A. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min.	Max.
Prop. to Vote for V	391	2.719	2.323	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for MP	392	1.911	1.651	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for SAP	392	2.855	2.206	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for C	393	2.321	1.855	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for L	390	2.287	1.739	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for KD	392	1.778	1.530	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for M	392	2.732	2.271	1.000	7.000
Prop. to Vote for SD	391	2.512	2.331	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party V	395	3.359	2.163	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party MP	395	2.871	1.759	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party SAP	394	3.680	1.765	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party C	395	3.367	1.596	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party L	395	3.506	1.495	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party KD	392	2.804	1.698	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party M	394	3.520	1.845	1.000	7.000
Rating of Party SD	395	2.661	2.211	1.000	7.000
Rating of Coalition M-C-L-KD	394	3.302	2.062	1.000	7.000
Rating of Coalition M-SD	394	2.685	2.272	1.000	7.000
Rating of Coalition SAP-MP	393	2.921	1.977	1.000	7.000
Rating of Coalition SAP-MP-L-C	394	3.246	1.927	1.000	7.000
Likelihood M entering Coalition M-C-L-KD	391	5.128	1.641	1.000	7.000
Likelihood M entering Coalition M-SD	393	3.186	1.724	1.000	7.000
Likelihood SAP entering Coalition SAP-MP	391	3.962	1.803	1.000	7.000
Likelihood SAP entering Coalition SAP-MP-L-C	391	3.627	1.503	1.000	7.000

Table 4: Descriptive statistics: Baseline propensities to vote, party ratings, coalition ratings and coalition expectations of the control group.

Note: Only respondents assigned to the control group were considered. V = Left Party; MP = Green Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party; C = Center Party; L = Liberal Party; KD = Christian Democrats; M = Moderate Party; SD = Sweden Democrats.

B. Randomization Test

In this section, a multinomial logistic regression is used to test whether respondents were indeed randomly assigned to either one of the treatment groups or the control group. Table 5 displays that a model including pre-treatment characteristics as control variables does not fit better to the data than a null model. Thus, we conclude that respondents were randomly assigned to the experimental groups.

	M-C-L-KD coef/se	M-SD coef/se	SAP-MP coef/se	SAP-MP-L-C coef/se
M Party Rating	0.01 (0.07)	0.01 (0.06)	0.08 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.07)
SAP Party Rating	0.11* (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)	0.08 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)
V Party Rating	-0.06 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.06)	0.05 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)
MP Party Rating	0.0008 (0.07)	0.05 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.07)	0.08 (0.07)
C Party Rating	0.03 (0.06)	-0.04 (0.06)	0.004 (0.06)	-0.06 (0.06)
L Party Rating	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.09 (0.07)	-0.008 (0.07)	0.01 (0.07)
KD Party Rating	0.01 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.007 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)
SD Party Rating	-0.002 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.05)	-0.0005 (0.05)	0.01 (0.05)
Sex	0.25 (0.15)	0.16 (0.15)	0.14 (0.15)	0.11 (0.15)
Age	-0.32 (0.24)	-0.62** (0.24)	-0.11 (0.25)	-0.17 (0.24)
Age Squared	0.03 (0.03)	0.08* (0.03)	0.01 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Constant	0.05 (0.70)	1.00 (0.68)	-0.75 (0.72)	0.11 (0.70)
N	1842			
log-likelihood	-2943.1			
χ^2	40.586			
p-value	**0.76748**			

. $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
The control group is the reference category.

Table 5: Randomization test: Multinomial logit on treatment assignment.

C. Unconditional Treatment Effect on Propensities to Vote

Figure 8 shows the average treatment effects of the coalition signals on the propensities to vote for the Moderates and the Social Democrats. The left panel shows the effects we find on voting decisions for the Moderates. The coalition signal, which indicates that the Social Democrats want to form a coalition with the Green Party, the Liberal Party, and the Center Party (i.e., Treatment SAP-MP-L-C), significantly increases the propensity to vote for the Moderates by 0.19 [0.01; 0.38] points on the 7-point scale. The other three coalition signals have no significant effect on voting for the Moderates. The right panel shows the effects on voting propensities for the Social Democrats. Respondents' propensity to vote for the Social Democrats increases on average by 0.20 [0.03; 0.37] points when the Moderates signal to form a coalition with the Sweden Democrats (i.e., Treatment M-SD). The other vignettes have no significant effect on voting for the Social Democrats. These results, again, indicate that some coalition signals indeed affect the voting decision of individuals.
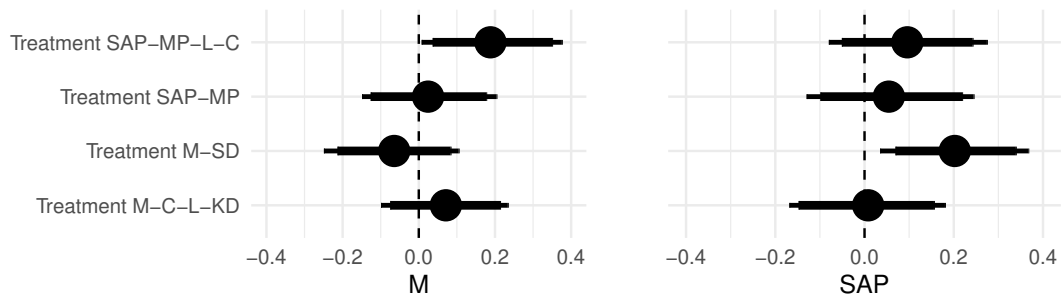

Figure 8: Average causal treatment effect of coalition signals on the propensity to vote.

