

Lang, Valentin; Schneider, Stephan A.

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## Immigration and Nationalism in the Long Run

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# Immigration and Nationalism in the Long Run

*Valentin Lang, Stephan A. Schneider*

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Poschingerstr. 5, 81679 Munich, Germany

Telephone +49 (0)89 2180-2740, Telefax +49 (0)89 2180-17845, email [office@cesifo.de](mailto:office@cesifo.de)

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# Immigration and Nationalism in the Long Run

## Abstract

During recent waves of immigration, support for nationalist parties has increased in many countries, but the political backlash against immigration differs strongly across regions. We identify an underlying cause for these differences by studying how local experience with immigration shapes nationalist sentiment and electoral reactions to current immigration in the long run. Our analysis draws on a natural experiment in post-war Germany, where a short-term demarcation of occupation zones led to a discontinuous and quasi-exogenous distribution of forced migrants. Across this border, the population share of migrants differed by 12 percentage points. Applying a spatial regression discontinuity design, we combine historical migration records with panel data at the municipality level for the 1925-2021 period. The results reveal a substantially weaker backlash against contemporary immigration in regions where more migrants settled in the late 1940s. This historical experience reduces the nationalist backlash by about 20 percent. High levels of immigration activate this effect over a period of at least 70 years. To study the mechanisms, we conduct a geocoded survey with a randomized experiment and open-ended questions in the study region. We find that both family history and local collective memory of successful immigrant integration contribute to these effects. The results of the randomized experiment are consistent with the natural experiment, revealing how experience with immigration can curb nationalism.

JEL-Codes: D720, O150.

Keywords: migration, nationalism, persistence, voting behavior.

*Valentin Lang*  
*University of Mannheim / Germany*  
*lang@uni-mannheim.de*

*Stephan A. Schneider*  
*ETH Zurich / Switzerland*  
*KOF Swiss Economic Institute*  
*mail@schneiderst.de*

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## I Introduction

The arrival of migrants and refugees often triggers political backlash. In many Western democracies, voting for nationalist parties with anti-immigrant positions surged during recent waves of immigration (e.g., [Cantoni et al., 2019](#); [Dal Bó et al., 2023](#); [Djourelouva, 2023](#); [Gethin et al., 2022](#)). Several studies document that exposure to immigration increases electoral support for far-right parties ([Dinas et al., 2019](#); [Dustmann et al., 2019](#); [Halla et al., 2017](#); [Steinmayr, 2021](#)). Yet, not all voters respond to immigration by shifting to the right. Quite the opposite, many speak in favor of welcoming and integrating migrants, emphasizing advantages such as economic opportunities and cultural diversity ([Alesina & Tabellini, 2022](#); [Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2014](#); [Zorlu, 2017](#)).

In this paper, we examine why electoral responses to immigration are so diverse, focusing on the role of experiences with migration in the distant past. The central proposition that we test in this paper is that past experiences with immigration can substantially mitigate hostile political reactions to contemporary waves of immigration. More specifically, we argue that through long-term exposure to and experience with immigration, voters learn about its benefits and drawbacks. In the economic realm, fears that immigration may harm natives are widespread, but a growing literature documents long-term economic benefits of immigration in many contexts (e.g., [Battisti et al., 2018](#); [Beerli et al., 2021](#); [Peters, 2022](#); [Sequeira et al., 2020](#); [Tabellini, 2020](#)).<sup>1</sup> If voters witness such positive effects in their home region, they may update their beliefs and reduce their political opposition to immigration. As political views persist locally through transmission within families and local communities ([Alesina et al., 2013](#); [Cantoni et al., 2019](#); [Giuliano & Nunn, 2021](#); [Haffert, 2022](#); [Voigtländer & Voth, 2012](#)), we argue that latent differences in views on immigration can translate into differences in local voting behavior whenever immigration turns politically salient, even decades later. We thus expect that electoral reactions to new immigration waves will be less hostile in regions with more experience of immigration in the past.

To test this argument, we proceed in two steps with complementary empirical strategies. First, we exploit a spatial natural experiment at the regional level for causal identification of the main effect. Second, we conduct a customized and geocoded survey with a randomized experiment at the individual level to provide causal evidence on the mechanisms as well as on the transmission of attitudes. Both strategies provide consistent evidence for the hypothesis that local experiences with waves of immigration in the past – albeit different from contemporary immigration – can substantially reduce far-right nationalist voting and mitigate the political backlash against present-day immigrants.

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<sup>1</sup>In their review of this literature, [Edo et al. \(2020\)](#) conclude: “overall, economic studies indicate that the impact of immigration on the average wage and employment of native-born workers is zero or slightly positive in the medium to long term. However, because adjustments take time, the immediate labour market effects of unexpected migration episodes [...] can be detrimental.”

This result underscores the relevance of learning from past immigration experiences as a key factor for explaining contemporary differences in support for nationalism.

In general, identifying causal effects of past immigration is challenging because immigrants often sort into areas with, e.g., attractive economic opportunities, reputations, and pre-existing diaspora networks (e.g., [Aksoy & Poutvaara, 2021](#); [Bracco et al., 2018](#); [Brox & Krieger, 2021](#); [Burchardi et al., 2019](#); [Edin et al., 2003](#); [Kleven et al., 2014](#); [Verdugo, 2016](#)). For empirical research, this presents an endogeneity issue, as exposure to immigration in the past may be related to unobserved determinants of voting behavior in the present. To overcome this challenge, our study draws on a natural experiment from post-war Germany. After Nazi Germany had been defeated in World War II, more than ten million people were expelled from Central and Eastern Europe and forced to migrate to regions within the borders of the newly created Federal Republic of Germany. However, disagreements among the occupation forces prevented expellees from entering the French occupation zone in Germany's Southwest between the end of the war in 1945 and 1949. This led to a strong discontinuity in the number of expellees at the newly drawn and short-lived border between the French and the US occupation zone. Just north of the new occupation zone border, the share of expellees in the population was more than 12 percentage points higher than just south of the border. Our analysis studies the effects of this large inflow of forced migrants on electoral outcomes in the short and long run.

To identify the causal effect of the discontinuity at the border, we employ a spatial fuzzy regression discontinuity (RD) design ([Dell, 2010](#); [Dell & Olken, 2020](#); [Keele & Titiunik, 2015](#)). This approach relies on the quasi-random geographic variation in immigration resulting from the newly drawn border and recovers its causal electoral effects as long as all other determinants of voting behavior vary smoothly around the border. To ensure this, we focus on the German state of Baden-Württemberg, whose contemporary territory was part of two occupation zones during the 1945-1949 period. Unlike in the rest of Germany, this division corresponded neither to previous nor to subsequent administrative state boundaries. Instead, for logistical reasons, the occupying forces agreed to use the southern boundaries of counties on the route of a highway as the border between the US occupation zone in the north and the French occupation zone in the south. For a period of five years, the municipalities in this otherwise culturally and economically homogeneous region found themselves being part of either of the two zones. A series of tests confirms that pre-treatment characteristics of these municipalities are continuous at this border and that municipalities could not sort into either occupation zone. We also show that our results are not explained by the

highway, unlikely to be driven by differential influences of the French and American military occupation, and that subsequent migration flows after the occupation are not affected by the short-term administrative divide.

To estimate the political implications of this shock, we compile a large 1925-2021 panel data set at the fine-grained municipality level, the smallest administrative unit in Germany. The state of Baden-Württemberg – home to about 11 million people – consists of 1,101 municipalities, with a contemporary median municipality size of about 4,800 inhabitants (comparable to a census tract in the United States). The data that we collected are a combination of archival data that we digitized and administrative data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg. The length of this panel allows us to study the evolution of nationalist voting for the entire history of the Federal Republic of Germany after the fall of the Nazi regime in 1945. In addition to collecting the universe of votes cast in each of the 20 German federal elections (1949-2021), we gather panel data on economic and demographic outcomes.

Our main finding is that experience with immigration in the past reduces voting for nationalist parties in the long run. Initially, we document that the division of the region into two occupation zones led to a difference of more than 12 percentage points in the share of forced migrants in the population of municipalities around the border in 1950. In 2021, more than 70 years after the dissolution of the short-term border, we find that the vote share of far-right parties in the municipalities just north of the former border, where more forced migrants settled after World War II, is 1.7 percentage points smaller than in municipalities just south of the former border. Given that far-right parties received about 10% of the votes in the study region in this election, this is a sizeable effect. A difference-in-discontinuities design around the European migrant crisis of 2015/16 shows that the sudden increase in migration salience at this time re-activated the discontinuity in voting behavior at the former border. Studying a long-term panel of German federal election results at the municipality level, we show that a similar discontinuity in far-right vote shares has historically emerged whenever municipalities have experienced high rates of current immigration. Local far-right voting increases with rising local immigration rates, but the political backlash is substantially attenuated in places that were exposed to the large expellee shock after World War II: this historical experience reduces contemporary electoral gains of far-right parties from immigration by about a fifth.

From the aggregate election outcomes, we cannot infer why these effects arise. For the explicit purpose of identifying the mechanisms at the individual level, we designed and conducted our own survey. This survey covers a representative sample of 3,020 geocoded respondents from the study region. We observe a significant discontinuity in expellee descendants among survey respondents at the former occupation zone border, revealing a persistent settlement pattern for people with expellee ancestry more than 70 years after the historical inflow of expellees. We

find that individuals with expellee ancestors are substantially more immigration-friendly and less likely to vote for nationalist parties, providing evidence that family history plays a significant role in shaping these attitudes and electoral outcomes. We calculate that expellee ancestry could account for at least 31% of the observed difference in vote shares for nationalist parties at the former border in recent elections. The remainder of the effect size is due to the differential electoral behavior of voters who live in the regions that were exposed to the large inflow of expellees after World War II. Combined with additional survey evidence that these attitudes are transmitted within families across generations, these results highlight that both family history and local collective memory in receiving regions are crucial factors in understanding persistent local differences in anti-immigrant attitudes and nationalist voting. Responses to open-ended survey questions align with this interpretation.

We also provide experimental evidence for our argument. In our survey, we randomly inform half of the respondents about the large inflow of expellees after World War II and find that this information treatment affects stated views on immigration. Treated individuals respond in more immigration-friendly ways and are more likely to state that immigration benefits the economy. This activation effect is particularly strong for people without expellee ancestors, supporting the view that the attitudes of expellee descendants toward immigration are already shaped by their family history and providing further evidence that the historical immigration inflow also affected political views in local native communities.

To test whether the treated respondents' perception of an economically beneficial effect of the influx of expellees is consistent with the actual statistical records, we return to the municipality-level analysis. Applying the spatial RD estimation to administrative tax data reveals a persistent difference in population density and positive long-term (but no short-term) economic effects of the historical inflow of forced migrants on the receiving regions, manifesting itself in higher incomes, higher land values, and higher corporate tax revenues. This result is in line with findings by [Cicccone & Nimczik \(2022\)](#) and [Peters \(2022\)](#) and it supports the view that long-run experiences with immigration in these regions were positive. Further investigating this channel, we find that the mitigation of nationalist responses to current immigration flows is not a function of higher local incomes across municipalities in the study region *per se*, but that it is only observable at the former occupation zone border, where higher local incomes result from the historical immigration shock. Moreover, in a number of additional tests we show that there are no other persistent differences in local demographic structures that could plausibly explain the persistent differences in political views.

Our study contributes to three strands of literature. First, by revealing that differences in electoral reactions to contemporary immigration result from experiences with past immigration waves, we add to research studying the political consequences of migration in destination countries. In this literature, a number of recent studies show that, on average, voting for far-right parties and support for anti-immigrant policies increase in the short run when voters are exposed to immigration (Dinas et al., 2019; Dreher et al., 2022; Edo et al., 2019; Halla et al., 2017; Hangartner et al., 2019; Harmon, 2018; Tabellini, 2020). Our results on the average short-term electoral backlash are consistent with these findings but our approach is geared towards examining the heterogeneity behind this average effect. With this emphasis, our analysis provides an explanation for the roots of the differences in the electoral reactions to immigration across regions. Whereas the existing literature has focused on causally identifying the average effect of exposure to current immigration and has noted heterogeneities of effect magnitudes between regions (Dustmann et al., 2019; Mayda et al., 2022), our study leverages an exogenous source of heterogeneity across regions to causally identify why the effect differs between them.<sup>2</sup> With our empirical focus on expellees, we also contribute to the more specific literature strand on the consequences of *forced* migration (Becker & Ferrara, 2019; Becker et al., 2020).<sup>3</sup>

Second, and more generally, our results speak to the literature on how exposure to immigrants and other minorities can affect hostility towards them. The aforementioned studies on electoral reactions to immigration, which find short-term hostile reactions in most contexts, are consistent with the *realistic group conflict theory*, which predicts intergroup hostility and competition for scarce resources – like jobs or public spending – under the conditions of a sufficiently large outgroup (Blalock, 1967; Campbell, 1965). In contrast, the *contact hypothesis* (Allport, 1954) suggests that interpersonal contact with outgroups can, in contexts that allow sustained interaction in a cooperative environment, reduce prejudice and anxiety in the ingroup. Recent empirical studies provide empirical support for the contact hypothesis by showing that contact with minorities can affect partisanship (Billings et al., 2021) and reduce racial biases (Schindler & Westcott, 2021). Regarding contact with immigrants, Dinas et al. (2021) show that historical exposure to immigration increases sympathy for refugees when surveys draw parallels between past and present immigration. Steinmayr (2021) studies different types of contact with refugees and finds that short-term exposure increases hostility and far-right voting while sustained interaction with refugees decreases it. Our results

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<sup>2</sup>Both Dustmann et al. (2019) and Mayda et al. (2022) find that the electoral backlash against immigration is stronger in rural areas. As voters in rural areas often have less experience with past immigration than voters in urban areas, our results may contribute to explaining this finding.

<sup>3</sup>In the existing literature, there are several studies that explore various effects of expellees arriving in Germany after World War II. Braun & Dwenger (2020) and Menon (2020) explore political consequences of forced migration but focus on cross-sectional correlations of initial expellee arrivals and voting behavior. Chevalier et al. (2023) use an IV-strategy to show that many expellees voted for expellee parties in the years after their arrival, leading to short-term policy changes at the county-level in the 1950s. Peters (2022) and Ciccone & Nimczik (2022) study the causal effects of expellees on economic outcomes.

support the view that short-term and long-term effects differ and add that local exposure to immigration can have long-term hostility-reducing effects that persist locally and are transmitted across generations. The latter resonates with [Bursztyrn et al. \(2021\)](#), who study the US context to show that long-term exposure to Arab-Muslims leads to more altruistic behavior toward that group. Compared to this result, we show that a positive experience with a single immigration shock leads to more welcoming attitudes toward *other* groups of immigrants, even though the immigration episodes differ along various dimensions. Our finding on the positive economic long-term effect of immigration also resonates with and supports recent studies on the local economic effects of immigration ([Beerli et al., 2021](#); [Burchardi et al., 2019](#); [Ciccone & Nimczik, 2022](#); [Peters, 2022](#); [Sequeira et al., 2020](#); [Tabellini, 2020](#)).

Third, we contribute to the broader literature on the long-term persistence of political attitudes by applying a *dynamic* perspective on local persistence. Several studies have documented the persistence of attitudes, traits, and norms, including trust and mistrust ([Becker et al., 2016](#); [Nunn & Wantchekon, 2011](#)), anti-Semitism ([Voigtländer & Voth, 2012](#)), preferences towards the role of the state in the economy ([Alesina & Fuchs-Schündeln, 2007](#)), gender norms ([Alesina et al., 2013](#)), political ideology ([Giuliano & Tabellini, 2023](#)), and far-right support ([Hafert, 2022](#)). This literature argues that such attitudes, traits, and norms are transmitted across generations, thereby leading to long-term persistence of differences across regions. Unlike the bulk of this literature, which compares differences across units decades or centuries after the shock, we examine how contemporary contexts can activate and mute differences in political norms over time. The two papers in this literature that are closest to our approach are [Ochsner & Roesel \(2019\)](#) and [Cantoni et al. \(2019\)](#). Congruent with our work, both of them show that differences in norms can be dormant for long periods and (re-)activated by current political events. [Ochsner & Roesel \(2019\)](#) study how the Austrian far-right party FPÖ used Turkish sieges in the 16th and 17th century to strategically activate anti-Turkish sentiment in recent elections. [Cantoni et al. \(2019\)](#) argue that many Germans had latent right-wing political preferences that only turned into observable differences in far-right voting when a new far-right party emerged. Our approach and data differ from these studies as we observe the entire time span before, during, and after the historical shock, allowing us to trace the dynamics of persistence over a seven-decade post-treatment period. While these studies point to activation by political entrepreneurs – the “supply” side of politics – our results from both a natural and a randomized experiment suggest that current political events, by affecting issue salience, can also activate latent differences in voters’ “demands.” We find that persistence does not necessarily translate into constant and stable differences in political behavior. Different contemporary contexts can activate, mute, and even reverse the political implications of historical shocks. In addition, we shed light on how political views are trans-

mitted vertically within families and horizontally within local communities and we provide experimental evidence at the individual level showing how latent differences in political views can be activated.

The study is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses the historical context. Section 3 describes the data that we digitized and collected. Section 4 explains the empirical strategy based on the spatial RD design. Section 5 presents the results on the historical expellee shock (5.1), on its electoral consequences (5.2), and on its role for nationalist reactions to current immigration (5.3). Section 6 studies the mechanisms, presenting the results of the survey (6.1) and further findings on channels (6.2). Section 7 concludes.

## 2 Historical Background

The outcome of World War II entailed a redrawing of Germany's boundaries. Compared to the 1939 borders of the German *Reich*, the Federal Republic of Germany lost more than 25% of its territory, mainly because its Eastern territories and regions that it annexed before the war became part of the Soviet Union, Poland, and the Czech Republic. The ethnic Germans in Eastern European regions were subject to expulsions when the war ended.

In total, about 14 million people were expelled from their home regions and had to resettle (Kossert, 2008). This caused a massive inflow of forced migrants to Germany within its new borders. By 1950, about a sixth of the population of the newly established Federal Republic of Germany were expellees (Braun & Dwenger, 2020). For the receiving regions, the arrival of this large number of forced migrants presented a substantial challenge. In war-torn Germany, housing was scarce and economic output had collapsed. Among natives, arriving expellees were often met with opposition and prejudice, sometimes with xenophobia and racism (Kluschmann, 2018).<sup>4</sup> Even though expellees were ethnic Germans and spoke the same language as the native population, historians report that many forced migrants experienced "exclusion and rejection as unwanted foreigners" (Kossert, 2008, p. 12) and describe a "competition" between them and natives with "features of a struggle between nationalities and classes" (Bade, 1994, p. 45). Differences in dialects, denominations, and customs contributed to animosities between natives and expellees (Burchardt, 2001; Kossert, 2008).

In retrospect however, the integration of the expellees was generally portrayed as a success story. For the German post-war economy, they constituted a flexible workforce that took low-paying jobs in a period when the country was rebuilding its economic structures and when new industries were emerging. Historians report that expellees thereby

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<sup>4</sup>Hostility towards expellees went as far as outright insults as "refugee pigs" and open discrimination by the native population. In some cases, allied forces made way for expellees at gunpoint (Wiederschein, 2016).

played a significant role in Germany's post-war economic boom (*Wirtschaftswunder*) in the 1950s (Kossert, 2016; Wiederschein, 2016). While fast integration is considered a post-war myth (Lüttinger, 1986), the positive experience of the expellees' labor market absorption may have been a reason for the ex-post glorification of their integration in society (Borutta & Jansen, 2016; Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2018).

The number of expellees varied strongly across regions within the new German borders. Overall, factors such as war destruction, population density, geographic location, and supply conditions played a role in the allocation of expellees (Braun & Dwenger, 2020; Peters, 2022). However, a newly drawn internal border between the occupation zones of the French and US occupation forces led to an additional source of variation in the distribution of expellees in the German Southwest. France had not been part of the negotiations on Germany's post-war occupation in Potsdam and Yalta but requested to occupy a part of Germany after the war (see Mosely, 1950, for details on these negotiations). The Soviet Union only agreed to France as an additional occupying force under the condition that the French zone was constructed out of a fraction of the hitherto designated British and US occupation zones.

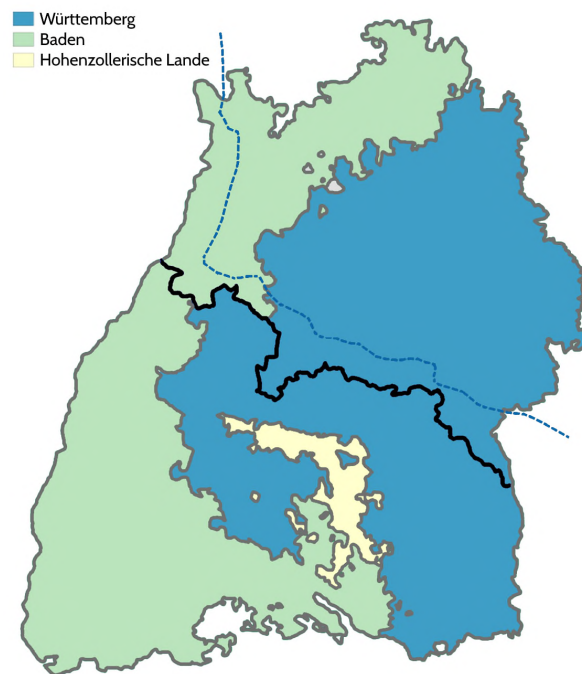


Figure 1: **Occupation Zone Border and Historical Provinces**

The map shows the state of Baden-Württemberg that has existed in this form since 1952. It also shows the historical regions of Württemberg (blue), Baden (light green), and Hohenzollerische Lande (yellow), that existed until 1945. The bold black line is the occupation zone border which split these regions into a part belonging to the US zone in the north and a part belonging to the French zone in the south between 1945 and 1949. The dashed dark-blue line depicts the highway.



For logistic reasons, the US military insisted on keeping the highway from Karlsruhe to Munich (*Autobahn A8*) in their zone. Disregarding local circumstances, it only ceded the areas to the southwest of this highway to France (Schumann, 2014).

Figure 1 shows the border of the 1945 occupation zones in Germany's Southwest. The border did not resemble any previous historical borders of the former provinces Baden, Württemberg, and Hohenzollerische Lande. Hence, the former occupation zone border within today's state of Baden-Württemberg, unlike in the rest of Germany, does not follow any historical or contemporary state borders. As an administrative boundary, it only existed for the short period between the fall of Nazi-Germany (1945) and the establishment of the German federate state of Baden-Württemberg in 1952, which comprises the entire depicted territory.<sup>5</sup>

The drawing of the occupation zone border had crucial consequences for the expellee distribution because France refused to accept expellees in its zone (Schumann, 2014; Wyrwich, 2020). The French government did not feel obliged by the agreements about accepting expellees at the Potsdam conference, because it had not taken part in it. Only refugees that arrived prior to July 1945 were allowed to stay (Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 2018).<sup>6</sup> The policy remained in place until the end of the occupation regime in 1949. After the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in May 1949, free movement across occupation zone borders was reinstated (Schumann, 2014).<sup>7</sup>

### 3 Data

We compile a large 1925-2021 panel data set at the municipality level, the smallest administrative unit in Germany. The average municipality in Baden-Württemberg has a median population of 4,800. This is an order of magnitude smaller than the average US county – the geographic unit considered in related research in the US context (Bursztyrn et al., 2021; Sequeira et al., 2020) – and comparable to a typical US census tract.<sup>8</sup> The effects we identify are thus more local than in comparable analyses in the literature.

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<sup>5</sup>Between the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 and the state of Baden-Württemberg in 1952, the northern part temporarily formed the German state of Württemberg-Baden, while the southern part formed the states of Baden and Württemberg-Hohenzollern.

<sup>6</sup>Other than that, the only exception to the French expellee embargo during the occupation was the acceptance of 36,000 German refugees from Denmark in 1947 (Mix, 2005).

<sup>7</sup>Schumann (2014) studies the persistence of population density for this spatial discontinuity in Baden-Württemberg for the 1950-1970 period. In a recent working paper, Ciccone & Nimczik (2022) study economic effects of this discontinuous distribution of expellees.

<sup>8</sup>The median US county has a population of 26,000 and a typical US census tract of 4,000 people <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/popest/2020s-counties-total.html> and <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/geography/about/glossary.html>, last accessed on May 18, 2023.

### 3.1 Historical Expellee Shock

We digitize data on the number of expellees from historical statistical volumes for the state of Baden-Württemberg, recording the share of expellees in each municipality in 1950, the time of the first census in the Federal Republic of Germany. Figure 2 illustrates the geographic distribution of expellees across municipalities. The discontinuity at the border of the two former occupation zones is evident in the raw data. In our sample, the municipality share of expellees averages 9.51% in the French zone and 20.74% in the US zone, where the maximum is at 45.16%.<sup>9</sup>

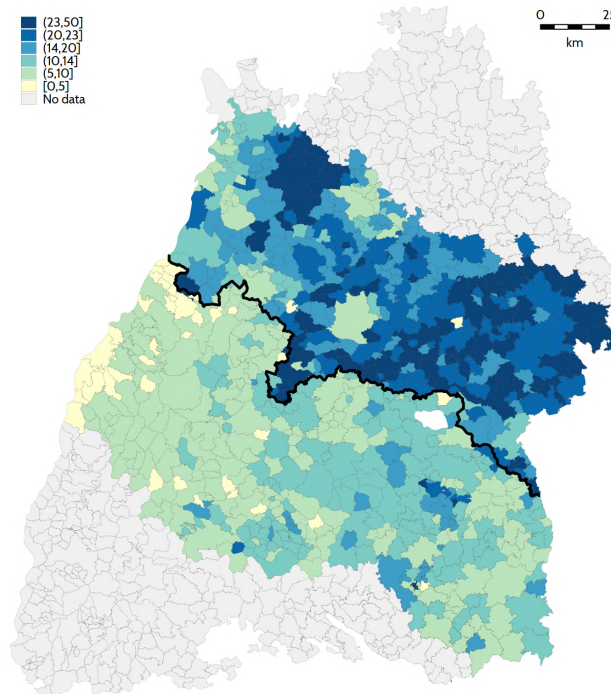


Figure 2: **Distribution of Expellees in Baden-Württemberg**

The map shows the share of expellees in today's state of Baden-Württemberg as a percentage of the total population in 1950. It visualizes the data on the municipality level that we digitized for all municipalities within 60 km distance to the border.

### 3.2 Electoral Outcomes

We study the outcomes of all 20 German federal elections between the foundation of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 and 2021, examining all votes cast in Baden-Württemberg at the municipality level.<sup>10</sup> Our focus is on

<sup>9</sup>As there have been administrative reforms in the 1970s that reduced the number of municipalities in Baden-Württemberg, we collect the location of the historical municipalities in latitude-longitude space and match the number of expellees and inhabitants to the respective current municipalities using geographic information system (GIS) software. Shapefiles for current municipalities are from *Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung*, downloaded January 10, 2020. We collect latitude-longitude records for the old municipalities via the *Nominatim* search engine in December 2020 and June 2021 and verified the locations manually.

