereas respondents thought it was 18 and would prefer it only to be 5. This substantial wedge between what is actually the case and people's beliefs and preferences exists across a wide range of respondents, including whether they hold left or right-wing political views.

[Figure 2]

3.1.2 Preferences for redistribution across the political spectrum

The survey revealed that preferences for redistribution vary widely across the political spectrum in the control group in the direction that would be expected (see Figure A13 in the Appendix). Respondents on the far-left are the most supportive of redistribution, while the opposite is the case for those on the far-right. For example, the share of respondents supporting policies to increase opportunities for children born in low-income families (even if this resulted in higher taxes) ranged from 26 percent on the far-right to 76 percent on the far-left. We show in the Appendix that respondents' political views are the strongest predictor of their preferences for redistribution among the background characteristics collected (see Figures A14-A16). Experts predicted this pattern as, after all, this is a key defining feature of what it means to hold left or right-wing political views.

3.2 Experimental Results

3.2.1 Main treatment effects

There were no meaningful average treatment effects on non-tax measures of redistribution (e.g., increasing spending on low-income households) across all respondents, but there were large positive effects among respondents on the far-right.⁵ This can be seen in Table 1, which shows the experimental results for all respondents (Panel A) and heterogeneous effects based on whether respondents are on the far-right or the rest of the population (Panel B). Panel A shows that the point estimates of the treatment effects were very close to zero on average for all respondents across the pre-specified measures of non-tax support for redistribution. The upper bound of the 95 percent confidence interval of the treatment effect on the non-tax index is only 0.033 standard deviations. In contrast, Panel B shows large and statistically significant effects of the treatments on respondents on the far-right of the political spectrum across most outcomes. For example, the treatments led these respondents to be 59.3 percent (15.6 percentage points) more likely to say the government should foster more equality of opportunity through policies such as increased spending on education. In most instances, the difference in treatment effects between those on the far-right and the rest of the population is significant, with a p-value below 0.05. In the case of the non-tax index, the p-value is less than 0.001 for the difference in treatment effects between those on the far-right and the rest of the population.

[Table 1]

Similarly, there were no meaningful average treatment effects on tax-related measures of redistribution (e.g., increasing taxes on high-income households) across all respondents, but

⁵The focus on pre-registered dimensions of heterogeneity, consistency of effects across outcomes, and use of z-scores to aggregate results dramatically reduces the likelihood that these findings are a false positive.

there were large positive effects among respondents on the far-right. This can be seen in Table 2, which shows the experimental results for all respondents (Panel A) and heterogeneous effects based on whether respondents are on the far-right or the rest of the population (Panel B). Panel A shows that the point estimates of the treatment effects were around zero (even negative in some instances) on average for all respondents across the pre-specified measures of support for increasing taxes. The upper bound of the 95 percent confidence interval of the treatment effect on the tax index is only 0.025 standard deviations. In contrast, Panel B shows substantial effects of the treatments on respondents on the far-right of the political spectrum. For example, the treatments made these respondents 26.7 percent (4.6 percentage points) more likely to say taxes on the richest 10 percent of full-time workers are too low. In most instances, the difference in treatment effects between those on the far-right and the rest of the population is not statistically significant at conventional levels. However, the difference in the overall treatment effects, captured by the tax index, is weakly significant at a p-value of 0.06.

[Table 2]

The order of magnitude of the treatment effects on far-right respondents' preferences is remarkable, substantially closing gaps in preferences across the political spectrum. This can be seen in Figures 3a and 3b, which show the level of support for far-left, left, center, right, and far-right respondents in the treatment and control groups for non-tax and tax-related measures of redistribution, respectively. For example, Figure 3a shows that the treatment increased the share of far-right respondents that would support policies to increase opportunities for children born in low-income families by over 15 percentage points. This closed the gap in levels of support between far-right and far-left respondents by more than one-third. Another example is in Figure 3b, which shows preferences for the tax rate of the top 1 and 10

percent of high-income earners. In this case, the treatments resulted in far-right respondents having levels of support that were statistically indistinguishable from left-wing respondents.

[Figure 3a and 3b]

3.3 Additional analysis

3.3.1 Impact of the treatments on beliefs about meritocracy

On average, the treatments failed to change respondents' views about meritocracy, including those on the far-right. In the Appendix, we present these experimental results for a series of questions about views on meritocracy for all respondents and heterogeneous effects based on whether respondents are on the far-right or the rest of the population (see Table A2). We do not find any evidence that the treatments make people more pessimistic about meritocracy in their country. As such, even though we see large increases in support for redistribution from the treatments for far-right respondents, we see no effect on their belief about meritocracy. This suggests that far-right respondents react to the treatments by desiring the government to reduce wage inequality but not because they are any more likely to believe that wage differences are due to an unfair income-generating process. Instead, they were more likely to view the extent of wage inequality in their country as so large that the government should intervene, even if they believe these wage differences are primarily due to merit.

3.3.2 Experts predictions

Expert predictions about the findings of our study were reasonably accurate regarding differences across the political spectrum in the control group, but they predicted the complete opposite of our experimental results (details in the Appendix). Specifically, experts correctly

predicted that there would be lower levels of support for redistribution among far-right respondents relative to others (see Figure A17). However, they thought that there would be substantial positive overall treatment effects (see Figure A18) and that there would be relatively larger positive treatment effects on left-wing respondents (see Figure A19). In fact, they predicted that far-right respondents would be the least likely to respond positively to the information we provided. The misalignment between expert predictions and the results of our study provides strong evidence that our findings add to the existing knowledge base.

3.3.3 Robustness checks

We conducted a series of robustness checks to demonstrate the strength of our results. In the Appendix, we show somewhat consistent results across countries and treatments.⁶ We show persistence of our treatment effects, as there were similar results regardless of whether the treatments were provided immediately before outcomes of interest questions or much earlier in the survey (see Tables A3-A6). In addition, our results are robust after winzorising, with alternative econometric specifications, addressing attrition, and reweighting.

4 Discussion and conclusion

This study fills a clear knowledge gap in the literature about how misperceptions of wage inequality impact preferences for redistribution. We show across a diverse range of high-income countries that people tend to underestimate wage inequality (particularly the skewness of the wage distribution) and would prefer it to be even lower than what they believe it to be. By doing so, we extend stylized facts in the literature about misperceptions of economic inequality to include wage inequality, as similar patterns have been shown to exist for income and wealth inequality (e.g., Norton and Ariely (2011)). A more nuanced finding we observe

⁶Although Treatment B tends to have a stronger effect than Treatment A, and the treatment effects among far-right respondents in Sweden were relatively small.

is that people have a greater aversion to a substantial share of full-time workers earning low wages (as opposed to high wages). As such, people seem far more accepting of full-time workers earning a high income (e.g., in the US, respondents seemed quite willing to accept a large share of full-time workers earning over USD100,000) and would primarily prefer less full-time workers earning a low income (e.g., in the US, respondents seemed quite averse to a substantial share of full-time workers earning below USD40,000).

We show that correcting misperceptions about wage inequality does not change preferences for redistribution across most of the population. This pattern holds across countries and across the treatments we provided. This result is consistent with an emerging pattern in this literature in high-income countries, showing that many types of information treatments fail to shift policy preferences, even if they shift beliefs (Stantcheva (2021)). In the case of this study, a potential explanation for the lack of effect from the treatments is that wage inequality is not necessarily a key factor that influences preferences for redistribution. As such, even though there is an extensive literature showing wage inequality typically lowers people’s utility (e.g., Card et al. (2012); Mas (2006)), this does not translate into wage inequality increasing support for redistribution for most of the population. An alternative factor that may be more likely to influence preferences is people’s beliefs about meritocracy (i.e., whether people are rich or poor due to hard work), which are highly correlated with preferences for redistribution in our survey.

The large, positive effects on far-right respondents’ preferences for redistribution from information about wage inequality is a key insight generated from this study. The effects exist across both non-tax and tax-related measures of preferences for redistribution (particularly the former) and are similar regardless of the treatment that was provided (i.e., simply receiving any information about wage inequality rather than the specific type of wage inequality appears to have driven the effect). The fact that the treatments were able to substantially close the gap between far-right respondents and those on the left is striking, and this illus-

trates that the order of magnitude of the treatment effects is meaningful. The lack of impact of the treatments on beliefs about meritocracy suggests that the channel through which the treatments impact preferences for redistribution is by making far-right respondents change their views about the need for the government to intervene to reduce inequality (as opposed to changing their views about fairness in the income generating process). The expert prediction survey provides evidence that the findings for far-right respondents are unexpected and substantially contribute to the existing knowledge base.

This study speaks to the growing literature about the resurgence of far-right populism in high-income countries. Misperceptions about economic inequality and “alternative facts” are often propagated and capitalized on by political actors to build support for otherwise less popular policies (e.g., cutting taxes for high-income earners) (e.g., see Barrera et al. (2020)). Our findings suggest that efforts to counteract this are not fruitless. Accurate information about wage inequality does shift preferences for redistribution for those on the far-right, bringing their policy preferences to be much more in line with the rest of the population. As such, there is more scope to build support for redistribution among those on the far-right than what is often appreciated (as illustrated by the expert predictions we collected). However, we cannot rule out the possibility that this sub-population may have greater elasticity of preferences for redistribution to information in general. For example, if we provided information that could potentially undermine support for redistribution, they may have revised downwards their preferences more than the rest of the population.

Future research on this topic of political polarization, wage inequality, and preferences for redistribution could take several directions. First, there is ample scope to further unpack the elasticity of preferences for redistribution of those on the far-right in high-income countries through additional surveys and/or lab experiments. Second, a significant contribution to the existing literature on preferences for redistribution would be to tease out the extent to which stated preferences impact real-world behavior, such as examining prefer-

ences for redistribution and wage inequality using online labor markets. Finally, researchers could explore further how information about fairness in the income-generating process, or meritocracy more broadly, leads to shifts in preferences in redistribution.

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Figures and tables

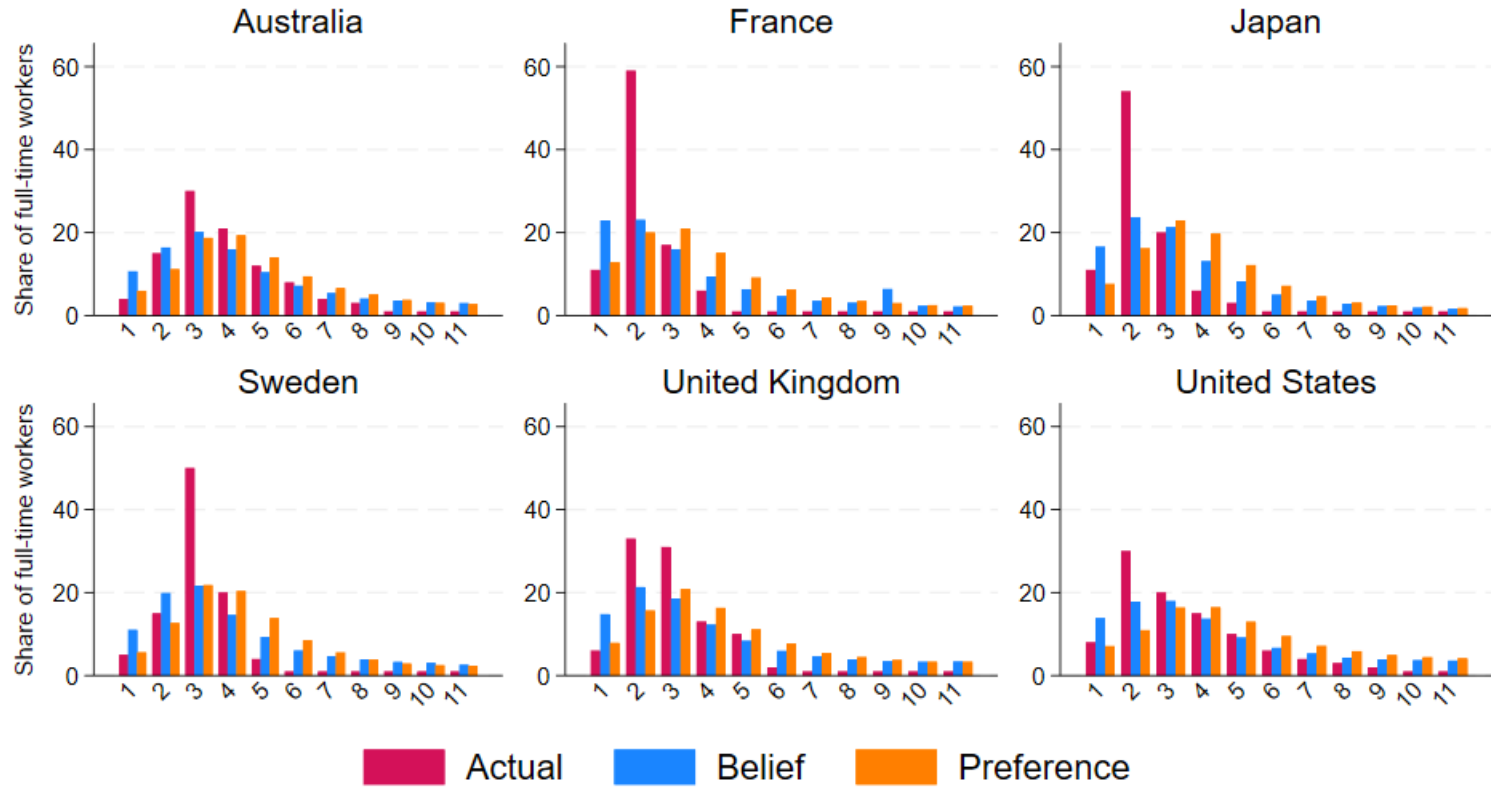


Figure 1: Actual, Beliefs about, and Preferences for the distribution of full-time workers' income across countries

Note: This figure shows the actual, beliefs about, and preferences for the distribution of full-time workers' income across countries. The actual distribution of full-time worker income data was sourced from the OECD (2025). To solicit beliefs and preferences, respondents were asked to allocate balls across 11 bins, each with equally spaced, round-number intervals of annual pre-tax wage levels, starting from zero. The lowest bin captured approximately the bottom five percentiles of the full-time wage distribution in that country in 2021, and the highest bin captured roughly the top two percentiles of the full-time wage distribution. The first bin in each country is as follows: in Australia it was AUD0-AUD24,999, in France it was EURO0-EURO15,999, in Japan it was YEN0-YEN2,199,999, in Sweden it was 0kr-159,999kr, in the UK it was GBP0-GBP13,999, and in the US it was USD0-USD19,999.