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "How likely is it that you will vote for the following parties?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("not likely at all") to 7 ("very likely"). M = Moderate Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

As Figure 9 shows, the coalition signals sent by either the Moderates or the Social Democrats also change the propensity to vote for Swedish parties other than the Moderates or the Social Democrats. For instance, signaling an SAP-MP coalition increases the propensity to vote for the Christian Decorates and the Left Party. However, these effects are only significant at the 90% confidence interval.
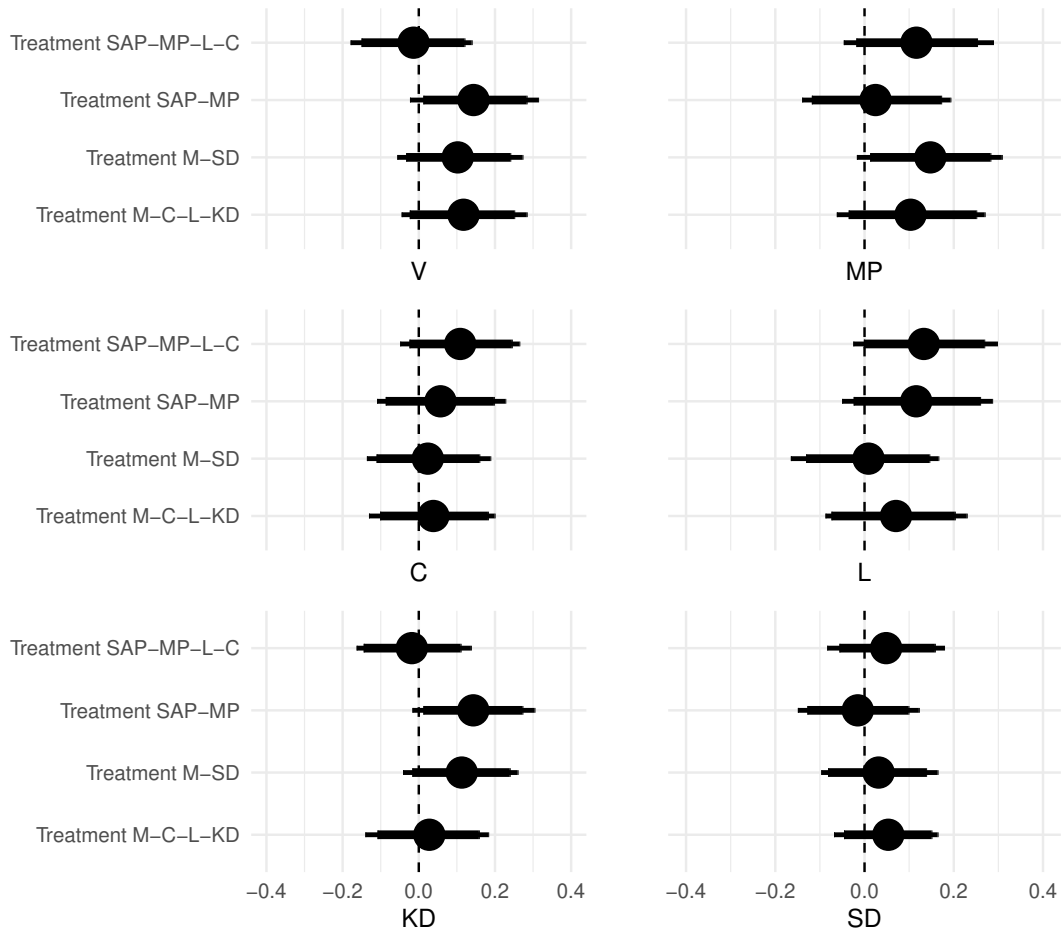
Figure 9: Average causal treatment effect of coalition signals on propensity to vote for parties V, MP, C, L, KD and SD.

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "How likely is it that you will vote for the following parties?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("not likely at all") to 7 ("very likely"). V = Left Party; MP = Green Party; C = Center Party; L = Liberal Party; KD = Christian Democrats; SD = Sweden Democrats. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. For the simulations, an observed-value approach was employed. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

D. Conditional Average Treatment Effects on Propensities to Vote for Other Parties
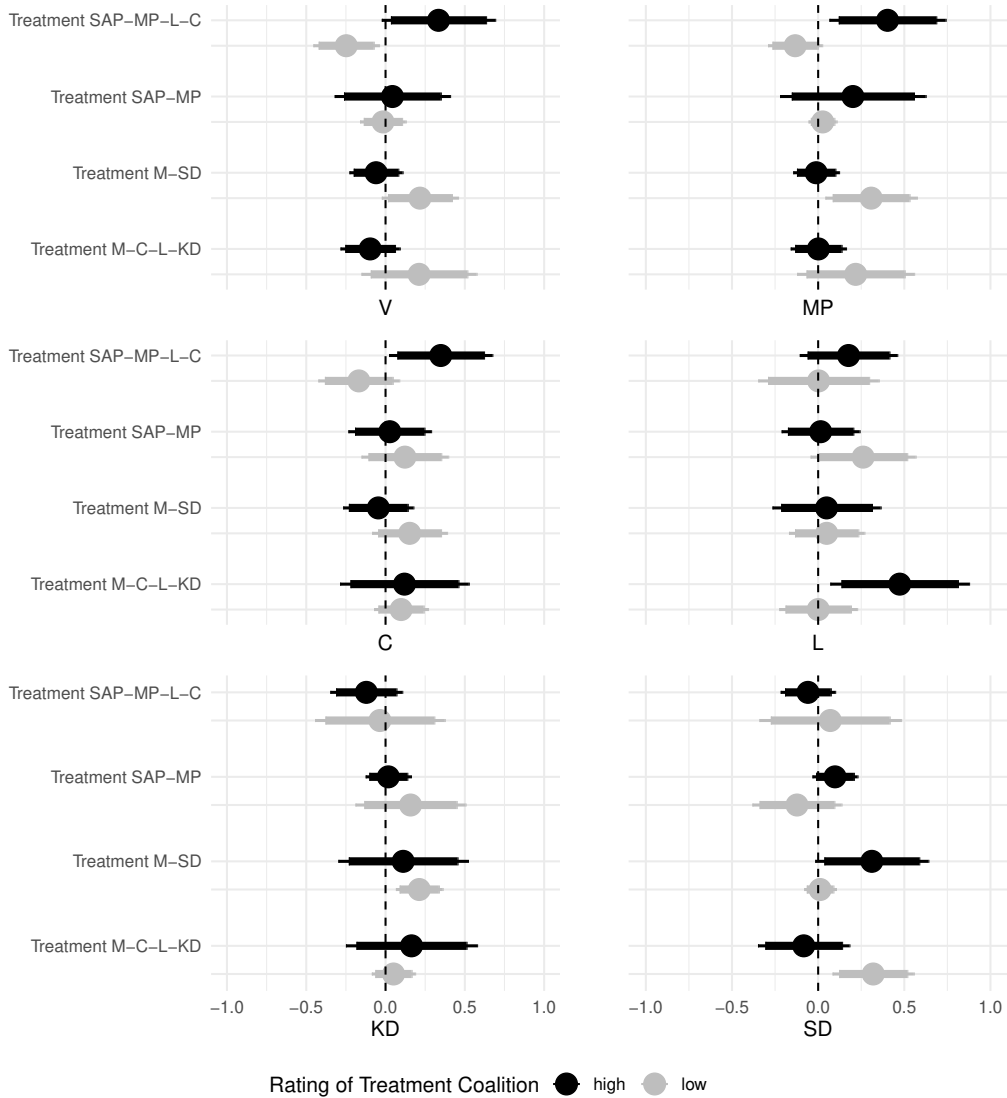