<sup>10</sup>To obtain the results from the 1949 and 1953 elections, we digitized election results from statistical yearbooks of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg. For all other elections, we received the results from the state's statistical office.

votes for far-right, nationalist parties. In Germany, this party family holds strong anti-immigration positions. After the fall of Nazi-Germany and the dissolution of Hitler’s *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP), different nationalist parties with far-right positions competed in federal elections; the most prominent ones are *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD) since the 1960s, *Die Republikaner* (REP) in the 1990s and 2000s, and *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) since the 2010s. Based on a number of official sources and contributions to the political-science literature, we identify all far-right nationalist parties that ever participated in the German federal elections. In addition to the three major far-right parties (AfD, REP, NPD), 18 fringe parties fall into this category.<sup>11</sup> We sum up the vote share of these parties in each municipality as our main outcome variable.

For additional analyses, we examine the vote shares of *Expellee Parties*, which represented the particular interests of expellees, and of the other major German parties: the Christian conservative *CDU*, the social democratic *SPD*, the liberal *FDP*, as well as the Green party *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen*. As these parties all belong to different party families, we do not group them together. To run pre-treatment placebo-tests, we also make use of data on the vote share of Hitler’s nationalist-socialist party *NSDAP*, available for a subset of municipalities in the 1930s.

### 3.3 Contemporary Immigration

We add panel data on current immigration. The Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg provides annual data on immigration at the state-, county-, and municipality-level. These data go back to 1970.<sup>12</sup> We define the variables *Immigration (State)* as the change in the share of foreigners in Baden-Württemberg since the last federal election. Analogously, *Immigration (County)* and *Immigration (Municipality)* denote the change in the share of foreigners at the county and municipality level.

Figure 3 visualizes the history of immigration to Baden-Württemberg between the 1970s and today. As we use current immigration levels as a measure for the political salience of immigration, the figure shows *Immigration (State)* values for the 1976-2021 period in concert with data from German election surveys. We plot the share of respondents in Baden-Württemberg who state that “immigration” is “currently the most important issue in Germany.”<sup>13</sup> As is visible, this share is highly correlated with net immigration. Both measures of immigration salience peak in the early 1990s, when many immigrants from Yugoslavia, Turkey, and the Soviet Union arrived in Germany, and in

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<sup>11</sup>We code each party as far-right nationalist if at least one of the sources unambiguously uses the terms “extreme right”, “far-right”, “right-wing populist”, or “nationalist” to describe the party (see Appendix B for details).

<sup>12</sup>See <https://www.statistik-bw.de/BevoelkGebiet/MigrNation/01035010.tab?R=LA>, accessed and downloaded last on April 16, 2021.

<sup>13</sup>The survey data are from *Forschungsgruppe Wahlen: Politbarometer*. The number of survey participants in Baden-Württemberg per year ranges between 1,600 and 3,700 (the mean is 2,353). The original German question text is: “Was ist Ihrer Meinung nach gegenwärtig das wichtigste Problem in Deutschland?”

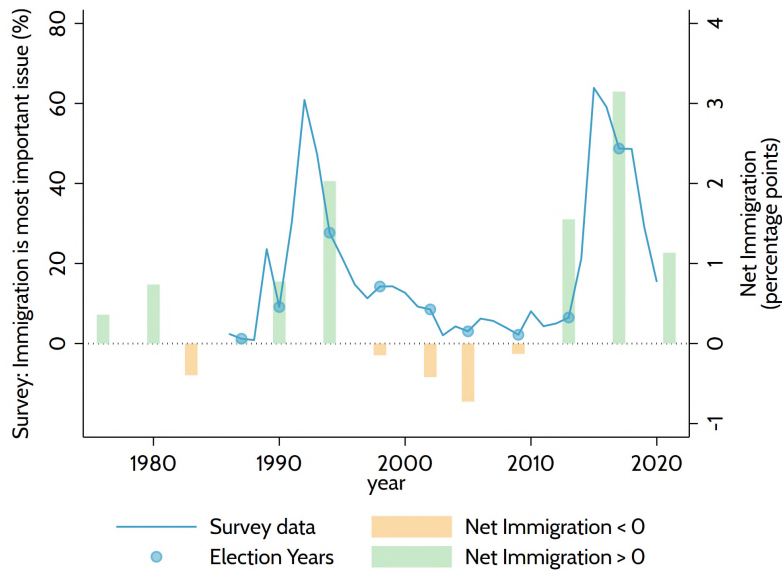


Figure 3: **Immigration to Baden-Württemberg**

The blue line represents the share of people who report they perceive “immigration” as the currently most important issue in Germany. Dots on this curve indicate federal election years. The green and orange bars depict current immigration to Baden-Württemberg as the difference in the population share of migrants to the previous election year. Systematic and reliable immigration data are available since 1970 and the first complete election cycle included in the data is 1972-1976.

the mid-2010s, the height of the European refugee crisis with an influx of many immigrants from Syria, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

### 3.4 Other Municipality-Level Data

We also collect data on various economic and demographic statistics at the municipality-year level. These include data on local tax revenues (from income taxes, land taxes, corporate taxes), household incomes, age structures, gender identities, religious affiliations, and population density. We digitized data for the 1950-1990 period from various statistical yearbooks found in archives. Data for the 1990-2021 period are a combination of web-scraped data and administrative data files that we received from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg. For the pre-treatment period, we collect demographic and electoral data starting in 1925 from [Falter & Hänisch \(1990\)](#). For all municipalities, we also code multiple time-invariant geographic variables that indicate their coordinates, their distance to the state capital, to the nearest city, etc.

### 3.5 Customized Survey

To complement the main analysis and to study mechanisms, we designed and fielded our own survey in November-December 2022. In cooperation with the survey company *Bilendi*, we collected data from 3,020 survey respondents in the study region of Baden-Württemberg. We designed the questionnaire to collect information on respondents' expellee ancestry, family history, political attitudes, views on immigration, and a number of socio-economic and personal characteristics. The survey included randomized elements that we use to experimentally test our hypothesis that memories of past immigration waves can activate latent differences in attitudes toward immigrants. Section 6 describes this experimental approach and the survey in more detail. In addition to measuring *stated preferences*, we also extract *revealed preferences* by giving respondents the opportunity to donate a lottery win to an organization that helps refugees. In addition to *closed-ended questions*, we included an *open-ended question* to study views on the mechanism in respondents' own words.

### 3.6 Summary Statistics

Appendix B describes the coding of the variables in detail and Appendix C provides summary statistics for all variables used in the municipality-analysis. Appendix K provides summary statistics and variable descriptions of the survey data.

## 4 Empirical Strategy

We study the effect of a massive inflow of forced migrants on local voting behavior over more than seven decades. Our focus is on how this relationship evolves from the short to the long run and how it depends on current levels of immigration.

### 4.1 Identification

Studying the political and economic effects of immigration requires addressing endogeneity issues that are intrinsic to the topic of immigration: immigrants typically self-select into locations based on local factors such as pre-existing immigrant communities, a region's reputation, economic conditions, and the political environment (e.g., Bracco et al., 2018; Brox & Krieger, 2021; Burchardi et al., 2019; Edin et al., 2003; Kleven et al., 2014; Verdugo, 2016). Our approach solves these endogeneity problems by leveraging a quasi-random component in the spatial distribution of the largest wave of forced migrants in modern German history. This exogenous variation of the immigration shock allows us to isolate the effect of experience with large-scale immigration in the past from selection effects. Our

estimations compare treated and control municipalities by applying a spatial regression discontinuity design over a period of more than seven decades. The design is tailored to studying how the massive inflow of forced migrants in 1945 affects political behavior in these municipalities in the short and long run and how contemporary political events activate and mute the effects.<sup>14</sup>

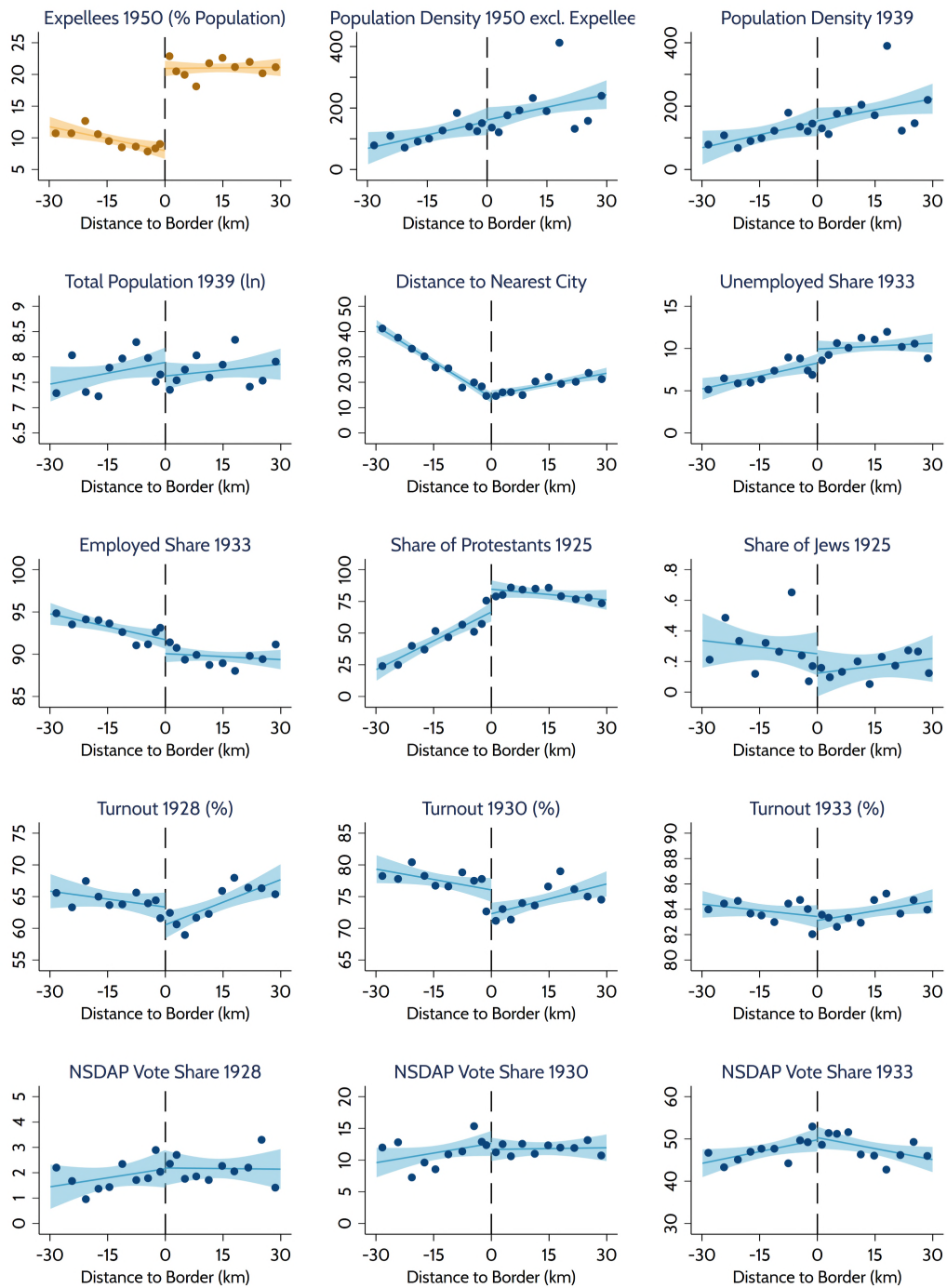
**Absence of Pre-Treatment Discontinuities.** In order to use the spatial discontinuity described in section 2 for causal identification, a number of assumptions have to hold. First, there must not be any pre-treatment discontinuities at the border. This assumption is unlikely to be violated in this setting because the border was drawn in 1945 and did not follow a pre-existing administrative boundary. Rather than following existing state borders – like occupation zone borders in the remainder of Germany – it cut across the existing states of *Baden* and *Württemberg* (see Figure 1). Logistical considerations of the US military led to this quasi-random drawing of the border through politically, socially, and socio-economically homogeneous areas (see previous section). In Figure 4, we show the absence of pre-treatment differences along the border in several observable pre-treatment characteristics. The results of these placebo regressions confirm that pre-treatment characteristics such as population size and population density in 1939 (and in 1950 when excluding expellees), distance to the nearest city, shares of employed and unemployed in 1933, as well as the population shares of jews and protestants in 1925 balance on both sides of the cut-off created by the occupation zone border. Furthermore, when studying the results of federal elections in 1928, 1930, and 1933, there is no discontinuous pattern in turnout and the vote share of Hitler’s NSDAP at the cut-off.<sup>15</sup>

**Absence of Sorting.** A second important assumption in RD designs is the absence of sorting. In our setting, this requires us to assume that municipalities could not select themselves into one of the two occupation zones. This assumption holds because the border was drawn by the occupation forces following the rule to use the southern borders of all counties crossed by highway A8. Historical maps show that this rule was adhered to without a single exception (see Appendix Figure A1). In Appendix Figure D1, we also show the result of a formal manipulation test based on local polynomial density estimators (Cattaneo et al., 2020). The density of municipalities is not significantly different on the two sides of the border.

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<sup>14</sup>Our approach and research question differ from the literature applying shift-share-IV strategies to isolate exogenous variation in immigration across regions (e.g., Altonji & Card, 1991; Barone et al., 2016; Burchardi et al., 2019; Bursztyl et al., 2021; Dreher et al., 2022; Halla et al., 2017; Tabellini, 2020). While these studies examine the effects of gradual inflows of immigrants and variations in their population shares across regions over time, we are interested in how a single large-scale arrival of forced migrants affects political outcomes in the short and long term.

<sup>15</sup>The election results refer to the *Reichstagswahlen* in May 1928, September 1930, and March 1933.



**Figure 4: Treatment and Pre-Treatment Placebos**

This figure displays RD plots for the expellee distribution in 1950 in orange and placebo tests for differences in pre-treatment municipality characteristics in blue. The figure uses the occupation zone border as the cut-off and *Distance to Border* as the running variable. Dots display binned averages of the dependent variable indicated in the respective panel title. The lines represent sharp RD estimations using a linear fit with their respective 95% confidence intervals.



**Absence of Subsequent Treatments.** Since we focus on long-term effects, we also need to assume that there was no subsequent treatment along the same border after the expellees were discontinuously distributed. This assumption is plausible because the occupation zone border was removed when the Federal Republic of Germany was founded in 1949. In 1952, the three states of Baden, Württemberg-Baden, and Württemberg-Hohenzollern, which the occupation forces had founded in 1945 and which had shared the occupation zone border in the 1945-1952 period were merged and combined to the state of Baden-Württemberg. Since then, Baden-Württemberg has comprised the former border and the surrounding municipalities in its entirety. The state has remained in this shape until the end of the observation period (2021) and is the only area state of the Federal Republic of Germany that was divided into two large occupation zones.<sup>16</sup> Subnational, state-level policies have thus not differed between the regions along the former border after 1952. Not even the next lower administrative units, the governorates (*Regierungsbezirke*), follow this former border.

**Compound Treatment.** While it is thus plausible to rule out other spatial discontinuities before 1945 and after 1952, there may have been other differences between the French and the US occupation zone in addition to the intake of forced migrants in the 1945-1952 period. It is worth noting that the discontinuity in the share of forced migrants naturally coincides with a discontinuity in population density because the inflow of migrants was large. Therefore, the empirical strategy does not allow isolating the effect of immigration from the effect of population density. Furthermore, our empirical strategy identifies the combined causal effect of both the arrival of forced migrants and any other potential differences between the French and the US occupation zone in this time period. Differences in policies during the occupation can be largely ruled out because the Allied Control Council (*Alliiertes Kontrollrat*) coordinated policies across the occupation zones in Germany. In terms of how these common policies were implemented, historians generally emphasize coordination and similarities between the three Western occupation forces until they combined their territories to the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949 (cf. Pünder, 1966). Nevertheless, we address remaining concerns that differences between the occupation forces might drive the long-term effects we observe in a number of ways. First, we control for whether US/French military bases were located in a given municipality and for the geographical distance of each municipality to the closest US/French military base (Appendix Table E1). Since this does not affect results, greater exposure to different occupying forces is not driving the effect (cf. Schindler & Westcott, 2021). Second, we show that the short-term occupation had no

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<sup>16</sup>To be precise, the Bavarian county of *Lindau* was part of the French occupation zone in order to provide France with a connection to the territories they occupied in Austria. The rest of Bavaria was occupied by the United States. The city state of Berlin was famously divided into four occupation zones.



effect on political attitudes toward the two occupying countries or English/French language skills (Table E2). It is therefore unlikely that the difference in occupying forces affected political views on the more unrelated topic of immigration. Third and most importantly, we circumvent the imperfection of the natural experiment by designing a randomized survey experiment that allows us to entirely isolate the long-term effect of the expellee inflow (section 6.1). The result of this experiment aligns with the result of the natural experiment, corroborating that the effect we observe in the observational data is due to the expellee inflow to the region.

## 4.2 Econometric Specification

To estimate the long-term effects of the large-scale migrant inflow, we run spatial fuzzy RD specifications of the following form:

$$expellees_m = \alpha zone_m + f(dist_m, zone_m) + g(long_m, lat_m) + \sum_{s=1}^5 seg_m^s + \epsilon_m \quad (1)$$

$$y_m^t = \beta \widehat{expellees}_m + f(dist_m, zone_m) + g(long_m, lat_m) + \sum_{s=1}^5 seg_m^s + \epsilon_m^t \quad (2)$$

The first-stage equation (1) estimates the extent to which the occupation zone border implied a discontinuity in the share of expellees in the population of municipalities  $m$  around the border in the year 1950. The second-stage equation (2) uses the instrumented share of *expellees* to explain variation in outcome variables  $y$  measured in year  $t$ .<sup>17</sup> Our main outcome variable is the cumulative vote share of far-right parties but we extend the analysis to all parties and party families that ever achieved a significant vote share in German federal elections and to various socio-economic outcomes. The post-treatment period that we study ranges from 1949 to 2021 and includes all 20 federal elections that have been held in the Federal Republic of Germany until the time of writing.

In these models, *US Zone* ( $zone$ ) is an indicator taking the value of 1 if the territory of the municipality was in the US occupation zone, and 0 if it was in the French zone. To locate the municipalities in either of the two occupation zones, we use the coordinates of the occupation zone border from Schumann (2014). Functions  $f(\cdot)$  and  $g(\cdot)$  are the RD polynomials. *Distance to Border* ( $dist$ ) indicates the geographic distance between the municipality's centroid and the former occupation zone border (in km). We assign positive values to municipalities that belonged to the former US zone and negative distances to municipalities in the former French zone. In the baseline,  $f(dist_m, zone_m)$  is a local linear RD polynomial that is estimated separately in both zones. Robustness tests in Appendix F.2 use a second-order polynomial but following Gelman & Imbens (2019), we refrain from using higher-order polynomials.

<sup>17</sup>For robustness, we also run reduced-form analyses in the form of a sharp RD, see Appendix F.1.

The function  $g(\text{long}_m, \text{lat}_m)$  is a two-dimensional RD polynomial that controls for smooth functions of longitude and latitude of the municipality's centroid. It is linear in the baseline and quadratic in robustness tests (Appendix F.2). To ensure that we compare proximate observations along the occupation zone border, which has a length of more than 150 km, we follow Dell (2010) and Dell & Olken (2020) by dividing the border into several segments of equal length (five in the baseline) and add these segment fixed effects ( $\text{seg}$ ) to the regression.

**RD Bandwidth.** Our panel data set builds on the  $N = 1,101$  municipalities in Baden-Württemberg and includes data of the time period between 1925 and 2021. As we focus on the municipalities around the former occupation zone border we collected complete data for all 759 municipalities within 60 km distance to the border. In the baseline, we follow the related literature on spatial RD designs and choose an RD bandwidth of 30 km (cf. Dell, 2010; Dell & Olken, 2020; Ochsner & Roesel, 2019, for related models using similar standard bandwidths). We also show that the results hold for both smaller and larger bandwidths (see Appendix F.3).

**RD Kernel.** In the baseline, we assign equal weight to all observations by using a uniform RD kernel as the distribution of expellees on both sides of the border is close to uniform (see Figure 4). In Appendix F.4, we show that the results are robust to using a triangular kernel, which assigns more weight to observations near the border.

**Control Variables.** Since the spatial RD cutoff is exogenous due to the arbitrary demarcation of the occupation zones, the baseline specification does not require further control variables. In robustness regressions, we include additional control variables to address concerns of potentially omitted factors (Appendix F.5). The control variables in these regressions are smooth functions of each municipality's distances to the state capital Stuttgart, to the next major city, as well as to the highway that influenced the demarcation. In Appendix E.1, we also control for locations of and distances to US and French military bases.

**Sample.** In the baseline, we use all municipalities within the RD bandwidth. In Appendix F.6 we also show that results are robust to excluding all municipalities that are close to the highway. As Baden-Württemberg consists of many small municipalities and few large ones, we address concerns that large municipalities may be atypical observations. In Appendix F.6 we thus show that results are robust to excluding cities with more than 50,000 or 100,000 inhabitants.

**Standard Errors.** In the baseline, we cluster standard errors at the municipality level in specifications that include multiple periods and we use heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in regressions with one period. Appendix F.7 shows that results are very similar when using standard errors that are robust to clustering at the county

level, to autocorrelation, and to Conley-type spatial correlation using Bartlett kernels (Colella et al., 2019; Conley, 1999).

**Placebo Border.** In addition, we construct a placebo border that uses the northern — rather than the original southern — boundaries of the counties through which the highway runs. The placebo tests produce a series of statistically insignificant estimates for key outcome variables (see Appendix F.8).

## 5 Main Results

We begin by estimating the discontinuity in the distribution of forced migrants at the occupation zone border after World War II (section 5.1). We then estimate the long-term political effect of this historical immigration wave (section 5.2), and examine how current immigration activates a difference in far-right voting at the border with a difference-in-discontinuities design and with panel data (section 5.3). In section 6 we turn to the mechanisms driving the effects.

### 5.1 The Historical Expellee Shock

In the first step of the empirical analysis, we use the RD model, specified in equation (1), to estimate the discontinuity in the share of expellees at the border. Panel A of Table 1 reports the results of sharp spatial RD regressions of each municipality’s share of expellees in 1950 on the *US Zone* indicator. The results point to a strong discontinuity, statistically different from zero at the 0.1% level, at the border. In 1950, the share of expellees in municipalities just north of the occupation zone border was 12-13 percentage points larger than in neighboring municipalities just south of the border. The size of the estimated effect is stable across different specifications of the RD model, and thus not sensitive to modelling choices such as adding and removing polynomials of the municipalities’ distance to the border, the latitude-longitude space, and border-segment fixed effects. The estimated discontinuity is similar to the raw difference in means in the two occupation zones. The mean expellee share in the US zone is 20.9 ( $SD=5.9$ ), while the mean in the French zone is 9.6 ( $SD=3.9$ ), when considering all municipalities whose centroid is closer than 30 km to the border.

Table 1: **Expellee Distribution and Long-Term Political Effects**

<b>Panel A: Expellees in 1950 (Sharp RD, First Stage)</b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>US Zone</i>	12.968*** (0.930)	12.528*** (0.805)	12.518*** (0.835)	12.077*** (0.804)	12.169*** (0.826)
<b>Panel B: Far-Right Vote Share in 2021 (Sharp RD, Reduced Form)</b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>US Zone</i>	-1.762*** (0.420)	-1.817*** (0.395)	-1.725*** (0.418)	-1.625*** (0.435)	-1.774*** (0.451)
<b>Panel C: Far-Right Vote Share in 2021 (Fuzzy RD, Second Stage)</b>					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.136*** (0.033)	-0.145*** (0.033)	-0.138*** (0.034)	-0.135*** (0.036)	-0.146*** (0.038)
Observations	185 + 219	185 + 219	185 + 219	185 + 219	185 + 219
Distance Polynomials	✓		✓	✓	✓
Coordinates		✓	✓		✓
Segments				✓	✓

The table displays coefficients from 15 spatial RD regressions with heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The outcome variable in Panel A is the share of expellees per municipality in 1950. The outcome variable in Panels B and C is the municipality vote share of far-right parties in 2021. ‘Observations’ reports the number of observations on the northern and the southern side of the cut-off. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). ‘Distance Polynomials’ indicate that local linear polynomials of the running variable *Distance to Border* are included. ‘Coordinates’ denotes additional inclusion of a two dimensional RD polynomial that is linear in latitude and longitude. ‘Segments’ indicates the usage of segment fixed effects. Model 5, which controls for distance to the border, latitude-longitude, and segment fixed effects represents the baseline specification for the following analysis. All estimations use a uniform RD kernel. See equation (1) for details.

## 5.2 Long-Term Political Effects

What are the long-term political implications of this historical immigration shock for voting behavior in contemporary Germany? We begin by studying its effect on electoral support for far-right, nationalist parties in the most recent German federal election of 2021.

We first estimate this effect with the same sharp spatial RD regressions as before and report the results in Panel B of Table 1. The estimates point to a negative effect on the vote share of far-right parties of 1.6-1.8 percentage points. As far-right parties received about 10% of the votes in this region in the federal election of 2021, this is a sizeable effect, corresponding to a sixth of the overall vote share for far-right parties in this region. The coefficients are statistically significant at the one percent level across all five specifications. In Panel C of Table 1, we estimate the effect of the historical expellee shock on far-right voting in 2021 with fuzzy spatial RD regressions that use the border as an instrument for the 1950 share of expellees (equation 2). The estimates imply that an increase in the

1950 expellee share by one percentage point reduces the vote share of the far-right AfD in 2021 by somewhat more than 0.1 percentage points.

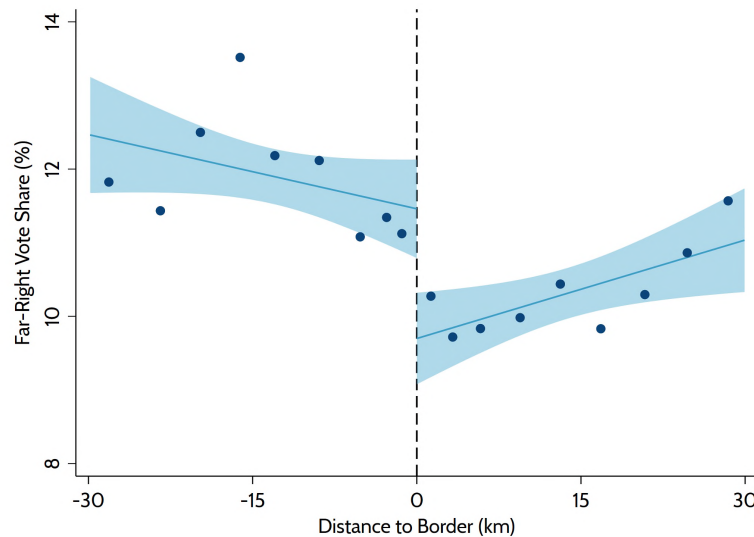


Figure 5: **Sharp RD: Effects on Far-Right Voting, 2021**

This figure displays estimates from a sharp RD estimation using the occupation zone border as the cut-off and *Distance to Border* as the running variable. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in the 2021 election. The dark blue dots display binned means of the dependent variable. The fitted lines represent parametric RD estimations using linear polynomials. The light blue area displays 95% confidence intervals.

In Figure 5, we visualize the discontinuity in the municipality-level vote share of far-right parties at the historical occupation zone border using a simple RD plot. The result confirms the substantial drop in the far-right vote share in the municipalities that were exposed to the large expellee inflow after World War II. The remainder of this study aims to elucidate this finding. Why and under what conditions does the large inflow of forced migrants after World War II affect voting for nationalist parties in contemporary Germany?

