

Appendix 1: Baseline Models Excluding Salience Controls and Interaction Effects

VARIABLES	Model1	Model2 Italy	Model3 France	Model4 Germany
immcongr_	0.342*** (0.064)	0.020 (0.095)	0.331*** (0.121)	0.676*** (0.121)
envircongr_	0.208* (0.116)	0.432*** (0.162)	0.544** (0.237)	-0.262 (0.203)
econcongr_	0.073 (0.110)	-0.058 (0.205)	0.055 (0.200)	0.160 (0.170)
y_media_exp	1.005*** (0.353)	1.479*** (0.447)	0.249 (0.830)	0.049 (0.892)
y_Female	0.966* (0.527)	1.659* (0.982)	0.556 (1.227)	0.965 (0.722)
y_edu	2.247 (2.796)	9.383 (15.689)	3.206 (17.403)	0.238 (2.920)
y_hAge	0.261 (1.724)	-4.136 (4.302)	3.073 (2.236)	-6.269 (4.113)
y_retro_econ	2.426*** (0.122)	2.404*** (0.264)	2.572*** (0.180)	2.368*** (0.257)
y_social_class	1.493*** (0.346)	1.873* (1.054)	1.201*** (0.457)	2.521*** (0.687)
y_close	1.310*** (0.246)	1.080*** (0.399)	0.668 (0.639)	1.738*** (0.381)
y_pol_int	0.686 (0.419)	0.599 (0.612)	1.382* (0.758)	0.196 (0.974)
Germany	-0.578*** (0.099)			
Italy	-0.077 (0.096)			
/cut1	-3.174*** (0.116)	-3.062*** (0.153)	-3.264*** (0.202)	-2.572*** (0.165)
/cut2	-0.411*** (0.091)	-0.502*** (0.114)	-0.293** (0.134)	0.196* (0.118)
/cut3	1.654*** (0.094)	1.718*** (0.131)	1.820*** (0.147)	2.105*** (0.129)
Observations	18,797	5,810	6,651	6,336

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

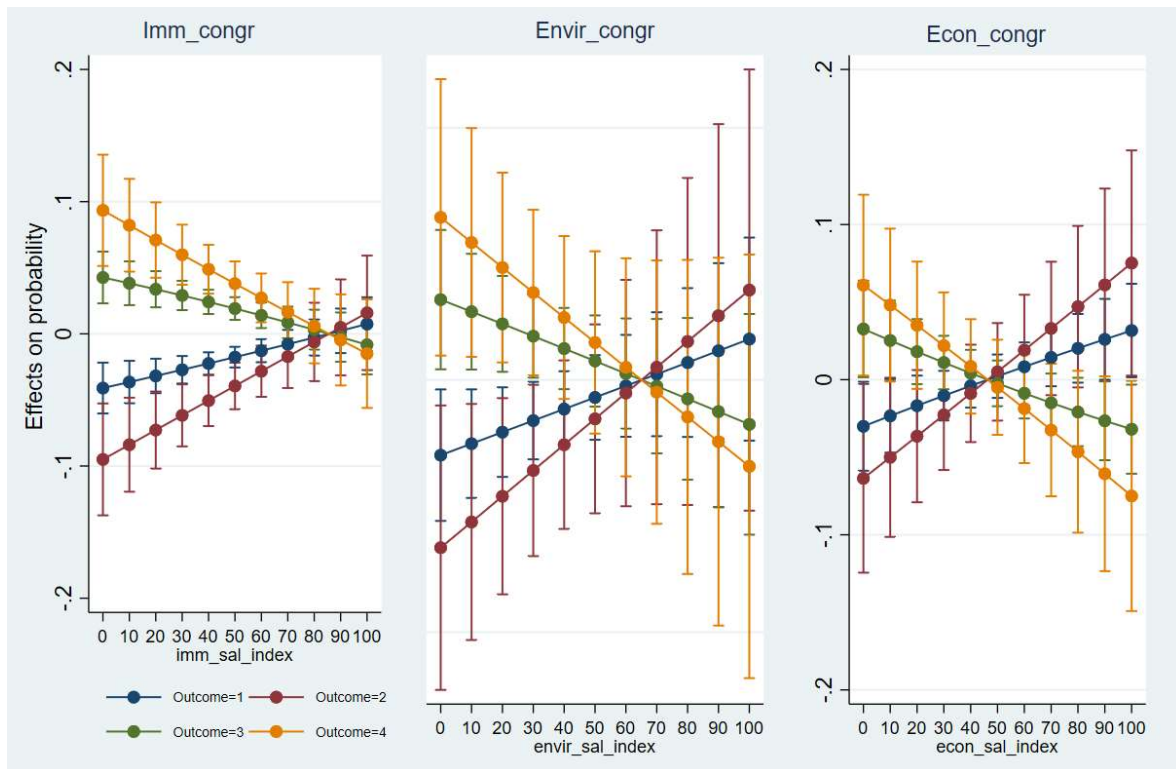
Appendix 1.A: Robustness check with pooled congruence variable