Figure 10: Conditional average treatment effects of coalition signals on propensities to vote for parties V, MP, C, L, KD and SD by coalition evaluations.

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "How likely is it that you will vote for the following parties?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("not likely at all") to 7 ("very likely"). V = Left Party; MP = Green Party; C = Center Party; L = Liberal Party; KD = Christian Democrats; SD = Sweden Democrats. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. For each party and coalition treatment, two model variants are calculated: one for respondents rather liking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is at least as high as any other measured coalition rating) and one for respondents rather disliking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is at least as low as any other measured coalition rating). We excluded respondents from the analyses who gave the same rating to each coalition. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

As Figure 10 shows, the coalition signals sent by either the Moderates or the Social Democrats also change the propensity to vote for Swedish parties other than the Moderates or the Social Democrats. For instance, signaling an M-C-L-KD coalition increases the propensity to vote for the Sweden Democrats among respondents disliking the Alliance

coalition.

E. Conditional Average Treatment Effects on Propensities to Vote for a Stricter Definition of Low and High Coalition Evaluations
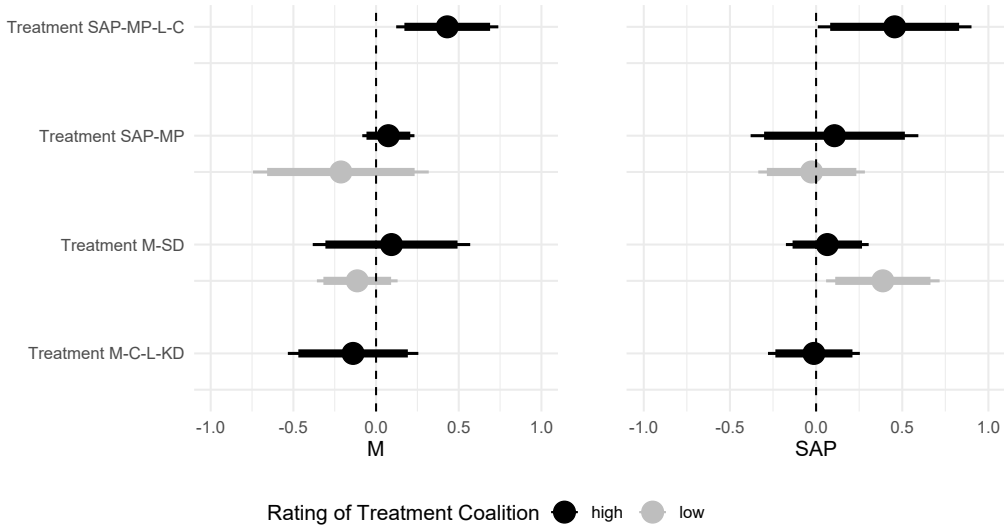

Figure 11: Conditional average treatment effects of coalition signals on propensities to vote for parties M and SAP by coalition evaluations (stricter definition of low and high coalition evaluation).

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "How likely is it that you will vote for the following parties?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("not likely at all") to 7 ("very likely"). M = Moderate Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. For each party and coalition treatment, two model variants are calculated: one for respondents rather liking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is higher than any other measured coalition rating) and one for respondents rather disliking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is lower than any other measured coalition rating). Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

Here we use another, stricter definition of low and high coalition evaluations for computing conditional average treatment effects. We now consider a respondent to have a high (low) rating of certain coalition if she rated this coalition higher (lower) than any other coalition for that we measured respondent ratings. In contrast, for the conditional average treatment effects displayed in Figure 3 and Figure 10 of Appendix D we used another definition: We regarded a respondent to have a high (low) rating of certain coalition if she rated this coalition *at least as high* (*at least as low*) as any other coalition for that we measured respondent ratings.

The results for the stricter definition of low and high coalition evaluations are displayed in Figure 11 and Figure 12.[27] The findings are very similar to those obtained from the less strict definition of low and high coalition evaluations (see Figure 3 and Figure 10 of Appendix D).