### 5.3 Activation by Current Immigration

In this subsection, we test whether experiences with past immigration may, in the long run, through an updating of beliefs on its implications, lead to more positive attitudes towards immigration. More specifically, we follow existing research in expecting electoral backlashes against contemporary immigration in the short run (e.g., [Dustmann et](#)

al., 2019; Hangartner et al., 2019; Steinmayr, 2021).<sup>18</sup> But we expect such hostile electoral reactions to be weaker in areas that have had more immigration experience in the past.

In the following, we test several observable implications of this explanation. We begin by examining whether the electoral backlash against a recent immigration wave to Germany was indeed weaker in areas that have experienced mass-immigration in the past.

### 5.3.1 The European Migrant Crisis: Evidence from Difference-in-Discontinuities

We first zoom in on the European migrant crisis. Immigration to Germany and to the study region of Baden-Württemberg had been at very low levels in the 2000s and early 2010s. The European migrant crisis suddenly changed this in 2015. In this year, more than 1.3 million refugees and migrants came to Europe to request asylum. The largest share of migrants were Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis, who fled their home countries because of ongoing civil wars. Of all European countries, Germany experienced the largest inflow of migrants with about 420,000 asylum seekers in 2015 and 590,000 in 2016.<sup>19</sup> During this period, far-right parties in Germany – predominantly the *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) – ran on a decidedly anti-immigration platform and gained an increasing share of votes in state and federal elections.<sup>20</sup>

We study the period before and after the start of the crisis to see whether this sudden increase in immigration had implications for the electoral effect of the historical migrant inflow. Figure 6 plots the results. The vertical bars in the background indicate electoral salience of immigration measured by net immigration to the study region since the last election, confirming the jump in immigration salience in 2015. The plotted dots are RD coefficients indicating the effect of historical expellee exposure on far-right vote shares in election year  $t$  estimated by separate fuzzy RD regressions. In addition to federal elections, we consider state-level and European-level election results to compile a panel with a higher frequency of elections ( $T=12$ ) in the 2005-2021 period before and after the start of the European migrant crisis. In a sense, this represents a “difference-in-discontinuities” design – a combination of a

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<sup>18</sup>Germany has witnessed such anti-immigration backlashes in its recent history. Immigration waves from Yugoslavia and Turkey in the 1990s coincided with increased electoral support for far-right parties like *Die Republikaner* and more recently, the entrance of the far-right *AfD* to German parliaments coincided with the exceptionally large inflow of refugees in the context of the 2015-16 European migrant crisis (see Appendix Figure G1). Stecker & Debus (2019) show that the AfD gained more votes in areas with more exposure to refugees in this period. In Appendix Table G1, we replicate this finding for our study region. With municipality-level panel data for the 1976-2021 period and two-way fixed effects regressions, we find strong positive associations between contemporary local immigration and vote shares of far-right parties. On attitudes to immigration in Germany, see also Poutvaara & Steinhardt (2018).

<sup>19</sup>UNHCR Refugee Data (<https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=mG2jd3>), last accessed August 15, 2023.

<sup>20</sup>See Cantoni et al. (2019) for details on the party’s anti-immigration position since the European migrant crisis.

regression-discontinuity and a difference-in-differences design – that allows examining differences between treated and untreated regions before and after the external shock.

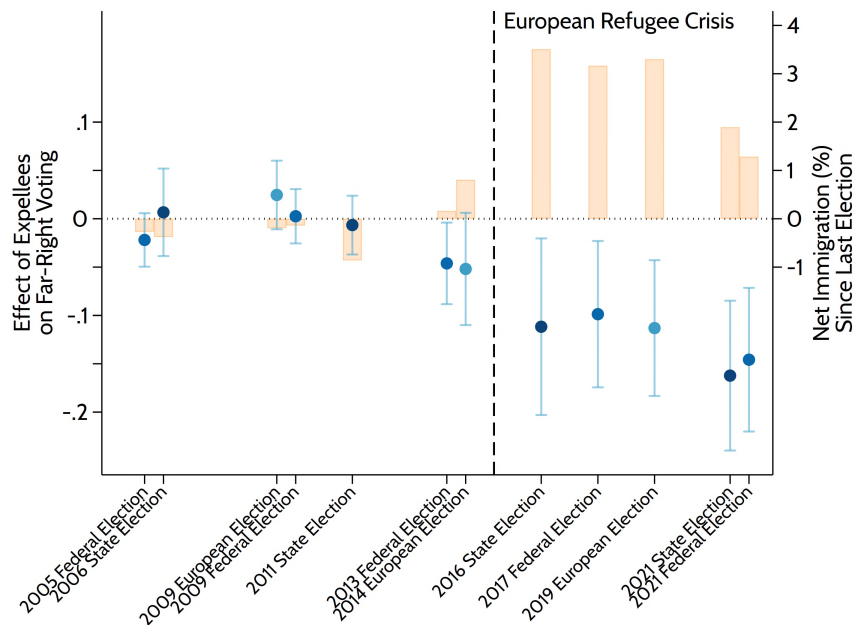


Figure 6: **Far-Right Voting and the European Migrant Crisis: RD Event Plot**

The coefficient plot shows results from individual fuzzy RD regressions, where the share of *Expellees* is the variable of interest instrumented with the *US Zone* indicator. The dependent variable is the municipality vote share of *Far-Right Parties* in European, federal, and state elections. Each dot shows the coefficient estimate of the share of *Expellees* (left vertical axis) from an individual regression for the election indicated on the horizontal axis. Thin vertical bars represent 95%-confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. Each estimation is a spatial RD regression controlling for latitude and longitude and allowing for segment-specific fixed effects as well as differing linear slopes on both sides of the cut-off. The sample bandwidth is 30 km. The orange bars in the background represent current salience of immigration measured by net immigration to Baden-Württemberg since the last election (right vertical axis). The dashed vertical line indicates the start of the European migrant crisis.

The results show that there are no consistent discontinuities in far-right voting in the period preceding the European migrant crisis (2005-2014). By contrast, there is a negative effect in all five elections of the post-2015 period. All RD estimates of the post-treatment period are statistically significant with  $p$ -values of 0.017 and smaller.

This supports the idea that the European migrant crisis activated a latent difference between the regions with and without exposure to the massive historical migration shock. Once immigration becomes politically salient, previous local experiences with immigration have implications for the local support of nationalist, anti-immigrant parties. Under such circumstances, voters in municipalities with local experiences of that kind are significantly less likely to react to contemporary immigration in a hostile way.

### 5.3.2 The Interaction of Past and Present Immigration: Evidence from Panel Data

Having studied the activation of the effect with separate spatial RD regressions in the 2005-2021 period, we now turn to panel data for the 1972-2021 period. For this observation period, we were able to compile a municipality-year-level panel data set of immigration flows and federal election results. To test whether current and local immigration flows activate the effect, we interact the historical spatial treatment with the current level of net *immigration* to municipality  $m$  since the last election:<sup>21</sup>

$$\begin{aligned} votes_{mt}^P = & \gamma \widehat{expellees}_m + \delta (\widehat{expellees}_m \times immigration_{mt}) \\ & + \tau_t + b(dist_m, zone_m, immigration_{mt}) + g(long_m, lat_m) + \sum_{s=1}^5 seg_m^s + \varepsilon_{mt}^P \quad (3) \end{aligned}$$

In addition to using municipality-level immigration, we also use state-level and county-level immigration, to capture current immigration exposure. These different operationalizations of current immigration exposure and salience have different advantages. Measuring immigration to the entire state of Baden-Württemberg has the advantage that it is exogenous to local developments in individual municipalities close to the border. Using data at the county- and municipality-level exploits more variation and allows absorbing unobserved temporal variation at the state level by adding year fixed effects ( $\tau_t$ ).<sup>22</sup>

Table 2 reports the results of fuzzy RD regressions of the far-right vote share on the 1950 expellee share and combines it with information on contemporary immigration. Column 1 is a baseline specification, which serves as the starting point for the subsequent analysis. It shows a statistically significant negative effect of *Expellees* on far-right voting when all federal elections since 1976 are pooled together while year fixed effects are absorbed. Before adding granular data on contemporary immigration to the analysis, specifications 2 and 3 split the sample into periods with low and high migration pressure. *High-immigration* years denote periods between two elections, during which the share of migrants in the state increased by more than one percentage point. The other years are coded as *low-immigration* periods.<sup>23</sup> The results show that the estimated effect is substantially larger in elections that are held after periods with high-immigration. The effect of the expellee share on far-right voting is insignificant during low-

<sup>21</sup>This restricts the analysis to the 1976-2021 period. As we use the change in the migrant share between two elections and spatially disaggregated immigration data is available from 1970 onward, the 1972-1976 electoral cycle with the federal election of 1976 is the first we can consider.

<sup>22</sup>Note that in these models, the function  $b(\cdot)$  includes full interactions of the RD polynomial with *Immigration* following the recommendation by Carril et al. (2018) for estimating heterogeneous effects with RD models.

<sup>23</sup>The federal elections of 1980, 1990, 1994, 2017, and 2021 are classified as elections after *high-immigration* periods.



Table 2: **Elections and Expellees: The Role of Current Immigration, 1976-2021**

Dep. var.: <i>Far-Right Vote Share</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.032*** (0.012)	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.062*** (0.019)	-0.019* (0.010)	-0.018* (0.010)	-0.024** (0.012)
<i>Expellees</i> × <i>Immigration (State)</i>				-0.022*** (0.007)		
<i>Immigration (County)</i>					0.415*** (0.100)	
<i>Expellees</i> × <i>Immigration (County)</i>					-0.019*** (0.005)	
<i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>						0.236*** (0.078)
<i>Expellees</i> × <i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>						-0.013*** (0.005)
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30	30	30
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distance Polynomials	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Distance Polynomials × Immigration				✓	✓	✓
Segment FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Periods of Low/High Immigration	All	Low	High	All	All	All
Observations	5252	3232	2020	5252	5656	4443
Municipalities	404	404	404	404	404	344
F-statistic (KP)	221	221	220	97	91	83
First Stage:	-----					
<i>US Zone</i>	12.169*** (0.819)	12.169*** (0.819)	12.169*** (0.820)	12.169*** (0.819)	12.161*** (0.814)	12.013*** (0.811)

The table reports coefficients from six spatial fuzzy RD regressions with standard errors clustered at the municipality-level in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). ‘Observations’ reports the number of observations for the indicated number of ‘Municipalities’. All estimations use a uniform kernel. All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a set of cross-interactions of migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. The lower panel shows the results from the first stage, the regression of the *Expellees* share on the *US Zone* indicator. Columns 2 and 3 compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point.

immigration periods (column 2) and twice as large during immigration waves (column 3) as compared to the average effect (column 1).

To study this relationship more rigorously, specification 4 interacts the 1950 expellee share with a measure of *Immigration* to the state of Baden-Württemberg. The interaction enters with a negative sign that is statistically significant at the one percent level, showing that the negative effect is large in years with higher immigration rates. Figure 7, Panel [a] visualizes this by plotting the corresponding marginal effects: the effect of *Expellees* is zero in periods without positive net immigration and negative when statewide immigration is higher. The reduction in nationalist backlash is substantial. As a back-of-the-envelope calculation, we multiply the coefficient of the inter-

action term in column 4 by the 12-percentage point discontinuity in the expellee share at the border. The resulting -0.264 percentage points correspond to a reduction of the average nationalist backlash against a one percent increase in immigration by about 20 percent (cf. Table G1).

Specifications 5 and 6 in Table 2 use more detailed data on immigration to each county and each municipality. Column 5 is based on county-year-level immigration data for the 44 counties (*Landkreise* and *Stadtkreise*) that comprise Baden-Württemberg. Specification 6 repeats this exercise with highly granular data at the municipality-year level. In both models, the coefficient on the interaction is negative and statistically significant at the one percent level. Panels [b] and [c] of Figure 7 again show the corresponding marginal effects. The negative effect of the expellee share on far-right voting is substantially more pronounced in counties and in municipalities that have experienced

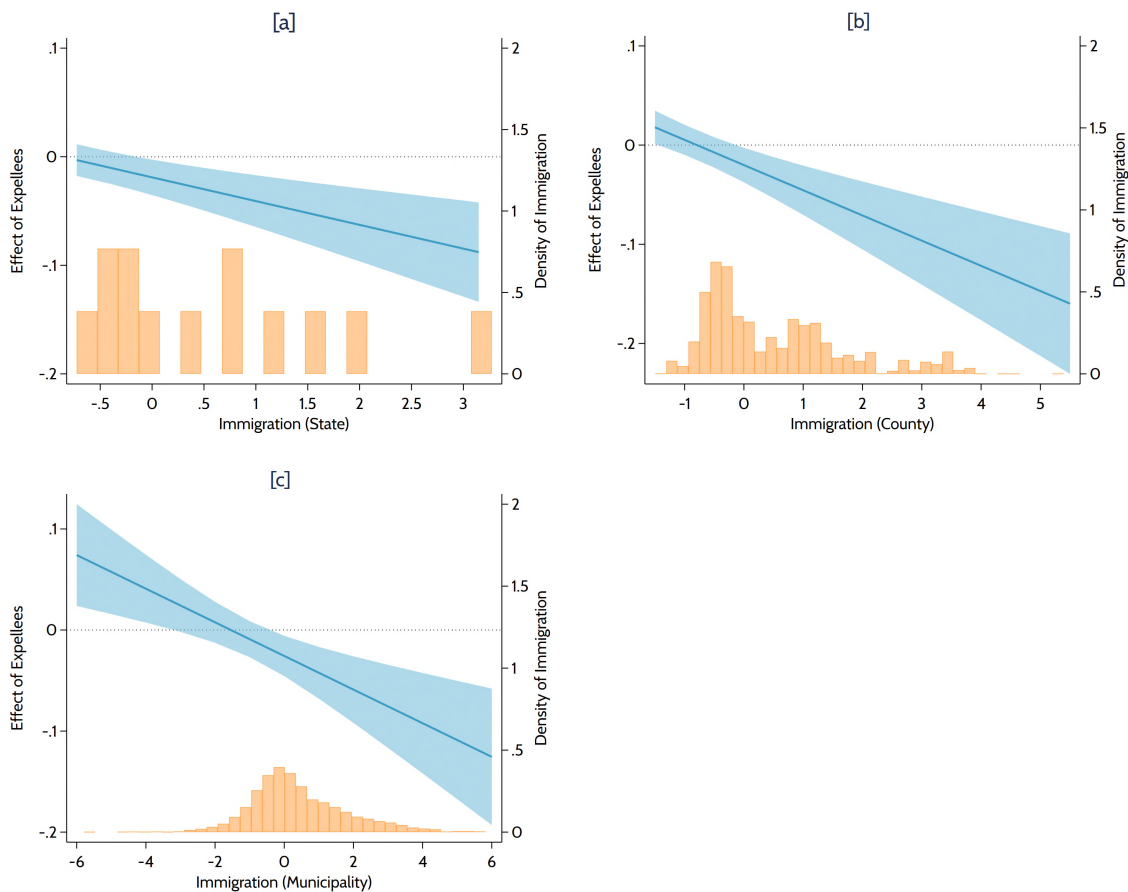


Figure 7: **Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares**

The figure plots results from three spatial fuzzy RD regressions as described in Table 2, columns 4-6. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the state level (Panel [a]), county level (Panel [b]), and municipality level (Panel [c]) with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the state, county, and municipality level, respectively.

higher levels of migration since the last election. In fact, the strong negative effect of the expellee share on far-right voting is only observable in counties and municipalities where contemporary net immigration is positive.

To show that this result is driven not only by temporal variation, i.e. periods of high immigration and high statewide far-right vote shares, but also by spatial variation, we use two additional estimation models. First, we normalize local far-right vote shares by the annual statewide vote share and still find the same pattern (see Appendix Table [H1](#) and Figure [H1](#)). This shows that the expellee effect is not simply scaled by the overall success of the far right in periods of high immigration. Second, controlling for annual statewide immigration and its interaction with the treatment does not change the results of models that use county-level and municipality-level variation in immigration (i.e., models 5 and 6, see Appendix Table [I1](#)). This shows that the effect is not only driven by temporal variation but also by spatial variation in immigration for given levels of current statewide immigration. Thus, the effect on voters is stronger *when* and *where* there is more contemporary immigration.

In Appendix [J](#), we extend the analysis to all German federal elections between 1949 and 2021. By analyzing electoral differences at the border in each individual election, we can assess how the effects differ in the immediate post-war period and in new immigration waves decades later, when learning from past experience may have materialized. Consistent with our argument, we find a short-run positive electoral effect of the expellee shock on far-right voting in the immediate post-war period. Between the late 1960s and late 1980s there are no significant effects. The first negative effect is observable during the immigration waves of the early 1990s. We also study effects on all other parties and only find short-run effects that wash out in the early 1960s. While the expellee shock increased vote shares of expellee parties and conservatives, it decreased the vote shares of liberals and social democrats between 1949 and 1961. Afterwards, there are no consistent long-term effects for these other parties.

## 6 Mechanisms

The evidence from election results that we have presented thus far demonstrates that the historical inflow of forced migrants has, in the long run, mitigated local nationalist backlashes in times of immigration. Our central argument to explain this result posits that experiences with immigration can lead voters to update their beliefs about immigration in a positive way. Updated beliefs may persist locally because of “vertical” transmission within families and “horizontal” transmission within local communities and may then affect voting behavior when immigration becomes politically salient ([Bisin & Verdier, 2001](#); [Giuliano & Tabellini, 2023](#)). In the subsequent section, we test

observable implications of this argument about the mechanism with a survey that we designed specifically for this purpose.

## 6.1 Family History and Collective Memory: Evidence from a Custom Survey

**Hypotheses.** A first testable implication of the argument is that long-term contact to expellees increases support for immigration. We expect the attitudes of direct descendants of expellees to be most strongly affected. We also expect somewhat more positive attitudes towards immigration among individuals with less formative expellee contact in their social environment, such as neighbors or distant relatives. Second, we test whether there is a persistent discontinuity in the number of people with expellee ancestors at the former border until today. Geocoding survey respondents allows us to test this with a spatial RD at the individual level. Combining the size of this discontinuity with the result on differential attitudes among expellee descendants compared to others allows us to calculate the extent to which descendants of expellees drive the main effect. Third, our argument implies that an active memory of the mass-arrival of expellees after World War II increases immigration-friendliness. Hence, by randomly priming some of the survey respondents with information on this historical episode we can create experimental variation in how active this memory is and examine how it affects attitudes on immigration for both respondents with and without expellee ancestry. Fourth, our argument suggests that views on immigration are transmitted within families and local communities. Collecting data on respondents' home regions and immigration-related views within their families allows us to examine whether this is the case. Fifth, the argument that views on immigration only affect voting behavior when immigration is salient implies that the association between anti-immigrant views and far-right voting should be stronger among respondents who consider immigration to be a politically important topic. Sixth, by using open-ended survey questions, we let respondents explain in their own words how they would describe the implications of the historical expellee shock for views toward immigration in the region today. We expect to find statements that elicit why and how the expellee shock led to more immigration-friendly attitudes.

**Survey Design.** To examine these hypotheses, we designed an online survey and fielded it in the region of Baden-Württemberg in November and December of 2022, cooperating with the commercial survey company *Bilendi*. We target a sample of German citizens, representative by gender and age (between 18-74 years), that reside in Baden-Württemberg. 3,020 respondents drawn from the company's online access panel fulfilled the inclusion criteria and 3,000 of those completed the entire survey.<sup>24</sup> We framed the survey as a scientific opinion poll about polit-

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<sup>24</sup>In order to maximize the sample size, we tolerated a slight overrepresentation of older respondents (46.0 years in the population, 47.0 years in our sample) and female respondents (49.5% in the population, 52.9% in our sample). The median respondent took approximately

ical attitudes and designed the questionnaire to collect information on respondents’ family history, political and immigration-related attitudes, as well as a number of additional socio-economic characteristics. Appendix K.1 provides the exact wording of the survey questions and lists the variables that we coded. Appendix K.2 contains summary statistics.

**Expellee Contact and Family History.** First, we examine whether descendants of expellees and individuals with other forms of personal contact to expellees differ in their views on immigration from individuals without such contact. We estimate this association with the following specification:

$$y_i^{c,t} = \gamma \text{contact}_i + \delta_c + \tau_t + \mathbf{X}_i' \zeta + \varepsilon_i^{c,t}, \quad (4)$$

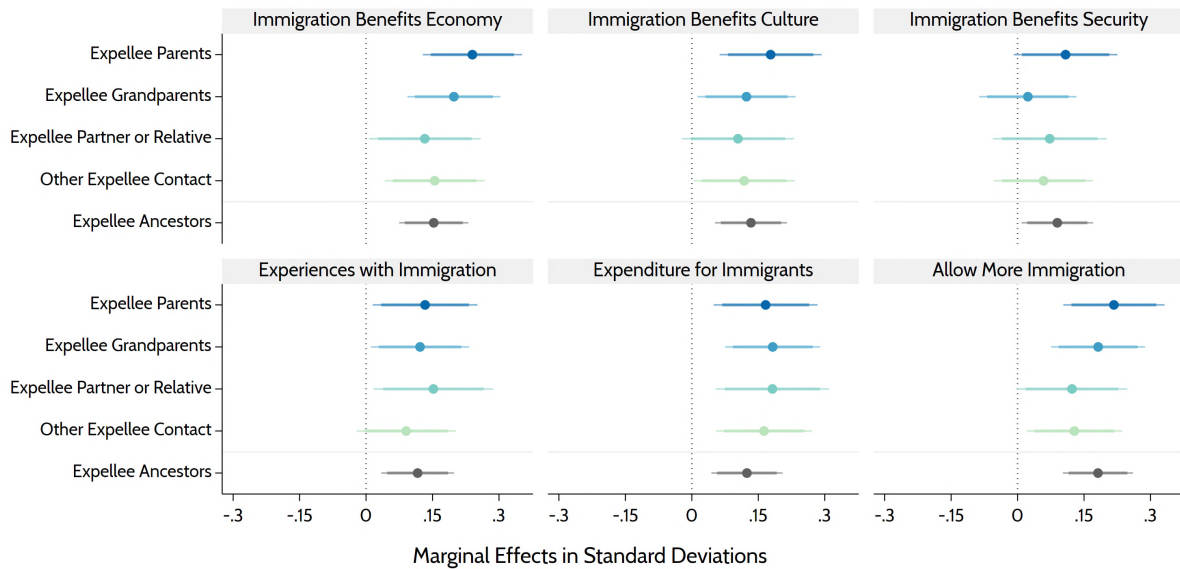
The outcome variable  $y$  in these regressions is one of six separate survey items that indicate respondent  $i$ ’s views on six separate immigration-related questions. The explanatory variable of interest,  $\text{contact}$ , is binary and represents different measures of personal contact to expellees.  $\delta_c$  represent county fixed effects of the respondent’s home region and  $\tau_t$  answer-day fixed effects of the day that the respondent completed the survey. The control vector  $\mathbf{X}_i$  includes self-reported gender, age, age-squared, a categorical income variable, nine religion categories, as well as eight education categories.

Figure 8 plots the coefficients  $\gamma$ , estimated from various specifications of equation (4), along with 95%- and 90%-confidence intervals. Coefficients plotted in grey indicate that individuals with expellees among their ancestors are significantly more likely to respond in an immigration-friendly way to all six questions. The 42% of the respondents in the sample who report having at least one expellee ancestor are more likely to respond affirmatively when asked whether immigration benefits (a) the economy, (b) culture and (c) security; they are also more likely to (d) report that their region has had positive experience with immigration in the past, (e) support redistributing public spending from natives to immigrants, and (f) allow more immigration to Germany.<sup>25</sup> The colored dots in each of the six panels represent coefficients from a separate regression that differentiates between four mutually exclusive categories of the closest contact to an expellee in one’s social environment. We differentiate between those who have expellees as a parent, as a grandparent, as a partner or other relative, and as another contact (friend, acquaint-

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7.5 minutes for completing the questionnaire. The survey company incentivized respondents to complete the survey by offering EUR 0.80 per respondent.

<sup>25</sup>For item (f), we experimentally test whether responses differ when respondents are asked whether they would allow more immigration of *migrants* vs. more immigration of *refugees* to Germany. Figure L4 shows that responses do not depend on this ( $p = 0.552$ ).



**Figure 8: Contact with Expellees: Immigration-Related Outcomes**

This figure presents a coefficient plot based on twelve linear regressions examining the relationship between expellee contact and six different immigration-related outcomes coded from survey questions. Panel titles indicate the dependent variables, which are standardized. The four colored dots represent the marginal effects from regressions that differentiate between having (1) an expellee parent, (2) expellee grandparent, (3) expellee partner, relative or other ancestor, and (4) other expellee contact such as friends, colleagues, neighbors, or acquaintances as the closest expellee contact. Indicating no contact to expellees is the base category. The categories used are mutually exclusive, with individuals who report for instance having at least one expellee parent and grandparent grouped under the “expellee parent” category as this represents their closest contact. We exclude respondents who identify as expellees themselves as the group that is sufficiently old consists of only six observations. The dark grey dots represent average marginal effects from regressions that use an indicator for respondents with expellee ancestry; having no expellee ancestry is the base category. Regressors include the variables for expellee contact mentioned on the left-hand side of the plot as well as a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

tance, neighbor). The results show that all types of such contact reduce hostility towards immigration, but also demonstrate that the effect sizes are larger when the contact is closer.

**Revealed Preferences and Other Outcomes.** To mitigate the risk of social desirability bias and cheap talk in survey responses, we also implemented a lottery in which respondents could win EUR 100. Respondents were asked how much of their win they would donate to a refugee aid charity. Respondents with expellee ancestry donated an average of EUR 5 [95%-CI: 3-7] more (see Appendix Figure L1). Appendix Figure L2 displays results for additional outcomes that are related to more general political attitudes and go beyond specific immigration-related questions: self-positioning in the political spectrum, intention to vote for the far-right party *AfD*, the degree to which a respondent has a European identity, a statement about national pride, and general attitudes towards immigration. Consistent with the previous results, all coefficients for expellee exposure take the expected sign and most – albeit not all – are statistically significant at conventional levels.

**Persistence in Settlement Patterns.** Given that people with close contact or family ties to expellees hold more pro-immigration and less far-right nationalist views, the question arises whether and to what extent it is these people who drive the electoral effect at the former border. To test this, we geocode each respondent’s home municipality (indexed by  $m$ ) and estimate with spatial RD regressions at the individual level whether there is a discontinuity in the likelihood of observing an expellee descendant among the respondents:

$$ancestry_i^m = \alpha zone_m + f(dist_m, zone_m) + g(long_m, lat_m) + \sum_{s=1}^5 seg_m^s + \epsilon_i^m \quad (5)$$

The results are reported in Table 3. There is a persistent difference in settlement patterns for people with expellee ancestry when testing for discontinuities at the former occupation zone border in 2022. Survey respondents just north of the border are 13 percentage points more likely to report having expellee ancestors than those just south of the border. This effect size corresponds almost exactly to the size of the discontinuity in the 1950 share of expellees at the municipality-level (12 percentage points, Table 1).<sup>26</sup>

Table 3: **Border Discontinuity in Expellee Ancestry**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>US Zone</i>	0.134** (0.056)	0.133** (0.052)	0.134** (0.056)	0.136** (0.056)	0.131** (0.057)
Observations	1365	1365	1365	1365	1365
Linear Polynomials	✓		✓	✓	✓
Coordinates		✓	✓		✓
Segment FE				✓	✓

The table displays RD estimates from five separate spatial RD regressions. The dependent variable is *Expellee Ancestors*. Consistent with our other estimations, we use an RD bandwidth of 30 km. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01.

