

How Voters Choose Under the Borda Rule: Evidence from a Post-Election Survey Experiment in Germany 2025

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1 Electronic Supplementary Material

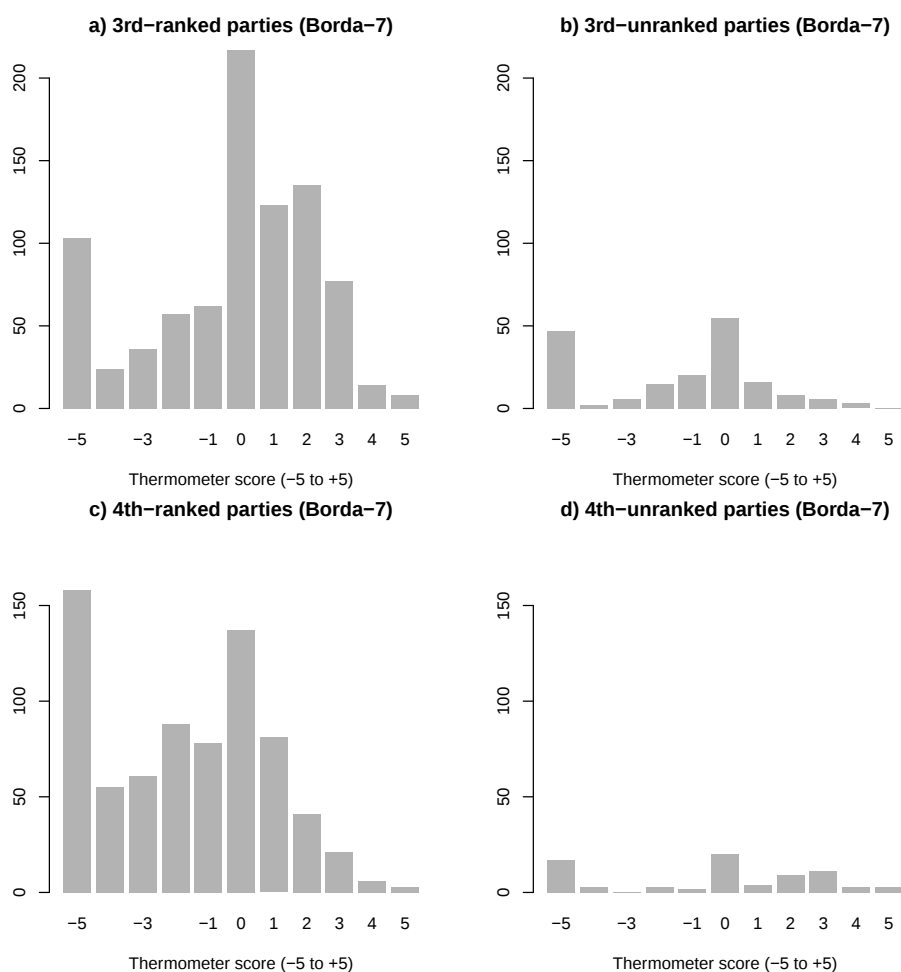
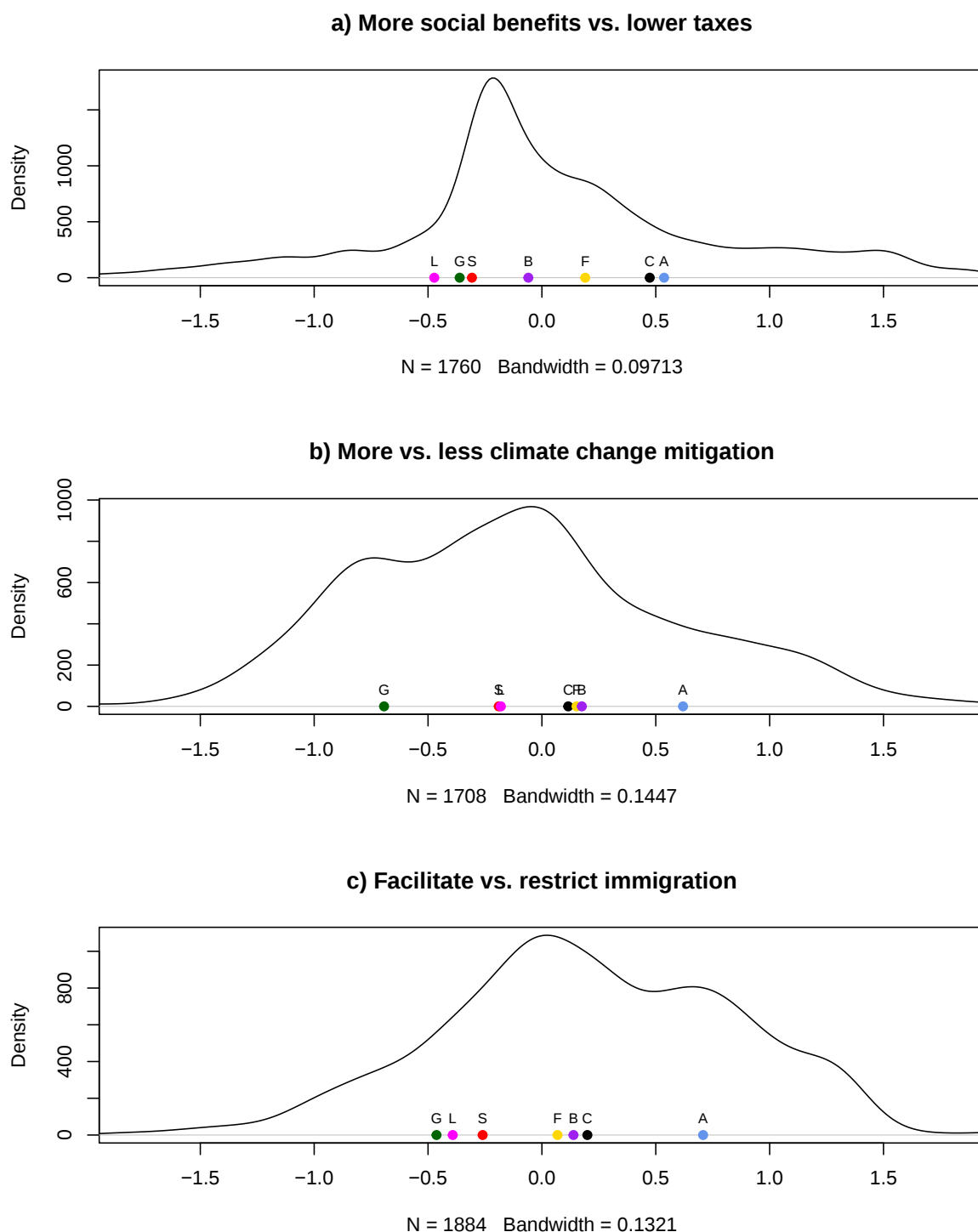