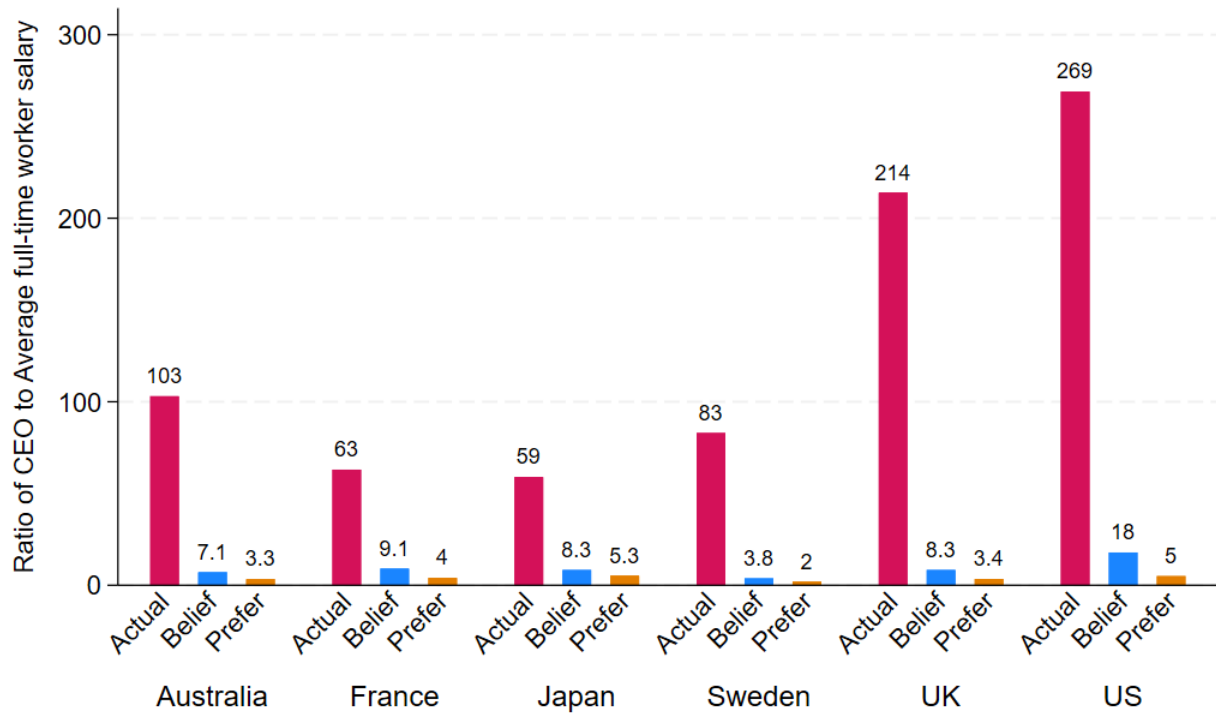


Figure 2: Actual, Beliefs about, and Preferences for the Ratio of CEO to average full-time worker income across countries

Note: This figure shows the actual, beliefs about, and preferences for the ratio of CEO to average full-time worker income across countries. Respondents were asked about their beliefs about the income of CEOs and the income of the average full-time worker. The ratio is calculated by the authors. The actual ratio is sourced from Bloomberg (2019); OECD (2025).

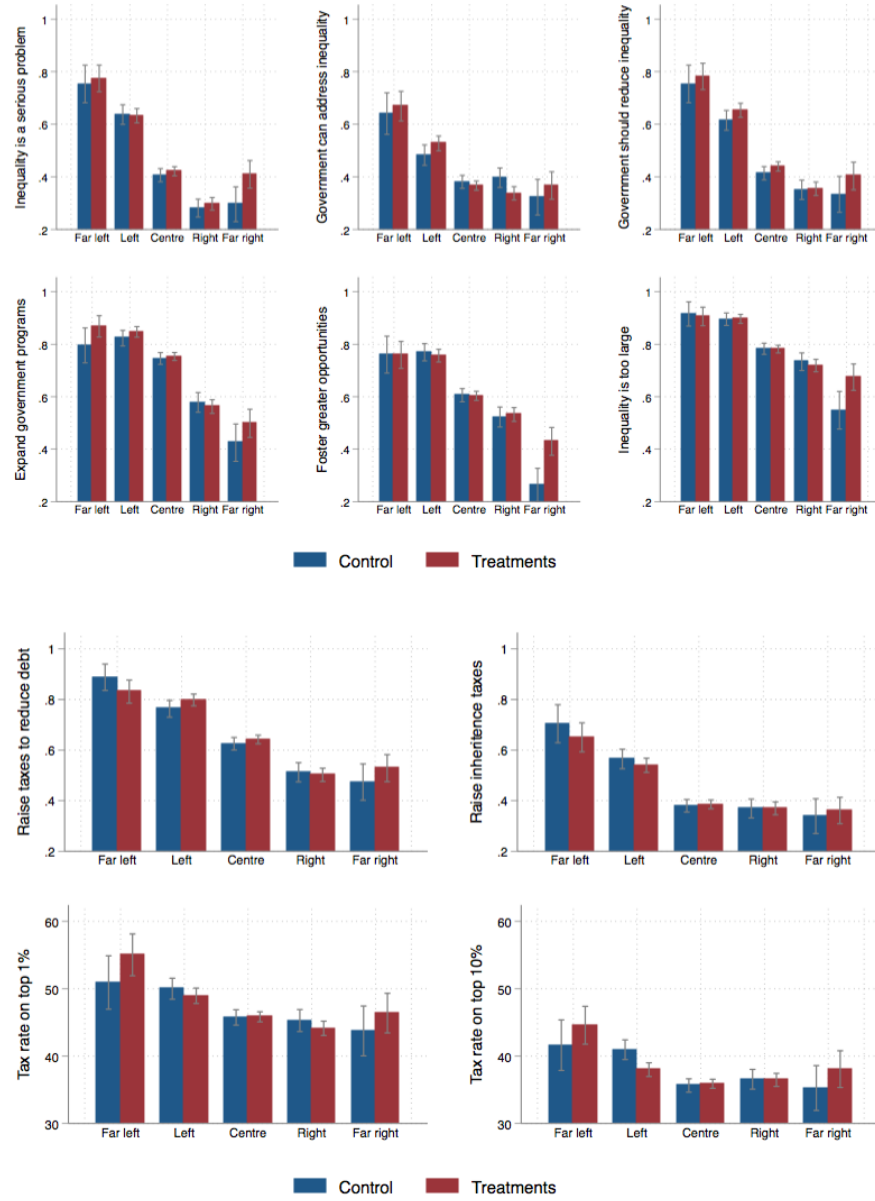


Figure 3: Levels of support for measures of redistribution (non-tax and tax-related measures) across the political spectrum in the combined treatment and control groups

Note: This figure shows the levels of support for redistribution (non-tax and tax-related measures) across the political spectrum in the combined treatment and control groups. *Inequality is a serious problem*: See Question 45. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “Problem”, “Serious problem” or “Very serious problem”, 0 otherwise. *Government can address inequality*: See Question 47. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “A lot”, 0 otherwise. *Government should reduce inequality*: See Question 48. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “6” or “7”, 0 otherwise. *Expand government programs*: See Question 49. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “expand programs”, 0 otherwise. *Foster greater opportunities*: See Question 50. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “Very strongly support” or “Support”, 0 otherwise. *Inequality is too large*: See Question 51. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “Too large” or “Much too large”, 0 otherwise. *Raise taxes to reduce debt*: See Question 52. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “Increased”, 0 otherwise. *Raise inheritance taxes*: See Question 53. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects “Strongly Agree” or “Agree”, 0 otherwise. *Tax rate on top 1%*: See Question 56a. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 1% of the population should pay. *Tax rate on top 9%*: See Question 56b. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 9% of the population should pay.

TABLE 1: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON NON-TAX MEASURES OF REDISTRIBUTION

	Unfair b/se/p	Problem b/se/p	Ability b/se/p	Power b/se/p	Program b/se/p	Opps b/se/p	Gap b/se/p	NT Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	0.016 (0.01)	0.008 (0.01)	-0.012 (0.01)	0.020 (0.01)	0.009 (0.01)	0.005 (0.01)	-0.001 (0.01)	0.013 (0.01)
Control mean	0.101	0.436	0.224	0.189	0.414	0.626	0.936	0.274
Observations	0.609	0.437	0.415	0.452	0.709	0.608	0.788	-0.013
	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323
Far-right X Treated	0.027 (0.02)	0.101*** (0.02)	0.041 (0.03)	0.312 (0.17)	0.067** (0.02)	0.156** (0.05)	0.117** (0.04)	0.186*** (0.02)
	0.284	0.009	0.267	0.118	0.014	0.022	0.034	0.001
Rest X Treated	0.014 (0.01)	0.002 (0.01)	-0.016 (0.01)	0.039** (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.006 (0.01)	-0.009 (0.01)	-0.000 (0.01)
	0.149	0.883	0.141	0.027	0.755	0.677	0.386	0.994
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.597	0.022	0.120	0.173	0.022	0.015	0.049	0.001

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' preferences for non-tax measures of redistribution. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Unfair:* See Question 44. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Basically unfair", 0 otherwise. *Problem:* See Question 45. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Problem", "Serious problem" or "Very serious problem", 0 otherwise. *Ability:* See Question 47. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "A lot", 0 otherwise. *Power:* See Question 48. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "6" or "7", 0 otherwise. *Programs:* See Question 49. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "expand programs", 0 otherwise. *Opps:* See Question 50. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Very strongly support" or "Support", 0 otherwise. *Gap:* See Question 51. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too large" or "Much too large", 0 otherwise. *NT Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the non-tax measures of redistribution, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

TABLE 2: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON SUPPORT FOR INCREASES IN TAXES

	Raise tax b/se/p	Inh. tax b/se/p	Rich tax b/se/p	Top 1% b/se/p	Top 9% b/se/p	Tax Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	0.008 (0.01)	-0.006 (0.02)	0.026 (0.01)	-0.207 (0.28)	-0.259 (0.60)	0.005 (0.01)
Control mean	0.266	0.709	0.133	0.499	0.682	0.732
Observations	0.632	0.428	0.336	46.649	46.649	-0.005
	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323
Far-right X Treated	0.045 (0.04)	0.020 (0.03)	0.046* (0.02)	2.919** (0.82)	3.234 (1.82)	0.104** (0.04)
	0.264	0.557	0.060	0.016	0.136	0.044
Rest X Treated	0.005 (0.01)	-0.008 (0.02)	0.024 (0.02)	-0.404 (0.28)	-0.475 (0.61)	-0.002 (0.02)
	0.508	0.617	0.206	0.203	0.473	0.911
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.319	0.438	0.404	0.010	0.114	0.061

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' support for increases in taxes. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Raise tax:* See Question 52. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Increased", 0 otherwise. *Inh. tax:* See Question 53. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Strongly Agree" or "Agree", 0 otherwise. *Rich tax:* See Question 54. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too low" or "Much too low", 0 otherwise. *Top 1%:* See Question 56a. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 1% of the population should pay. *Top 9%:* See Question 56b. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 9% of the population should pay. *Tax Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the measures of support for increases in taxes, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

5 Appendix

TABLE A1: BALANCE TABLE

Variable	(1) Control Mean/(SE)	(2) Treatment A Mean/(SE)	(3) Treatment B Mean/(SE)	(1)-(2) Mean difference	(1)-(3) Mean difference
male	0.488 (0.009)	0.491 (0.009)	0.484 (0.009)	-0.003	0.004
age1849	0.501 (0.009)	0.508 (0.009)	0.499 (0.009)	-0.007	0.003
uni completed	0.5 (0.009)	0.482 (0.009)	0.504 (0.009)	0.018	-0.004
major race type	0.713 (0.008)	0.712 (0.008)	0.722 (0.008)	0.001	-0.009
HHsize	2.574 (0.024)	2.566 (0.023)	2.526 (0.023)	0.008	0.048
working	0.612 (0.009)	0.593 (0.009)	0.617 (0.009)	0.02	-0.004
satisfied with income	0.59 (0.009)	0.555 (0.009)	0.58 (0.009)	0.034***	0.01
married	0.488 (0.009)	0.48 (0.009)	0.473 (0.009)	0.008	0.015
voted	0.844 (0.007)	0.84 (0.007)	0.832 (0.007)	0.003	0.012
child	0.396 (0.009)	0.388 (0.009)	0.373 (0.009)	0.008	0.023*
low income	0.58 (0.009)	0.597 (0.009)	0.596 (0.009)	-0.017	-0.016
low wage	0.51 (0.009)	0.53 (0.009)	0.522 (0.009)	-0.02	-0.012
Observations	3082	3113	3128		

Note: This table shows the average share of respondents with various background characteristics for the control and treatment groups as well as the mean differences. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significance: ***=.01, **=.05, *=.1.

TABLE A2: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON BELIEFS ABOUT INEQUALITY

	Rich lucky b/se/p	Poor unlucky b/se/p	Ahead luck b/se/p	Unequal opp b/se/p	Unequal chance b/se/p	Belief Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	-0.004 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	0.004 (0.01)	-0.013 (0.01)	-0.006 (0.02)
Control mean	0.795	0.730	0.700	0.733	0.246	0.741
Observations	0.598	0.661	0.330	0.784	0.295	-0.001
	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323	9323
Far-right X Treated	-0.056 (0.04)	-0.053** (0.01)	-0.092 (0.06)	-0.027 (0.03)	0.008 (0.01)	-0.094* (0.04)
	0.181	0.015	0.177	0.442	0.606	0.062
Rest X Treated	-0.002 (0.01)	0.004 (0.01)	0.000 (0.01)	0.004 (0.01)	-0.015 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.02)
	0.881	0.623	0.978	0.745	0.210	0.859
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.245	0.045	0.198	0.492	0.218	0.152

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' beliefs about inequality. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Rich lucky:* See Question 61. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "More advantages", 0 otherwise. *Poor unlucky:* See Question 60. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Circumstances beyond control", 0 otherwise. *Ahead luck:* See Question 62. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Lucky breaks", 0 otherwise. *Unequal opp:* See Question 63. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Problem", "Serious problem" or "Very serious problem", 0 otherwise. *Unequal chance:* See Question 64. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Strongly disagree" or "Disagree", 0 otherwise. *Beliefs Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of variables measuring beliefs about inequality, oriented so that a higher index means more concern about inequality.