This finding is important for two reasons. First, it confirms that the self-reported expellee measure of the survey accurately captures expellee ancestry among the respondents. Reporting an expellee ancestor is thus not endogenous to some unobserved personal traits, which we would assume to be balanced around the former occupation zone border. Second, in connection with our results from Figure 8, the higher number of expellee descendants north of the border can contribute to explaining the pattern we see in the aggregate election results.

<sup>26</sup>It is worth noting that while our observational data aggregate the political opinions of all voters in the municipalities along the border, our survey provides more noisy measures as we only have a small one-digit sample of voters from most municipalities. Consequently, we do not find statistically significant differences at the border for other outcomes, including AfD voting.

**Share of Effect Due to Expellee Descendants.** To estimate the extent to which direct expellee ancestry might explain our results, we conduct a simple back-of-the-envelope calculation. Among respondents within our baseline bandwidth 30 km to the border, expellee descendants are less likely to vote for the AfD, with a difference of 3.9 percentage points. Combining this finding with the difference in the presence of expellee descendants along the border, we estimate that descendants account for 31% of the observed 1.7-percentage-points difference in the AfD vote share at the border in the most recent election.<sup>27</sup> The results thus suggest that expellee descendants have a substantial effect on the observed differences in far-right voting at the border. However, this channel does not explain the entire effect.

**Experimental Evidence.** As a next step, we provide experimental evidence for our argument that learning from past immigration mitigates anti-immigration sentiments. We evoke potential “learning from migration experience” by experimentally addressing the mass-arrival of expellees. Prior to being asked about their attitudes toward immigration and nationalism, a randomly selected half of survey participants were shown a brief neutral information text describing the arrival of expellees as the largest migration episode in modern German history. These *treated* respondents were then given the opportunity to describe their views on the implications of this expellee inflow and were asked if they had expellees as ancestors, in their family or social environment. The control group received the same treatment block at the end of the survey.<sup>28</sup> Respondents could not change their responses to previous questions.

$$y_i^{c,t} = \rho D_i + \delta_c + \tau_t + \mathbf{X}'_i \gamma + \varepsilon_i^{c,t} \quad (6)$$

Figure 9 shows the results of this survey experiment. Respondents who received the information treatment pointed out larger advantages from immigration for the economy, culture, and security. These effects are statistically significant at the 95% level and equivalent to about 10% of a standard deviation. Coefficients for the other three outcomes (experiences with immigration, redistributing public expenditure to immigrants, allowing more immigration) are positive but insignificant at conventional significance levels. Notably, the information treatment has the strongest effects on outcomes that relate to expected effects of immigration and thus to outcomes that are most likely to be influenced by “learning from the past.”

<sup>27</sup>This exercise assumes that expellee descendants turn out at the same rates as the non-expellee descendants group, an assumption supported by the insignificant difference in indicating an abstention in the next election among both groups in our survey.

<sup>28</sup>Appendix K.1 provides the detailed wording of the treatment block.



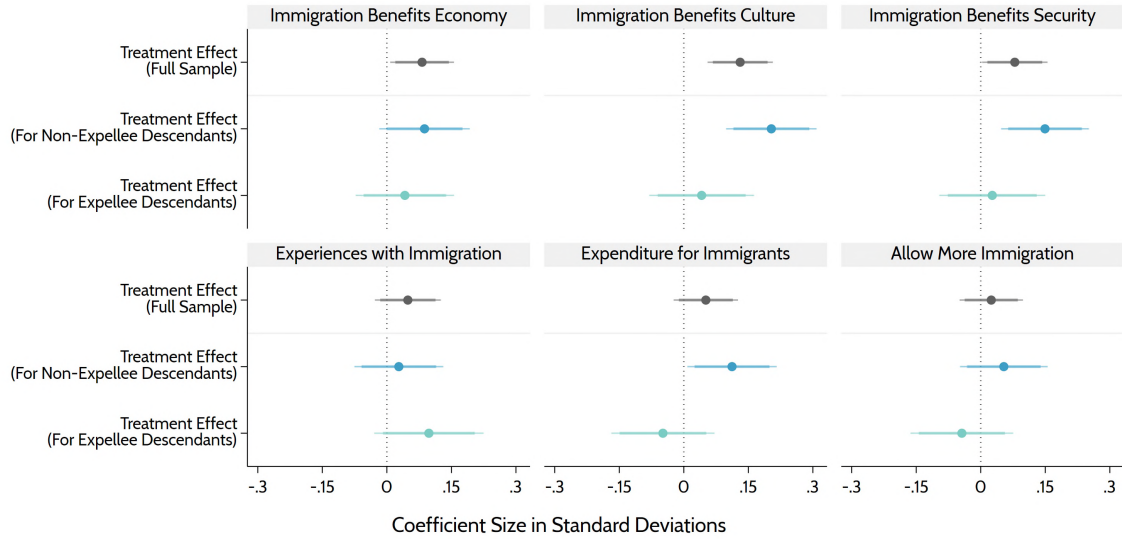


Figure 9: **Survey Experiment: Activation Treatment**

This figure presents a coefficient plot based on six linear regressions examining the relationship between the information treatment and the six main immigration-related outcomes coded from survey questions. Panel titles indicate the dependent variables, which are standardized. The dark grey dots represent average treatment effects, the colored dots display the treatment effect by respondents with expellee ancestry and those without. Regressors further include a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

It is reasonable to assume that, in absence of the treatment, expellee descendants know more about the history and integration of the expellees. Since this was a formative experience in their own family history, it is also more likely that they have this episode in mind when being asked about immigration issues. For those without expellee ancestors, the treatment provides more additional activating information. To test for heterogeneities of the treatment effects depending on the respondents' expellee ancestry we estimate the following specification:

$$y_i^{c,t} = \theta D_i + \phi \text{ancestry}_i + \psi(D_i \times \text{ancestry}_i) + \delta_c + \tau_t + \mathbf{X}'_i \gamma + \varepsilon_i^{c,t} \quad (7)$$

The colored dots in Figure 9 plot the marginal treatment effects for respondents with expellee ancestry ( $\theta + \psi$ ) and those without ( $\theta$ ). For three of the six outcomes, the marginal treatment effect is only statistically significant for respondents without expellee ancestry and not for those with expellee ancestry. This supports the interpretation that activating the memory of the historical episode decreases anti-immigration views particularly among those respondents that are least likely to consider this episode in the absence of the treatment. The result also shows that “learning from the past” goes beyond descendants of expellees and extends to descendants of natives. In concert

with the finding that descendants explain only part of the electoral effects, this suggests that the historical experience also influenced the attitudes of local native communities and their descendants.

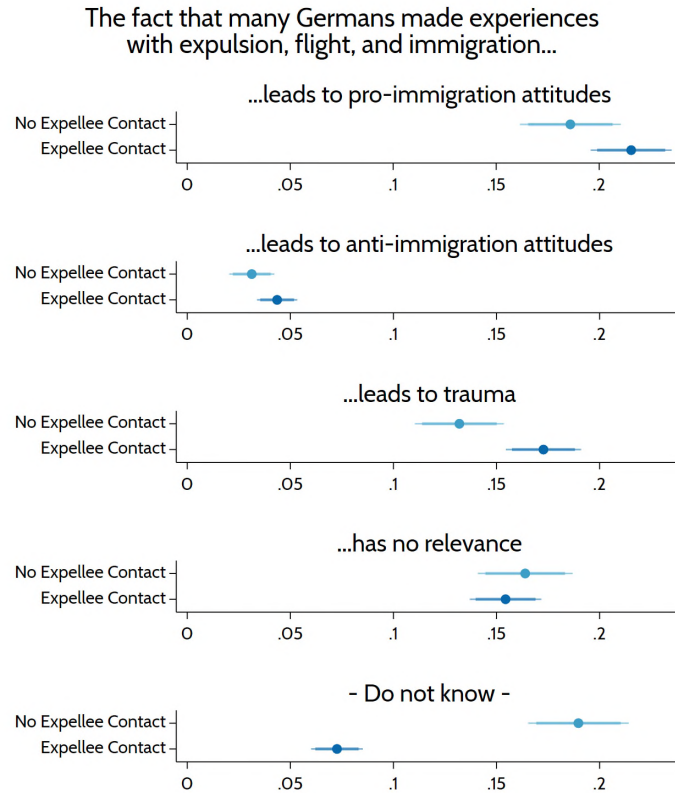
**Open-Ended Survey Question.** So far, we have used data that allow us to *infer* the implications of the inflow of forced migrants on the attitudes of individuals. An alternative approach is to *directly ask* individuals what they think these implications are without restricting their replies to a set of answer options. A key advantage of such an open-ended survey question is that it does not lead or prime respondents in any predefined direction (Stantcheva, 2022). Instead, respondents can reflect on the supposed effect in their own words.

We add such an open-ended question, in which we ask respondents to reflect on the relevance of Germany's historical expellee experience for contemporary society, right after providing them with the information on the post-war expellee inflow. We ask: "*What do you think is the significance of the fact that many Germans had experience of expulsion, flight, and immigration?*" An initial qualitative inspection of the most elaborate replies reveals that there are survey participants who respond to this question with statements that closely align with our argument. One respondent stated: "*My grandparents talked a lot about this and it made me more sympathetic towards refugees today.*" Another one argued: "*We can understand what it is like to not be welcome ourselves. In those days, people were housed in smaller apartments, sometimes for years as a family in just one room. My father comes from East Prussia. I heard many stories about it.*" And yet another respondent said: "*My generation knows the situation of displaced persons from the stories of parents and has contributed to the fact that today's young generation has also learned about it. This influences the solidarity with refugees.*"

These selected examples are not exceptional but illustrate a general pattern. Categorizing all free-text responses *post hoc*, we find that the most common response was that this historical experience has led to more pro-immigration attitudes, with 20% of the respondents mentioning that it could foster greater empathy and welcoming attitudes toward current immigrants.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, less than 5% suggested that the experience yields more dislike, antipathy, etc. toward current immigrants. Furthermore, 16% noted that trauma could be a consequence of the experience without specifying political consequences. Another 16% stated that these experiences are no longer relevant today, suggesting, e.g., that too much time has passed since then. Other respondents gave answers that did not include statements on the expected effect (see Appendix L.3) or indicated that they "do not know." As one would expect, respondents without expellee contact are significantly more likely to "not know."

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<sup>29</sup>Appendix L.3, Table L1 shows definitions and examples for each of the coded categories, Table L2 provides summary statistics, and Figure L3 shows the results for all categories.



**Figure 10: Open Question: The Significance of Germany’s Expellee Experience for Today**

This figure presents average predicted outcomes from five separate regressions. The dependent variables as indicated in the panel titles are indicators for different categories of answers coded from an open survey question: “*What do you think is the significance of the fact that many Germans had experience of expulsion, flight, and immigration?*” Regressors consist of the variable for expellee contact as well as a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

**Transmission Across Generations.** Our argument implies that attitudes persist locally because they are transmitted across generations. Results in Appendix Table L3 show a strong relationship between respondents’ attitudes towards immigration and those of their parents. This link tends to be more pronounced for older respondents and for those who live in the same region as their ancestors. Moreover, 50.3% of survey participants indicate that they live within 20 kilometers of their ancestors’ home.

**The Role of Immigration Salience.** Finally, two additional findings underline the relevance of immigration-related attitudes for actual voting behavior. First, negative attitudes towards immigration strongly predict AfD voting, as shown in Appendix Table L4.<sup>30</sup> Second, the association between anti-immigration views and far-right

<sup>30</sup>The table also shows that AfD voters are older, less educated, poorer and less religious than voters of other parties. They also place themselves more toward the right end of a political left-right spectrum and indicate more national pride.

voting is substantially stronger for respondents who consider the topic of immigration as particularly important (see Figure L5). The latter finding provides individual-level evidence for the argument that surges in immigration salience can activate latent attitudes toward immigration to become electorally relevant.

Overall, the survey results provide insights into the relationship between family history and attitudes towards immigration, and the potential for information interventions to shape self-reported attitudes towards immigration. Arguably, an implication of our argument is that local experiences with past immigration shocks must have been *positive* in the long term in one way or another. In the next section we examine whether we can detect evidence for positive experiences also in our observational data. Specifically, we investigate whether the data reflect the perceived positive economic experiences from the inflow of expellees that is suggested by survey responses.

## 6.2 The Positive Economic Experience

As was observable in recent immigration waves, there is a widespread fear in the societies of destination countries that immigration creates economic problems. To the extent that these fears originate from economic theory, a standard argument is that increased labor supply puts downward pressure on wages, especially for low-skilled workers. However, a growing body of evidence suggests that in many cases, migration actually has positive effects on regional economic performance, including the incomes of natives (e.g., Beerli et al., 2021; Card, 1990; Foged & Peri, 2015; Tabellini, 2020).<sup>31</sup> If positive effects on regional incomes are observable in our setting, this could contribute to explaining the less hostile political reaction to current immigration in regions that made such a positive experience with immigration in the past.

**Data on Economic Outcomes.** We collected and digitized administrative data on local tax revenues at the municipality level to study the long-term economic effects of the expellee shock. We focus on the taxes for which data is available for the longest time period: income taxes, land taxes, and corporate taxes. The local revenue from income taxes is the most direct measure of local incomes, but municipality level-data is only available from 1970 onwards.<sup>32</sup> Data on municipality-level land tax revenues are also available for 1950 and 1960, allowing us to observe the early post-treatment period. Municipality-level corporate taxes are also available for earlier years, but they represent a more noisy measure of local incomes, because they are heavily influenced by individual large firms in individual municipalities. For the analyses, we adjust local tax revenues for municipality-specific tax factors, convert them

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<sup>31</sup>See Borjas (2003) for a different result and Lewis & Peri (2015) for a review of this literature.

<sup>32</sup>Figure M2 shows that local income tax revenues are strongly correlated with household incomes, for which there is county-level data.

to per-capita amounts, and take the natural logarithm to examine effects in relative terms rather than in absolute amounts.

**Economic Effects.** Table 4 reports the results of sharp RD regressions that estimate the discontinuity at the border based on equation (1). In column 1, we examine income tax data from 1970 to 2020 and find larger incomes north of the former occupation zone border. The discontinuity is small and marginally significant in the 1970s but becomes economically large and highly statistically significant in the 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s, with an estimated discontinuity at the border of 9-10% of local income tax revenues in 2020. Moving to column 2, the estimated effects on local land tax revenues from 1990 to 2020 are very similar to the effects on income tax revenues, both in terms of

Table 4: Long-Term Economic Effects

Outcome variable:	<i>Income Tax</i> (per capita, ln)	<i>Land Tax</i> (per capita, ln)	<i>Corporate Tax</i> (per capita, ln)
2020	0.008*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.003)	
2015	0.008*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.003)	0.020* (0.011)
2010	0.008*** (0.002)	0.009*** (0.003)	
2005	0.011*** (0.002)	0.008*** (0.003)	
2000	0.008*** (0.002)	0.007** (0.003)	
1995	0.013*** (0.002)	0.008*** (0.003)	
1990	0.013*** (0.002)	0.007* (0.004)	
1976	0.004 (0.003)		0.000 (0.010)
1970	0.007* (0.004)		0.012 (0.012)
1960		-0.022*** (0.008)	-0.006 (0.012)
1960 (per native)		-0.006 (0.011)	0.003 (0.012)
1950		-0.020** (0.009)	-0.016 (0.011)
1950 (per native)		-0.003 (0.008)	-0.008 (0.012)

The table displays coefficients from separate fuzzy spatial RD regressions, where the treatment variable *Expellees* is instrumented with the *US Zone* indicator. The various dependent variables are indicated in the top row and measured at the municipality level. The first column indicates the year in which the outcomes are measured. Cells are empty if data are not available. Apart from the outcome variables, the specifications are the same as in Table 1, Panel C.

statistical significance and in economic magnitude.<sup>33</sup> Data on municipality-level land tax revenues are also available for the pre-1970 period. With these data, we find that positive economic effects are not yet observable in 1950 and 1960. When calculating land tax revenue per capita (natives + expellees) there is a negative effect, suggesting that the arrival of expellees did not immediately increase land tax revenues – and thus the value of real estate property – north of the border. Positive economic effects only emerge in the long run. Results on local corporate tax revenues in the last column generally support these conclusions, albeit statistical precision is smaller. Nevertheless, the results on corporate taxes are consistent with the absence of a discontinuity in the 1950s, a growing discontinuity in the 1970s, and a significant discontinuity in the 2010s. These results are in line with [Peters \(2022\)](#) and [Ciccone & Nimczik \(2022\)](#), who find positive long-term economic effects of the immigration of expellees to Germany. In sum, our evidence is consistent with a positive causal effect of immigration on local incomes.

**Only an Income Effect?** The finding of the positive economic effect prompts the question of whether the electoral effect we observe is exclusively due to a general association between local income levels and nationalist voting. If so, reduced support for nationalist parties in treated regions would result only from increased local economic well-being, not from the positive collective experience with immigration. However, we find evidence against this interpretation. First, the heterogeneous effects (section 5.3.2) and, in particular, the finding that the European migrant crisis of 2015 activated the effect (section 5.3.1) go against this interpretation. As the previous section shows, the positive economic effect of the forced migrants existed for decades but the local experience has only translated into differences in voting behavior *when* and *where* it turned politically salient through a contemporary immigration shock. Second, we specifically test whether there is an association between local income levels and nationalist voting that depends on contemporary immigration. If the effect we identify was exclusively driven by higher local incomes and was independent of the local experience with immigration, we would see that locations with lower incomes react more strongly to contemporary immigration. However, we do not find this pattern (see Appendix M.1). While higher local incomes reduce far-right vote shares overall, this association is homogeneous and does *not* depend on contemporary immigration. Richer municipalities show less support for far-right parties also when contemporary immigration is low. In contrast, the experience with the expellee shock only matters when contemporary immigration is high, which supports the idea that the local experience with immigration matters. According to this inter-

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<sup>33</sup>The land tax can serve as a rough proxy for local incomes by indicating the value of real estate property in the municipalities. As a caveat, note that in Germany, the last re-valuation of land for the collection of land taxes took place in 1964. This is why there would be no significant changes in land tax revenues between 1990 and 2020 even if actual land value had changed differentially on the two sides of the border.

pretation, it is the positive experience that prevents voters from shifting to nationalist parties when contemporary immigration is high, which is consistent both with results from observational data and our survey.

**Alternative Mechanisms: Demographics.** In Appendix M.3, we show that the expellee shock had a persistent positive effect on population density but that other demographic characteristics such as population growth, the share of immigrants, and annual immigration levels are not significantly different in the long run. This also rules out that immigrants who settled in the region after the expellees sorted along the same border.

**Alternative Mechanisms: Import of Political Ideology.** An alternative explanation for why regions that received more expellees are less nationalist today could be that the expellees were, on average, less nationalist than the natives of these regions. To examine this possibility, we collect data on pre-war election results in regions from which people were expelled. While not all ethnic German expellees lived in areas that were part of the German *Reich*, we observe voting outcomes for the numerically most important home regions of soon-to-be expellees in the 1924-1933 period.<sup>34</sup> In Appendix M.4, we compare voting for the Nazi party NSDAP in these regions to Baden and Württemberg. This comparison shows that, if anything, the home regions of expellees were not less but *more* supportive of nationalism and far-right views than natives. This contradicts the conjecture that expellees imported their political ideology from their home region, and further supports the claim that the immigration experience in the destination region changed political views.<sup>35</sup>

## 7 Conclusions

This study examines the long-term political effects of exposure to immigration. Drawing on a natural experiment from Germany, we show that the massive inflow of forced migrants after World War II reduces voting for nationalist parties more than 70 years later. Voters in municipalities that experienced this historical immigration shock are significantly less likely to respond to current immigration waves by voting for nationalist parties. Current immigration activates latent differences in political attitudes that result from demonstrably positive experiences with the economic effects of immigration.

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<sup>34</sup>Before the treatment, there were no more elections in Germany after the Nazis came to power in 1933.

<sup>35</sup>A related concern could be that expellees from different home regions settled north and south of the occupation zone border and thereby imported different political ideologies from different home regions. We address this concern in Appendix M.5. Based on information from survey respondents with expellee ancestry on their ancestors' home regions, we find that the result that expellee descendants view immigration more positively holds across the different home regions.

Individual-level evidence from a customized survey with a randomized experiment aligns with these results and shows that immigration-friendly attitudes in the regions that experienced the expellee inflow result from norm transmission within families and local communities. The long-term electoral effect is driven by both descendants of expellees and descendants of natives. Experimentally evoking memories of the historical experience also leads to more pro-immigration responses. In summary, the results from both a randomized experiment and a natural experiment indicate that positive experience with migration reduces anti-immigrant attitudes, resulting in substantial electoral consequences when immigration is politically salient.

These results provide an explanation for the stark regional differences and the rural-urban divide in political reactions to immigration. In many countries, the nationalist backlash against immigration is regionally concentrated; interestingly often in regions with relatively few immigrants. Our results offer an explanation for this particular phenomenon and suggest that the lack of experience with immigration in such regions is an important mechanism behind hostile political reactions. Second, the results highlight that the short- and long-run political effects of immigration can go in opposite directions. While fears of harm from immigration often dominate immediate electoral reactions, opposition to immigration is more likely to fade in the long run if integration is successful. Third and more generally, we find that regional history does not necessarily translate into stable differences in political preferences. Instead, current events can activate latent but dormant differences in attitudes, turning them into pivotal determinants of electoral outcomes.

It is important to note that this study draws these conclusions from a context where the economic integration of immigrants from similar cultural backgrounds has been demonstrably successful. What is remarkable, however, is that our results consistently show that voters link these past immigration experiences to other, contemporary migrant inflows, even though the integration of immigrants from different cultural backgrounds may involve more friction. Given that experiences with immigration determine outcomes across different contexts and over long periods of time, the successful integration of immigrants is critical. Its political consequences will be felt for decades to come.



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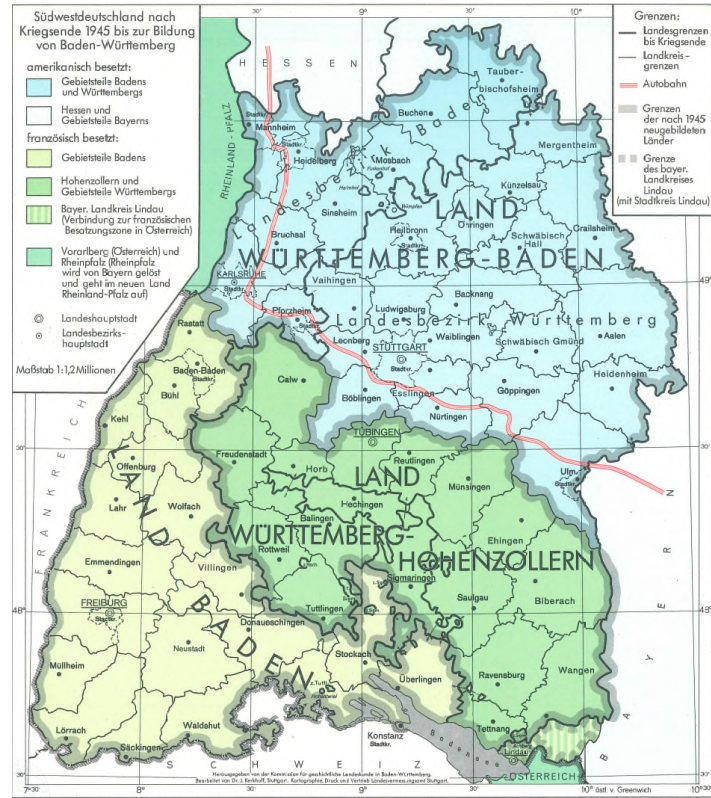
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## A Historical Map



**Figure A1: The Occupation Zones in Baden-Württemberg**

The map shows which areas in today's state of Baden-Württemberg belonged to the US occupation zone (light blue) and the French occupation zone (light green and medium green). The red line shows the highway A8. As can be seen from the map, none of the previously existing borders (bold black lines) of the former historical provinces of Baden, Württemberg, and the Hohenzollern Lands played a role in the determination of the occupation zone border. These regions were cut apart by the border until the state of Baden-Württemberg was founded in 1952. The three provinces that are visible in the map were created by the occupation forces and only existed in the 1945-1952 period. Source: Historischer Atlas von Baden-Württemberg (Kommission für geschichtliche Landeskunde in Baden-Württemberg 1972).

## B Definition of Variables

**Far-Right Vote Share.** Combined municipality vote share of all far-right, nationalist parties (in percent). Party coding according to Decker & Neu (2018); Schedler (2021); Stöss (1980–1986). Based on these sources, we identify all far-right nationalist parties that ever participated in the German federal elections. We code each party as far-right nationalist if at least one of the sources unambiguously uses the terms “extreme right”, “far-right”, “right-wing populist”, or “nationalist” to describe the party. The following parties are coded as far-right parties: *Ab jetzt... Demokratie durch Volksabstimmung*, *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD), *Arminius-Bund*, *Bund freier Bürger*, *Bürgerbewegung pro Deutschland*, *Bürgerbewegung pro NRW*, *Christliche Mitte – Für ein Deutschland nach Gottes Geboten* (CM), *Dachverband der nationalen Sammlung* (DNS), *Der III. Weg*, *Deutsche Gemeinschaft* (DG), *Deutsche Reichspartei* (DRP), *Deutsche Liga für Volk und Heimat*, *Deutsche Reichspartei* (DRP), *Deutsche Soziale Union* (DSU), *Deutsche Volksunion* (DVU), *Die Rechte*, *Die Republikaner* (REP) *Freiheitliche Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (FAP), *Nationaldemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (NPD), *Partei Rechtstaatlicher Offensive* (Schill), *STATT Partei – Die Unabhängigen*. Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**Expellee Parties Vote Share.** Combined vote share of all expellee parties (in percent). In the early elections of the Federal Republic, a number of parties represented the particular interests of expellees. Over time, some of them formed various alliances and cooperated and we thus group them together for the analysis. The parties’ names are *Vertriebenenorganisation Notgemeinschaft Württemberg-Baden*, *Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten* (BHE), *Gesamtdeutscher Block/Bund der Heimatvertriebenen und Entrechteten* (GB/BHE), *Gesamtdeutsche Partei* (GDP), *Deutsche Partei* (DP). Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**CDU Vote Share.** Municipality vote share of the *Christlich Demokratische Union* (CDU) in percent. Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**SPD Vote Share.** Municipality vote share of the *Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands* (SPD) in percent. Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**FDP Vote Share.** Municipality vote share of the *Freie Demokratische Partei* (FDP) in percent. Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**Green Party Vote Share.** Municipality vote share of *Bündnis 90/Die Grünen* in percent. Data sources: online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**US Zone.** Binary variable indicating municipalities whose territory is located in the former US occupation zone. Data sources: based on *Historischer Atlas von Baden-Württemberg* (1972), GIS shapefiles provided by Schumann (2014), and the *Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung* of Baden-Württemberg (2019).