Figure A1: Histograms of thermometer values of ranked and unranked parties under Borda-7

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Figure A2: Respondents' own policy preferences and perceived party positions on three policy issues



Note: The plots present weighted density curves of respondents' reported policy positions, and points to indicate parties' positions as perceived by the electorate. These are rescaled data, after applying the Aldrich-McKelvey rescaling as described in the main text. Party labels: C=CDU/CSU, S=SPD, F=FDP, G=Greens, L=Linke, A=AfD, B=BSW.

Table A1: Conditional logit models of vote choice for each Borda-rank

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>					
	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)
Candidate Eval.	0.40*** (0.02)	0.33*** (0.01)	0.31*** (0.02)	0.28*** (0.03)	0.23*** (0.04)	0.20*** (0.05)
AfD	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.	ref.
BSW	−1.53*** (0.16)	−0.38** (0.17)	−0.74*** (0.18)	0.11 (0.29)	1.69*** (0.40)	1.24*** (0.27)
CDU	0.37*** (0.12)	0.77*** (0.16)	0.34* (0.17)	1.63*** (0.30)	3.10*** (0.43)	1.97*** (0.39)
FDP	−1.42*** (0.18)	−0.05 (0.16)	−0.15 (0.17)	1.08*** (0.28)	2.50*** (0.41)	1.83*** (0.33)
Greens	−1.57*** (0.17)	0.05 (0.18)	0.33* (0.18)	1.14*** (0.30)	2.34*** (0.42)	1.35*** (0.28)
Linke	−1.08*** (0.16)	−0.21 (0.18)	−0.33* (0.18)	0.72** (0.29)	2.26*** (0.41)	1.28*** (0.29)
SPD	−0.08 (0.13)	0.47*** (0.16)	0.004 (0.17)	0.68** (0.32)	2.98*** (0.44)	2.30*** (0.40)
Policy Distance:						
−Ecnomy	−0.60*** (0.12)	−0.54*** (0.12)	−0.50*** (0.14)	−0.66*** (0.21)	0.06 (0.28)	−0.35 (0.30)
−Immigration	−1.36*** (0.14)	−1.37*** (0.15)	−1.24*** (0.16)	−0.92*** (0.25)	−1.10*** (0.33)	−0.32 (0.34)
−Climate	−0.89*** (0.14)	−0.94*** (0.14)	−1.20*** (0.15)	−0.99*** (0.24)	−0.54* (0.30)	−0.54 (0.36)
Observations	9,611	8,253	7,039	6,015	5,548	5,101
R ²	0.22	0.14	0.12	0.05	0.05	0.04
Max. Possible R ²	0.42	0.41	0.38	0.20	0.17	0.13
Log Likelihood	−1,434.24	−1,531.38	−1,229.26	−501.12	−363.56	−261.10