TABLE A3: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON NON-TAX MEASURES OF REDISTRIBUTION (TREATMENT JUST BEFORE OUTCOMES)

	Unfair b/se/p	Problem b/se/p	Ability b/se/p	Power b/se/p	Program b/se/p	Opps b/se/p	Gap b/se/p	NT Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	0.027*** (0.01)	0.014 (0.01)	-0.012 (0.01)	0.023 (0.02)	0.010 (0.01)	0.006 (0.01)	0.008* (0.00)	0.022* (0.01)
Control mean	0.008	0.119	0.284	0.190	0.283	0.655	0.098	0.054
Observations	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177
Far-right X Treated	0.066* (0.03)	0.113** (0.04)	0.040 (0.06)	0.356 (0.23)	0.079* (0.04)	0.170** (0.04)	0.134*** (0.03)	0.218*** (0.04)
Rest X Treated	0.078	0.031	0.525	0.178	0.097	0.012	0.004	0.004
	0.024** (0.01)	0.008 (0.01)	-0.016 (0.01)	0.039 (0.02)	0.005 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.02)	-0.001 (0.01)	0.008 (0.01)
	0.010	0.504	0.165	0.176	0.586	0.746	0.936	0.543
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.223	0.072	0.353	0.231	0.114	0.009	0.010	0.005

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' preferences for non-tax measures of redistribution. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Unfair:* See Question 44. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Basically unfair", 0 otherwise. *Problem:* See Question 45. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Problem", "Serious problem" or "Very serious problem", 0 otherwise. *Ability:* See Question 47. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "A lot", 0 otherwise. *Power:* See Question 48. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "6" or "7", 0 otherwise. *Programs:* See Question 49. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "expand programs", 0 otherwise. *Opps:* See Question 50. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Very strongly support" or "Support", 0 otherwise. *Gap:* See Question 51. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too large" or "Much too large", 0 otherwise. *NT Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the non-tax measures of redistribution, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

TABLE A4: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON SUPPORT FOR INCREASES IN TAXES (TREATMENT JUST BEFORE OUTCOMES)

	Raise tax b/se/p	Inh. tax b/se/p	Rich tax b/se/p	Top 1% b/se/p	Top 9% b/se/p	Tax Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	0.018** (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.031* (0.01)	0.154 (0.33)	-0.234 (0.50)	0.018 (0.01)
Control mean	0.041	0.795	0.064	0.662	0.663	0.153
Observations	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177	6177
Far right X Treated	0.048 (0.03)	0.042 (0.04)	0.045 (0.03)	4.434** (1.62)	4.030 (2.68)	0.135* (0.05)
Rest X Treated	0.219 (0.01)	0.299 (0.01)	0.192 (0.02)	0.041 (0.31)	0.193 (0.52)	0.051 (0.01)
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.072	0.978	0.104	0.724	0.377	0.443
	0.376	0.381	0.679	0.041	0.160	0.072

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' support for increases in taxes. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Raise tax:* See Question 52. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Increased", 0 otherwise. *Inh. tax:* See Question 53. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Strongly Agree" or "Agree", 0 otherwise. *Rich tax:* See Question 54. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too low" or "Much too low", 0 otherwise. *Top 1%:* See Question 56a. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 1% of the population should pay. *Top 9%:* See Question 56b. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 9% of the population should pay. *Tax Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the measures of support for increases in taxes, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

TABLE A5: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON NON-TAX MEASURES OF REDISTRIBUTION (TREATMENT EARLY IN SURVEY)

	Unfair b/se/p	Problem b/se/p	Ability b/se/p	Power b/se/p	Program b/se/p	Opps b/se/p	Gap b/se/p	NT Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	0.005 (0.01)	0.002 (0.01)	-0.013 (0.01)	0.018 (0.01)	0.007 (0.01)	0.005 (0.01)	-0.009 (0.01)	0.004 (0.01)
Control mean	0.720	0.879	0.233	0.200	0.600	0.605	0.387	0.777
Observations	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228
Far right X Treated	-0.016 (0.04)	0.086** (0.03)	0.044 (0.02)	0.256 (0.14)	0.053* (0.02)	0.141** (0.05)	0.098 (0.06)	0.149*** (0.02)
Other X Treated	0.706	0.046	0.108	0.132	0.056	0.048	0.176	0.001
	0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.017 (0.01)	0.040 (0.02)	0.002 (0.01)	-0.006 (0.01)	-0.017 (0.01)	-0.009 (0.02)
	0.763	0.771	0.168	0.126	0.904	0.631	0.224	0.611
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.605	0.023	0.087	0.215	0.022	0.037	0.169	0.001

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' preferences for non-tax measures of redistribution. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Unfair:* See Question 44. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Basically unfair", 0 otherwise. *Problem:* See Question 45. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Problem", "Serious problem" or "Very serious problem", 0 otherwise. *Ability:* See Question 47. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "A lot", 0 otherwise. *Power:* See Question 48. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "6" or "7", 0 otherwise. *Programs:* See Question 49. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "expand programs", 0 otherwise. *Opps:* See Question 50. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Very strongly support" or "Support", 0 otherwise. *Gap:* See Question 51. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too large" or "Much too large", 0 otherwise. *NT Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the non-tax measures of redistribution, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

TABLE A6: TREATMENT EFFECTS ON SUPPORT FOR INCREASES IN TAXES (TREATMENT EARLY IN SURVEY)

	Raise tax b/se/p	Inh. tax b/se/p	Rich tax b/se/p	Top 1% b/se/p	Top 9% b/se/p	Tax Index b/se/p
Overall treatment effect	-0.001 (0.01)	-0.015 (0.02)	0.021 (0.02)	-0.536 (0.30)	-0.283 (0.78)	-0.006 (0.02)
Control mean	0.931	0.524	0.350	0.130	0.730	0.770
Observations	0.632	0.428	0.336	46.637	46.637	-0.005
Far right X Treated	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228	6228
	0.042 (0.06)	-0.001 (0.04)	0.051** (0.02)	1.480* (0.64)	2.400 (1.54)	0.074 (0.04)
Rest X Treated	0.484	0.990	0.022	0.067	0.180	0.136
	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.016 (0.02)	0.018 (0.02)	-0.673 (0.34)	-0.454 (0.79)	-0.013 (0.02)
	0.669	0.480	0.457	0.107	0.588	0.580
p-value (Far-right vs Rest)	0.433	0.686	0.105	0.064	0.136	0.125

Note: Panel A shows the overall treatment effect on respondents' support for increases in taxes. Panel B shows differences between respondents with far-right political views vs everyone else. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis and p-values are presented below standard errors. *Raise tax:* See Question 52. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Increased", 0 otherwise. *Inh. tax:* See Question 53. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Strongly Agree" or "Agree", 0 otherwise. *Rich tax:* See Question 54. The variable takes on the value of 1 if the respondent selects "Too low" or "Much too low", 0 otherwise. *Top 1%:* See Question 56a. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 1% of the population should pay. *Top 9%:* See Question 56b. The variable takes on the tax rate that the respondent states the richest 9% of the population should pay. *Tax Index:* An unweighted average of the Z-scores of the measures of support for increases in taxes, oriented so that a higher index means more support.

We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of full-time workers **actually** is in the United States. To complete this question please select the percent of full-time workers that you believe **actually** earns an annual wage (before tax) in each of these income groups. For example, if you believe 10% of full-time workers **actually** earn an annual wage (before tax) of between \$0 - \$19,999 please drag the relevant slider so that the box on the right-hand side states 10. In total, your answers must add up to exactly 100.

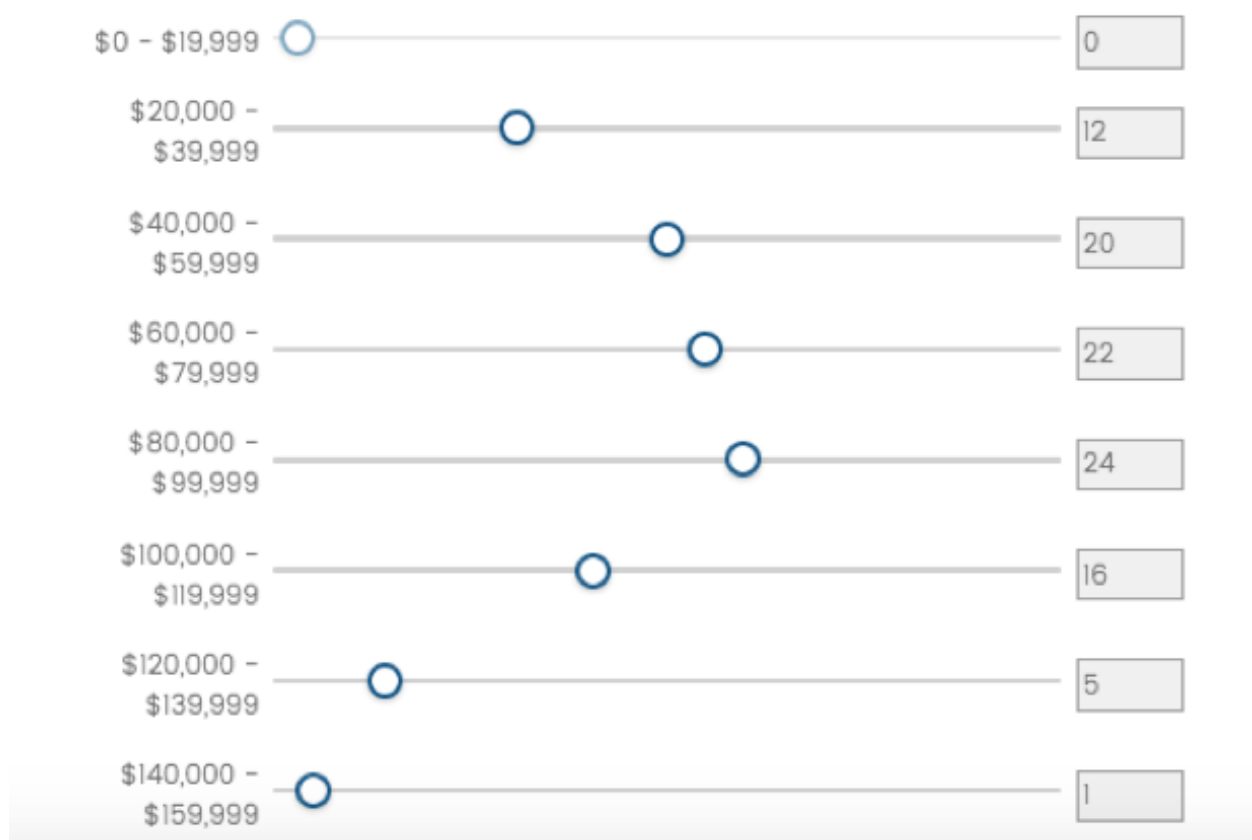


FIGURE A1: EXAMPLE OF ANSWERS PROVIDED TO THE DISTRIBUTION BUILDER

The richest 10% of full-time workers earn 5 times as much as the poorest 10% of full-time workers



FIGURE A2: EXAMPLE OF TREATMENT A - P90/P10 RATIO OF WORKERS WAGES

The average CEO earns 270 times as much as the average full-time worker

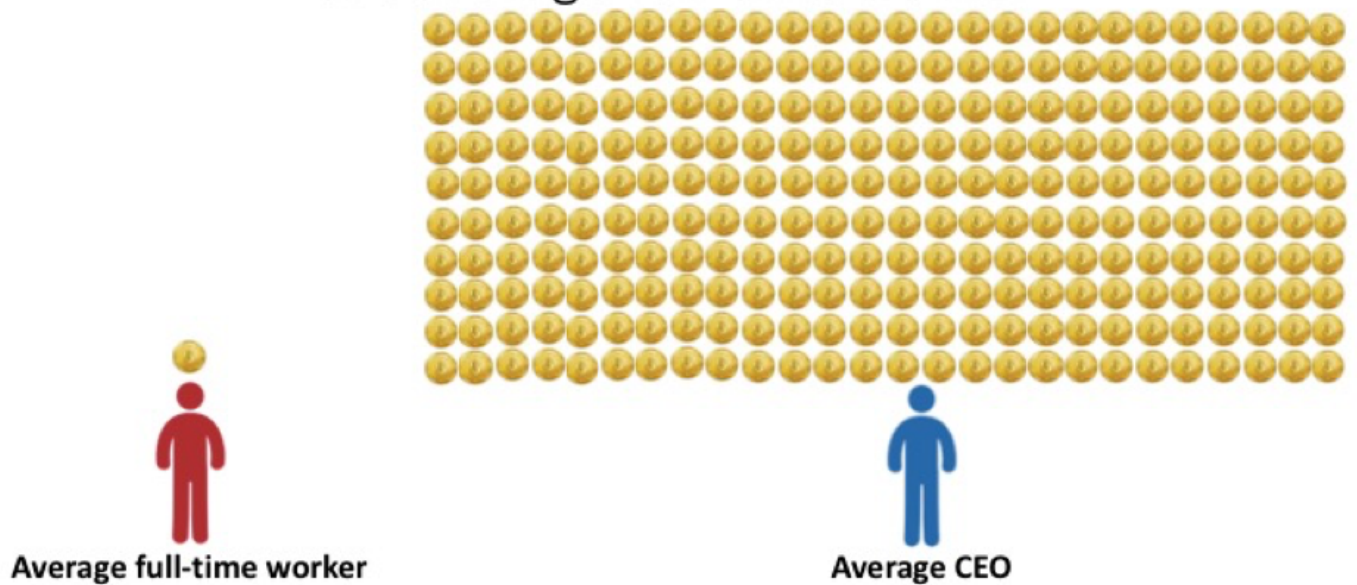


FIGURE A3: EXAMPLE OF TREATMENT B - CEO TO AVERAGE WORKER WAGE RATIO

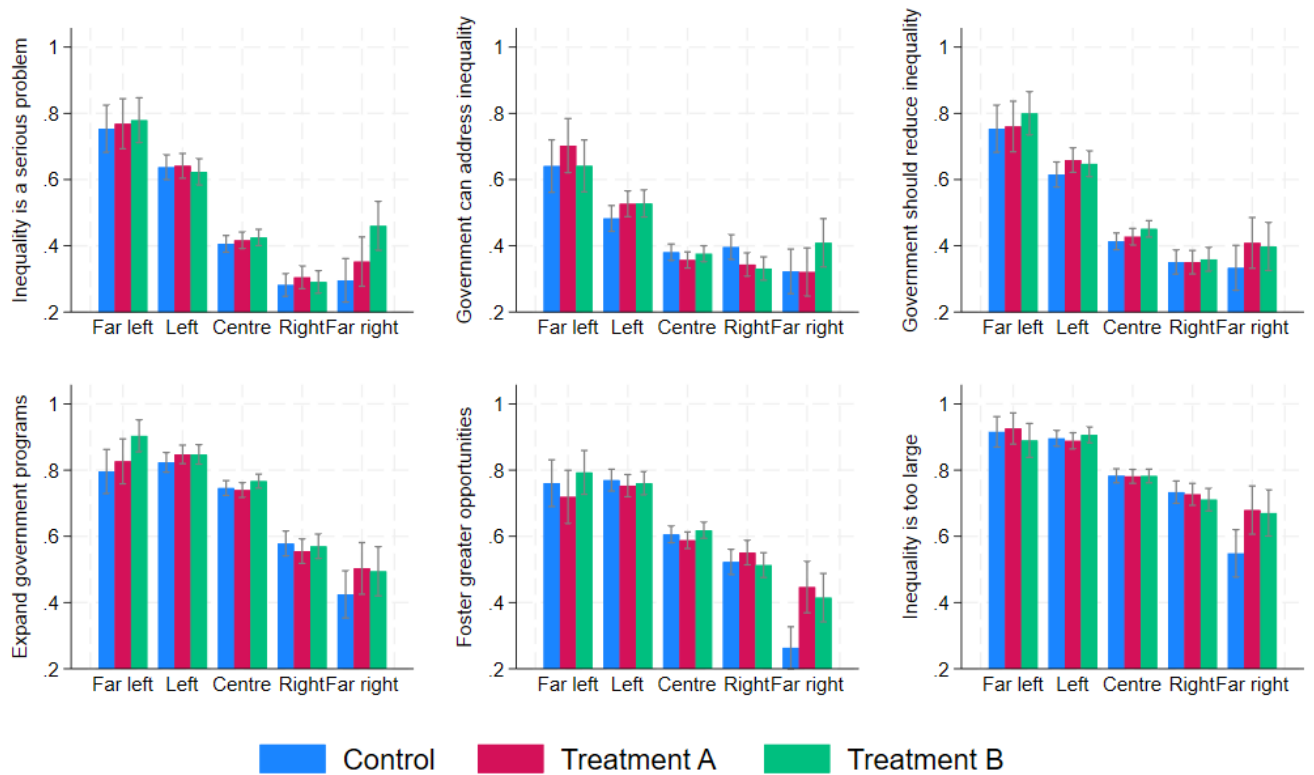


FIGURE A4: NON-TAX TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY TREATMENT