***Distance to Border.*** Euklidian distance between a municipality's centroid and the closest point on the former occupation zone border in kilometers. Data source: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by Schumann (2014) and the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019).

***Expellees.*** Share of expellees in the total population of the municipality in percent in 1950. Data sources: digitized statistical yearbooks of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg. We matched 1950 and current municipalities based on exact geo-locations that we collected and verified using the Nominatim search engine.

***Immigration (State).*** Change in the share of foreigners in the state of Baden-Württemberg between two elections in percentage points. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Immigration (County).*** Change in the share of foreigners in a county (Kreis) between two elections in percentage points. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Immigration (Municipality).*** Change in the share of foreigners in a municipality (Gemeinde) between two elections in percentage points. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Periods of High Migration.*** Binary variable indicating periods in which *Immigration (State)* is larger than one percentage point. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Population (in Thousands, ln).*** Number of residents of a given municipality. Natural logarithm. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Male Population Share (%).*** Share of male residents. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Population Share Older than 65 (%).*** Share of residents aged 66 and older. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Population Share Younger than 25 (%).*** Share of residents aged 24 and younger. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Catholics Share (%).*** Share of residents who are of Catholic faith. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Population Growth.*** Annual change in the number of residents in percent. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Annual Immigration.*** Annual change in the number of foreigners in percentage points. Data sources: web-scraped data from the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

***Total Population 1939 (ln).*** Number of residents in 1939. Natural logarithm. Data source: statistical yearbooks of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**Population Density 1950.** Number of residents per square kilometer. Data sources: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019) and 1950 population reported in statistical yearbooks of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**NSDAP Vote Share.** Vote share of the *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* (NSDAP) in 1928 and 1933 in percent. Data source: (Falter & Hänisch, 1990).

**Turnout.** Electoral turnout in 1928 and 1933 in percent. Data source: (ibid.).

**Unemployed Share 1933.** Population share of the unemployed in 1933 in percent. Data source: (ibid.).

**Employed Share 1933.** Population share of the employed in 1933 in percent. Data source: (ibid.).

**Share of Protestants 1925.** Population share of Protestants in 1925 in percent. Data source: (ibid.).

**Share of Jews 1925.** Population share of Jews in 1925 in percent. Data source: (ibid.).

**Area of Municipality.** Geographic size of the municipality in square kilometers. Data source: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019).

**Distance to Stuttgart.** Euklidian distance between a municipality's centroid and the center of Stuttgart in kilometers. Data source: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019).

**Distance to Nearest City.** Euklidian distance in kilometers between a municipality's centroid and the center of the nearest municipality with more than 100,000 inhabitants. Data source: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019).

**Distance to Autobahn.** Euklidian distance between a municipality's centroid and the highway A8. Data source: own coding based on GIS shapefiles provided by Schumann (2014) the Landesamt für Geoinformation und Landentwicklung of Baden-Württemberg (2019).

**Income Tax (p.c., ln).** Municipality-level revenues of the income tax. Divided by municipality-specific tax factors. Divided by the number of residents. Natural logarithm. Data sources: Digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**Land Tax (p.c., ln).** Municipality-level revenues of the land tax. Divided by municipality-specific tax factors. Divided by the number of residents. Natural logarithm. Data sources: Digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

**Corporate Tax (p.c., ln).** Municipality-level revenues of the corporate tax. Divided by municipality-specific tax factors. Divided by the number of residents. Natural logarithm. Data sources: Digitized statistical yearbooks and online files of the Statistical Office of Baden-Württemberg.

## C Descriptive Statistics

Table C1: Summary Statistics

	Observations	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>Far-Right Vote Share</i>	15,180	3.36	3.90	0.00	25.00
<i>Expellee Parties Vote Share</i>	4,554	4.38	6.50	0.00	47.72
<i>CDU Vote Share</i>	15,180	50.77	16.29	7.46	100.00
<i>SPD Vote Share</i>	15,180	24.97	10.32	0.00	59.50
<i>FDP Vote Share</i>	15,180	11.12	6.77	0.00	71.43
<i>Green Party Vote Share</i>	9,108	8.22	3.91	0.00	36.95
<i>US Zone</i>	759	0.52	0.50	0.00	1.00
<i>Distance to Border</i>	759	28.12	17.88	0.03	59.87
<i>Expellees</i>	759	15.26	7.52	0.90	45.17
<i>Immigration (State)</i>	12,144	0.88	1.13	-0.73	3.15
<i>Immigration (County)</i>	11,385	0.78	1.30	-1.49	5.39
<i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>	8,754	0.64	1.52	-14.29	10.02
<i>Periods of High Migration</i>	15,326	0.25	0.43	0.00	1.00
<i>Population (in Thousands, ln)</i>	14,567	1.41	1.15	-2.06	6.46
<i>Male Population Share (%)</i>	12,290	49.13	1.64	23.17	64.18
<i>Population Share Older than 65 (%)</i>	10,609	14.53	3.87	5.59	36.79
<i>Population Share Younger than 25 (%)</i>	10,608	32.91	5.88	19.17	55.43
<i>Catholics Share</i>	759	40.06	22.22	2.69	90.43
<i>Population Growth</i>	15,180	0.97	1.95	-27.14	27.48
<i>Annual Immigration</i>	10,626	0.17	0.74	-6.96	10.13
<i>Total Population 1939 (ln)</i>	759	7.70	1.09	4.86	13.12
<i>Population Density 1950</i>	759	182.58	196.18	22.08	2,400.41
<i>NSDAP Vote Share 1933</i>	146	45.42	12.28	13.61	73.80
<i>Area of Municipality</i>	759	30.18	29.15	1.85	207.33
<i>Distance to Stuttgart</i>	759	58.24	26.97	0.69	135.47
<i>Distance to Nearest City</i>	759	29.71	17.29	0.61	79.74
<i>Distance to Autobahn</i>	759	32.97	23.60	0.01	90.11
<i>Income Tax (p.c., ln)</i>	6,828	5.80	0.35	3.06	7.30
<i>Land Tax (p.c., ln)</i>	6,068	3.30	0.33	1.20	4.65
<i>Corporate Tax (p.c., ln)</i>	2,265	4.35	0.80	0.61	8.48

Summary statistics for observations in election years (1949–2021) from all municipalities within 60 km distance to the former occupation zone border. For variables without time-variation in our panel, we show only one observation per entity.

## D Manipulation Test

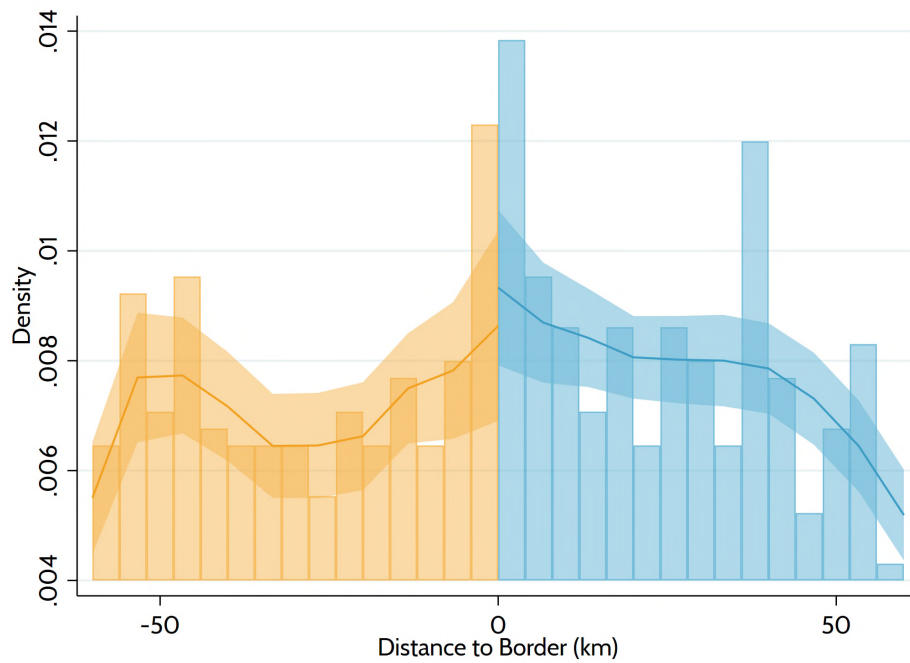


Figure D1: **Manipulation Test**

The figure shows the density of the observations with respect to their distance to the border between the French (negative values) and the US occupation zone (positive values) in the state of Baden-Württemberg. This manipulation testing procedure applies local polynomial density estimators (Cattaneo et al., 2020). The border predominantly follows municipality boundaries and *Distance to Border* captures the distance from the center of the respective municipalities to the occupation zone border in kilometers. Hence, for mechanical reasons, very few observations have a distance that is quasi zero, but as a consequence, we observe a relative accumulation of distances in the range of two to five kilometers. As the manipulation test shows, this pattern exists on both sides of the border and we do not observe significantly different densities at the cut-off.

## E Additional Evidence on the Treatment

### E.1 Effects of the Military Occupation

Table E1: **Robustness: Effects of the Military Occupation**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.060*** (0.019)	-0.060*** (0.018)	-0.049*** (0.018)	-0.048*** (0.016)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.013 (0.009)	-0.013 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.007 (0.008)
Panel C. 2021				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.141*** (0.037)	-0.141*** (0.036)	-0.119*** (0.035)	-0.112*** (0.032)
Municipalities	404	404	404	404
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30
Segments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Controls	Any Base	US Base, French Base, US Base × French Base	Distance to Base	Distance to Base, US Base Closest, Distance to Base × US Base Closest

The table displays coefficients from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions. Standard errors are in parentheses and are adjusted for clustering at the municipality level in Panels A and B and heteroskedasticity-robust in Panels C. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. Panels A and B compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Panels C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021.

The last row indicates the additional control variables that are added to the models:

**Any Base** indicates that the regressions control for whether a military base of the occupying forces was located in the municipality.

**US/French Base** indicates that the regressions control separately for whether a US military base or a French military base was located in the municipality. As there are municipalities with both a US and a French military base, the regressions also include an interaction of the two variables.

**Distance to Base** indicates that the regressions control for the Euklidian distance of the municipality’s centroid to the closest military base of the occupying forces.

**US Base Closest** is a binary variable indicating that the closest military base is a US base. In the regressions it is included both individually and interacted with *Distance to Base* to differentiate between distances to US and French military bases.

## E.2 Persistent US and French Influence?

Table E2: **Discontinuities in US and French Influence**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	US Influence	French Influence	Learnt English	Learnt French
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.064 (0.111)	-0.093 (0.084)	0.040 (0.029)	0.081 (0.054)
Observations	1515	1514	1521	1521
Linear Polynomials	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Segment FE	✓	✓	✓	✓

The table displays RD estimates from five separate spatial sharp RD regressions. The RD bandwidth is 30 km. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variables are indicated in the first row.

**US Influence:** In your view, is the influence of the United States on the world generally positive, rather positive, neither positive nor negative, rather negative or negative? [5-points Likert scale]

**French Influence:** In your view, is the influence of France on the world generally positive, rather positive, neither positive nor negative, rather negative or negative? [5-points Likert scale]

**Learnt English:** Did you learn English at school? [binary]

**Learnt French:** Did you learn French at school? [binary]

## F Robustness and Sensitivity

### F.1 Reduced-Form Regressions

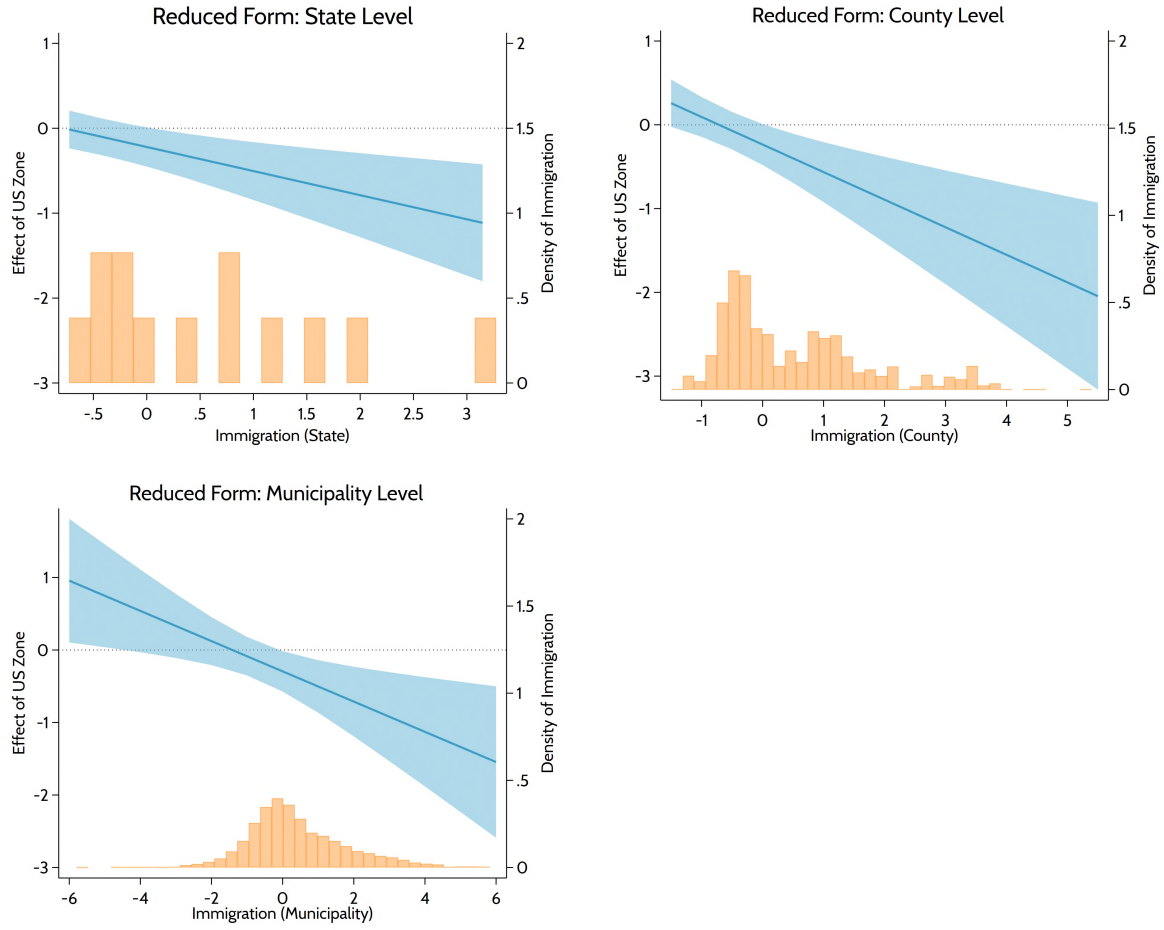


Figure F1: **Reduced-Form Regressions: Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares**

The figure plots results from three spatial sharp RD regressions. These are the reduced-form models corresponding to models 4-6 in Table 2. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of being located in the former *US Zone* given different levels of current *Immigration*. The shaded blue areas are 95% confidence intervals. The orange bars represent a histogram of *Immigration* at various levels of observation.

Table F1: **Robustness: Reduced Form**

	(1)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration	
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.758*** (0.228)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration	
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.167 (0.113)
Panel C. 2021	
<i>US Zone</i>	-1.774*** (0.445)
Municipalities	404
Bandwidth	30
Segments	✓
Coordinates	✓

The table displays coefficients from separate spatial sharp RD regressions (see equation 1) with the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections as the dependent variable. Standard errors are in parentheses and are robust to clustering at the municipality level. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . Panels A and B compare elections in periods of high and low immigration. An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. These two specifications include year fixed effects. Panel C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021.



## F.2 Alternative RD Specifications

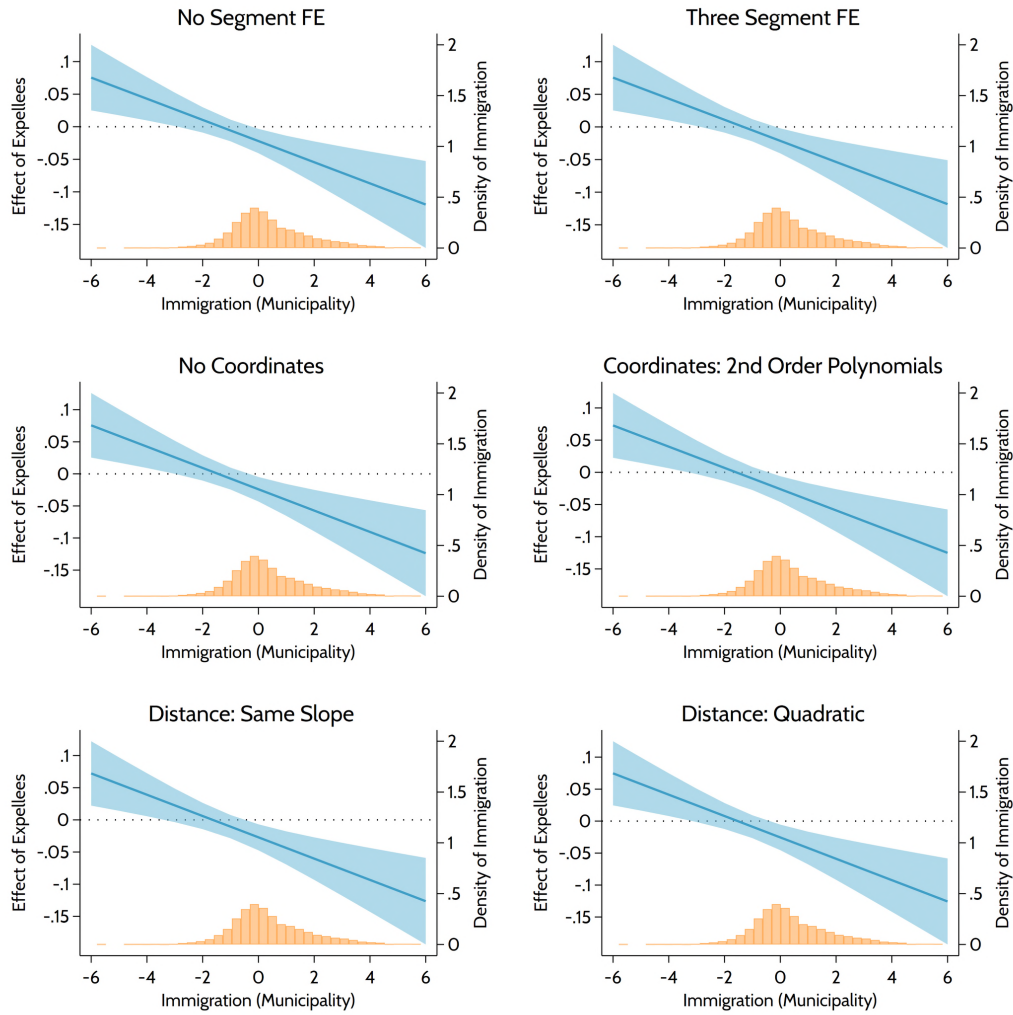


Figure F2: **Alternative RD Specifications**

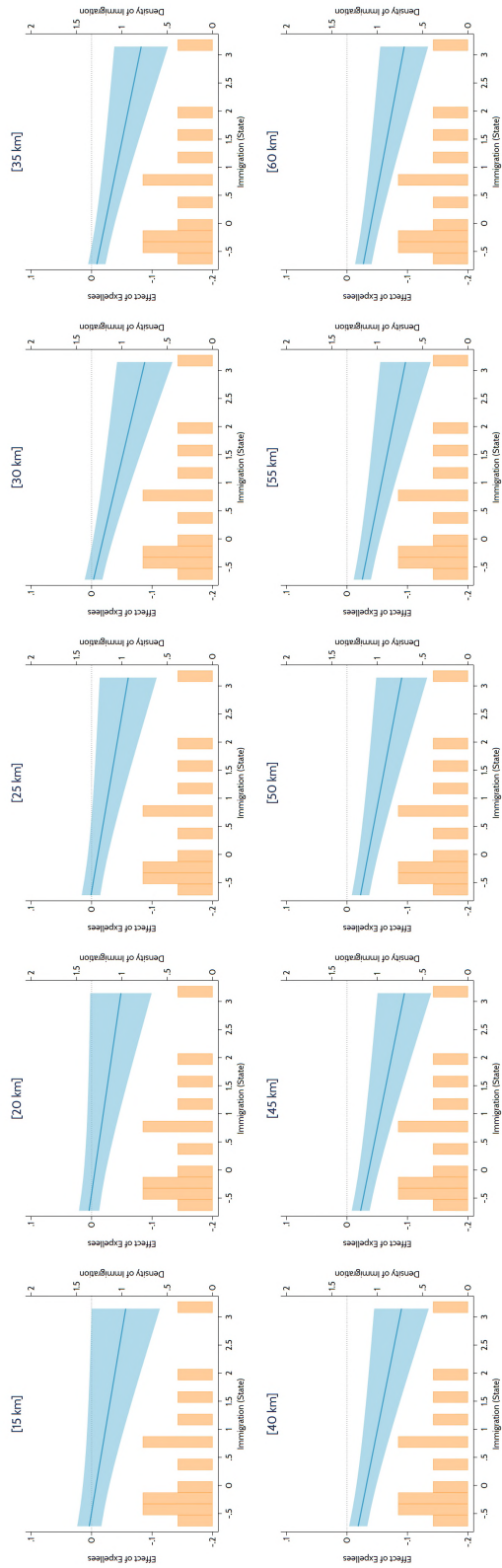
The figure plots results from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions that use alternative RD specifications for the baseline result in Figure 7, panel [c]. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the municipality level. **No Segment FE** runs the baseline specification but excludes segment fixed effects. **Three Segment FE** uses three instead of five segments. **No Coordinates** excludes latitude-longitude controls. **Coordinates: 2nd Order Polynomials** controls for second order polynomials of the latitude-longitude space. **Distance: Same Slope** does not allow different linear slopes of the running variable on both sides of the cut-off. **Distance: Quadratic** controls for second order polynomials of *Distance to Border*.

Table F2: Robustness: Alternative RD Specifications

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration						
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.055 <sup>***</sup> (0.018)	-0.056 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.059 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.061 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.064 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.062 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration						
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.013 (0.009)	-0.012 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.010)	-0.015 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.009)
Panel C. 2021						
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.138 <sup>***</sup> (0.034)	-0.134 <sup>***</sup> (0.036)	-0.135 <sup>***</sup> (0.036)	-0.139 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)	-0.153 <sup>***</sup> (0.039)	-0.146 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)
Municipalities	404	404	404	404	404	404
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30	30	30
Segments	✓	✓ (3 segments)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓ (quadratic)	✓	✓
Specification					Distance: same slope	Distance: quadratic

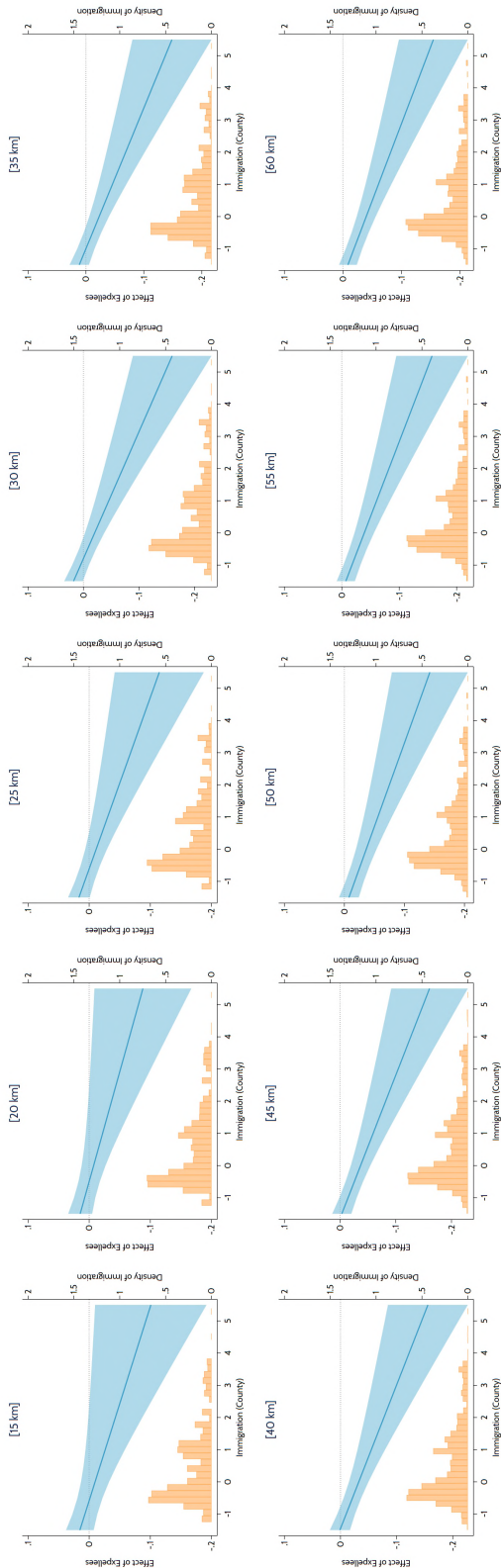
The table displays coefficients from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions. Standard errors are in parentheses and are robust to clustering at the municipality level in Panels A and B and to heteroskedasticity in Panel C. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. 'Bandwidth' depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. Panels A and B compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Panels C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021. **No Segment FE** runs the baseline specification but excludes segment fixed effects. **Three Segment FE** uses three instead of five segments. **No Coordinates** excludes latitude-longitude controls. **Coordinates: 2nd Order Polynomials** controls for second order polynomials of the latitude-longitude space. **Distance: Same Slope** does not allow different linear slopes of the running variable on both sides of the cut-off. **Distance: Quadratic** controls for second order polynomials of *Distance to Border*.

### F.3 Alternative Bandwidths



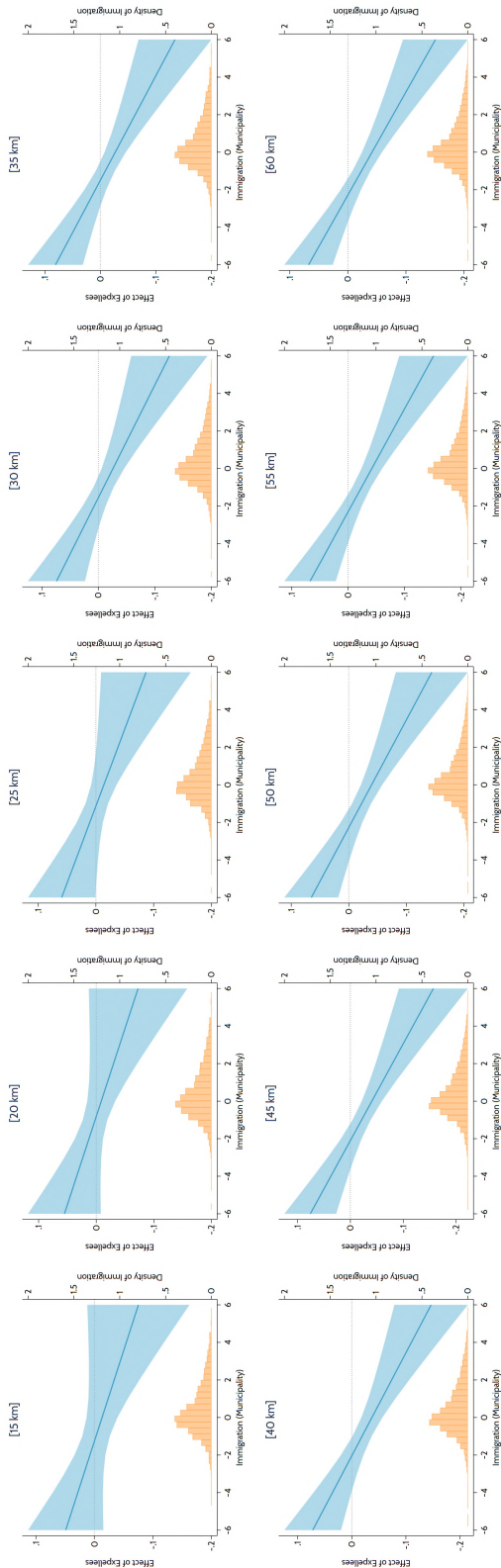
**Figure F.3: Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares — State-Level Immigration**

The figure plots results from ten spatial fuzzy RD regressions as described in Table 2, column 4. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the state level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue area). The orange bars represent a histogram of *Immigration* at the state level. Bandwidth choices restricting the respective samples are indicated in the panel titles.