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[27]Note that only very few respondents have a low evaluation of the centrist SAP-MP-L-C and the M-C-L-KD coalition according to this definition. Thus, the confidence intervals for the conditional average treatment effects of these subgroups are very large and, thus, not displayed here.
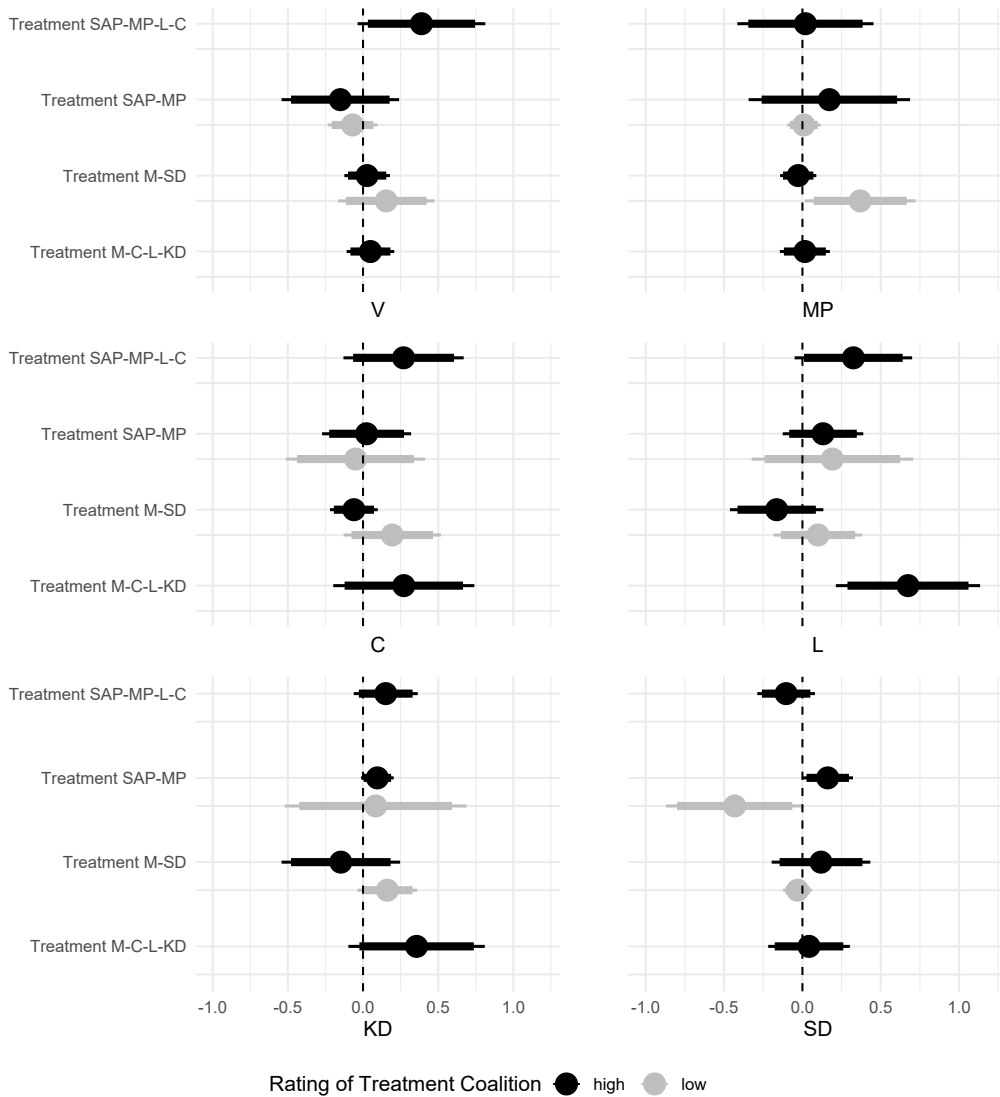
Figure 12: Conditional average treatment effects of coalition signals on propensities to vote for parties V, MP, C, L, KD and SD by coalition evaluations (stricter definition of low and high coalition evaluation).

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "How likely is it that you will vote for the following parties?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("not likely at all") to 7 ("very likely"). V = Left Party; MP = Green Party; C = Center Party; L = Liberal Party; KD = Christian Democrats; SD = Sweden Democrats. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. For each party and coalition treatment, two model variants are calculated: one for respondents rather liking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is higher than any other measured coalition rating) and one for respondents rather disliking the coalition (rating of treatment coalition is lower than any other measured coalition rating). Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