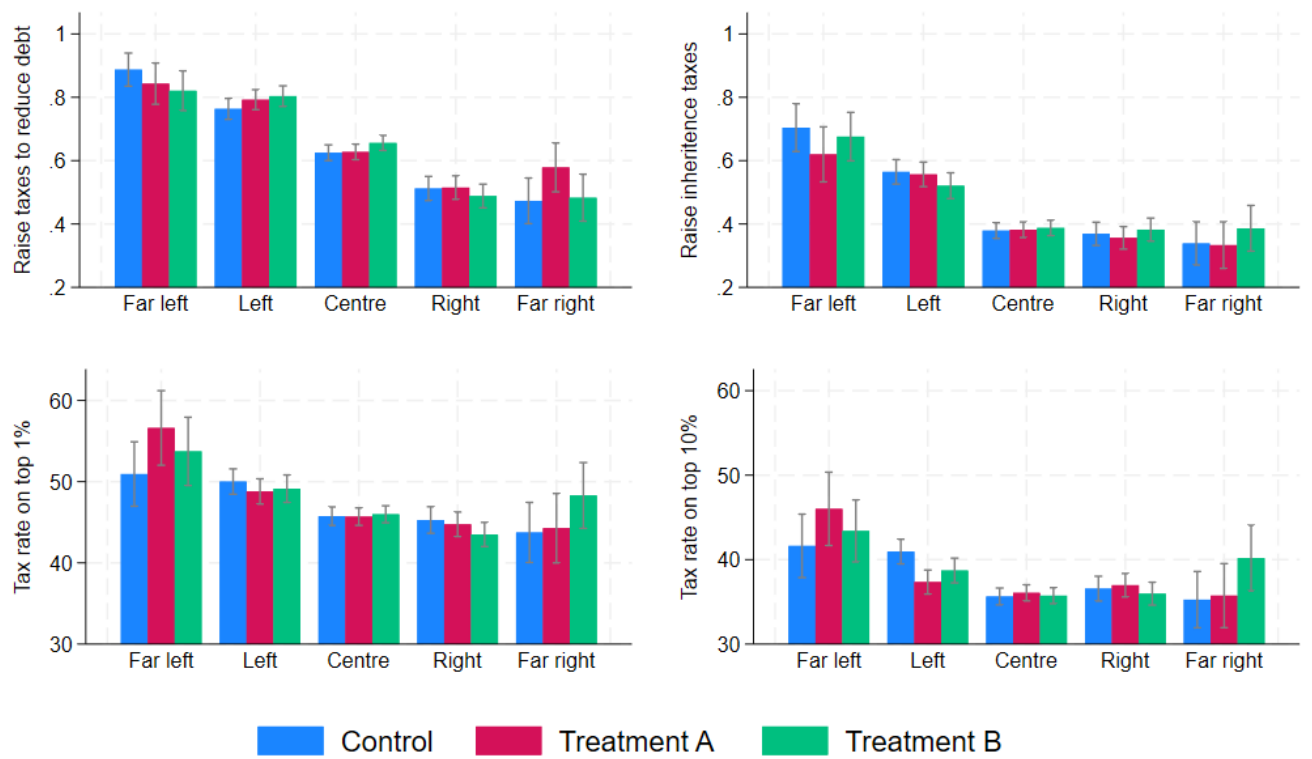


FIGURE A5: TAX-RELATED TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY TREATMENT

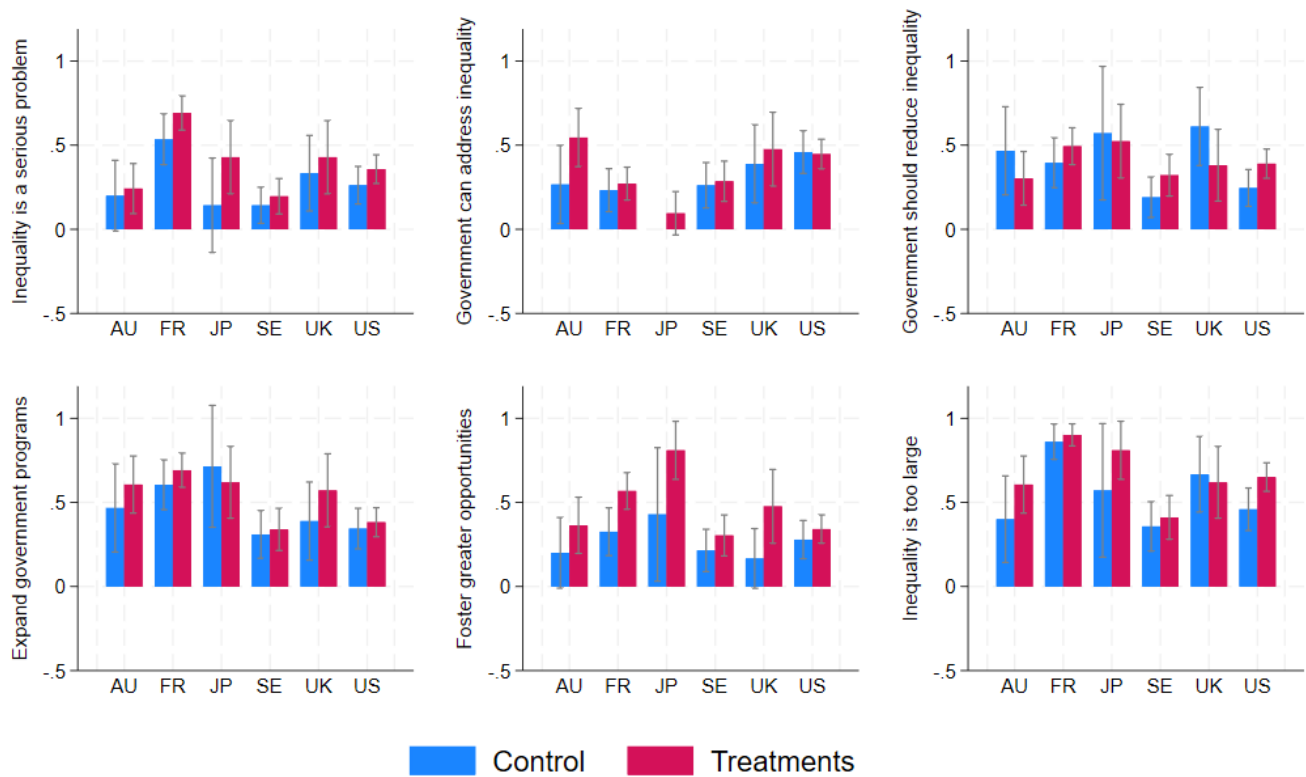


FIGURE A6: NON-TAX TREATMENT EFFECTS ON FAR-RIGHT RESPONDENTS
DISAGGREGATED BY COUNTRY

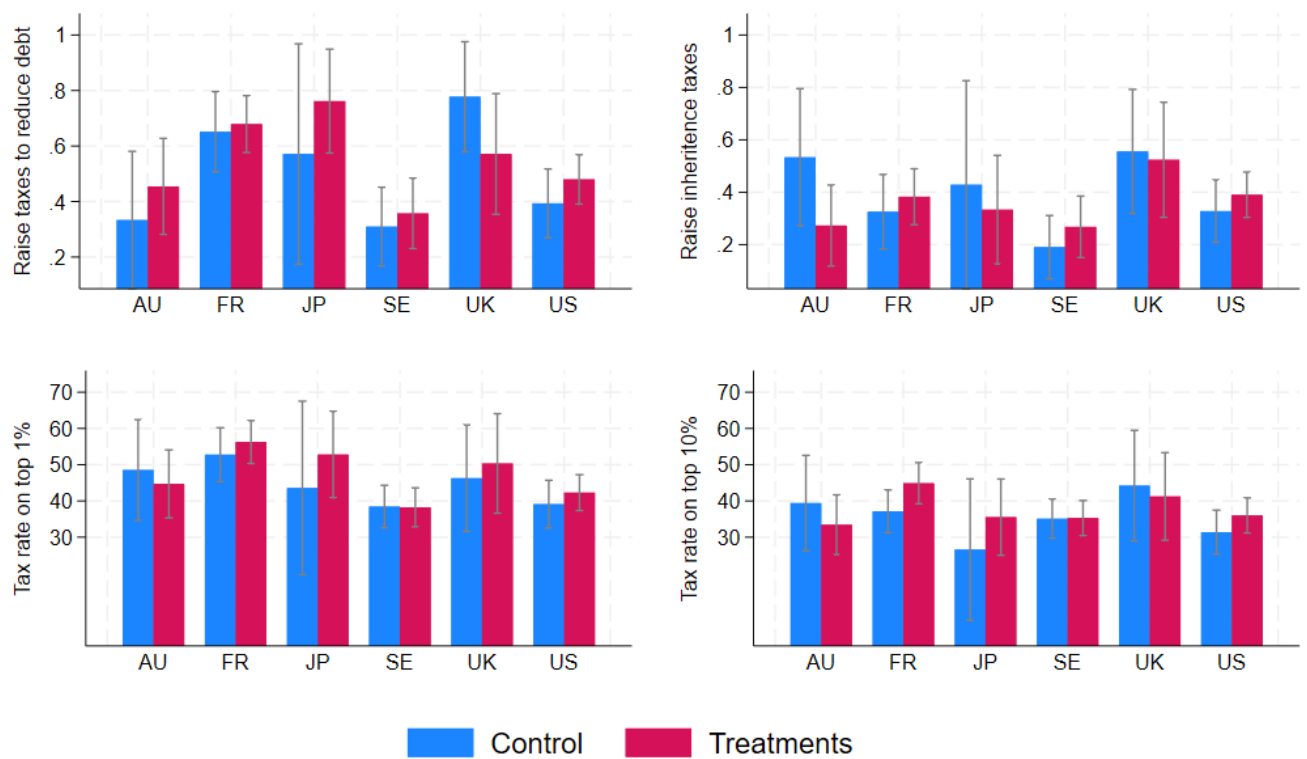


FIGURE A7: TAX-RELATED TREATMENT EFFECTS ON FAR-RIGHT RESPONDENTS
DISAGGREGATED BY COUNTRY

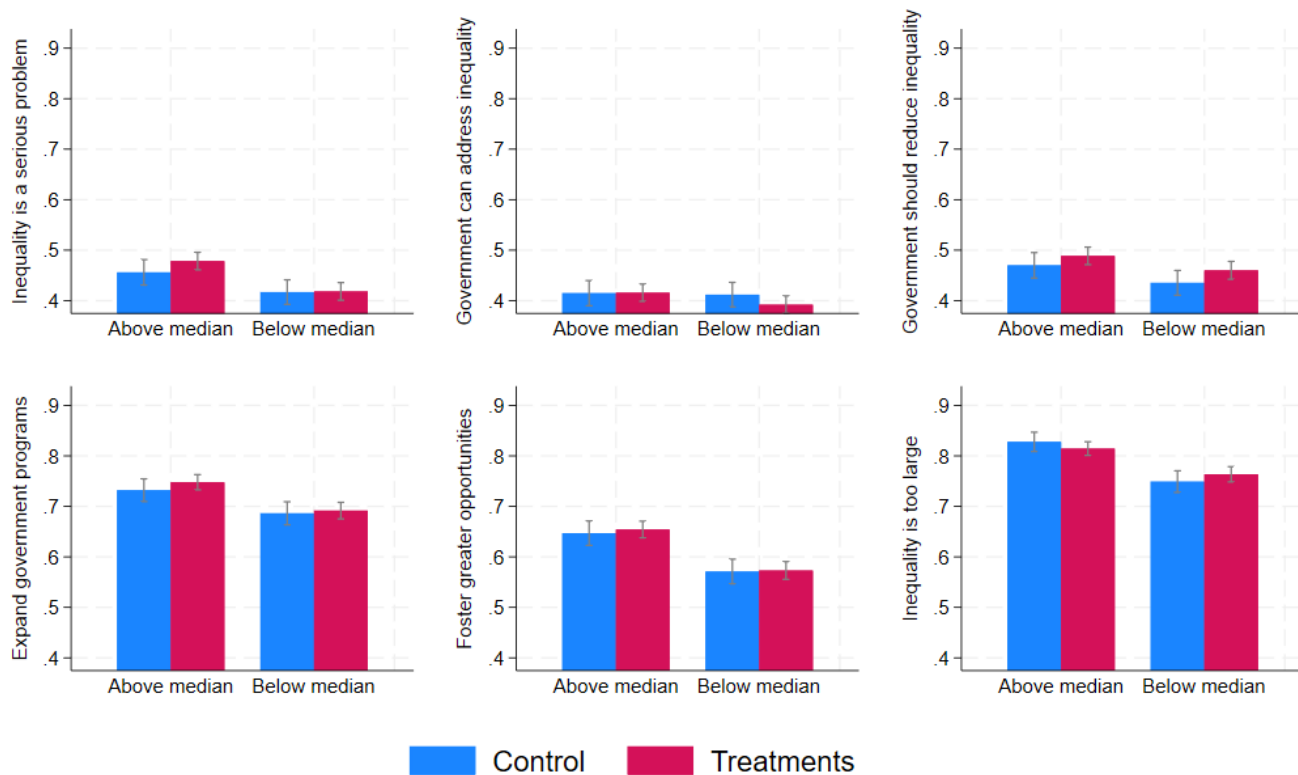


FIGURE A8: NON-TAX TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY PRIOR BELIEF ABOUT RATIO OF CEO TO AVERAGE WORKER PAY