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table A2: Multinomial logit models of Borda evaluation

	<i>Dependent variable: Evaluation (Reference=Mixed)</i>			
	Borda-3		Borda-7	
	negative	positive	negative	positive
Voters of...				
<i>Greens</i>	<i>Reference</i>		<i>Reference</i>	
AfD	−0.69 (0.38)	0.35 (0.26)	−0.75 (0.41)	0.08 (0.27)
BSW	−2.24* (1.06)	0.48 (0.35)	−1.85* (0.80)	−0.32 (0.36)
CDU	−0.10 (0.35)	0.34 (0.27)	−0.35 (0.39)	−0.12 (0.28)
FDP	−1.10 (0.81)	0.43 (0.41)	−0.11 (0.51)	−0.49 (0.39)
Linke	−0.57 (0.51)	0.51 (0.33)	−0.13 (0.46)	−0.28 (0.34)
SPD	−0.24 (0.37)	0.06 (0.28)	−0.34 (0.39)	−0.25 (0.28)
Constant	−0.85** (0.28)	−0.07 (0.22)	−0.83** (0.32)	0.25 (0.24)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,681.28	1,681.28	1,733.07	1,733.07

Note: *p<0.05; **p<0.01; ***p<0.001

Table A3: Arguments for a Borda voting system categorized by type

Category (AI)	Estimated Frequency (AI)	Examples (Hand-coded)
More justice / fairness / equality	196	• More democratic than current system • Equal opportunity for parties • More transparency and fairness • Less susceptible to manipulation, corruption, fraud • Increases trust in the electoral process • More direct citizen participation → more representative • Greater say in political process • Higher legitimacy of government

Category (AI)	Estimated Fre- quency (AI)	Examples (Hand-coded)
More accurate / realistic representation of voter preferences	154	• More accurate depiction of voter will (incl. coalition preferences) • Own position can be relativized • More nuanced voting possible • Clear party ranking • More clarity
More voting options / flexibility / prioritization	128	• No need to commit to a single party • Distribution of interests possible • Combining party platforms • More voting choices • Better weighting of voter decision
Stronger citizen participation / more influence	84	• Greater say in political outcomes • More influence on government/coalition formation • Better support for preferred party
Simplicity / transparency / comprehensibility	59	• Easier to understand and more transparent • Simpler system • Easier to cast a vote

Category (AI)	Estimated Fre- quency (AI)	Examples (Hand-coded)
Change / alternative to the current system	42	• Alternative to current system • More innovative • Less party fragmentation • Eliminates overhang mandates → smaller parliament • Less stagnation/blockades • Loser parties can't govern via coalitions • Less personalized politics • Encourages inter-party cooperation • Fairer seat distribution • Similar to a referendum
Smaller parties would have better chances	38	• Small parties no longer excluded • Greater consideration for small parties • More parties in parliament → greater pluralism
No opinion / undecided / don't know	103	/

Table A4: Arguments **against** a Borda voting system categorized by type

Category (AI)	Estimated Fre- quency (AI)	Examples (Hand-coded)
Complicated system / over- whelming	255	• Too many parties → overwhelming • Difficult to understand (requires high education level) • Hard to implement; too bureaucratic • High error rate in vote counting • Bundestag would grow too large • Too many parties to choose from
Unfair / undemocratic / ma- nipulable	154	• Preference for direct democracy • Many opportunities for manipulation • Lack of transparency • Undemocratic (no direct vote; parties pre-selected) • Non-representative results • Extremist parties could gain via coalition • Less diversity and representation • Small parties disadvantaged • Extremist micro-parties gain access • Danger of single-party government
Fragmentation / unstable government formation	115	• Fragmentation → many small parties • Coalition building becomes necessary • Hard to form majority
No real freedom of choice / forced to select multiple par- ties	82	• Forced to give points to "unacceptable" parties • Excessive vote splitting
Loss of identification / loss of direct vote	69	• Underrepresentation of certain parties • Can't support local district politicians • Undemocratic due to loss of direct mandates • No regional point of contact
No need to change / current system is sufficient	92	• Current system is fair and proven • Borda system brings no real improvement
Unclear / no concrete disad- vantage stated / don't know	84	/