VARIABLES	(1) Pooled Congruence Model
congr_pooled	0.635*** (0.155)
y_media_exp	1.282*** (0.325)
y_Female	1.165** (0.501)
y_edu	2.900 (2.673)
y_hAge	0.735 (1.610)
y_retro_econ	2.427*** (0.114)
y_social_class	1.479*** (0.321)
y_pol_int	0.979** (0.393)
1276.countrycode	-0.585*** (0.093)
1380.countrycode	-0.032 (0.089)
/cut1	-3.139*** (0.107)
/cut2	-0.411*** (0.083)
/cut3	1.630*** (0.086)
Observations	21,125

Robust standard errors in parentheses

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Appendix 1.B: Super-interaction of Salience Indices with Issue Congruence



Note: Average marginal effects of Issue Congruence by Salience Indices with 95% CIs (overall). Higher values of SWD indicate greater satisfaction with democracy (recoded scale).

The figure in appendix 1.B presents the marginal effects of issue-specific congruence on the probability of each SWD category, conditional on different levels of salience. Each panel corresponds to a policy domain—immigration, environment, and economy—and includes separate lines for each SWD outcome (1 = “not at all satisfied”, 4 = “very satisfied”). The plots reveal clear patterns of divergence in the predicted effects depending on the level of salience. In the case of immigration, increasing salience appears to reduce the positive effect of congruence on the probability of high satisfaction (Outcome 1), while increasing the likelihood of dissatisfaction (Outcome 4). A similar, though less pronounced, trend is observed for environmental issues. For the economy, the interaction effect is comparatively weaker and more uncertain, as shown by wider confidence intervals, yet the directional pattern suggests that higher salience may similarly diminish the evaluative benefit of congruence.

Appendix 1.C:

Party	envircongr_ (mean)
SI – Italian Left	0.2330
PD – Democratic Party	0.2409
FI – Forward Italy	0.4466
FdI – Brothers of Italy	0.4550
Lega	0.4634
M5S – Five Star Movement	0.2296
SVP – South Tyrolean People's Party	0.2533
Totale (mean)	0.3317

Note: Values refer to the mean level of environmental congruence (envircongr_), calculated as the absolute proximity between each respondent's environmental position and the corresponding party's position, normalized on a 0–1 scale. Data are drawn from the 2019 European Election Study (EES 2019) Voter Study and matched with party positions from the 2019 Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES). The analysis includes only respondents from Italy.

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Appendix 2: List of parties by country and issue position

country	party	Party_names	party_id	EES	immigrate_ policy	econ_interven	environment
Germany	CDU	Christian Democratic Union of Germany	1276521		6.0	5.7	6.0
Germany	SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany	1276320		4.2	2.8	4.7
Germany	FDP	Free Democratic Party	1276420		5.6	8.7	7.5
Germany	GRUNEN	Alliance 90/The Greens	1276113		1.7	2.8	1.6
Germany	LINKE	The Left	1276321		2.7	0.7	4.3
Germany	CSU	Christian Social Union in Bavaria	1276527		7.7	6.0	6.2
Germany	AfD	Alternative for Germany	1276621		9.9	6.6	8.5
Germany	Piraten	Pirate Party Germany	1276951		1.3	2.8	4.5
France	PCF	French Communist Party	1250223		3.3	0.6	3.9
France	PS	Socialist Party	1250320		2.8	2.6	4.0
France	EELV	Europe Ecology – The Greens	1250110		1.6	2.6	1.6
France	LR	The Republicans	1250626		7.8	6.8	7.3
France	RN	National Rally	1250720		9.9	3.9	7.3
France	MoDem	Democratic Movement	1250336		5.3	5.9	6.2
France	LREM	The Republic on the Move	1250438		5.6	5.1	5.2
France	LFI	Unsubmissive France	1250225		4.0	0.9	3.9
France	DLF	Stand Up France	1250636		9.3	5.8	6.5
Italy	LN	Northern League	1380720		9.9	6.2	7.7
Italy	FI	Forward Italy	1380610		7.0	7.8	7.5
Italy	SVP	South Tyrolean People's Party	1380958		6.5	5.8	4.5
Italy	PD	Democratic Party	1380331		3.0	3.8	4.1
Italy	SI	Italian Left	1380007		0.7	1.4	2.2
Italy	FdI	Brothers of Italy	1380631		9.8	5.0	7.6
Italy	M5S	Five Star Movement	1380956		6.5	3.1	2.5
Mean					5.0	5.5	5.0
DS					2.0	0.71	1.0