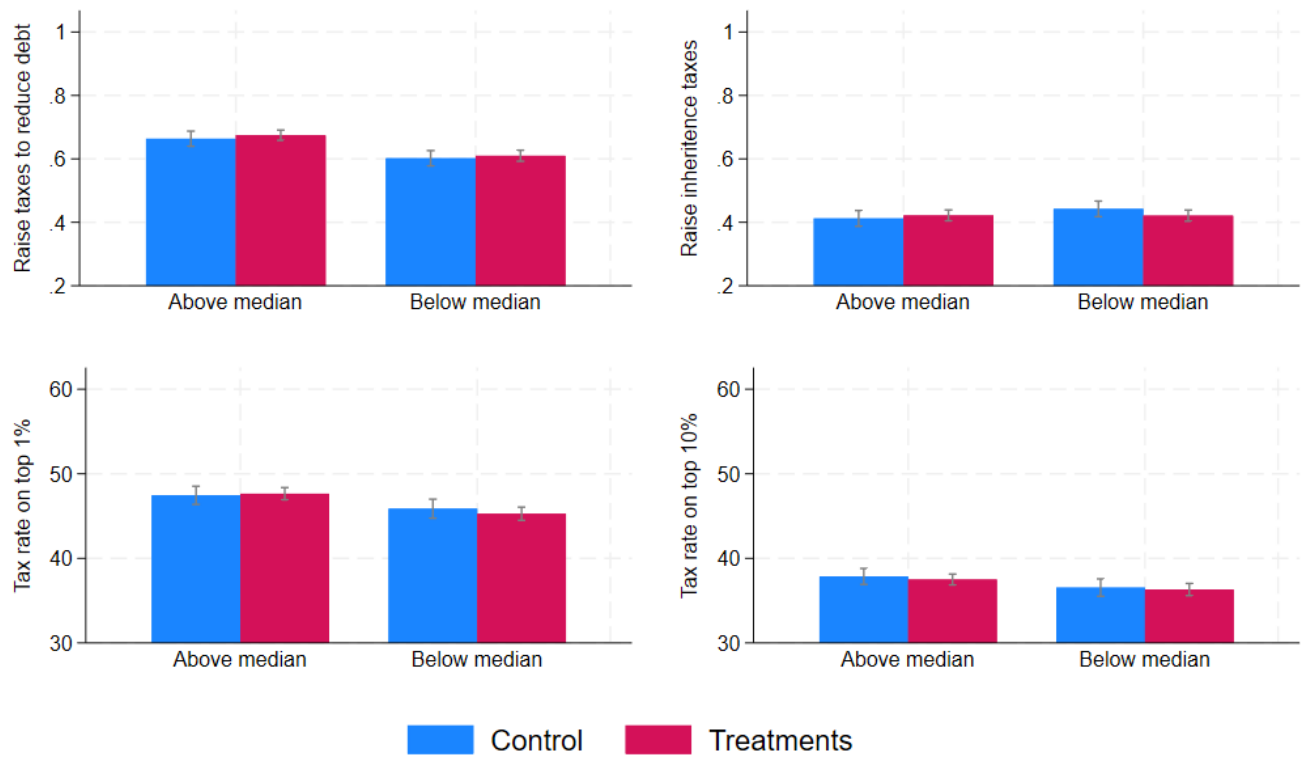


FIGURE A9: TAX-RELATED TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY PRIOR BELIEF ABOUT RATIO OF CEO TO AVERAGE WORKER PAY

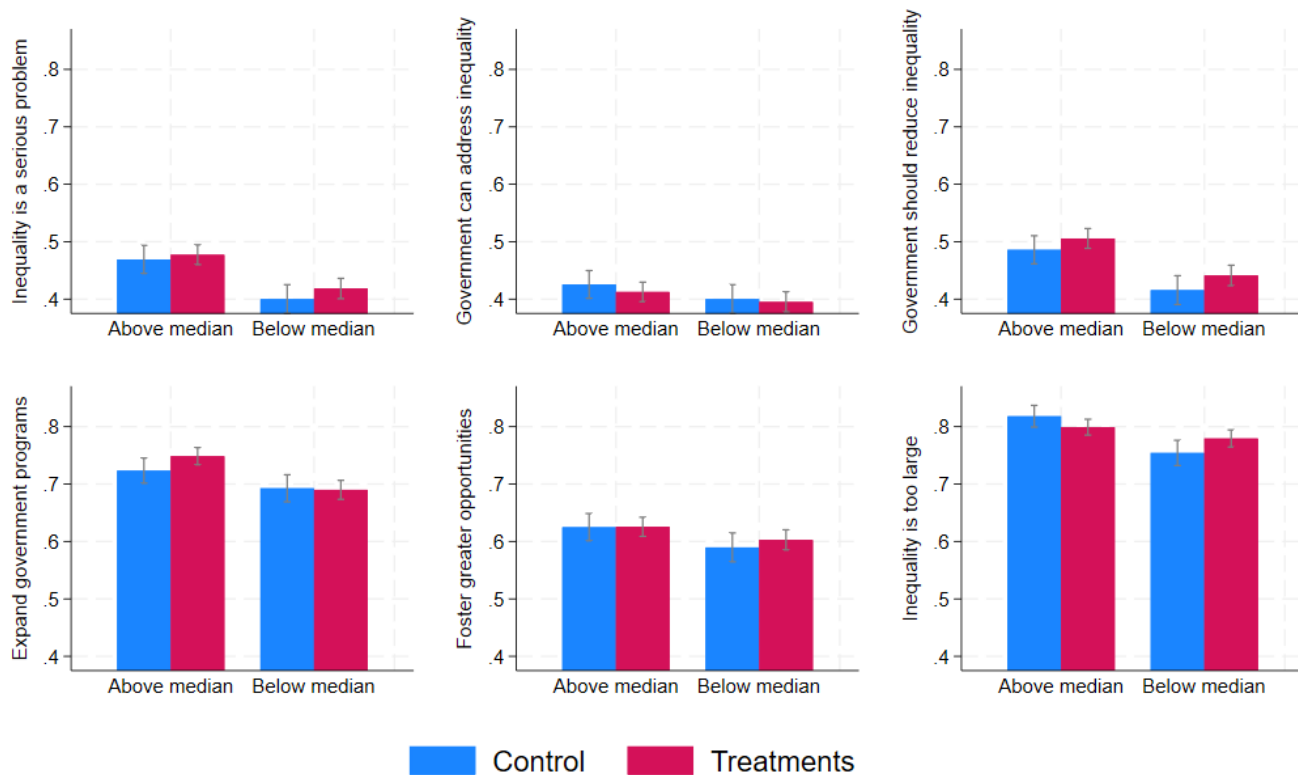


FIGURE A10: NON-TAX TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY PRIOR BELIEF ABOUT SHARE OF FULL-TIME WORKERS EARNING LOW WAGES

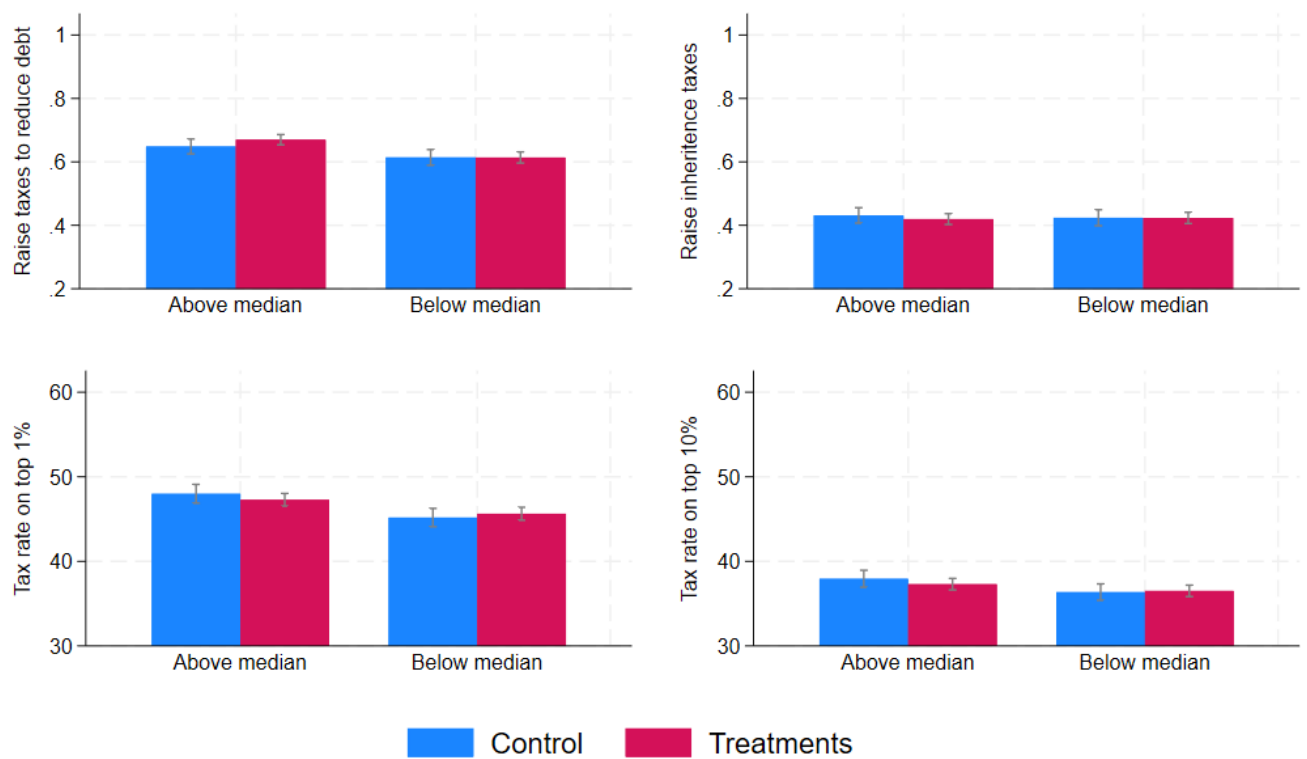


FIGURE A11: TAX-RELATED TREATMENT EFFECTS DISAGGREGATED BY PRIOR BELIEF ABOUT SHARE OF FULL-TIME WORKERS EARNING LOW WAGES