F. Treatment Effect on Perceived Positions of Other Parties

Figure 13 displays treatment effects on the perceived positions of the Swedish parties other than the Moderates or the Social Democrats. Almost all of these effects are not significantly different from zero. This is in accordance with our expectations, since none of these parties are sending a coalition signal in any treatment. The party position mechanisms should only change the sender's perceived position.
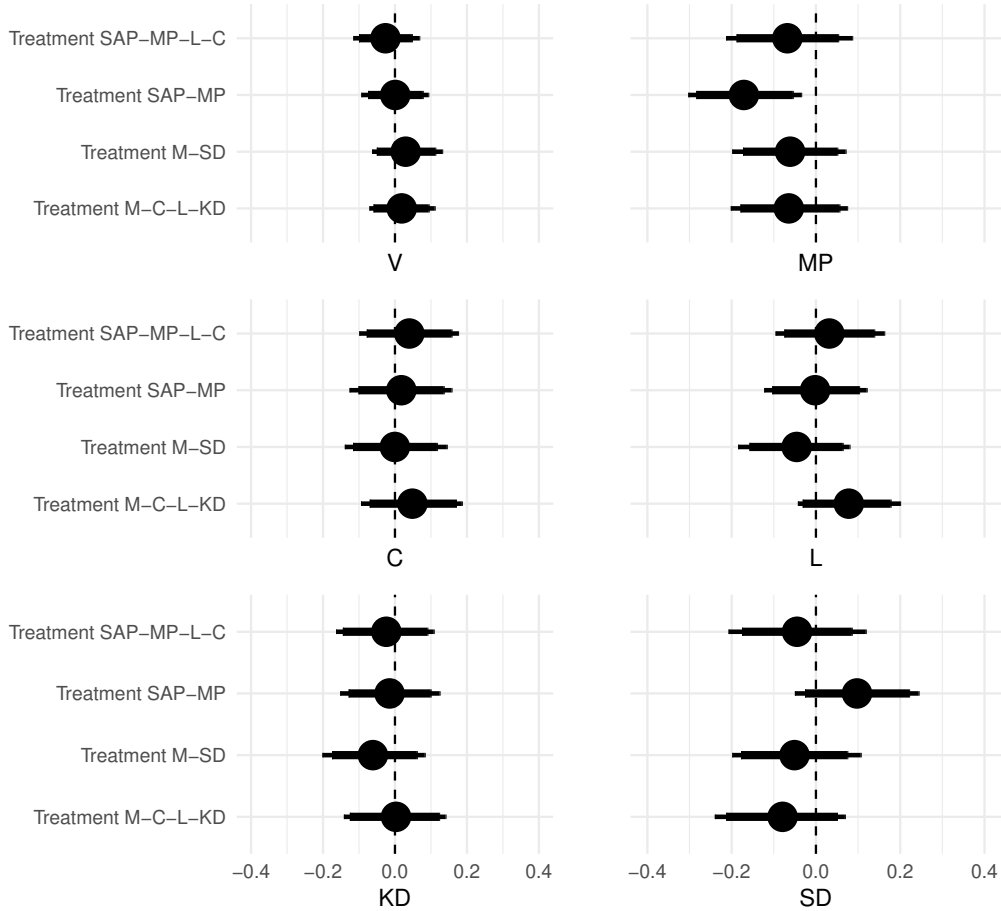

Figure 13: Average causal treatment effect of coalition signals on perceived position of parties V, MP, C, L, KD and SD.

Note: Respondents answered the following question: "In politics people sometimes talk about left and right, where would you place the following parties on the scale?" Respondents answered on a scale from 1 ("very left") to 7 ("very right"). V = Left Party; MP = Green Party; C = Center Party; L = Liberal Party; KD = Christian Democrats; SD = Sweden Democrats. Estimates come from separate linear regressions restricted on respondents who are either in the respective treatment group or in the control group. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

G. ACME for Centrist Voters

We evaluate the coalition expectation mechanism additionally by estimating the ACME for voters ideologically placed between the leftist Social Democratic Party and the rightist Moderate Party. For this group of voters, we can formulate observable implications for the mechanism. Consider, for instance, the M-SD coalition signal. According to the coalition expectation mechanism, signaling the right-wing M-SD coalition should make the Moderate Party less attractive to centrist voters. The M-SD coalition signal makes it more likely that the Moderates will end up in an M-SD coalition and less likely that they will join other constellations, such as the M-C-L-KD coalition. Thus, the ideological distance to coalition M-SD should become a more important factor in the voting utility for the Moderates, while the distance to other coalitions should become less important. This becomes immediately apparent by means of Equation (1). Since centrist voters can be assumed to be less ideologically proximate to the right-wing M-SD coalition than to other viable constellations, such as the centrist M-C-L-KD coalition[28], voting utility for the Moderate Party should decrease if the coalition expectation mechanism operates. At the same time, as argued in Section 2, this mechanism should not affect voting utilities for parties which are not part of the signaled coalition (e.g., for the Social Democrats). This implies that, compared to, e.g., the Social Democrats, the Moderate Party should become a less attractive voting option among centrist voters.
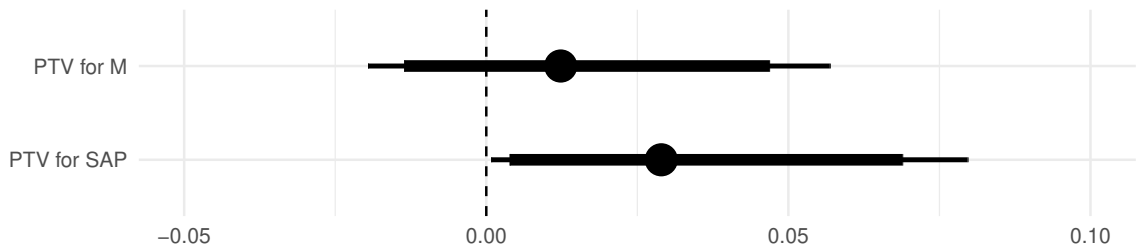

Figure 14: Average causal mediation effects (ACME) of Treatment M-SD via M-SD coalition likelihood on propensities to vote for centrist voters.

Note: M = Moderate Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party. Models for the mediator and the propensity to vote were estimated through ordinary least squares. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. The models were calculated with restriction to voters ideologically placed between SAP and M. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.
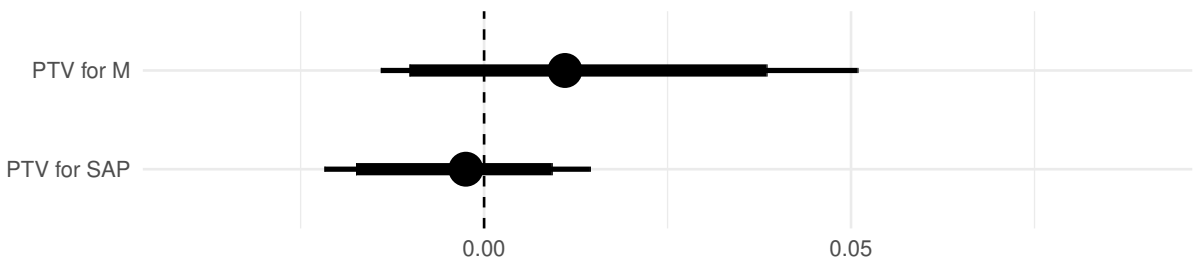

Figure 15: Average causal mediation effects (ACME) of Treatment SAP-MP via SAP-MP coalition likelihood on propensities to vote for centrist voters.