Appendix 3: List of parties by country and issue salience

country	party	party_id EES	immigration	econ interven	environment
Germany	CDU	1276521	6.5	6.9	5.9
Germany	SPD	1276320	7.6	5.4	6.3
Germany	FDP	1276420	8.1	5.1	5.2
Germany	GRUNEN	1276113	5	8	9.7
Germany	LINKE	1276321	8	6.2	5.2
Germany	CSU	1276527	6.5	8.1	5.9
Germany	AfD	1276621	3.2	9.8	5
Germany	Piraten	1276951	2.2	3.3	3
Mean			5,9	6,6	5,8
DS			2,2	2,0	1,9
France	PCF	1250223	9.3	2.9	3.4
France	PS	1250320	6.9	3.8	6
France	EELV	1250110	5.6	4.3	9.3
France	LR	1250626	7	6.8	2.6
France	RN	1250720	5.2	9.8	2.5
France	MoDem	1250336	6.6	4.3	3.9
France	LREM	1250438	7.8	5.6	5.5
France	FI	1250225	8.9	4.5	6.5
France	DLF	1250636	5	9	1
Mean			6,9	5,7	4,5
DS			1,5	2,4	2,5
Italy	LN	1380720	6.8	9.9	1.9
Italy	FI	1380610	7.3	5.8	2.4
Italy	SVP	1380958	4.4	4.8	4.5
Italy	PD	1380331	7.2	6.7	6.5
Italy	SI	1380007	7.6	7.1	7.3
Italy	FdI	1380631	6.5	9.8	2
Italy	M5S	1380956	6.9	5.5	7.5
Mean			6,7	7,1	4,6
DS			1,1	2,0	2,5
Total M			6	8,5	3
Tota DS			2	0,71	2

Appendix 4: Matrix of correlations

Tab. 1

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) imm_	1.000			
(2) econ_	-0.255	1.000		
(3) envir_	-0.127	0.110	1.000	
(4) media_exp	0.042	-0.022	0.031	1.000

Legend Tab. 1:

- (1) imm_ = party salience about immigration
- (2) econ_ = party salience about economy
- (3) envir_ = party salience about environment
- (4) media_camp_att = citizens attention to electoral campaign on the media

Tab. 2

Variables	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) SWD	1.000							
(2) immcongr_	0.066	1.000						
(3) envircongr_	0.031	0.036	1.000					
(4) econcongr_	-0.002	0.020	0.094	1.000				
(5) imm_media_sal	-0.118	0.076	0.179	-0.062	1.000			
(6) envir_media_sal	-0.117	0.048	-0.084	0.072	0.514	1.000		
(7) econ_media_sal	-0.117	-0.028	-0.006	0.132	0.596	0.638	1.000	
(8) media_camp_att	-0.151	0.021	0.040	0.050	0.784	0.705	0.847	1.000

Legend Tab. 2:

- (1) SWD = satisfaction with democracy
- (2) immcongr_ = party-citizens dyad congruence opinion about immigration
- (3) envircongr_ = party-citizens dyad congruence opinion about environment
- (4) econcongr_ = party-citizens dyad congruence opinion about economy
- (5) imm_media_sal = index of media salience about immigration
- (6) envir_media_sal = index of media salience about environment
- (7) econ_media_sal = index of media salience about economy
- (8) media_camp_att = citizens attention to electoral campaign on the media