**Figure F 4: Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares – County-Level Immigration**

The figure plots results from ten spatial fuzzy RD regressions as described in Table 2, column 5. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the county level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue area). The orange bars represent a histogram of *Immigration* at the county level. Bandwidth choices restricting the respective samples are indicated in the panel titles.



**Figure F5: Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares – Municipality-Level Immigration**

The figure plots results from ten spatial fuzzy RD regressions as described in Table 2, column 6. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue area). The orange bars represent a histogram of *Immigration* at the municipality level. Bandwidth choices restricting the respective samples are indicated in the panel titles.

Table F3: Robustness: Alternative Bandwidths

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration										
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.032 (0.024)	-0.028 (0.021)	-0.042 <sup>**</sup> (0.019)	-0.062 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.064 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.076 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.083 <sup>***</sup> (0.020)	-0.078 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.082 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.082 <sup>***</sup> (0.018)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration										
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.008 (0.013)	-0.005 (0.011)	-0.006 (0.010)	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.009)	-0.023 <sup>**</sup> (0.009)	-0.026 <sup>***</sup> (0.009)	-0.026 <sup>***</sup> (0.009)	-0.030 <sup>***</sup> (0.009)	-0.031 <sup>***</sup> (0.008)
Panel C. 2021										
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.073 (0.046)	-0.065 (0.041)	-0.101 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)	-0.146 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)	-0.152 <sup>***</sup> (0.037)	-0.181 <sup>***</sup> (0.039)	-0.203 <sup>***</sup> (0.040)	-0.198 <sup>***</sup> (0.039)	-0.220 <sup>***</sup> (0.039)	-0.225 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)
Municipalities	229	288	344	404	458	527	587	646	710	759
Bandwidth	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60
Segments	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The table displays coefficients from 40 spatial fuzzy RD regressions with standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. 'Bandwidth' depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). 'Municipalities' indicates the number of observations by counting the municipalities within a certain bandwidth. All specifications use a uniform kernel and include local linear polynomials of *Distance to Border*, segment fixed effects, and latitude-longitude controls. Panels A and B compare elections in periods of high and low immigration. These two specifications include year fixed effects. Panel C shows results for the 2021 federal election.

## F.4 Triangular RD Kernel

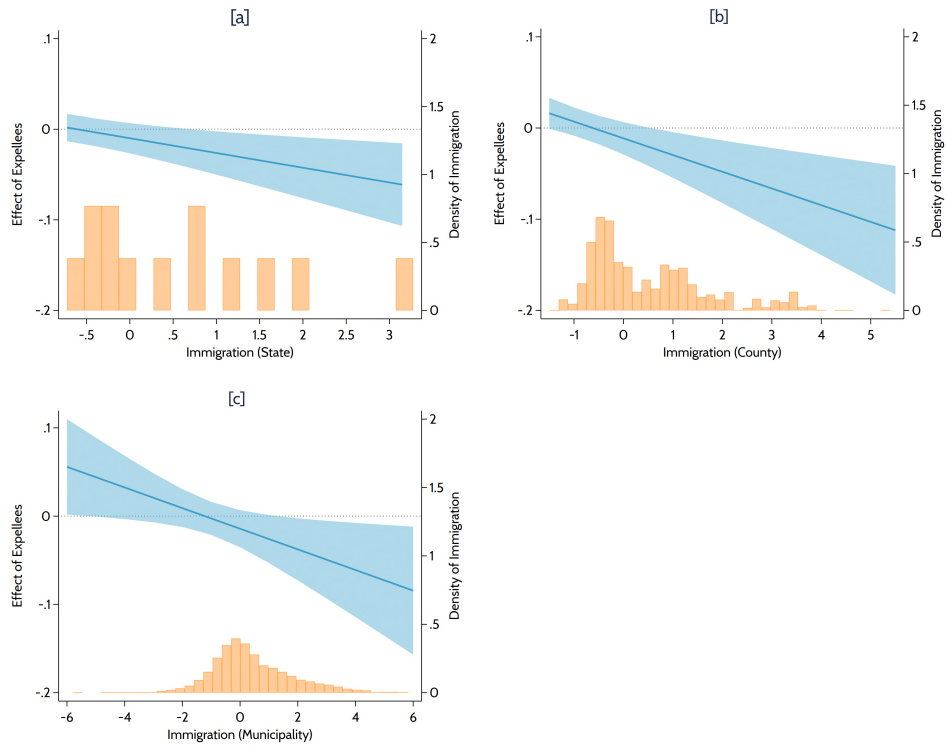


Figure F6: **Triangular Kernel. Marginal Effects of Expellees on Far-Right Vote Shares**

The figure plots results from spatial fuzzy RD regressions as described in Table 2, columns 4-6. The specifications are identical except that they use a triangular RD kernel. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the state level (Panel [a]), county level (Panel [b]), and municipality level (Panel [c]) with 95% confidence intervals. The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the state/county/municipality level.

Table F4: **Robustness: Alternative Kernel**

	(i)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.039** (0.019)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.008 (0.010)
Panel C. 2021	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.092** (0.036)
Municipalities	404
Bandwidth	30
Segments	✓
Coordinates	✓

These specifications are identical to our baseline, except that they use a *triangular* instead of a *uniform* kernel.

## F.5 Control Variables

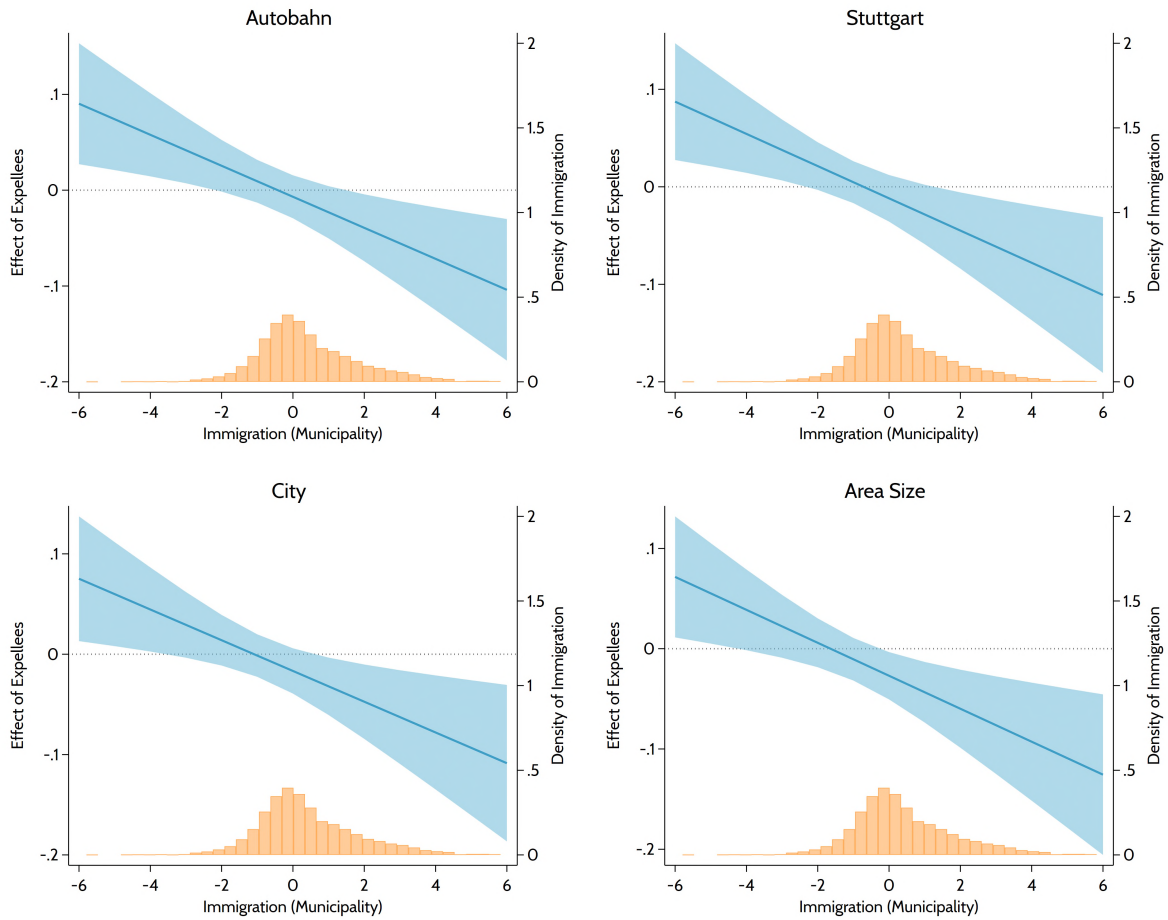


Figure F7: **Additional Control Variables**

The figure plots results from four spatial fuzzy RD regressions. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the municipality level. The specifications are identical to those reported in Figure 7, panel [c] but add the control variables indicated in the panel titles: **Autobahn** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the Autobahn A8. **Stuttgart** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the state capital Stuttgart. **City** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the nearest city with more than 100,000 inhabitants. **Area Size** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of the municipality's area size in  $km^2$ .



Table F5: **Robustness: Additional Control Variables**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.040** (0.017)	-0.041** (0.019)	-0.049*** (0.018)	-0.064*** (0.019)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.009 (0.009)	-0.008 (0.009)	-0.006 (0.009)	-0.015 (0.009)
Panel C. 2021				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.089*** (0.033)	-0.094*** (0.036)	-0.116*** (0.035)	-0.149*** (0.038)
Municipalities	404	404	404	404
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30
Segments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Covariates	Autobahn	Stuttgart	Nearest City	Area Size

The table displays coefficients from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions. Standard errors are in parentheses and clustered at the municipality level in Panels A and B and heteroskedasticity-robust in Panels C. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. Panels A and B compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Panels C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021.

**Autobahn** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the Autobahn A8.

**Stuttgart** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the state capital Stuttgart.

**Nearest City** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of distance to the nearest city with more than 100,000 inhabitants.

**Area Size** indicates that the regressions control for second-order polynomials of the municipality’s area size in  $km^2$ .

## F.6 Alternative Samples

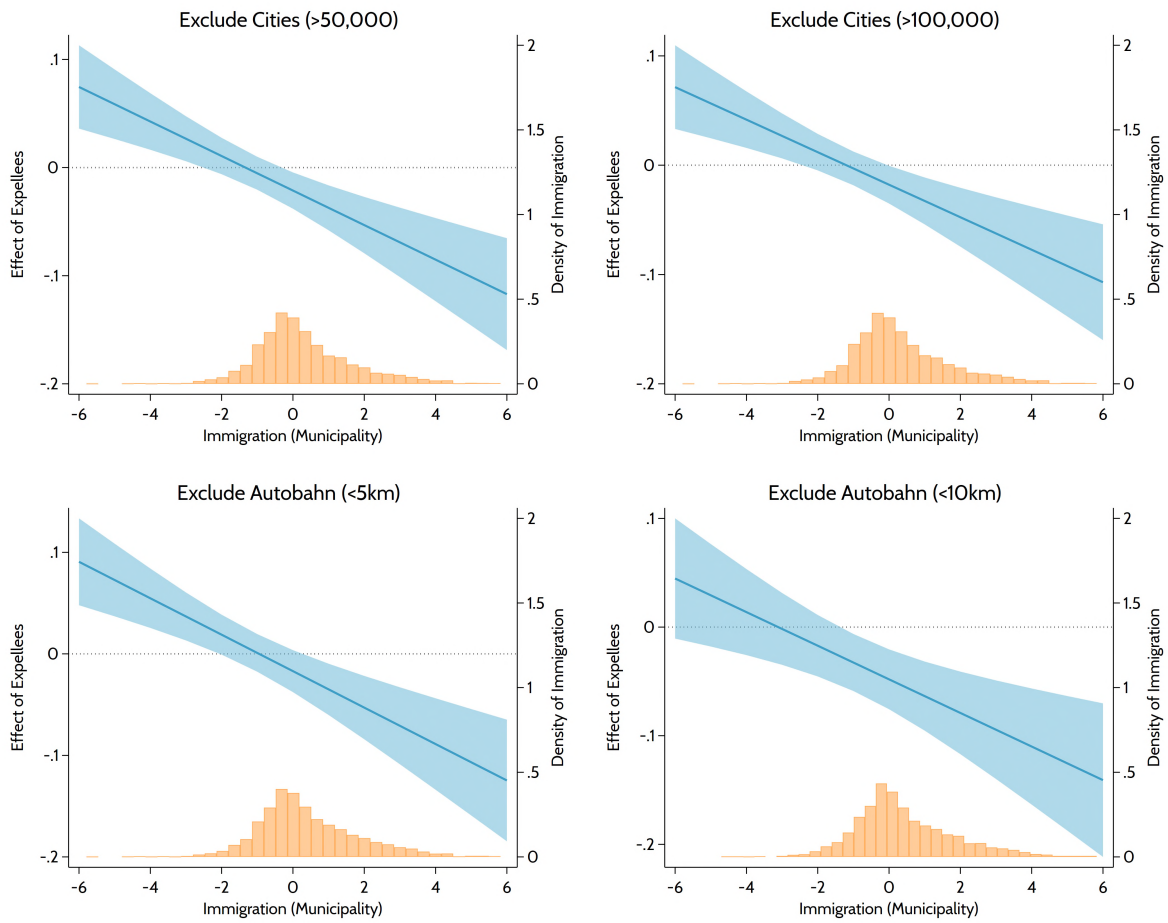


Figure F8: **Alternative Samples**

The figure plots results from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions that use alternative RD specifications for the baseline result in Figure 7, panel [c]. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the municipality level. **Exclude Cities (>50,000)** indicates that the sample excludes municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. **Exclude Cities (>100,000)** excludes municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. **Exclude Autobahn (<5 km)** excludes municipalities that are within 5 km distance to the Autobahn. **Exclude Autobahn (<10 km)** excludes municipalities that are within 10 km distance to the Autobahn.

Table F6: Robustness: Alternative Samples

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.046 <sup>***</sup> (0.015)	-0.041 <sup>***</sup> (0.015)	-0.055 <sup>***</sup> (0.019)	-0.087 <sup>***</sup> (0.025)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.015 <sup>*</sup> (0.009)	-0.013 (0.009)	-0.010 (0.010)	-0.033 <sup>**</sup> (0.015)
Panel C. 2021				
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.111 <sup>***</sup> (0.037)	-0.098 <sup>***</sup> (0.038)	-0.128 <sup>***</sup> (0.036)	-0.162 <sup>***</sup> (0.049)
Municipalities	392	399	337	264
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30
Segments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sample	Excl. Cities (>50,000)	Excl. Cities (>100,000)	Excl. Autobahn (<5km)	Excl. Autobahn (<10km)

The table displays coefficients from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions. . \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. 'Bandwidth' depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. Panels A and B compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Panel C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021. **Excl. Cities (>50,000)** indicates that the sample excludes municipalities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. **Excl. Cities (>100,000)** excludes municipalities with more than 100,000 inhabitants. **Excl. Autobahn (<5 km)** excludes municipalities that are within 5 km distance to the Autobahn. **Excl. Autobahn (<10 km)** excludes municipalities that are within 10 km distance to the Autobahn.

## F.7 Alternative Standard Errors

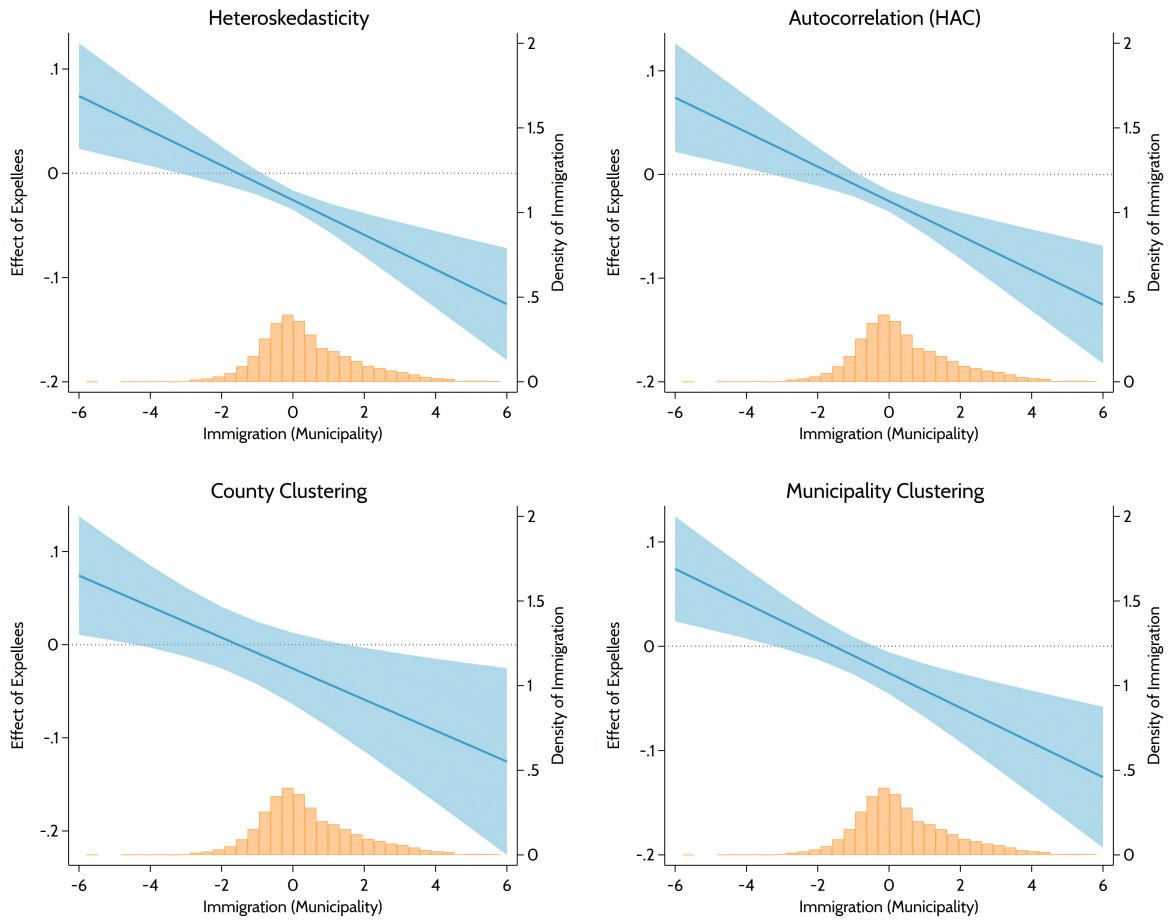


Figure F9: **Alternative Standard Errors I**

The figure plots results from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions of the baseline specification in Figure 7, panel [c]. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas) based on alternatives to calculate standard errors. The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the municipality level. **Heteroskedasticity** indicates heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. **Autocorrelation (HAC)** indicates HAC-robust standard errors. **County Clustering** adjusts standard errors for clustering at the county level. **Municipality Clustering** adjusts standard errors for clustering at the municipality level.

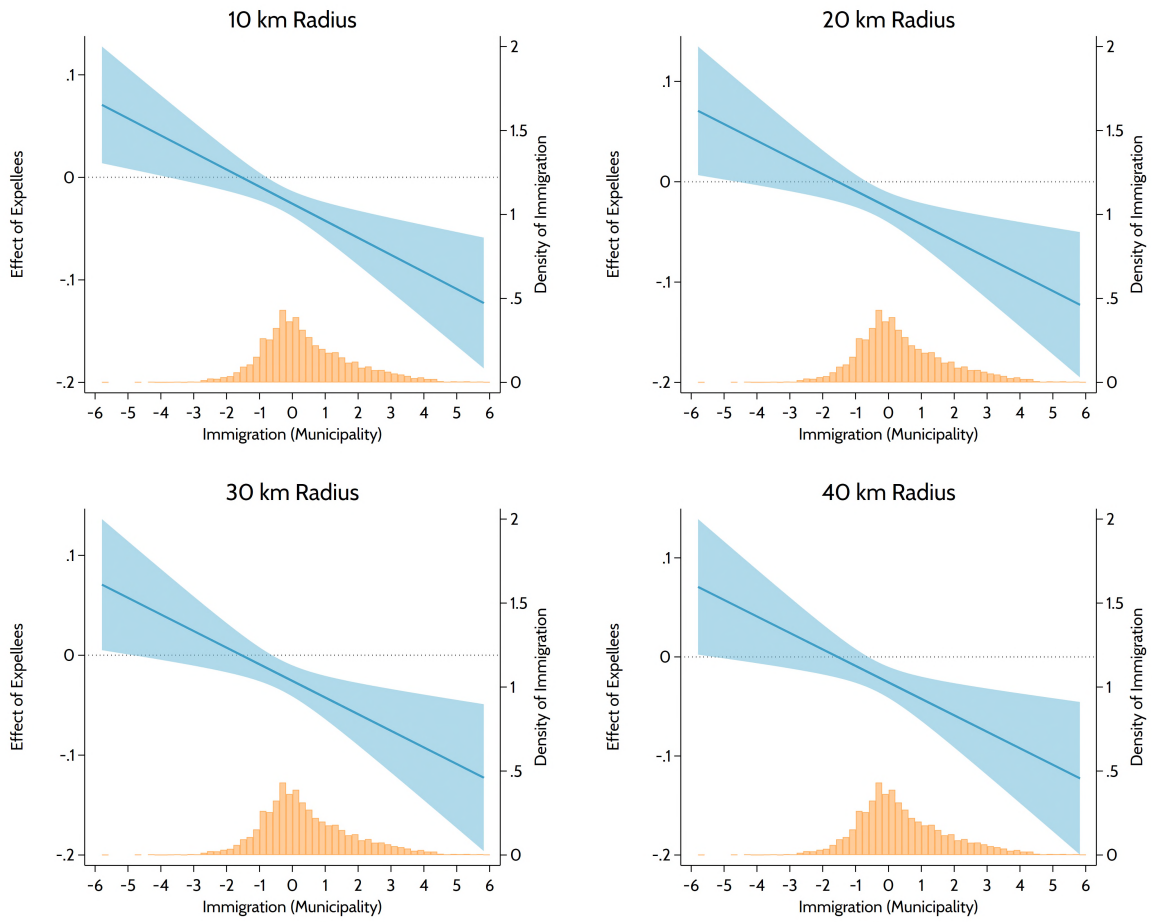


Figure F10: **Alternative Standard Errors II: Spatial Clustering**

The figure plots results from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions of the baseline specification in Figure 7, panel [c]. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the municipality level with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas) based on spatial (Conley) standard errors using a Bartlett kernel with different cut-offs. Panel titles indicate the respective cut-off distances for the calculation of standard errors. The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the municipality level.

Table F7: Robustness: Alternative Standard Errors

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration								
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.062*** (0.012)	-0.062*** (0.013)	-0.062* (0.036)	-0.062*** (0.019)	-0.062*** (0.016)	-0.062*** (0.020)	-0.062*** (0.021)	-0.062*** (0.022)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration								
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.014 (0.014)	-0.014 (0.014)	-0.014 (0.017)	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.014* (0.007)	-0.014 (0.009)	-0.014 (0.010)	-0.014 (0.010)
Panel C. 2021								
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.146*** (0.038)		-0.146** (0.074)		-0.146*** (0.054)	-0.146** (0.067)	-0.146** (0.070)	-0.146** (0.073)
Municipalities	404		404		404	404	404	404
Bandwidth	30		30		30	30	30	30
Segments	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Standard Errors	Heterosked.	HAC	County Clust.	Municip. Clust.	Spatial (10km)	Spatial (20km)	Spatial (30km)	Spatial (40km)

The table displays coefficients from separate spatial fuzzy RD regressions. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. 'Bandwidth' depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off. Panels A and B compare the effect of *Expellees* in two sub-samples: elections in periods of low immigration (2) and during immigration waves (3). An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Panel C focuses on vote shares in the German Federal Election of 2021. Standard errors are in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. 'Standard Errors' indicates the respective standard error correction, where **Heterosked.** represents heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors, **HAC** indicates heteroskedasticity- and auto-correlation robust standard errors, **County Clust.** indicates standard errors adjusted for clustering at the county level, **Municip. Clust.** indicates standard errors adjusted for clustering at the municipality level. **Spatial (x km)** indicates Conley-type spatial standard errors with a Bartlett kernel and an x km cut-off.

## F.8 Placebo Border

Table F8: **Robustness: Placebo Border**

Bandwidth (km)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A. Occupation Zone Border				
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.758*** (0.228)	-0.167 (0.113)	-1.201*** (0.464)	-1.774*** (0.445)
Panel B. Placebo Border				
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.075 (0.347)	-0.096 (0.164)	-0.315 (0.658)	-0.837 (0.654)
Sample	high	low	2017	2021
Observations	2165	3464	433	433
Bandwidth	30	30	30	30
Segments	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE	✓	✓		

The table displays coefficients from eight spatial fuzzy RD regressions with standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). ‘Observations’ reports the number of observations for the indicated number of ‘Municipalities’. The upper panel uses the occupation zone border as the cutoff and *Distance to Border* as the running variable. The lower panel makes use of a placebo border. While the original border was defined by using the southern borders of all counties through which the highway runs, the placebo border uses the northern boundaries of those counties. The specifications in column (1) and (2) are based on sub-samples of high- and low-immigration years, respectively. An immigration wave is defined as a period between two elections, during which the share of migrants in society increased by more than one percentage point. Column (3) shows results for the 2017 federal election and column (4) for the 2021 federal election.