Note: M = Moderate Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party. Models for the mediator and the propensity to vote were estimated through ordinary least squares. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. The models were calculated with restriction to voters ideologically placed between SAP and M. 95% (90%) confidence intervals are indicated with thin (thick) bars.

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[28]The fact that about 73% of our centrist respondents are more ideologically proximate to coalition M-C-L-KD than to coalition M-SD seems to support this assumption.

The average causal mediation effects of Figure 14 support the outlined implications for centrist voters. The confidence intervals display the average causal mediation effects for treatment M-SD on the the propensities to vote for the Moderates and the Social Democrats through the coalition expectations. The change in the coalition expectations induced by the signal makes the Social Democrats a significantly more attractive voting option. At the same time, the Moderates do not gain any popularity through updating the coalition expectations. Though small, the effect indicates that the coalition expectation mechanism operates systematically for centrist voters. As Figure 15 shows, signaling the leftist SAP-MP coalition does not have the anticipated effects.

H. Sensitivity Analysis
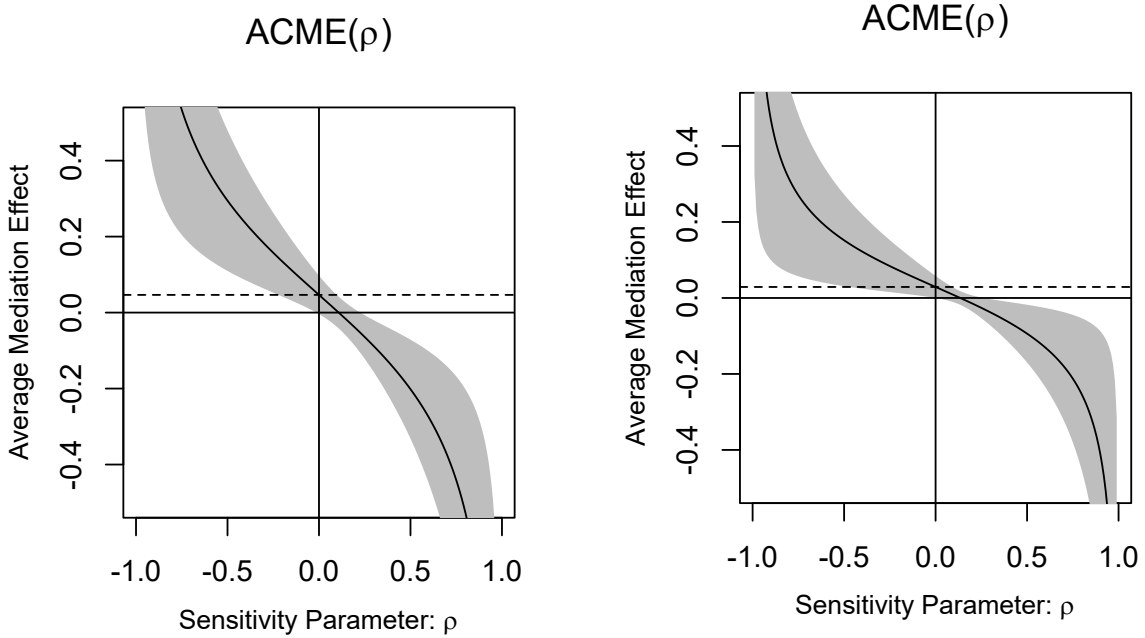
(a) ACME of treatment M-SD on propensity to vote SAP for opponents of M-SD coalition (see Figure 6)

(b) ACME of treatment M-SD on propensity to vote SAP for respondents ideologically positioned between SAP and M (see Figure 14 of Appendix G)

Figure 16: Sensitivity analysis for ACMEs found to be statistically significant on the 90% confidence interval.

Note: M = Moderate Party; SAP = Social Democratic Party. Models for the mediators and the propensity to vote were estimated through ordinary least squares. Age, age squared, sex, education, and party ratings were used as control variables. The models were calculated for voters ideologically placed between SAP and M. ρ is the correlation between the error terms in the mediator and outcome regression models. The shaded areas display 90% confidence intervals.

Figure 16 shows the results of sensitivity analyses for ACMEs found to be statistically significant at least on the 90% confidence interval. These sensitivity analyses investigate the consequences of a possible violation of the sequential ignorability assumption. Parameter ρ corresponds to the correlation between mediation and outcome models. In our case, it is the correlation between the coalition expectation model (Equation 4) and the propensity to vote model (Equation 5). Figure 16a displays the ACME of treatment M-SD on the propensity to choose SAP for opponents of the M-SD coalition (shown in Figure 6) given different values of the sensitivity parameter ρ. If sequential ignorability is satisfied, ρ is zero. This implies that the ACME is exactly equal to the effect showed in Figure 6 and significant on the 90% confidence interval. Under weak positive correlation between the error terms (a small positive value for ρ) this statistically significant effect disappears. The point estimate of this ACME is zero for $\rho = 0.11$.

Figure 16b shows the sensitivity analysis for the ACME of treatment M-SD on propensity to vote SAP for centrist respondents (shown in Figure 14 of Appendix G). Again, small positive values of the sensitivity parameter lead to a disappearance of the effect. For $\rho = 0.13$, the point estimate of this ACME is zero.

Summarizing, these analyses indicate that the results of the mediation analysis are very sensitive to a violation of the sequential ignorability assumption.