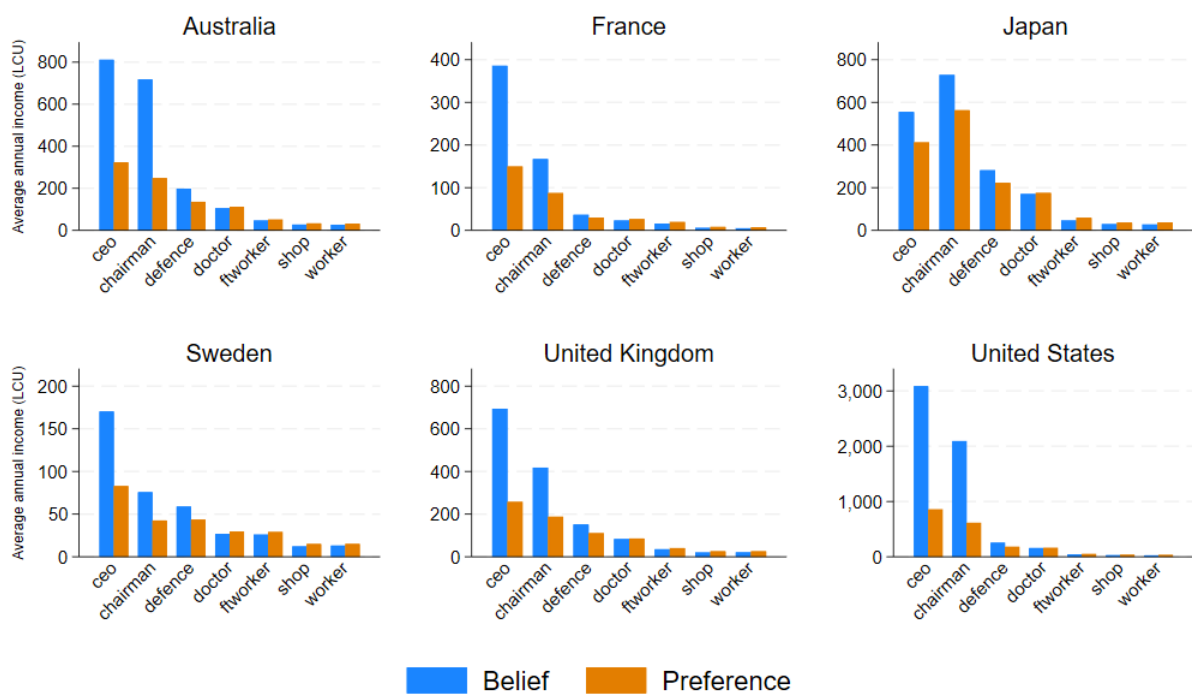


FIGURE A12: DIFFERENCES IN BELIEFS AND PREFERENCES ABOUT WAGE LEVELS
ACROSS OCCUPATIONS

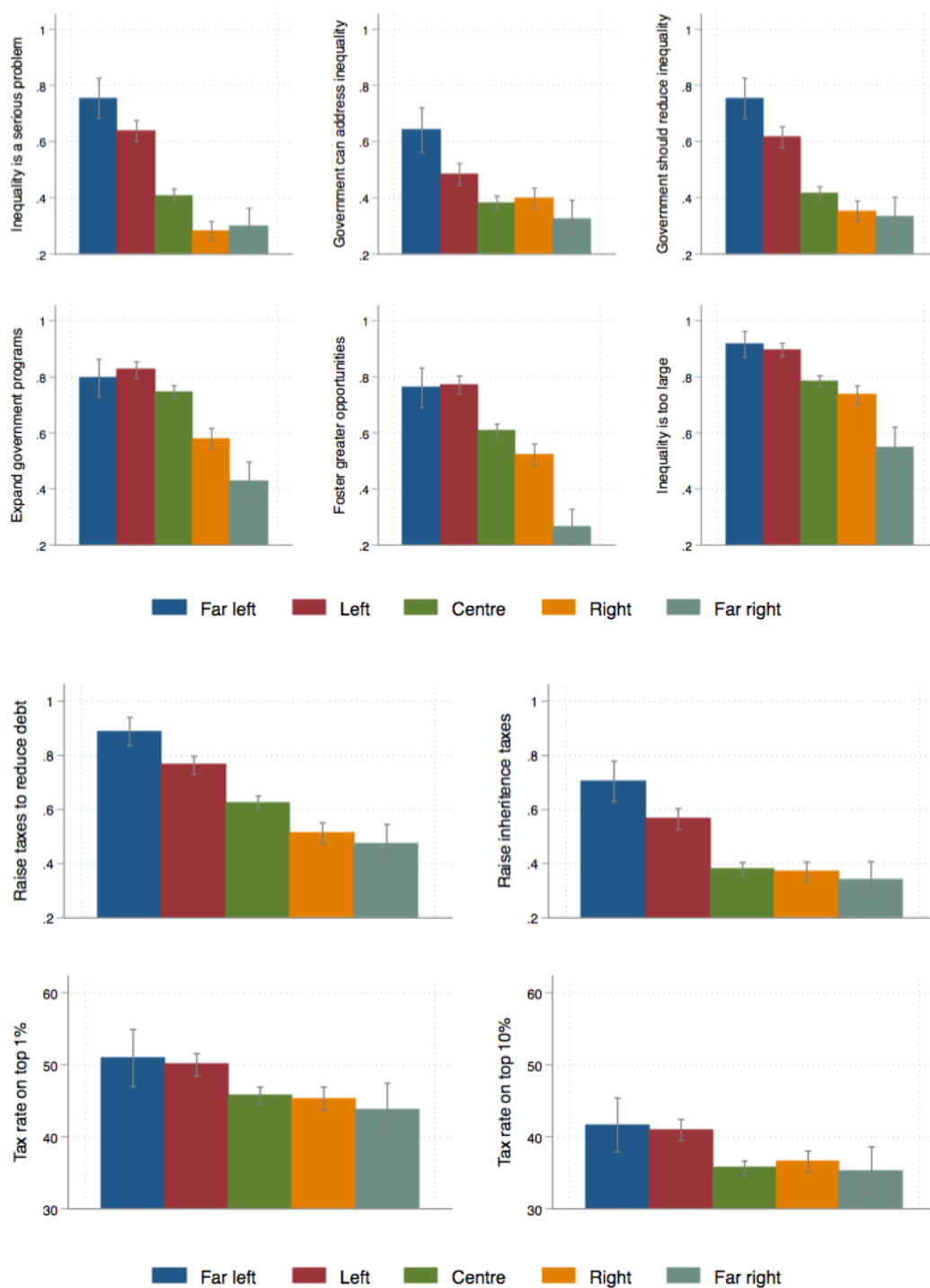


FIGURE A13: SUPPORT FOR REDISTRIBUTION (NON-TAX AND TAX-RELATED) ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM

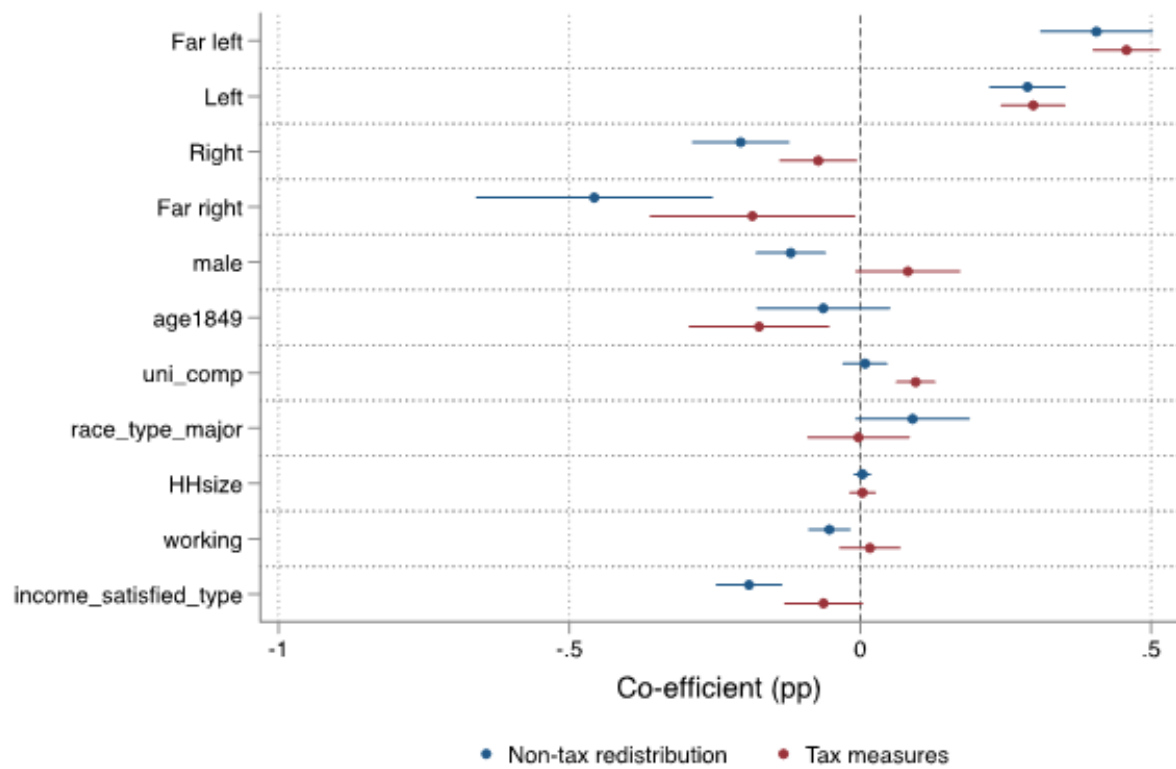


FIGURE A14: CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH SUPPORT FOR REDISTRIBUTION

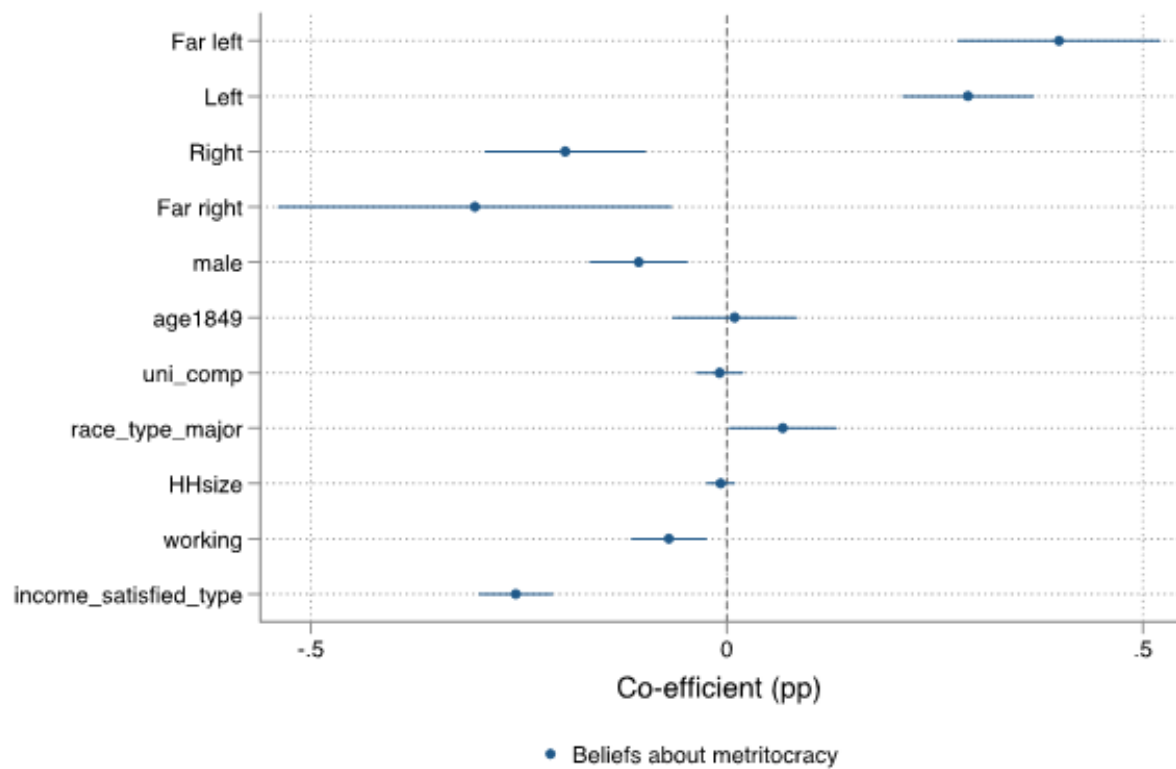


FIGURE A15: CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH BELIEFS ABOUT MERITOCRACY

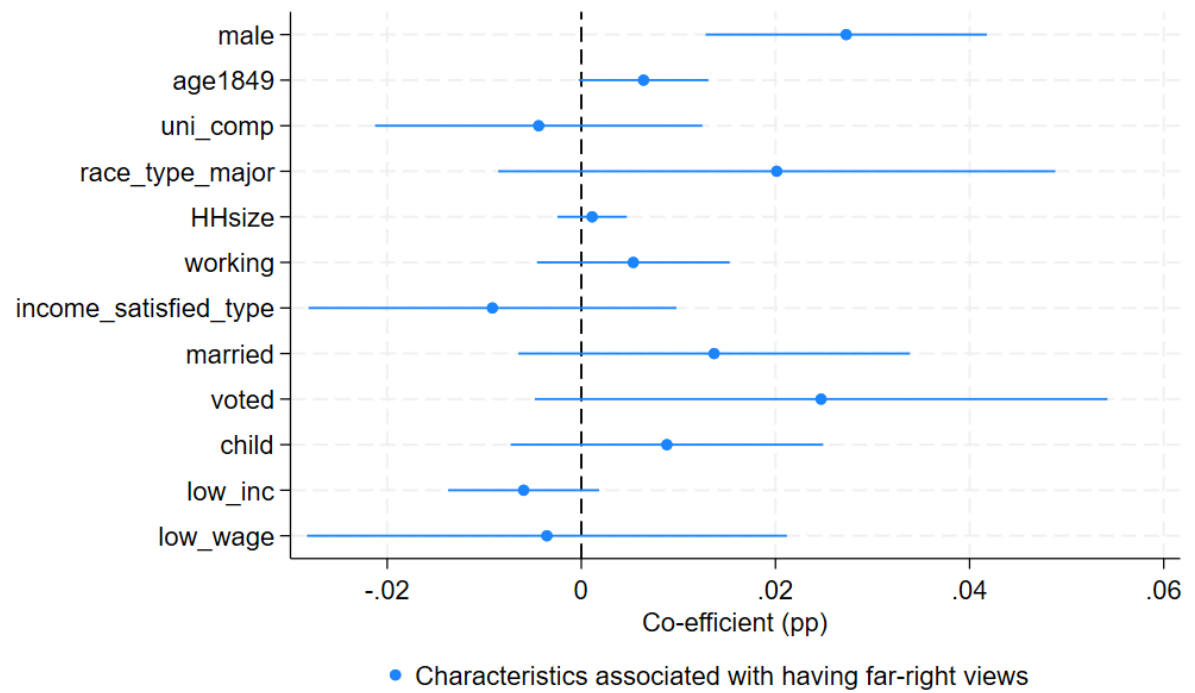


FIGURE A16: CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH HAVING FAR-RIGHT VIEWS

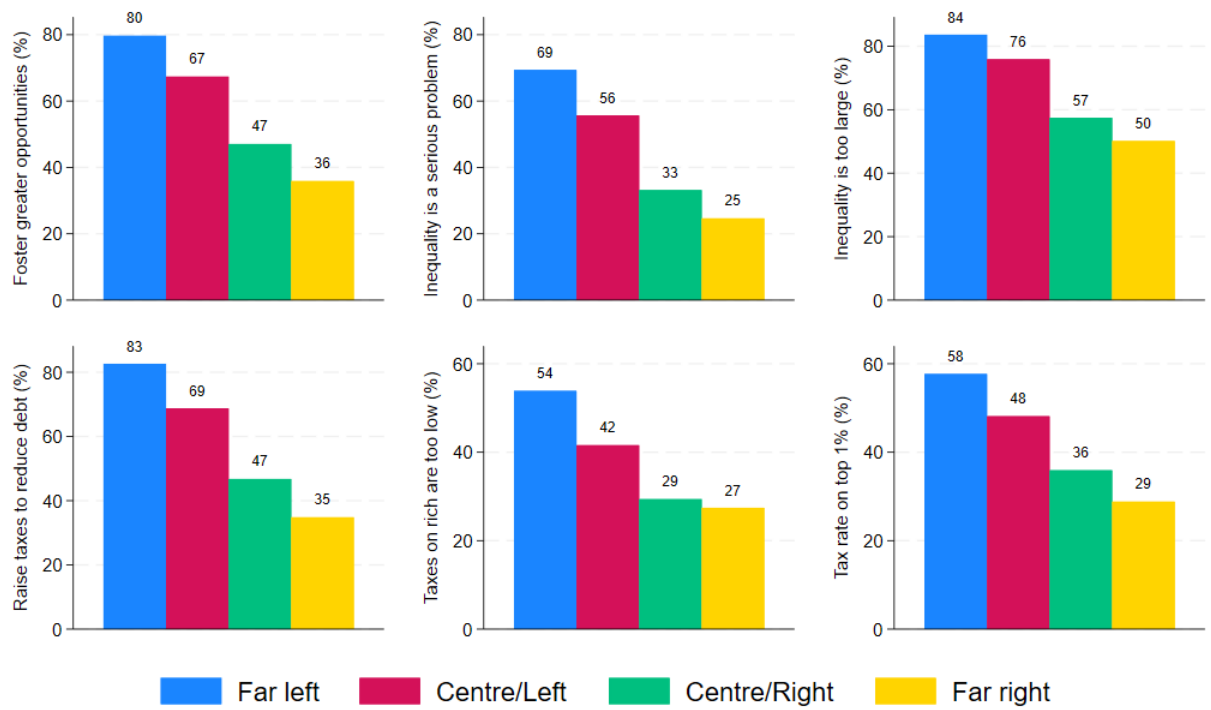


FIGURE A17: EXPERT PREDICTIONS: LEVELS OF SUPPORT ACROSS POLITICAL SPECTRUM

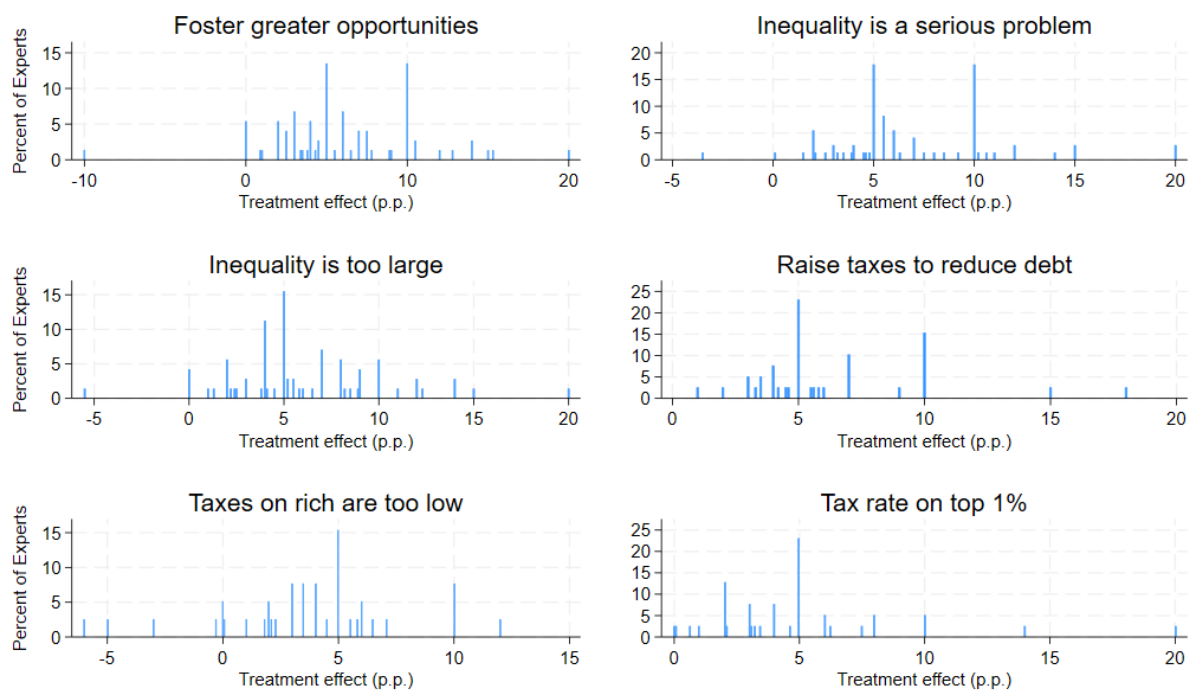
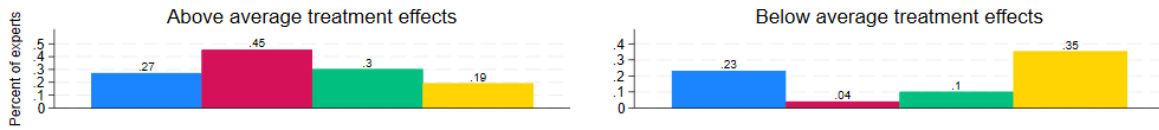