Appendix 5: Most Important Problem (opens answer coded)

MIP	France	Germany	Italy	Total
Economy	12,96	1,53	20,99	35,47
Immigration	4,7	7,79	3,28	15,77
Enviroment	4,73	7,92	1,43	14,08
Other	1,17	1,29	0,7	3,17
Politics	0,51	1,41	1,25	3,17
Poverty	0,47	1,72	0,59	2,78
Debt	0,59	0	1,64	2,23
Extremism	0,08	1,96	0,04	2,08
Housing	0	1,84	0	1,84
Taxes	0,51	0,04	1,25	1,8
Inequality	0,78	0,67	0,2	1,64
Security	0,82	0,43	0,39	1,64
Terrorism	1,14	0,35	0	1,49
Corruption	0,12	0,04	1,21	1,37
Govern	0,35	0,55	0,43	1,33
Education	0,31	0,43	0,51	1,25
Social cohesion	0,74	0,27	0,16	1,17
Social Injustice	0	1,1	0	1,1
Racism	0,2	0,39	0,23	0,82
Health Care	0,2	0,39	0,12	0,7
Crime	0,2	0,16	0,31	0,67
Yellow vests	0,63	0	0	0,63
Macron	0,55	0	0	0,55
Trust	0,08	0,04	0,43	0,55
Europe	0,12	0,16	0,23	0,51
Illegality	0,51	0	0	0,51
Pensions	0,2	0,23	0,04	0,47
Islam	0,12	0,2	0	0,31
Demography	0,16	0,04	0,08	0,27
Elite	0,12	0	0,12	0,23
Burocracy	0,04	0	0,16	0,2
Future	0	0,04	0,16	0,2
Mafia	0	0,04	0,16	0,2
Trump	0,04	0,16	0	0,2
Underskilled Workers	0	0,2	0	0,2
Credibility	0	0,08	0,04	0,12
Democracy	0	0,12	0	0,12
Morality	0,08	0	0,04	0,12
Salvini	0	0	0,12	0,12
Technology	0,08	0,04	0	0,12
Welfare	0,08	0	0,04	0,12
Brexit	0	0,08	0	0,08
Eco-populism	0	0,08	0	0,08

Family	0	0,04	0,04	0,08
Foreign Policy	0	0,08	0	0,08
Fuel	0	0,08	0	0,08
Homeless	0,08	0	0	0,08
Homophobia	0,04	0	0,04	0,08
Identity	0,04	0,04	0	0,08
Laziness	0,08	0	0	0,08
Media	0,04	0,04	0	0,08
Merkel	0	0,08	0	0,08
Populism	0	0,08	0	0,08
Rule of law	0	0,04	0,04	0,08
Traffic	0	0	0,08	0,08
War	0	0,08	0	0,08
Animal Protection	0	0,04	0	0,04
Globalization	0	0,04	0	0,04
Homosexuality	0,04	0	0	0,04
Individual responsibility	0,04	0	0	0,04
Inflation	0	0	0,04	0,04
Internet	0	0,04	0	0,04
Legality	0	0	0,04	0,04
Legality Party	0	0	0,04	0,04
Legality	0	0	0,04	0,04
Liberty	0,04	0	0	0,04
Nationalism	0,04	0	0	0,04
Tolerance	0	0,04	0	0,04
Transportation	0	0,04	0	0,04

Note: Responses were manually coded, starting with transcription into three separate files for each country sample (Italy, France, and Germany, 1000 responses each). After translation, thematic keywords were identified (e.g., “economy,” “income,” “inflation” for economic issues; “immigration,” “borders” for immigration; “environment,” “climate change” for environmental issues). This process produced around 60 thematic categories, which were then recoded in Stata to form MIP variable values.