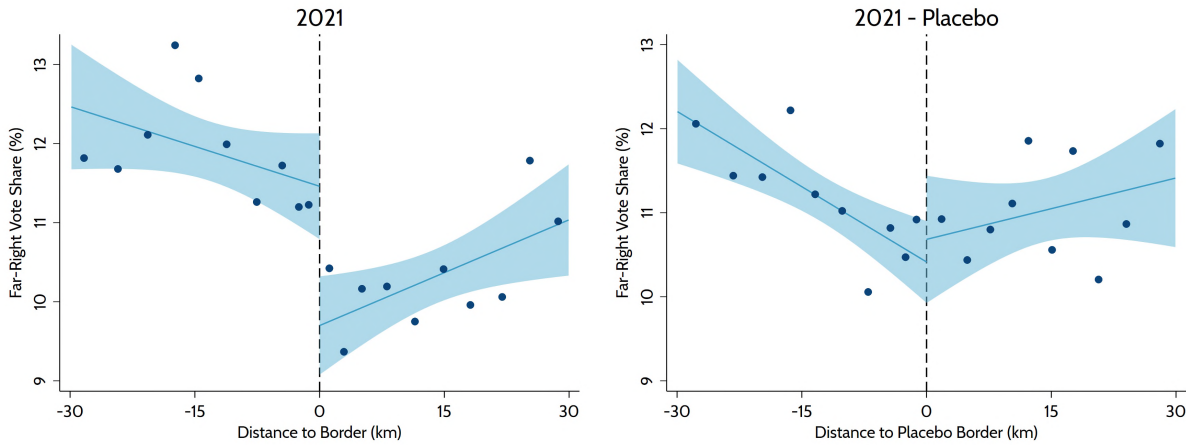


Figure F11: **Placebo Border**

This figure displays estimates from individual sharp RD estimations. The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in the 2021 federal election. The dark blue dots display binned means of the dependent variable. The fitted lines represent parametric RD estimations using linear polynomials. The light blue area displays respective 95% confidence intervals. The left panels use the occupation zone border as the cut-off and *Distance to Border* as the running variable. The right panels show results using a placebo border and distances to the placebo border as the running variable. While the original border was defined by using the southern borders of all counties through which the highway runs, the placebo border uses the northern boundaries of those counties.

## G Trends and Correlations: Immigration and Far Right Voting

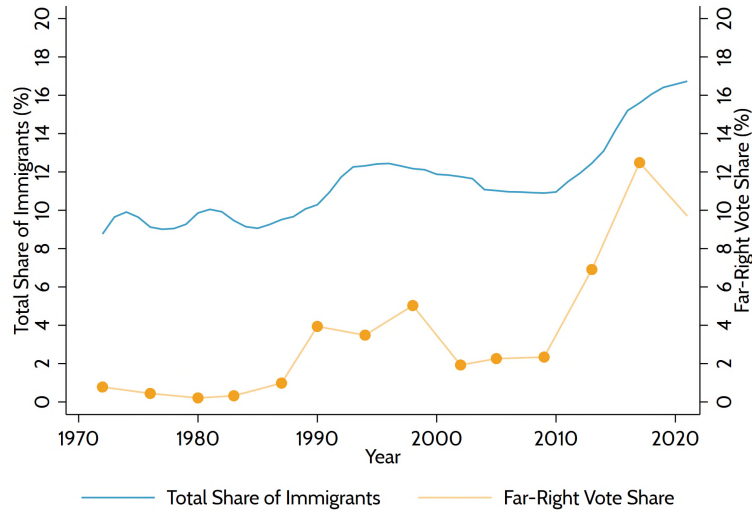


Figure G1: **Trends in Immigration and Far-Right Voting**

The blue line represents the total percentage share of immigrants in the state of Baden-Württemberg for the years indicated on the horizontal axis. The orange curve depicts the vote shares of far-right parties in federal elections.

Table G1: **Immigration and Far-Right Voting, Fixed-Effects Regressions**

Dep. var.: <i>Far-Right Vote Share</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>Immigration (State)</i>	1.369*** (0.022)			0.499*** (0.039)	
<i>Immigration (County)</i>		0.306*** (0.044)		0.946*** (0.040)	0.371*** (0.047)
<i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>			0.084*** (0.016)	0.058** (0.023)	0.051*** (0.016)
Observations	10,964	10,964	8,974	8,974	8,974
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Municipality FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FE		✓	✓		✓

The table displays coefficients from five OLS fixed-effects regressions. Standard errors clustered at the municipality-level are in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections in percent. The vector of controls includes the following municipality-year-specific variables: *Population (ln)*, *Income Tax (per Capita)*, *Share Male (%)*, *Share Older than 65 (%)*, *Share Younger than 25 (%)*. The sample covers almost all municipalities in Baden-Württemberg; it is limited to the 1990-2021 period by the availability of data for the control variables.

These results show strong positive associations between far-right voting and immigration at the level of the state (column 1), the county (2), and the municipality (3). Columns 4 and 5 show that these relationships hold when the different measures are added to the same regressions. Columns 2, 3, and 5 include a full set of two-way fixed effects at the year and municipality level and thus suggest that the relationship is neither driven by unobserved statewide time trends nor unobserved, time-invariant municipality characteristics. These results confirm a short-run association between immigration and far-right voting, a finding that is well-established in the existing literature and for which, e.g., [Dustmann et al. \(2019\)](#) and [Dinas et al. \(2019\)](#) provide causal evidence.



## H Relative Electoral Success

Table H1: **Relative Electoral Success**

	(1)
Panel A. Periods of High Migration	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.007** (0.003)
Panel B. Periods of Low Migration	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.006 (0.004)
Panel C. 2021	
<i>Expellees</i>	-0.013*** (0.004)
Municipalities	404
Bandwidth	30
Segments	✓
Coordinates	✓

The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of *Relative Far-Right Vote Share*, i.e., the local far-right vote share relative to the state-wide mean far-right vote share per election). Standard errors are in parentheses and are adjusted for clustering at the municipality level in Panels A and B and heteroskedasticity-robust in Panels C. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

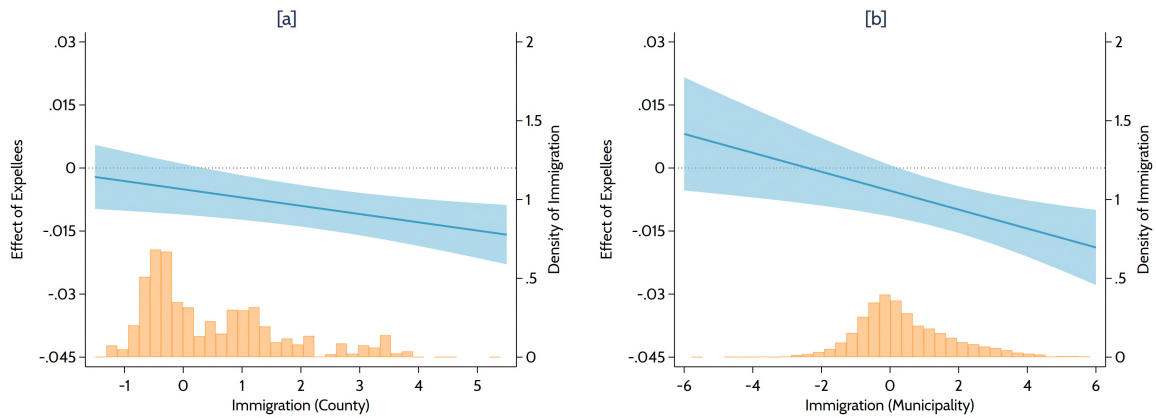


Figure H1: **Relative Electoral Success**

The figure plots results from two OLS regressions. The dependent variable is  $\log(\text{Relative Far-Right Vote Share})$  (vote share relative to the state average result of the far right per election). The blue lines display marginal effects of *Expellees* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the county level (Panel [a]) and municipality level (Panel [b]) with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at county and municipality level, respectively.

## I Isolating Cross-Municipality Variation of Immigration in Given Years

Table I1: Elections and Expellees – Spatial and Temporal Variation in Immigration

Dep. var.: <i>Far-Right Vote Share</i>	(1)	(2)
<i>US Zone</i>	-0.278** (0.124)	-0.255** (0.123)
<i>US Zone</i> × <i>Immigration (State)</i>	0.168 (0.185)	-0.100 (0.113)
<i>Immigration (County)</i>	0.301*** (0.109)	
<i>US Zone</i> × <i>Immigration (County)</i>	-0.469** (0.192)	
<i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>		0.113* (0.064)
<i>US Zone</i> × <i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>		-0.152* (0.091)
Bandwidth	30	30
Year FE	✓	✓
Lin. Polynomials	✓	✓
Lin. Polynomials x Migration	✓	✓
Segment FE	✓	✓
Coordinates	✓	✓
Observations	5252	4182
Municipalities	404	344

The table displays coefficients from two spatial sharp RD regressions with standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses. Significance levels: \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ . The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. ‘Bandwidth’ depicts the sample bandwidth (in km). ‘Observations’ reports the number of observations for the indicated number of ‘Municipalities’. All estimations use a uniform kernel. All regressions include year fixed, segment fixed effects, as well as a full set of cross-interactions of segment fixed effects, migration, and the running variable (*Distance to Border*) allowed to differ on both sides of the cut-off.

## J Results for All Elections and Parties

In this appendix, we present and discuss short and long-term effects of the discontinuity in the expellee share on the remaining parties of post-war Germany. The results are plotted in Figure J1 and Figure J2.

For parties that represented the interests of expellees in post-war Germany, we find – as one would expect – strong positive effects of the expellee shock at the border in the first couple of elections after their arrival (Figure J1). This effect gradually diminishes in the elections of the 1950s and early 1960s, suggesting that other parties absorbed these voters. Over the course of the 1960s, expellee parties disappeared from the political landscape in Germany. Results for the center-right, Christian-conservative CDU suggest that this party absorbed some of the expellee voters in the late 1950s and early 1960s. At the time when expellee parties lose their political significance, there is a positive effect of the expellee share on the CDU's vote share. This short-run effect, however, washes out in the long run, approaches zero in the 1960s, and stays there until 2021. The CDU's main competitors, the social-democratic, center-left SPD and the liberal FDP, are unable to electorally benefit from the expellee inflow in the short run. In the early federal elections, both parties fared less well in the municipalities with more expellees just north of the border. As for the conservatives, the short-run effect fades out in the long run. From the 1970s onwards until 2021, there are no differences in the vote shares of these mainstream parties along the former occupation zone border.

For far-right parties, there is evidence for short-run positive effects in the early federal elections of the 1950s, supporting, again, a short-run anti-immigration backlash (Figure J2). In the 1960s, however, this short-run effect vanishes and expellees did not affect the vote share of far-right parties in post-war Germany until the late 1980s. As discussed in the main text, we start observing statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) negative effects in the 1990s, primarily in elections that are preceded by waves of immigration (1990, 1994, 2013, 2017 and 2021, see Figure G1).

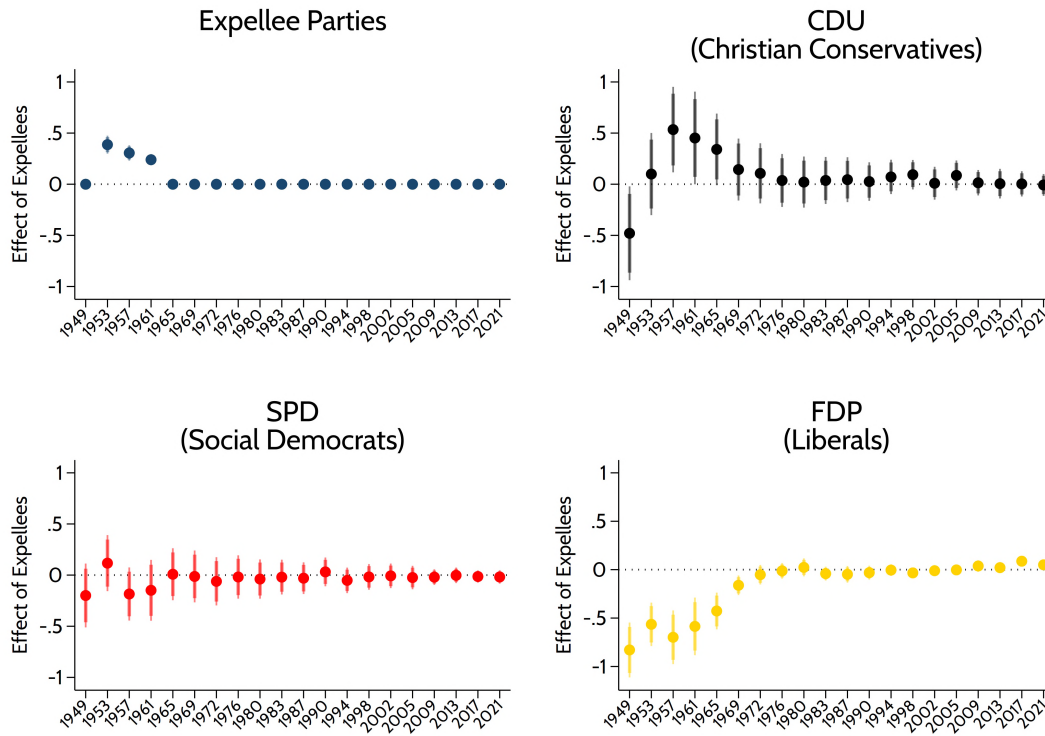


Figure J1: **Electoral Effects, All Federal Elections 1949-2021**

The coefficient plots show results from individual fuzzy RD regressions, where the share of *Expellees* is the variable of interest instrumented with the *US Zone* indicator. The dependent variables are the municipality vote shares of the parties indicated in the panel titles in federal elections. See equations (1) and (2). Each dot shows the coefficient estimate for the share of *Expellees* from an individual regression in the election year indicated on the horizontal axis. Vertical bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. The sample bandwidth is 30 km.



**Figure J2: Far-Right Parties, All Federal Elections 1949-2017**

The coefficient plot shows results from individual fuzzy RD regressions, where the share of *Expellees* is the variable of interest instrumented with the *US Zone* indicator. The dependent variable is the municipality vote share of *Far-Right Parties* in federal elections. See equations (1) and (2). Each dot shows the coefficient estimate for the share of *Expellees* from an individual regression in the election year indicated on the horizontal axis. Vertical bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors. The sample bandwidth is 30 km.

**Effects on a Pro-Immigration Party: The Greens.** So far, we have studied voter reactions with regards to nationalist, *anti-immigration* parties and found that exposure to past immigration *reduces* support for them under the condition of current immigration. As an extension of our argument, we examine its “symmetry” and test whether exposure to past immigration, under the condition of current immigration, *increases* support for *pro-immigration* parties. Following expert surveys on German political parties (Jankowski et al., 2022), we consider the German Green party as the most immigration-friendly German party and study how our setting influences support for the Greens. The results indeed point to a symmetric, inverse effect for this pro-immigration party. Although the results are somewhat weaker than for nationalist, anti-immigration parties, voters tended to support the Greens more in the most recent federal elections in regions that experienced the historical migration shock (Figure J3). As for the nationalist parties, the absolute size of the effect – with the opposite sign – is stronger when contemporary immigration is higher (Figure J4). This supports the view that the historical immigration shock not only reduced support for nationalism but also increased support for immigration in the long run.

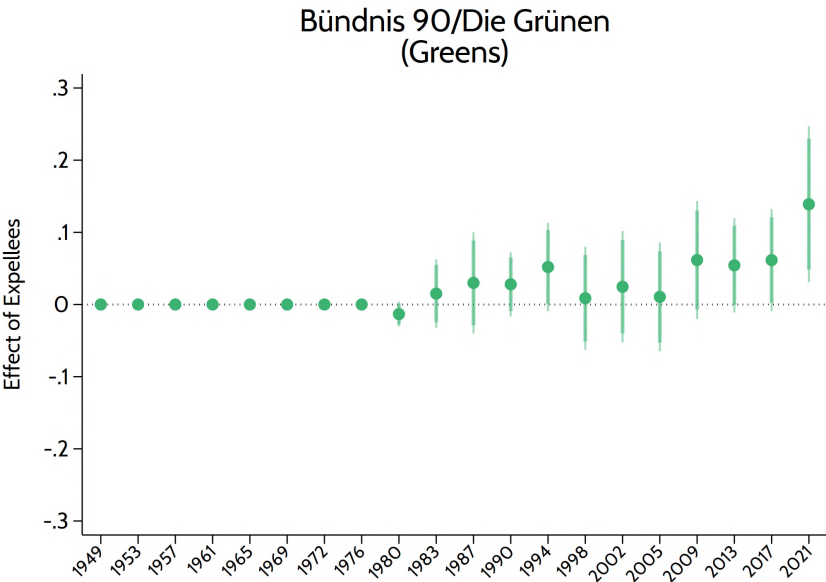
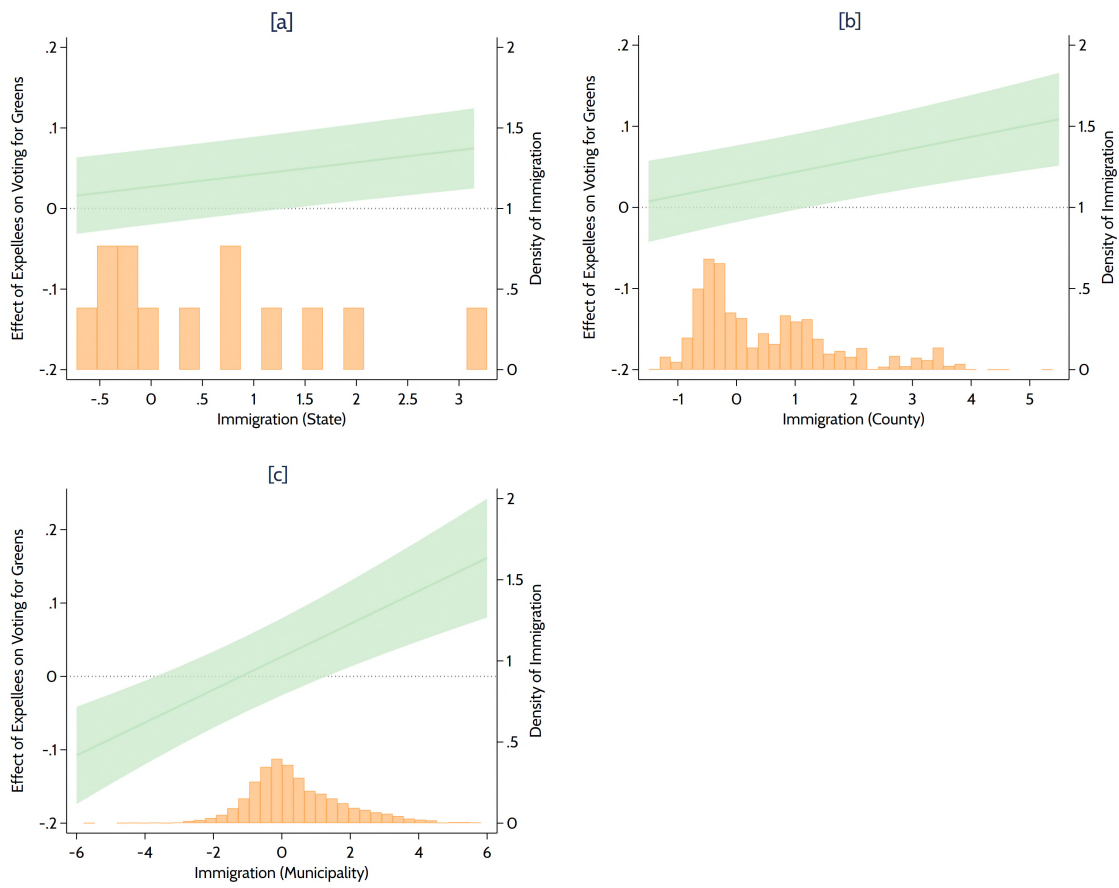


Figure J3: **The Greens, All Federal Elections, 1949-2021**

The figure is a coefficient plot that is identical to the plots shown in Figure J1 except that the vote share of the Green party is used as the dependent variable. The party was founded in 1980.



**Figure J4: The Greens, Marginal Effects Depending on Current Immigration**

The figures are marginal-effect plots that are identical to those shown in Figure 7 except that the vote share of the Green party is used as the dependent variable.

## **K Survey: Background Information**

### **K.1 Questionnaire**

In the following, we present the full questionnaire of our survey discussed in section 6. We print an English translation above the German original text in *italics*. The names of the variables that we coded based on the survey responses are printed in **bold italics**.

#### **Information and Consent Form**

Welcome to this survey. Before you decide to participate, please read the following information carefully.

##### **Aim and procedure of the survey**

The survey explores the attitudes of the population in Germany on various social and political issues. We ask you to answer a series of questions about yourself, your experiences, and your opinions. Your participation is voluntary and should take no more than 10 minutes. You can refuse to answer individual questions or stop the survey altogether at any time.

##### **Privacy and anonymization**

All of your responses are anonymous and do not reveal your identity. Your identity will not be known to the researchers at any time. The use of the data follows the legal data protection regulations.

##### **What happens to my answers?**

All answers are converted into numbers and statistically analyzed. The data evaluation is anonymous and for purely scientific and non-commercial purposes.

##### **Risks and benefits of the survey**

Your participation does not involve any personal risks for you, but has a high scientific benefit. In order to evaluate the results correctly, it is very important that you are very attentive and answer truthfully.

##### **Contact**

This survey is part of a research project conducted by Prof. Dr. Valentin Lang (University of Mannheim). If you have any questions, please reach out to lang@uni-mannheim.de.

Please confirm that you have read this information and wish to participate in the survey.

- Yes, I have read the information and would like to participate in the survey.
- No, I do not want to participate in the survey.

*German Original:*

*Herzlich Willkommen zu dieser Umfrage. Bevor Sie sich entscheiden teilzunehmen, lesen Sie sich die folgenden Informationen bitte sorgfältig durch.*

##### **Ziel und Vorgehen der Studie**

*Die Umfrage erforscht die Einstellungen der Bevölkerung in Deutschland zu verschiedenen gesellschaftlichen und politischen Themen. Wir bitten Sie, eine Reihe von Fragen zu Ihnen, Ihren Erfahrungen und Ihren Meinungen zu beantworten. Ihre Teilnahme ist freiwillig und sollte höchstens 10 Minuten dauern. Sie können die Beantwortung einzelner Fragen verweigern oder die Umfrage jederzeit ganz beenden.*



### **Datenschutz und Anonymisierung**

*Alle Ihre Antworten sind anonym und lassen keinen Rückschluss auf Ihre Person zu. Ihre Identität wird den Forschenden zu keinem Zeitpunkt bekannt sein. Die Verwendung der Daten folgt den gesetzlichen Datenschutzbestimmungen.*

### **Was passiert mit meinen Antworten?**

*Alle Antworten werden in Zahlen umgewandelt und statistisch ausgewertet. Die Datenauswertung erfolgt anonym und zu rein wissenschaftlichen und nicht-kommerziellen Zwecken.*

### **Risiken und Nutzen der Umfrage**

*Ihre Teilnahme birgt keinerlei persönliche Risiken für Sie, hat aber einen hohen wissenschaftlichen Nutzen. Um die Ergebnisse korrekt auswerten zu können, ist es sehr wichtig, dass Sie sehr aufmerksam sind und wahrheitsgemäß antworten.*

### **Kontakt**

*Die vorliegende Umfrage ist Teil eines Forschungsprojektes, das von Prof. Dr. Valentin Lang (Universität Mannheim) durchgeführt wird. Bei Fragen wenden Sie sich bitte gerne an [lang@uni-mannheim.de](mailto:lang@uni-mannheim.de).*

*Bitte bestätigen Sie, dass Sie diese Information gelesen haben und an der Umfrage teilnehmen möchten.*

- *Ja, ich habe die Information gelesen und möchte an der Umfrage teilnehmen.*
- *Nein, ich möchte nicht an der Umfrage teilnehmen.*

## **Filter Questions**

**Citizenship.** Do you have German citizenship?

- Yes
- No

*Besitzen Sie die deutsche Staatsbürgerschaft?*

- *Ja*
- *Nein*

**State.** In which state do you live?

- List of all federal states

*In welchem Bundesland wohnen Sie?*

- *Liste aller Bundesländer*

**Age.** What is your year of birth?

*Was ist Ihr Geburtsjahr?*

**Quality.** For the correct evaluation of the survey it is very important that you answer all questions truthfully. Can you assure that you will make an effort to answer the questions truthfully?

- No, I can't.
- Yes, I can.

*Für die korrekte Auswertung der Umfrage ist es sehr wichtig, dass Sie alle Fragen sorgfältig beantworten. Können Sie zusichern, dass Sie sich bemühen werden, die Fragen sorgfältig zu beantworten?*

- *Nein, das kann ich nicht.*
- *Ja, das kann ich.*

## **Socio-Economic Information**

**County.** In which county or city do you live?

- List of counties

*In welcher Stadt oder welchem Landkreis wohnen Sie?*

- *Liste aller Kreise*

**Municipality.** In which municipality do you live?

- List of municipalities of selected county

*In welcher Gemeinde wohnen Sie?*

- *Liste der Gemeinden im ausgewählten Kreis*

**Gender.** What gender do you identify with?

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- No specification

*Welches Geschlecht haben Sie?*

- *Weiblich*
- *Männlich*
- *Divers*
- *Ohne Angabe*

**Education.** What is your highest educational qualification?

- No high school diploma
- Elementary diploma / Hauptschulabschluss
- Mittlere Reife / Realschule (intermediate school)
- High school diploma / Gymnasium
- Completed vocational training
- Technical college
- College / University
- I do not wish to specify.

*Was ist Ihr höchster Bildungsabschluss?*

- *Kein Schulabschluss*
- *Grund-/Hauptschulabschluss*
- *Mittlere Reife / Realschule*
- *Abitur / Gymnasium*
- *Abgeschlossene Berufsausbildung*
- *Fachhochschule*
- *Hochschule / Universität*
- *Möchte ich nicht angeben.*

**Religion.** Which religion do you belong to?

- No religion
- Roman Catholic
- Protestant
- Evangelical
- Another Christian denomination
- Jewish
- Muslim/Islamic
- Of another, namely...
- I do not wish to specify

*Welcher Religion fühlen Sie sich zugehörig?*

- *Keiner Religion*
- *Römisch-Katholisch*
- *Protestantisch*
- *Evangelikal*
- *Einer anderen christlichen Konfession*
- *Jüdisch*
- *Muslimisch/Islam*
- *Einer anderen, und zwar...*
- *Möchte ich nicht angeben*

**Household Size.** How many people in total live in your household?

*Wie viele Personen leben insgesamt in Ihrem Haushalt?*

**Household Income.** What is the monthly income of your entire household after taxes and duties (i.e. “net”)? Please add up all types of income from everyone in your household.

*Wie hoch ist das monatliche Einkommen Ihres gesamten Haushalts nach Steuern und Abgaben (also „netto“)? Zählen Sie bitte alle Arten von Einkommen von allen Personen in Ihrem Haushalt zusammen.*

**Migrant.** Were you born in Germany?

- Yes
- No

*Wurden Sie in Deutschland geboren?*

- *Ja*
- *Nein*

**Parents Migrants.** Were your parents born in Germany?

- Yes, both.
- One parent yes, one parent no.
- No, both parents were not born in Germany.

*Wurden Ihre Eltern in Deutschland geboren?*

- *Ja, beide.*
- *Ein Elternteil ja, ein Elternteil nein.*
- *Nein, beide Elternteile wurden nicht in Deutschland geboren.*

## Treatment Block

[A random half of respondents saw the treatment block only at the end of the survey.]

Germany has experienced several large migration movements in its history.

The largest migration movement constituted the so-called German Expellees right after the Second World War. At that time, more than 12 million people were expelled from the former German eastern territories and fled to post-war Germany (for example, from East Prussia, Silesia, Pomerania or the Sudetenland). About one in six Germans had fled at that time.

What do you think is the significance of the fact that many Germans thus had experience of expulsion, flight and immigration? Please take a moment to write down a few keywords that come to mind first.