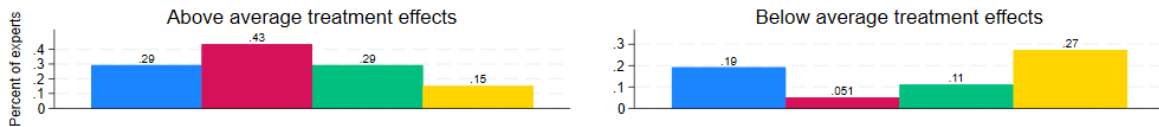
FIGURE A18: EXPERT PREDICTIONS: AVERAGE TREATMENT EFFECTS

Non-tax measures of redistribution

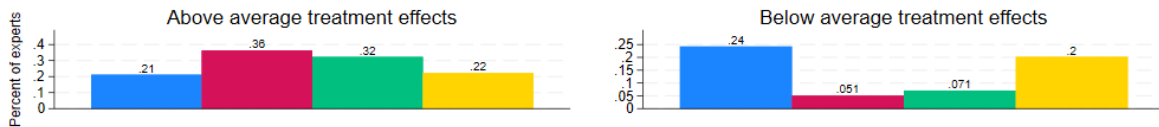
Foster greater opportunities



Inequality is a serious problem



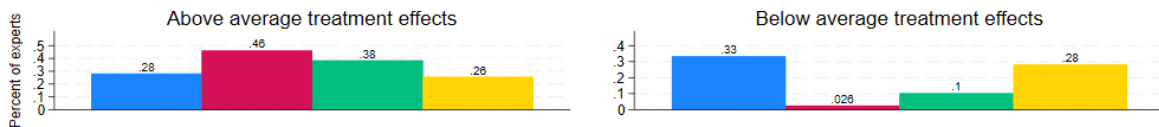
Inequality is too large



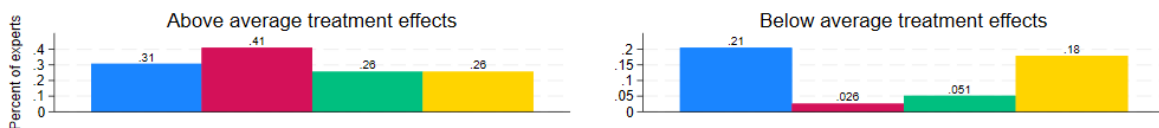
Far left Centre/Left Centre/Right Far right

Tax measures of redistribution

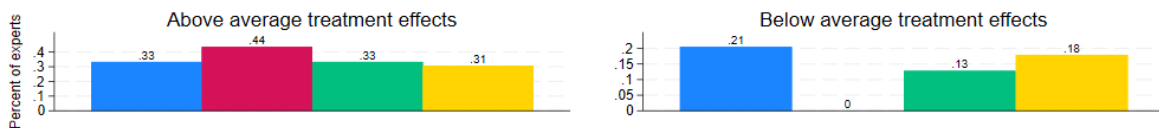
Raise taxes to reduce debt



Taxes on rich are too low



Tax rate on top 1%



Far left Centre/Left Centre/Right Far right

FIGURE A19: EXPERT PREDICTIONS: TREATMENT EFFECTS ACROSS POLITICAL SPECTRUM

UTS_Qual4011_240919_PopulationSurvey

Start of Block: Section A : Demographics

Q1

We are a non-partisan group of researchers from Monash University, the University of Technology Sydney and the Australian National University. You are invited to take part in this survey about your perception of wage inequality and support for redistribution. Your participation in this survey is voluntary and you may decline to take part. Access to the data you provide will be restricted to the research team and your identity will remain confidential.

Please note that it is very important for the success of our research that you answer honestly and read the questions very carefully before answering. Responding without adequate effort or skipping many questions may result in your responses being flagged for low quality and you may not receive your compensation. It is also very important for the success of our research project that you complete the entire survey, once you have started. This survey should take (on average) about 20 minutes to complete.

Page Break

Q2 What is your gender?

☐ Male (1)

☐ Female (2)

Page Break



Q3 What is your age?

- ☐ Below 18 (1)
- ☐ 18-34 (2)
- ☐ 35-49 (3)
- ☐ 50-64 (4)
- ☐ 65 and over (5)

Skip To: End of Block If What is your age? = Below 18

Page Break



Q4 What was your TOTAL wage, before taxes, last year?

- ☐ \$0 - \$19,999 (1)
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$39,999 (2)
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$59,999 (3)
- ☐ \$60,000 - \$79,999 (4)
- ☐ \$80,000 - \$99,999 (5)
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$119,999 (6)
- ☐ \$120,000 - \$139,999 (7)
- ☐ \$140,000 - \$159,999 (8)
- ☐ \$160,000 - \$179,999 (9)
- ☐ \$180,000 - \$199,999 (10)
- ☐ \$200,000+ (11)

Page Break

Q5 Are you satisfied with your current income?

- ☐ Very satisfied (1)
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied (2)
- ☐ Not too satisfied (3)
- ☐ Not at all satisfied (4)

Page Break



Q6 What was your TOTAL household income, before taxes, last year?

- ☐ \$0 - \$19,999 (1)
- ☐ \$20,000 - \$39,999 (2)
- ☐ \$40,000 - \$59,999 (3)
- ☐ \$60,000 - \$79,999 (4)
- ☐ \$80,000 - \$99,999 (5)
- ☐ \$100,000 - \$119,999 (6)
- ☐ \$120,000 - \$139,999 (7)
- ☐ \$140,000 - \$159,999 (8)
- ☐ \$160,000 - \$179,999 (9)
- ☐ \$180,000 - \$199,999 (10)
- ☐ \$200,000+ (11)

Page Break

Q7 How many people (including yourself) live in your household?

▼ 1 (1) ... 8 or more (8)

Page Break



Q8 Please indicate your relationship status

- ☐ Single (1)
- ☐ De facto (2)
- ☐ Married (3)
- ☐ Legally separated or divorced (4)
- ☐ Widowed (5)

Page Break

Q9 How many children live in your household?

- ☐ 1 (1)
- ☐ 2 (2)
- ☐ 3 (3)
- ☐ 4 (4)
- ☐ 5 or more (5)
- ☐ I do not have children living in my household (6)

Page Break

Q10 How would you describe your ethnicity/race?

- ☐ European American/White (1)
- ☐ African American/Black (2)
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino (3)
- ☐ Asian/Asian American (4)
- ☐ Other (5)

Page Break



Q11 What is your ZIP code?

Page Break



Q12 Which category best describes your highest level of education?

- ☐ Completed primary school (1)
- ☐ Some secondary school (2)
- ☐ Completed secondary school (3)
- ☐ Some tertiary education (4)
- ☐ Completed a tertiary degree/qualification (5)
- ☐ Completed a post-graduate degree (e.g. Masters, MBA, PhD) (6)

Page Break



Q13 How frequently are you engaged in employment?

- ☐ Full-time (i.e. equal to or more than 35 hours per week) (1)
- ☐ Part-time (i.e. less than 35 hours a week) (2)
- ☐ Not currently working (3)

Page Break



Q14 What is your current employment status?

- ☐ Employee (1)
- ☐ Self-employed or small business owner (2)
- ☐ Unemployed and looking for work (3)
- ☐ Not currently working and not looking for work (4)
- ☐ Student (5)
- ☐ Retiree (6)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If What is your current employment status? = Employee

Or What is your current employment status? = Self-employed or small business owner

Q15 Which of the following sectors are you employed in? Check the one that applies. If you have multiple jobs, check the one that describes your main occupation.

- ☐ Agriculture, forestry and fishing (1)
- ☐ Mining and quarrying (2)
- ☐ Manufacturing (3)
- ☐ Construction (4)
- ☐ Wholesale and retail trade (5)
- ☐ Transportation and storage (6)
- ☐ Accommodation and food service activities (7)
- ☐ Information and communication (8)
- ☐ Financial and insurance activities (9)
- ☐ Real estate activities (10)
- ☐ Administrative and support service activities (11)
- ☐ Public administration and defence (12)
- ☐ Education (13)
- ☐ Human health and social work activities (14)
- ☐ Arts, entertainment and recreation (15)
- ☐ Other (16)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If What is your current employment status? = Unemployed and looking for work

Or What is your current employment status? = Not currently working and not looking for work

Q16 Even if you are not currently working, what sector did your latest occupation fall under? Check the one that applies. If you have had multiple jobs, check the one that describes your main occupation.

- ☐ Agriculture, forestry and fishing (1)
- ☐ Mining and quarrying (2)
- ☐ Manufacturing (3)
- ☐ Construction (4)
- ☐ Wholesale and retail trade (5)
- ☐ Transportation and storage (6)
- ☐ Accommodation and food service activities (7)
- ☐ Information and communication (8)
- ☐ Financial and insurance activities (9)
- ☐ Real estate activities (10)
- ☐ Administrative and support service activities (11)
- ☐ Public administration and defence (12)
- ☐ Education (13)
- ☐ Human health and social work activities (14)
- ☐ Arts, entertainment and recreation (15)
- ☐ Other (16)

Q17 If you compare your job (or your last job if you currently don't have a job) with the job your father had while you were growing up, would you say that the level of status of your job is:

- ☐ Much higher than my father's (1)
- ☐ Higher than my father's (2)
- ☐ About equal to my father's (3)
- ☐ Much lower than my father's (4)
- ☐ My father did not have a job while I was growing up OR I come from a single-parent family (5)

Page Break



Q18 If you compare your job (or your last job if you currently don't have a job) with the job your mother had while you were growing up, would you say that the level of status of your job is:

- ☐ Much higher than my mother's (1)
- ☐ Higher than my mother's (2)
- ☐ About equal to my mother's (3)
- ☐ Lower than my mother's (4)
- ☐ Much lower than my mother's (5)
- ☐ My mother did not have a job while I was growing up OR I come from a single-parent family (6)

Page Break

Q19 On economic policy matters, where do you see yourself on the left/right wing spectrum?

- ☐ Far left (1)
- ☐ Left (2)
- ☐ Centre (3)
- ☐ Right (4)
- ☐ Far right (5)

Page Break

Q20 In politics, as of today, do you consider yourself a Republican, a Democrat or an Independent?

- ☐ Republican (1)
- ☐ Democrat (2)
- ☐ Independent (3)

Page Break

Q21 Did you vote in the presidential election?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Did you vote in the presidential election? = Yes

Q22 Who did you vote for:

- ☐ Joe Biden (1)
- ☐ Donald Trump (2)
- ☐ Other (5)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Did you vote in the presidential election? = No

Q23 Even if you did NOT vote, please indicate the candidate who represents your views most closely

☐ Joe Biden (5)

☐ Donald Trump (6)

Page Break

Q24 Before proceeding to the next set of questions, we want to ask for your feedback about the responses you provided so far. It is vital to our study that we only include responses from people who devoted their full attention to this study. This will not affect in any way the compensation you will receive for taking this survey.

In your honest opinion, should we use your responses, or should we discard your responses since you did not devote your full attention to the questions so far?

- ☐ Yes, I have devoted full attention to the questions so far and I think you should use my responses for your study (1)
- ☐ No, I have not devoted full attention to the questions so far and I think you should not use my responses for your study (2)

Skip To: End of Block If Before proceeding to the next set of questions, we want to ask for your feedback about the respon... = No, I have not devoted full attention to the questions so far and I think you should not use my responses for your study

End of Block: Section A : Demographics

Start of Block: Section B: Distribution Builder_Actual Earnings

Display This Question:

*If Var_Method = Category1_TreatmentA
Or Var_Method = Category1_TreatmentB*

Timer Timing
First Click (1)
Last Click (2)
Page Submit (3)
Click Count (4)

Display This Question:

*If Var_Method = Category1_TreatmentA
Or Var_Method = Category1_TreatmentB*

Intro

`#{e://Field/Var_TreatmentPipe1}`

Page Break

Q25

We would like to know what you think people in these jobs ACTUALLY earn. Please write in how much you think they usually earn EACH YEAR before taxes. Many people are not exactly sure about this, but your best guess will be close enough. This may be difficult, but it is very important, so please try.

Page Break



Q26

About how much do you think a doctor in general practice earns(in \$)?



Q27 How much do you think a chairman of a large national corporation earns(in \$)?

Page Break



Q28 How much do you think a shop assistant earns(in \$)?



Q29 How much do you think an unskilled worker in a factory earns(in \$)?



Q30 How much do you think the Secretary of Defence in the national government earns(in \$)?



Q31
How much do you think the average CEO of a firm listed on the New York Stock Exchange earns(in \$) each year before taxes?



Q32
How much do you think the average full-time worker earns(in \$) each year before taxes?

Page Break

Q33 How confident are you with the estimates you entered in the previous questions about people's actual earnings?

	Not Confident			Very Confident	
	1	2	3	4	5
()					

Page Break



Q34 We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of full-time workers **actually** is in the United States. To complete this question please select the percent of full-time workers that you believe **actually** earns an annual wage (before tax) in each of these income groups. For example, if you believe 10% of full-time workers **actually** earn an annual wage (before tax) of between \$0 - \$19,999 please drag the relevant slider so that the box on the right-hand side states 10. In total, your answers must add up to exactly 100.

- _____ \$0 - \$19,999 (15)
- _____ \$20,000 - \$39,999 (16)
- _____ \$40,000 - \$59,999 (17)
- _____ \$60,000 - \$79,999 (18)
- _____ \$80,000 - \$99,999 (19)
- _____ \$100,000 - \$119,999 (20)
- _____ \$120,000 - \$139,999 (21)
- _____ \$140,000 - \$159,999 (22)
- _____ \$160,000 - \$179,999 (23)
- _____ \$180,000 - \$199,999 (24)
- _____ \$200,000+ (25)

End of Block: Section B: Distribution Builder_Actual Earnings

Start of Block: Section C: Distribution Builder_Should Earn_1

Q35 The next set of questions are about how much do you think people in these jobs **SHOULD** earn EACH YEAR before taxes, regardless of what they actually earn.

Page Break



Q36

About how much do you think a doctor in general practice should earn(in \$)?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q26/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.