Appendix 6: Variable Operationalization

Variable	Question wording	Coding
Satisfaction with democracy (SWD_recoded)	Overall, how satisfied are you with the functioning of democracy in [country]? Please specify your point of view on a scale where 1 means “Very satisfied” and 4 means “not at all satisfied”.	5-SWD 1 = not at all satisfied 2 = not very satisfied 3 = fairly satisfied 4 = very satisfied.
Most important Problem (MIP)	What do you think is the most important problem facing your country today?	0 = issue not mentioned. 1 = issue mentioned.
Economy congruence	<p>Now I would like you to tell me your views on various issues. For each issue, we will present you with two opposite statements and we will ask your opinion about these two statements. We would like to ask you to position yourself on a scale from 0 to 10, where '0' means that you “fully agree with the statement at the top” and '10' means that you “fully agree with the statement at the bottom”. Then if your views are somewhere in between, you can choose any number that describes your position best.</p> <p>Individual-level Position (EES 2019): What do you think of state regulation and control of the economy, where 0 means “You fully favor state intervention in the economy” and 10 means “You fully oppose state intervention in the economy”?</p> <p>Party-level Position (CHES 2019): What is the position of the party on state intervention in the economy, where 0 means ‘Fully in favour of state intervention’ and 10 means ‘Fully opposed to state intervention’?</p>	0 – 10 Congruence = abs (Citizen position – Party position)] / 10
Immigration congruence	<p>Individual-level Position (EES 2019): What do you think about immigration, where '0' means “fully in favour of a restrictive policy on immigration” and '10' means “fully opposed of a restrictive policy on immigration”. Then if your views are somewhere in between, you can choose any number that describes your position best.</p> <p>Party-level Position (CHES 2019): What is the overall orientation of the party leadership towards the immigration policy, where 0 means “Fully opposed to a restrictive policy on immigration” and 10 “Fully in favour of a restrictive policy on immigration”?</p>	0 – 10 Congruence = abs (Citizen position – Party position)] / 10
Environment congruence	<p>Individual-level Position (EES 2019): What do you think of the environment, where ‘0’ means “Environmental protection should take priority even at the cost of economic growth” and ‘10’ “Economic growth should take priority even at the cost of environmental protection”</p> <p>Party-level Position (CHES 2019): What is the overall orientation of the party leadership towards environmental sustainability, where 0 means “Strongly supports environmental protection even at the cost of economic growth” and 10 “Strongly supports economic growth even at the cost of environmental protection”?</p>	0 – 10 Congruence = (Citizen position – Party position)] / 10
Media exposure (media_exp)	How closely did you follow the campaign ahead of the European Parliament elections in the media or on social media? Please indicate using any number on an 11-point-scale.	0-10

	On this scale, where 0 means “not at all” and 10 means “very closely” which number best describes your situation?	
Party Issue Salience:	CHES: Relative salience of the issue according to the party's public stance in YEAR.	0 - 10
Economy party salience (econ_)	Relative salience of economic issues in the party's public stance in 2019.	0 = No importance : 10 = Great importance
Immigration party salience (imm_)	Relative salience of immigration policy in the party's public stance in 2019.	0 = No importance : 10 = Great importance
Environment party salience (envir_)	Relative salience of environmental sustainability in the party's public stance in 2019.	0 = No importance : 10 = Great importance
Salience index:	Single issue party salience multiplied the attention to the electoral campaign on the media.	0-100
econ_media_sal	Economy party salience x Media exposure	
imm_media_sal	Immigration party salience x Media exposure	
envir_media_sal	Environment party salience x Media exposure	
Super interaction	Congruence x Salience: Immigration x Salience Environment x Salience Economy x Salience	0-10
Political interest (pol_int)	Could you tell me, in general, how interested are you in politics?	1= very much 2= quite a lot 3= a little 4= not at all
Social Class (social_class)	If you were asked to choose one of these five names to define your social class, to which class would you say you belong to - working class, lower-middle class, middle class, upper-middle class or upper class?	1= working class 2= lower-middle class 3= middle class 4= upper-middle class 5= upper class
Female	Are you?	Male = 0 Female = 1
Age	How old are you?	1 = 18-24; 2 = 25-39;

		3 = 40-54; 4 = 55-64; 5 = 65+
Education Years	How old were you when you stopped full-time education?	0 = Still studying; 1 = below 15 years “Low”; 2 = between 16 and 19 years “Medium”; 3 = 20 years and plus “High”.
Economic Retrospective (retro_econ)	What do you think about the economy? Compared to 12 months ago, do you think that the general economic situation in the country is...	1 = a lot worse 2 = a little worse 3 = stayed the same 4 = a little better 5 = a lot better
Country (Countrycode)		(ex 1380) 1 = Italy (ex 1250) 2 = France (ex 1276) 3 = Germany

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