	Dependent variable:			
	Propensity to Vote for the Liberals			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Treatment	M-C-L-KD	M-SD	SAP-MP	SAP-MP-L-C
Constant	−1.026***	−0.820**	−0.825**	−1.157***
	(0.354)	(0.342)	(0.365)	(0.367)
Coalition Rating M-C-L-KD	0.039	0.045	0.044	0.036
	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.042)
Coalition Rating SAP-MP-L-C	0.087***	0.086***	0.087***	0.089***
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.032)
Party Rating Liberals	0.797***	0.797***	0.799***	0.798***
	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.058)
Treatment	0.118	0.200	−0.092	0.107
	(0.257)	(0.254)	(0.269)	(0.252)
Treatment × Coalition Rating M-C-L-KD	0.114**	0.128**	0.124**	0.001
	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.060)	(0.062)
Treatment × Coalition Rating SAP-MP-L-C	−0.088*	0.002	−0.005	−0.012
	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.050)	(0.047)
Treatment × Party Rating Liberals	−0.044	−0.182**	−0.069	0.015
	(0.080)	(0.082)	(0.084)	(0.084)
Observations	747	765	731	750
R^2	0.566	0.517	0.550	0.556
Adjusted R^2	0.560	0.510	0.543	0.550
Residual Std. Error	1.168	1.180	1.191	1.175
F Statistic	87.162***	73.283***	79.978***	84.071***

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 6: Regression table: effect of coalition ratings on expected propensity to vote for Liberal Party by treatment and control status. Socio-demographic control variables are not displayed.

Note: The coefficients for the socio-demographic control variables (age, age squared, education, sex) are not displayed.

I. Regression Table: Effect of Coalition Ratings on Propensity to Vote for Liberals

Table 6 shows the result of the OLS regression described in Section 4.2 for the Liberal Party. As already suggested by Figure 7, signalling coalitions M-C-L-KD, M-SD and SAP-MP increases the influence of the M-C-L-KD coalition rating on the propensity to vote for the Liberals significantly on the 95% confidence interval, while signalling coalition SAP-MP-L-C does not affect the impact of the M-C-L-KD coalition rating. At the same time, coalition signals M-SD, SAP-MP and SAP-MP-L-C do not alter the impact of coalition rating SAP-MP-L-C on the propensity to vote for the Liberals, while signalling the M-C-L-KD coalition does decrease the influence of this coalition rating significantly on the 90% confidence interval.

J. Effects of Coalition Ratings on the Propensities to Vote for Parties MP, SAP, C, KD, M and SD

As Figure 17 illustrates, we also find the expected effects of coalition ratings on the propensity to vote for parties other than the Liberals. Taking the Center Party as an example, Treatment SAP-MP-L-C increases the effect of the SAP-MP-L-C coalition rating on the expected propensity to vote for the Center Party, while Treatment M-C-L-KD does not change the impact of the SAP-MP-L-C coalition rating. Again, these results indicate that the coalition expectation and coalition priming mechanisms operate simultaneously.
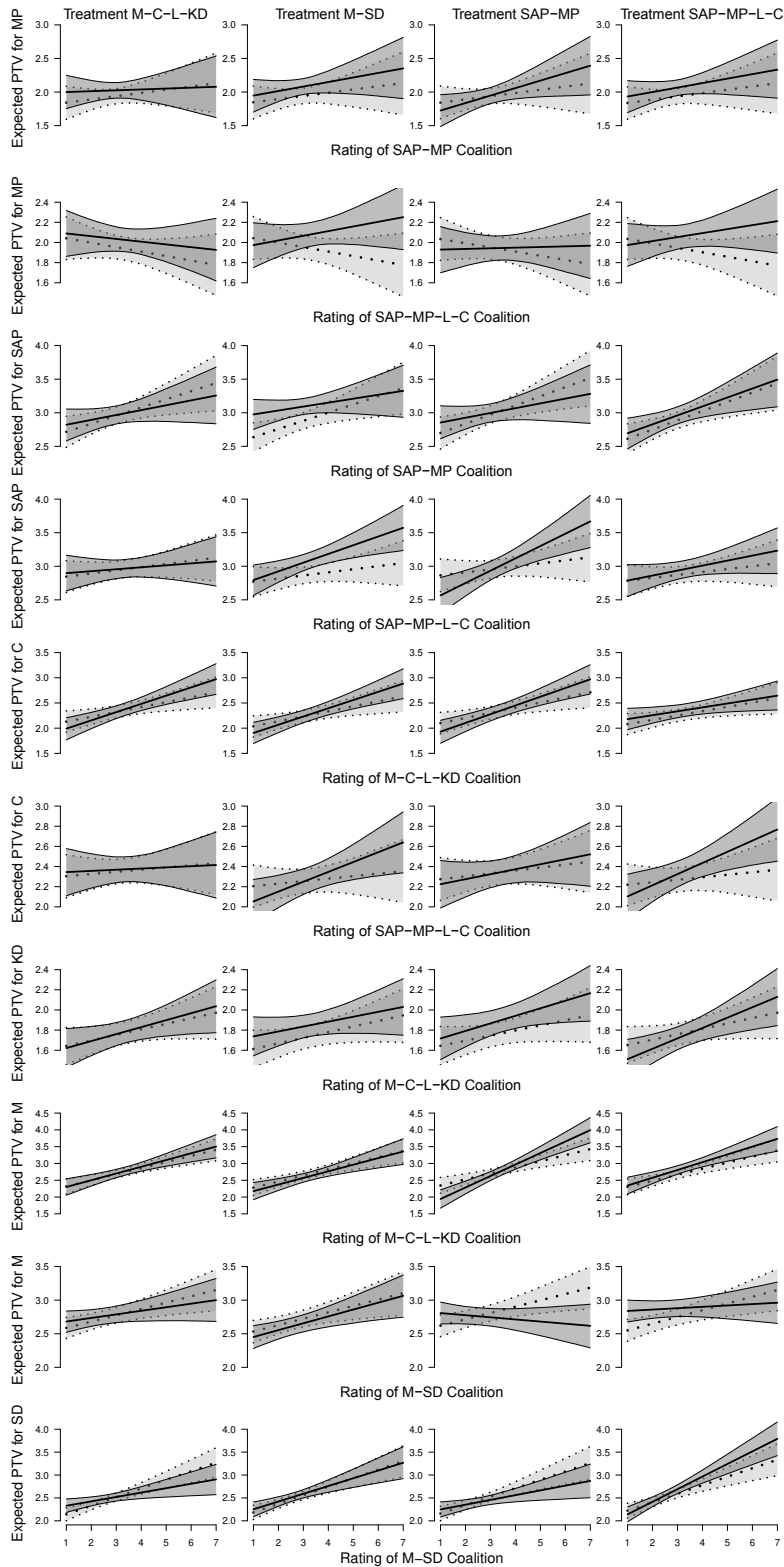
Figure 17: Effect of coalition ratings on propensity to vote for parties by treatment and control status.