Q37 How much do you think a chairman of a large national corporation should earn(in \$)?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q27/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.

Page Break

Display This Question:

If About how much do you think a doctor in general practice earns(in \$)? Text Response Is Equal to \${q://QID36/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

And And How much do you think a chairman of a large national corporation earns(in \$)? Text Response Is Equal to \${q://QID37/ChoiceTextEntryValue}

Reminder Reminder: You are being asked what you think people SHOULD earn, as opposed to what people ACTUALLY earn

Page Break



Q38 How much do you think a shop assistant should earn(in \$)?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q28/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.



Q39 How much do you think an unskilled worker in a factory should earn(in \$)?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q29/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.



Q40 How much do you think the Secretary of Defence in the national government should earn(in \$)?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q30/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.



Q41 How much do you think the average CEO of a firm listed on the New York Stock Exchange should earn(in \$) each year before taxes?

Reminder: you have previously entered $\${Q31/ChoiceTextEntryValue}$ when asked what they actually earned.



Q42

How much do you think the average full-time worker should earn(in \$) each year before taxes?

Reminder: you have previously entered `#{Q32/ChoiceTextEntryValue}` when asked what they actually earned.

End of Block: Section C: Distribution Builder_Should Earn_1

Start of Block: Section C: Distribution Builder_Should Earn_2

IntroQ43 *Reminder: you have previously entered the following values when asked about the ACTUAL distribution of full-time, annual wages (pre-tax) in your country.* /* Center tables for demo table { margin: 0 auto; }*/ /* Default Table Style */ table { color: #333; background: white; border: 1px solid grey; font-size: 12pt; border-collapse: collapse; } table thead th, table tfoot th { color: #777; background: rgba(0,0,0,.1); } table th, table td { padding: .5em; border: 1px solid lightgrey; }

Your distribution	Income Range
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/15}</code>	\$0 - \$19,999
\$20,000 - \$39,999	<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/16}</code>
	\$40,000 - \$59,999
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/17}</code>	
\$60,000 - \$79,999	<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/18}</code>
	\$80,000 - \$99,999
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/19}</code>	
\$100,000 - \$119,999	<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/20}</code>
	\$120,000 - \$139,999
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/21}</code>	
\$140,000 - \$159,999	<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/22}</code>
	\$160,000 - \$179,999
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/23}</code>	
\$180,000 - \$199,999	<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/24}</code>
	\$200,000+
<code>#{Q34/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/25}</code>	

The next question will ask about what the distribution of wages SHOULD be.

Page Break



Q43 We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of full-time workers **should** be in the United States. To complete this question please select the percent of full-time workers that you believe **should** earn an annual wage (before tax) in each of these income groups. For example, if you believe 10% of full-time workers **should** earn an annual wage (before tax) of between \$0 to \$19,999 please drag the relevant slider so that the box on the right-hand side states 10. In total, your answers must add up to exactly 100.

- _____ \$0 - \$19,999 (17)
- _____ \$20,000 - \$39,999 (18)
- _____ \$40,000 - \$59,999 (19)
- _____ \$60,000 - \$79,999 (20)
- _____ \$80,000 - \$99,999 (21)
- _____ \$100,000 - \$119,999 (22)
- _____ \$120,000 - \$139,999 (23)
- _____ \$140,000 - \$159,999 (24)
- _____ \$160,000 - \$179,999 (25)
- _____ \$180,000 - \$199,999 (26)
- _____ \$200,000+ (27)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$0 - \$19,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/15}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$20,000 - \$39,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/16}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$40,000 - \$59,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/17}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$60,000 - \$79,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/18}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$80,000 - \$99,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/19}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$100,000 - \$119,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/20}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$120,000 - \$139,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/21}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$140,000 - \$159,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/22}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$160,000 - \$179,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/23}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$180,000 - \$199,999] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/24}

And We are interested in your views about what the distribution of the annual wages (before tax) of f... [\$200,000+] = \${q://QID23/ChoiceNumericEntryValue/25}

Erroer_Page Reminder: You are being asked what you think people SHOULD earn, as opposed to what people ACTUALLY earn.

You have entered the exact same values for both section. Please click on back button and update your responses. .Skin #Buttons #NextButton { display: none; }

End of Block: Section C: Distribution Builder_Should Earn_2

Start of Block: Section D: Outcome Measures Intro

Display This Question:

If Var_Method = Category2_TreatmentA

Or Var_Method = Category2_TreatmentB

Timer Timing

First Click (1)

Last Click (2)

Page Submit (3)

Click Count (4)

Display This Question:

If Var_Method = Category2_TreatmentA

Or Var_Method = Category2_TreatmentB

Intro \${e://Field/Var_TreatmentPipe2}

End of Block: Section D: Outcome Measures Intro

Start of Block: Section D: Outcome Measures

Q44 Do you think the economic system in the United States is:

- ☐ Basically fair, since all people have an equal opportunity to succeed (3)
- ☐ Basically unfair, since all people do not have an equal opportunity to succeed (4)

Page Break

Q45 Do you think inequality is a serious problem in the United States?

- ☐ Not a problem at all (1)
- ☐ A small problem (2)
- ☐ A problem (3)
- ☐ A serious problem (4)
- ☐ A very serious problem (5)

Page Break

Q46 How much of the time do you think you can trust the government to do what is right?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Only some of the time (2)
- ☐ Most of the time (3)
- ☐ Always (4)

Page Break _____

Q47 To reduce the inequality of opportunities between children born in poor and rich families, the government has the ability and the tools to do:

☐ Nothing at all (1)

☐ Not much (2)

☐ A lot (4)

Page Break

Q48

Some people think that the government should not concern itself with making the opportunities for children from poor and rich families less unequal. Others think that the government should do everything in its power to make the opportunities for children from poor and rich families less unequal.

Think of a score of 1 as meaning that the government should not concern itself with making the opportunities for children from poor and rich families less unequal, and a score of 7 meaning that the government should do everything in its power to reduce this inequality of opportunities.

What score between 1 and 7 comes closest to the way you feel?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
()							

Page Break

Q49 What do you think would do more to make the opportunities for children from poor and rich families less unequal?

- ☐ Lowering taxes on wealthy people and corporations to encourage more investment in economic growth (1)
- ☐ Raising taxes on wealthy people and corporations to expand programs for the poor (2)

Page Break

Q50 Do you support more policies to increase the opportunities for children born in poor families and to foster more equality of opportunity, such as education policies? Naturally, to finance an expansion of policies promoting equal opportunity, it would have to be the case that either other policies are scaled down or taxes are raised

- ☐ I very strongly oppose more policies promoting equality of opportunity (1)
- ☐ I oppose more policies promoting equality of opportunity (2)
- ☐ I am indifferent (3)
- ☐ I support more policies promoting equality of opportunity (4)
- ☐ I very strongly support more policies promoting equality of opportunity (5)

Page Break

Q51 Thinking of income levels generally in the United States today, would you say that the gap between those with high incomes and those with low income is:

- ☐ Much too large (1)
- ☐ Too large (2)
- ☐ About right (3)
- ☐ Too small (4)
- ☐ Much too small (5)
- ☐ Can't choose (6)

Page Break

Q52 There have been proposals in some countries to decrease national debt by raising income taxes on the rich. Do you think income taxes on the rich should be increased, stay the same or decreased?

- ☐ Increased (1)
- ☐ Stay the same (2)
- ☐ Decreased (3)

Page Break

Q53 An inheritance tax is a tax imposed on the transfer of wealth from very rich people who have deceased to their heirs. To what extent do you agree that this sort of tax should exist in the United States?

- ☐ Strongly Agree (1)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Neither Agree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly Disagree (5)

Page Break

Q54 Generally, how would you describe taxes in the United States today for the top 10% of full-time workers? Taxes are...

- ☐ Much too high (1)
- ☐ Too high (2)
- ☐ About right (3)
- ☐ Too low (4)
- ☐ Much too low (5)
- ☐ Can't choose (6)

Page Break

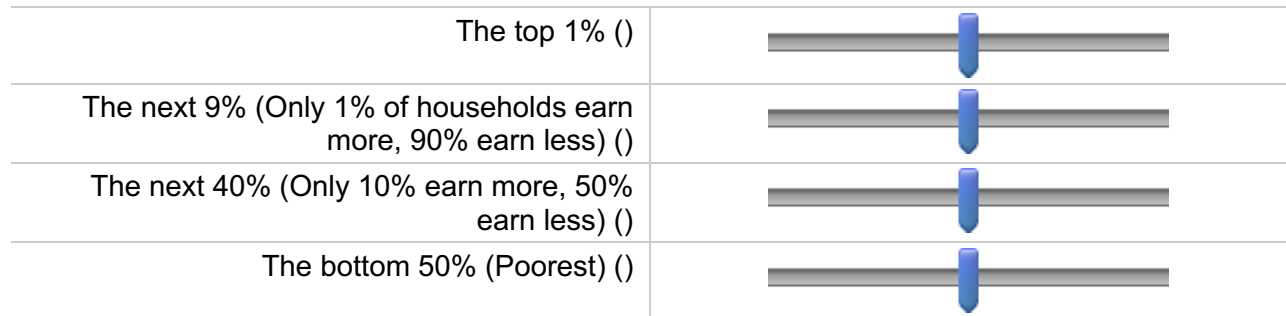
Q55 In the next two questions, we ask you to think about the total level of funds that the government raises and spends today on various policies. We will ask about your views on two aspects: a. First, on the fair split of the tax burden to raise these funds; b. Second, on how you think the government should spend these funds.

Page Break

Q56

Please use the sliders below to tell us how much you think each of the following groups should pay in taxes as a percentage of their total income.

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Page Break



Q57 Please enter the percent of the national government budget you would assign to each spending category (the total must sum to 100):

Defence and National Security : _____ (1)

Public Infrastructure : _____ (2)

Spending on Schooling and Higher Education : _____ (3)

Social Security, Medicare, Disability Insurance and Supplementary Security Income (SSI) :
_____ (4)

Social Insurance and Income Support Programs : _____ (5)

Public Spending on Health : _____ (6)

Total : _____

Page Break

Q58 To what extent do you agree with the following:

	Strongly agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neither agree or disagree (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly disagree (5)
Too many people on welfare could be working (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Too many people on welfare cheat (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most people on welfare don't have any choice (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Most people on welfare do not get enough help (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Page Break

Q59 Which of the following ethnicities/races (if any) do you believe disproportionately benefits from government spending on welfare?

- ☐ European American/White (1)
- ☐ African American/Black (4)
- ☐ Hispanic/Latino (5)
- ☐ Asian/Asian American (6)
- ☐ Other (7)
- ☐ There are no differences between ethnicities/races (8)

End of Block: Section D: Outcome Measures

Start of Block: Section E: Beliefs Questions

Q60 Which has more to do with why a person is poor?

- ☐ Lack of effort on his or her own part (1)
- ☐ Circumstances beyond his or her control (2)

Page Break

Q61 Which has more to do with why a person is rich?

- ☐ Because she or he worked harder than others (1)
- ☐ Because she or he had more advantages than others (2)

Page Break

Q62 Some people say that people get ahead by their own hard work; others say that lucky breaks or help from other people are more important. Which do you think is most important?

- ☐ People get ahead by their own hard work (1)
- ☐ Lucky breaks or help from other people (2)

Page Break

Q63 If children from poor and rich backgrounds have unequal opportunities in life, do you think this is:

- ☐ Not a problem at all (1)
- ☐ A small problem (2)
- ☐ A problem (3)
- ☐ A serious problem (4)
- ☐ A very serious problem (5)

Page Break

Q64 How do you feel about the following statement? "In the United States everybody has a chance to make it and be economically successful."

- ☐ Strongly agree (1)
- ☐ Agree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Disagree (4)
- ☐ Strongly disagree (5)

Page Break

Q65 Please select one box for each of these to show how important you think it is for getting ahead in life

	Essential (1)	Very Important (2)	Fairly Important (3)	Not Very Important (4)	Not Important At All (5)	Can't Choose (6)
How important is coming from a wealthy family? (1)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is having well-educated parents? (2)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is having a good education yourself? (3)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is having ambition? (4)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is hard work? (5)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is knowing the right people? (6)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is having political connections? (7)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
How important is giving bribes? (8)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How
important is
a person's
race? (9)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

How
important is
a person's
religion? (10)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

How
important is
being born a
man or a
woman? (11)

☐☐☐☐☐☐

Page Break

Q66 Please describe in one sentence what has this survey been about so far?

End of Block: Section E: Beliefs Questions

Start of Block: Section F: Real stakes Questions_1

Q67

Imagine you are enrolled in a lottery to win US\$1000. In the event that you won, would you be willing to donate part or all of your US\$1000 gain for a good cause? Below you will find 2 charities which help people in the U.S. deal with the hurdles of everyday life. You can enter how many dollars out of your US\$1000 gain you would like to donate to each of them.

Enter how much of your US\$1000 gain you would like to donate to each charity:

_____ Feeding America (1)

_____ The Salvation Army (2)



Q68 How much, if any, of your US\$1000 gain would you be willing to pay for accurate information about the distribution of full-time wages in your country and the amount of money CEOs earn relative to the average full-time worker?

End of Block: Section F: Real stakes Questions_1

Start of Block: Section F: Real stakes Questions_2

Q69 Writing to the Senators of your state gives you an opportunity to influence government policy. Few citizens email their elected officials, therefore Senators and their staff take such emails from their constituents very seriously. For the purpose of our survey, we would just like to know which of the following actions you would consider undertaking (you can select more than one):

- ☐ Sending an email to your Senator asking for limits to be placed on the incomes of corporate executives (4)
 - ☐ Sending an email to your Senator asking for increases in the minimum wage (5)
 - ☐ Sending an email to your Senator about another issue (6)
 - ☐ ☒ Not sending an email to your Senator (7)
-

Q70 A way to illustrate your desire for government action is by signing a petition. Imagine you were given the opportunity to sign a petition asking for the government to reduce the level of wage inequality. For the purpose of our survey, we would just like to know which of the following actions you would consider undertaking:

- ☐ I would sign a petition (4)
 - ☐ I would be interested in finding out more information before deciding whether I would sign a petition (5)
 - ☐ I am not interested in being provided with information or signing a petition (6)
-

Q71 Joining the registered union for your industry may increase the chances of wage rises for employees. For the purpose of our survey, we would just like to know which of the following actions you would consider undertaking:

- ☐ I am already a member of a union (4)
- ☐ I would like to join the registered union for my industry (5)
- ☐ I would be interested in finding out more information before deciding whether I would join a union (6)
- ☐ I am not interested in being provided with information or joining a union (7)

End of Block: Section F: Real stakes Questions_2

Start of Block: Section G: Closing Survey

Q72 Do you feel that this survey was biased?

- ☐ Yes, left-wing bias (1)
- ☐ Yes, right-wing bias (2)
- ☐ No, it did not feel bias (3)

Page Break

Q73 Please feel free to give us any feedback or impression regarding this survey.

End of Block: Section G: Closing Survey