Note: Model was estimated through ordinary least squares. Age, age squared, sex and education were used as control variables. For the simulations, an observed-value approach was employed. The shaded areas display 95% confidence intervals.

K. Effects of Coalition Ratings on the Propensities to Vote: Combined Models

We estimated combined models in which the propensities to vote were stacked such that the propensity to vote for each individual party constitutes a separate case, yielding a data set with 16144 data points. The results are displayed in Figure 18 and again exhibit evidence in favor of the coalition expectation and the coalition priming mechanism. Especially, it can be observed that signaling a particular coalition seems to result in a greater impact of the rating of this coalition on the propensity to vote for the member parties of this coalition.
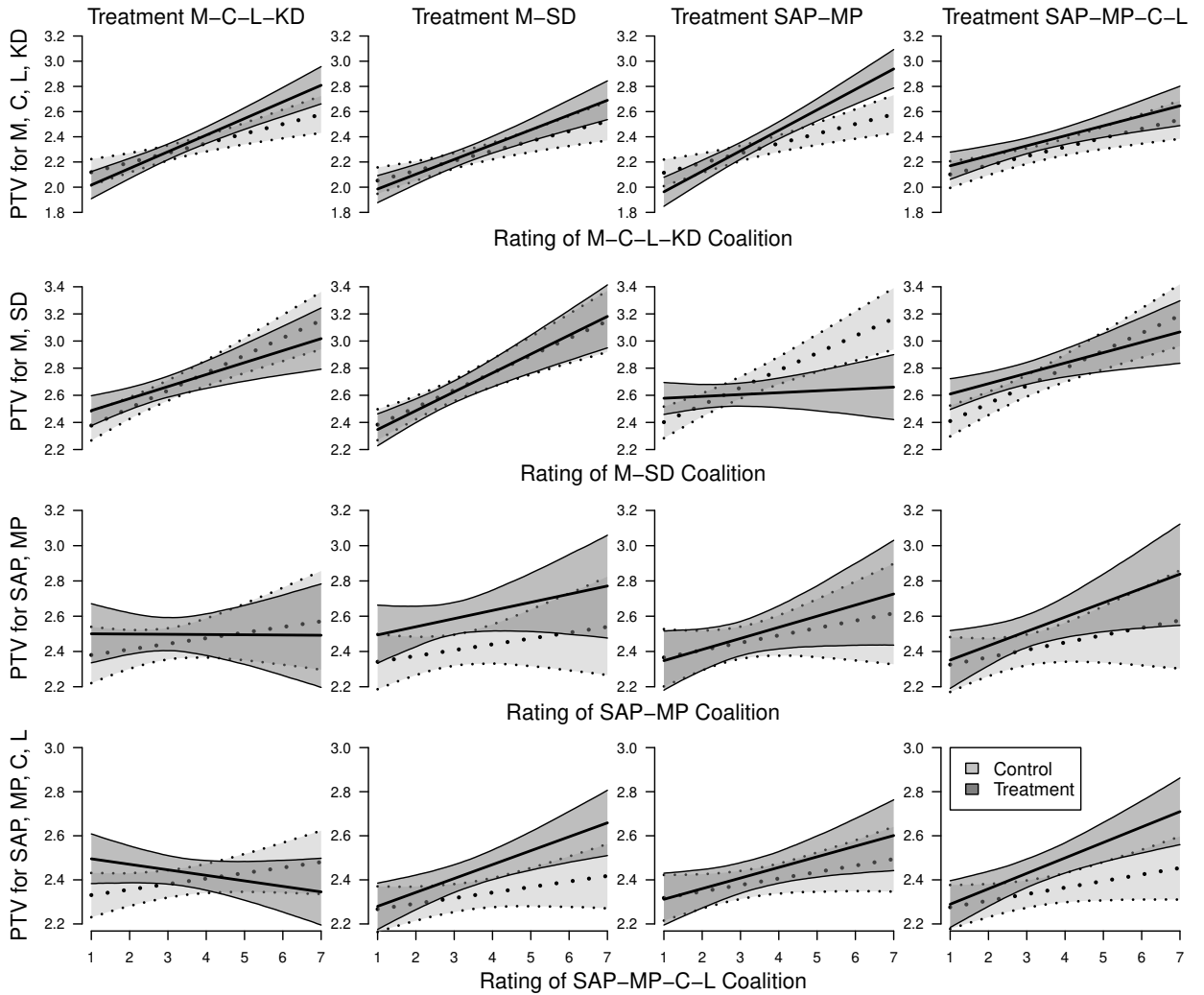

Figure 18: Effect of coalition ratings on expected propensities to vote by treatment and control status.

Note: Model was estimated through ordinary least squares. Age, age squared, sex and education were used as control variables. For the simulations, an observed-value approach was employed. The shaded areas display 95% confidence intervals. Expected values are displayed.