*Deutschland hat in seiner Geschichte mehrfach Erfahrungen mit großen Migrationsbewegungen gemacht.*

*Die größte Migrationsbewegung bildeten die sogenannten Heimatvertriebenen direkt nach dem zweiten Weltkrieg. Mehr als 12 Millionen Menschen wurden damals aus den ehemaligen deutschen Ostgebieten vertrieben und flohen ins Deutschland der Nachkriegszeit (zum Beispiel aus Ostpreußen, Schlesien, Pommern oder dem Sudetenland). Etwa jede(r) sechste Deutsche war damals geflüchtet.*

*Was glauben Sie, welche Bedeutung hat es, dass viele Deutsche somit Erfahrungen mit Vertreibung, Flucht und Einwanderung gemacht haben? Nehmen Sie sich bitte kurz Zeit, um hier einige Stichworte aufzuschreiben, die Ihnen als erstes dazu einfallen.*

**Expellee Ancestry.** Do you have ancestors who were expellees or were you yourself an expellee?

- I am an expellee myself.
- At least one of my parents was an expellee.
- At least one of my grandparents was an expellee.
- At least one other ancestor of mine was an expellee.
- No, I have no ancestors who were expellees.
- I don't know.

[Multiple answers possible.]

*Haben Sie Vorfahren, die Heimatvertriebene waren oder waren Sie selbst Heimatvertriebene(r)?*

- *Ich selbst war Heimatvertriebene(r).*
- *Mindestens ein Elternteil von mir war Heimatvertriebene(r).*
- *Mindestens eine Großmutter oder ein Großvater von mir war Heimatvertriebene(r).*
- *Mindestens ein anderer Vorfahre / eine andere Vorfahrin von mir war Heimatvertriebene(r).*
- *Nein, ich habe keine Vorfahren die Heimatvertriebene waren.*
- *Ich weiß es nicht.*

**Expellee Contact.** Now think about other people in your social environment. Are there people among them of whom you know that they are expellees or that their ancestors were expellees? (Please select all that apply).

- Yes, partner/spouse
- Yes, friends
- Yes, acquaintances
- Yes, relatives
- Yes, neighbors
- No
- I do not know.

[Multiple answers possible. The answers from these two questions were translated into binary variables such as *Expellee Parents*, *Expellee Grandparents*, *Expellee Partner or Relative*, etc.]

*Denken Sie jetzt an andere Menschen in Ihrem Umfeld. Sind darunter Menschen, von denen Sie wissen, dass sie Heimatvertriebene sind oder dass deren Vorfahren Heimatvertriebene waren? (Kreuzen Sie bitte alles Zutreffende an.)*

- *Ja, Partner/Ehepartner*
- *Ja, Freunde*
- *Ja, Bekannte*
- *Ja, Verwandtschaft*
- *Ja, Nachbarn*
- *Nein*
- *Ich weiß es nicht.*

## Survey Questions on Attitudes to Immigration and Nationalism

**Experiences with Immigration.** All things considered, how do you feel the immigration experience in your region has been in the past?

- Very negative (1)
- Somewhat negative (2)
- Neither negative nor positive (3)
- Somewhat positive (4)
- Very positive (5)

*Wie waren Ihrer Meinung nach alles in allem die Erfahrungen mit Einwanderung in Ihrer Region in der Vergangenheit?*

- *Sehr negativ (1)*
- *Eher negativ (2)*
- *Weder negativ noch positiv (3)*
- *Eher positiv (4)*
- *Sehr positiv (5)*

**Immigration Benefits Economy/Culture/Security.** What do you think, does immigration rather have advantages or disadvantages for Germany in the long run in the following areas?

- For the economy
- For culture
- For security
  
- Significantly more disadvantages (1)
- Rather more disadvantages (2)
- Same amount of disadvantages as advantages (3)
- Rather more advantages (4)
- Significantly more advantages (5)

*Was glauben Sie, hat Einwanderung für Deutschland langfristig eher Vorteile oder eher Nachteile in den folgenden Bereichen?*

- *Für die Wirtschaft*
- *Für die Kultur*
- *Für die Sicherheit*
- *Deutlich mehr Nachteile (1)*
- *Eher mehr Nachteile (2)*
- *Gleich viele Nachteile wie Vorteile (3)*
- *Eher mehr Vorteile (4)*
- *Deutlich mehr Vorteile (5)*

**Expenditure for Immigrants** (inverse coding). Do you agree with the following statement? “The money that the German state spends on immigrants and refugees would be better spent on German citizens.”

- No (1)
- Rather no (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Rather yes (4)
- Yes (5)

Stimmen Sie der folgenden Aussage zu? „Das Geld, das der deutsche Staat für Einwanderer und Flüchtlinge ausgibt, sollte besser für deutsche Staatsbürger ausgegeben werden.“

- Nein (1)
- Eher nein (2)
- Weder noch (3)
- Eher ja (4)
- Ja (5)

**Allow More Immigration.** What do you think, should Germany rather take in more or rather less [immigrants]/[refugees]?

- Much less (1)
- Somewhat less (2)
- As many as before (3)
- Somewhat more (4)
- Much more (5)

([Immigrants]/[Refugees] is randomized.)

Was denken Sie, sollte Deutschland eher mehr oder eher weniger [Einwanderer]/[Flüchtlinge] aufnehmen?

- Viel weniger (1)
- Eher weniger (2)
- So viele wie bisber (3)
- Eher mehr (4)
- Viel mehr (5)

**Left-Right Scale.** In politics, people often talk about left and right. Where would you place yourself on a left-right scale, if 0 is far left and 10 is far right?

- Scale 0-10.

In der Politik wird manchmal von links und rechts gesprochen. Wo würden Sie sich auf einer Links-Rechts Skala einordnen, wenn 0 ganz links und 10 ganz rechts ist?

- Skala 0-10.

**Salience.** How important is the position of the parties on immigration for your voting decision in the federal election?

- Not at all important (1)
- Rather not important (2)
- Somewhat important (3)
- Important (4)
- Very important (5)

Wie wichtig ist Ihnen die Position der Parteien zum Thema Einwanderung für Ihre Wahlentscheidung bei der Bundestagswahl?

- Gar nicht wichtig (1)
- Eher nicht wichtig (2)
- Etwas wichtig (3)

- *Wichtig (4)*
- *Sehr wichtig (5)*

**Vote Choice.** Which party would you vote for if there were a federal election next Sunday?

- SPD
- CDU
- Greens
- FDP
- AfD
- Die Linke
- A different party
- I would not vote
- Prefer to not say

*Welche Partei würden Sie wählen, wenn am kommenden Sonntag Bundestagswahl wäre?*

- *SPD*
- *CDU*
- *Die Grünen*
- *FDP*
- *AfD*
- *Die Linke*
- *Eine andere Partei*
- *Ich würde nicht wählen*
- *Möchte ich nicht sagen*

**Regional, European, National Identity.** How strongly do you feel associated with...

- Your region
- Germany
- Europe

(Scale 1-5)

*Wie stark fühlen Sie sich verbunden mit...*

- *Ihrer Region*
- *Deutschland*
- *Europa*

(Skala 1-5)

**National Pride.** Do you agree with the following statement? "Germany should finally have the courage to have a stronger national sentiment again."

- No (1)
- Rather no (2)
- Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- Rather yes (4)
- Yes (5)

*Stimmen Sie der folgenden Aussage zu? „Deutschland sollte endlich wieder mehr Mut zu einem stärkeren Nationalgefühl haben.“*

- *Nein (1)*
- *Eher nein (2)*
- *Weder noch (3)*
- *Eher ja (4)*
- *Ja (5)*

**Parents Prejudice.** Do you agree with this statement? “My parents made it a point for me to behave without prejudice toward people of other backgrounds.”

- No
- Rather no
- Neither yes or no
- Rather yes
- Yes

*Stimmen Sie dieser Aussage zu? „Meine Eltern haben Wert darauf gelegt, dass ich mich Menschen mit anderer Herkunft gegenüber vorurteilsfrei verhalte.“*

- *Nein*
- *Eher nein*
- *Weder noch*
- *Eher ja*
- *Ja*

**Pro-Immigration Views.** What is your attitude toward immigration? How do you rate your parents’ attitudes?

(1-10 scale, from disapproving to approving)

*Wie ist Ihre Einstellung zu Einwanderung? Wie schätzen Sie die Einstellung Ihrer Eltern ein?*

*(1-10 Skala, von ablehnend bis befürwortend)*

**Contact with Immigrants.** Do you have personal contact with people who immigrated to Germany in the last 10 years? (Please tick all that apply).

- Yes, as partner or spouse
- Yes, among friends
- Yes, in a circle of colleagues, in a club or in my community
- Yes, as neighbors
- No

*Haben Sie persönlich Kontakt zu Menschen, die in den letzten 10 Jahren nach Deutschland eingewandert sind? (Bitte kreuzen Sie alles Zutreffende an.)*

- *Ja, als Partner oder Ehepartner*
- *Ja, im Freundeskreis*
- *Ja, im Kollegenkreis, im Verein oder in meiner Gemeinde*
- *Ja, als Nachbarn*
- *Nein*

**Influence.** Do you think the influence of the following countries on the world is – all in all – positive or negative?

- France
- Great Britain
- Italy
- Spain
- USA

(1-5 scale, from very negative to very positive)

*Was denken Sie, ist der Einfluss der folgenden Länder auf die Welt ganz grundsätzlich positiv oder negativ?*

- *Frankreich*
- *Großbritannien*
- *Italien*



- *Spanien*
- *USA*

*(1-5 Skala, von sehr negativ bis sehr positiv)*

**Languages.** Which of these languages did you learn at school? (Please check all that apply).

- English
- French
- Russian
- Spanish
- Other
- None

*Welche dieser Sprachen haben Sie in der Schule gelernt? (Bitte kreuzen Sie alles Zutreffende an.)*

- *Englisch*
- *Französisch*
- *Russisch*
- *Spanisch*
- *Andere*
- *Keine*

**Same Region.** Did direct ancestors of yours or you yourself already live in the same region immediately after World War II as you do today?

*(That is, no further than 20 kilometers from your current place of residence).*

- Yes
- No
- Don't know.

*Lebten direkte Vorfahren von Ihnen oder Sie selbst unmittelbar nach dem Zweiten Weltkrieg schon in derselben Region wie Sie heute? (Das heißt, nicht weiter als 20 Kilometer von Ihrem aktuellen Wohnort entfernt.)*

- *Ja*
- *Nein*
- *Weiß ich nicht.*

**GDR.** Have you yourself or ancestors of yours lived in the former GDR?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know.

*Haben Sie selbst oder Vorfahren von Ihnen in der ehemaligen DDR gelebt?*

- Ja
- Nein
- Weiß ich nicht.

**Local Association.** Are you a member of a local association?

- Yes
- No

*Sind Sie Mitglied in einem ortsansässigen Verein?*

- *Ja*
- *Nein*

**Donation.** Among all who participate in this survey, we will draw a prize of 100 EUR. The winner will be chosen at random. In case you win the 100 EUR, you can decide to donate part of the prize to the German refugee aid organization “Aktion Deutschland Hilft.” (The “Aktion Deutschland Hilft” is an alliance of German aid organizations. You can find information about the appeal for donations here.) The amount you choose will be donated automatically, the rest will be given to you. If you win, how much would you like to donate to refugee aid?

(Selection: 0-100 EUR.)

*Unter allen, die an dieser Umfrage teilnehmen, verlosen wir einen Gewinn von 100 EUR. Der Gewinner oder die Gewinnerin wird nach dem Zufallsprinzip ermittelt. Für den Fall, dass Sie die 100 EUR gewinnen, können Sie entscheiden, einen Teil des Gewinns an die deutsche Flüchtlingshilfe der „Aktion Deutschland Hilft“ zu spenden. (Die „Aktion Deutschland Hilft“ ist ein Bündnis deutscher Hilfsorganisationen. Informationen zum Spendenaufruf finden Sie hier.)*

*Der von Ihnen gewählte Betrag wird automatisch gespendet, den Rest erhalten Sie. Falls Sie gewinnen, wie viel Ihres Gewinns möchten Sie für die Flüchtlingshilfe spenden? (Auswahl: 0-100 EUR.)*

[The control group received the treatment block after this question]

**Home Region.** You have indicated that you or ancestors of yours were expellees. From which region(s) did your family come? [This question is contingent on previous answers.]

- Silesia
- East Prussia
- Pomerania
- Sudetenland
- Bohemia
- Moravia
- from another region, namely:...

*Sie haben angegeben, dass Sie oder Vorfahren von Ihnen Heimatvertriebene waren. Aus welcher Region / welchen Regionen kam Ihre Familie?*

- Schlesien
- Ostpreußen
- Pommern
- Sudetenland
- Böhmen
- Mähren
- aus einer anderen Region, und zwar:...

**Knowledge.** Had you heard of the group of German expellees before this survey? [This question is contingent on previous answers.]

- Yes
- No

*Hatten Sie vor dieser Umfrage schon von den Heimatvertriebenen gehört?*

- Ja
- Nein

## K.2 Summary Statistics of Survey Data

Table K1: Summary Statistics of Survey Data

	Observations	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>Immigration Benefits Economy</i>	3,014	3.23	1.09	1.00	5.00
<i>Immigration Benefits Culture</i>	3,010	2.95	1.16	1.00	5.00
<i>Immigration Benefits Security</i>	3,010	2.33	0.94	1.00	5.00
<i>Experiences with Immigration</i>	3,017	3.03	0.89	1.00	5.00
<i>Expenditure for Immigrants</i>	3,010	-3.36	1.23	-5.00	-1.00
<i>Allow More Immigration</i>	3,012	2.36	1.03	1.00	5.00
<i>Left-Right Scale</i>	2,735	4.88	1.82	0.00	10.00
<i>Vote for AfD</i>	2,749	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
<i>European Identity</i>	3,010	3.16	1.02	1.00	5.00
<i>More National Pride</i>	3,012	3.73	1.08	1.00	5.00
<i>Immigration Views</i>	2,876	5.58	2.48	0.00	10.00
<i>Mother's Immigration Views</i>	2,470	5.22	2.35	0.00	10.00
<i>Father's Immigration Views</i>	2,329	4.86	2.45	0.00	10.00
<i>Issue Salienc Immigraion</i>	3,012	3.53	1.00	1.00	5.00
<i>Donation to Refugees</i>	3,005	31.89	30.60	0.00	100.00
<i>Expellee Ancestors</i>	2,736	0.42	0.49	0.00	1.00
<i>Expellee Parents</i>	3,020	0.15	0.36	0.00	1.00
<i>Expellee Grandparents</i>	3,020	0.17	0.38	0.00	1.00
<i>Expellee Partner or Relative</i>	3,020	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
<i>Other Expellee Contact</i>	3,020	0.17	0.38	0.00	1.00
<i>Any Expellee Contact</i>	3,020	0.63	0.48	0.00	1.00
<i>Information Treatment</i>	3,020	0.49	0.50	0.00	1.00
<i>Female</i>	3,020	0.53	0.50	0.00	1.00
<i>Age</i>	3,011	47.04	15.07	18.00	82.00
<i>Catholic</i>	3,020	0.25	0.44	0.00	1.00
<i>Protestant</i>	3,020	0.14	0.34	0.00	1.00
<i>Other Religion</i>	3,020	0.21	0.41	0.00	1.00
<i>No Religion</i>	3,020	0.38	0.48	0.00	1.00
<i>Income Category (log)</i>	2,720	7.60	0.47	5.80	8.74
<i>Lower Sec. Education (Hauptschule)</i>	3,020	0.06	0.25	0.00	1.00
<i>Intermed. Sec. Education (Realschule)</i>	3,020	0.20	0.40	0.00	1.00
<i>Completed Vocational Training</i>	3,020	0.30	0.46	0.00	1.00
<i>High School Education (Abitur)</i>	3,020	0.11	0.32	0.00	1.00
<i>Polytechnic Degree</i>	3,020	0.10	0.30	0.00	1.00
<i>University Degree</i>	3,020	0.22	0.41	0.00	1.00

Summary statistics for the survey outcomes.

Table K2: **Balance of Pre-Treatment Characteristics**

	Control			Treatment			Diff
	Obs	Mean	SD	Obs	Mean	SD	
<i>Female</i>	1531	0.54	0.50	1489	0.51	0.50	-0.030
<i>Male</i>	1531	0.45	0.50	1489	0.48	0.50	0.030
<i>Age</i>	1527	47.60	15.27	1484	46.46	14.84	-1.119**
<i>Christian</i>	1531	0.57	0.50	1489	0.56	0.50	-0.006
<i>Catholic</i>	1531	0.25	0.43	1489	0.26	0.44	0.008
<i>Protestant</i>	1531	0.13	0.34	1489	0.14	0.35	0.007
<i>Other Religion</i>	1531	0.22	0.41	1489	0.20	0.40	-0.016
<i>No Religion</i>	1531	0.38	0.49	1489	0.38	0.48	-0.003
<i>Immigrant</i>	1530	0.06	0.23	1489	0.05	0.22	-0.007
<i>Immigrant Parent</i>	1531	0.17	0.38	1489	0.17	0.38	0.001
<i>Income Category (log)</i>	1381	7.59	0.46	1339	7.61	0.47	0.017
<i>Household Size</i>	1529	2.39	1.16	1484	2.42	1.24	0.034
<i>Lower Sec. Education (Hauptschule)</i>	1531	0.06	0.24	1489	0.07	0.25	0.003
<i>Intermed. Sec. Education (Realschule)</i>	1531	0.20	0.40	1489	0.19	0.40	-0.007
<i>Completed Vocational Training</i>	1531	0.31	0.46	1489	0.30	0.46	-0.012
<i>High School Education (Abitur)</i>	1531	0.11	0.31	1489	0.12	0.32	0.004
<i>Polytechnic Degree</i>	1531	0.09	0.29	1489	0.11	0.31	0.015
<i>University Degree</i>	1531	0.22	0.41	1489	0.21	0.41	-0.004

The last column reports the estimated coefficient from a regression of treatment status on the respective variable, with clustered standard errors at the municipality level. Stars indicate whether this difference is statistically significant. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01.

## L Survey: Additional Results

### L.1 Donation

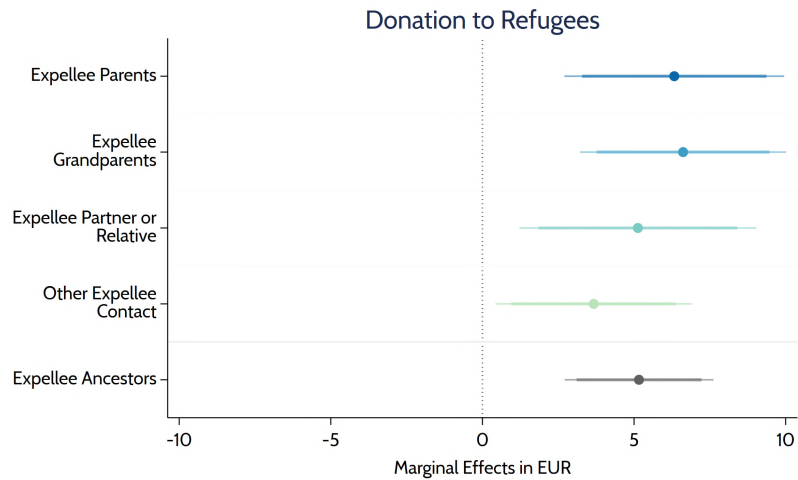


Figure L1: **Expellee Ancestors: Donation to Refugee Aid**

This figure presents a coefficient plot based on two linear regressions examining the relationship between expellee contact and revealed preference to donate for a refugee charity organization. We informed respondents that they participate in a lottery to win EUR 100. We asked them which amount of their win they would like to donate to a refugee charity organization in case they are the lottery winner. Respondents could select a value in the range 0-100. The four colored dots represent the marginal effects from a regression that differentiates between having (1) an expellee parent, (2) expellee grandparent, (3) expellee partner, relative or other ancestor, and (4) other expellee contact such as friends, colleagues, neighbors, or acquaintances as the closest expellee contact. Indicating no contact to expellees is the base category. The dark grey dots represent average marginal effects from a regression that uses an indicator for respondents with expellee ancestry; having no expellee ancestry is the base category. Regressors include the variables for expellee contact mentioned on the left-hand side of the plot as well as a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

## L.2 Expellee Ancestors: Other Political and Personal Attitudes

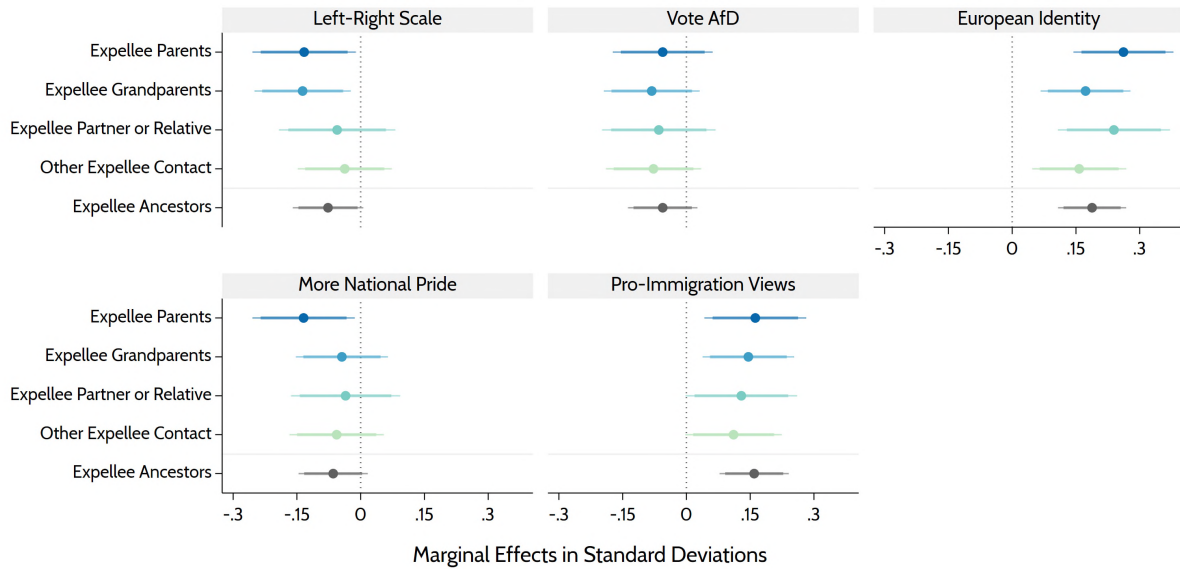


Figure L2: **Expellee Ancestors: Other Political and Personal Attitudes**

This figure presents a coefficient plot based on ten linear regressions examining the relationship between expellee contact and five different outcomes related to political and personal attitudes coded from survey questions. Panel titles indicate the dependent variables, which are standardized. The four colored dots represent the marginal effects from regressions that differentiate between having (1) an expellee parent, (2) expellee grandparent, (3) expellee partner, relative or other ancestor, and (4) other expellee contact such as friends, colleagues, neighbors, or acquaintances as the closest expellee contact. Indicating no contact to expellees is the base category. The dark grey dots represent average marginal effects from regressions that use an indicator for respondents with expellee ancestry; having no expellee ancestry is the base category. Regressors include the variables for expellee contact mentioned on the left-hand side of the plot as well as a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

### L.3 Open Question: All Categories

Table L1: Coding of Replies to the Open-Ended Question

Code	Label	Description	Example (Translation)	Example (Original German)
1	Leads to pro-immigration attitudes	The answer states that the fact that many Germans made experiences with expulsion, flight, and immigration leads to pro-immigration sentiments, for instance because of increased empathy, pity, understanding etc.	“People can better understand displacement and flight. They probably have fewer prejudices against refugees.”	„Die Menschen können Vertreibung und Flucht besser nachvollziehen. Sie haben vermutlich weniger Vorurteile gegenüber Geflüchteten.“
2	Leads to anti-immigration attitudes	The answer states that the fact that many Germans experienced expulsion, flight, and immigration leads to more anti-immigration sentiments, for instance because of negative experiences with immigration.	“I think that it led many people to become more home-loving and hence they do not want to share that home with other immigrants.”	„Ich denke, dadurch sind viele Menschen noch heimatverbundener und wollen diese Heimat nicht mit anderen Einwanderern teilen.“
3	Differences between past and present	The answer emphasizes differences between the past migration shock and present-day migration. These differences make it unlikely that the historical shock is relevant until today.	“These immigrants were Christians, with the same culture and were hard-working, not Muslims”	„Diese Einwanderer waren Christen, mit der gleichen Kultur und waren fleißig, keine Moslems“
4	Unrelated pro-immigration statement	The answer is a pro-immigration statement that is unrelated to the question.	“Economic upswing, diversity”	„Wirtschaftlicher Aufschwung, Vielfalt“ [sic!]
5	Unrelated anti-immigration statement	The answer is an anti-immigration statement that is unrelated to the question.	“Germany cannot take them all in”	„deutschland kann nicht alle aufnehmen“ [sic!]
6	Leads to trauma	The answers emphasizes that the experience was traumatic for many Germans.	“The people who had to endure this experience are burdened with immense pain and suffering.”	„da sitzt viel schmerz und leid in den menschen, die das erfahren mussten.“ [sic!]
7	Has relevance	The answer states that the experience is relevant but it does not indicate the direction of the presumed effect.	“major importance”	„Große Bedeutung“
8	Has no relevance	The answer states that the experience is not relevant for today.	“That was generations ago and is no longer important for our lives today.”	„Das liegt Generationen zurück und ist für unser heutiges Leben nicht mehr ausschlaggebend“
9	Do not know	The respondents indicate that they do not know.	“Don’t know”	„Weiß nicht“
10	Nonsense	Answers without meaning.	“xxxx”	„xxxx“
11	Other	All other statements that do not fit into the other ten categories.	“My grandparents are from Silesia and in our small community there were some ‘refugees’ who integrated very well.”	„Meine Großeltern stammen aus Schlesien und in unserer kleinen Gemeinde gab es einige ‚Flüchtlinge‘, die sich sehr gut integriert haben.“

Table L2: **Open Question: Meaning of Germany’s Expellee Experience for Today?**

	Observations	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
<i>Leads to Pro-Immigration Attitudes</i>	3,020	0.20	0.40	0.00	1.00
<i>Leads to Trauma</i>	3,020	0.16	0.36	0.00	1.00
<i>Has No Relevance</i>	3,020	0.16	0.36	0.00	1.00
<i>Other</i>	3,020	0.13	0.34	0.00	1.00
<i>Do Not Know</i>	3,020	0.12	0.32	0.00	1.00
<i>Nonsense</i>	3,020	0.07	0.25	0.00	1.00
<i>Today’s Immigration is Different</i>	3,020	0.07	0.25	0.00	1.00
<i>Is Relevant (But Direction Unclear)</i>	3,020	0.05	0.22	0.00	1.00
<i>Leads to Anti-Immigration Attitudes</i>	3,020	0.04	0.19	0.00	1.00
<i>Unrelated Pro-Immigration Statement</i>	3,020	0.03	0.17	0.00	1.00
<i>Unrelated Anti-Immigration Statement</i>	3,020	0.03	0.16	0.00	1.00

Summary statistics for the responses in the open-ended question about the meaning of Germany’s historical expellee experience for today, classified in eleven non-exclusive categories.



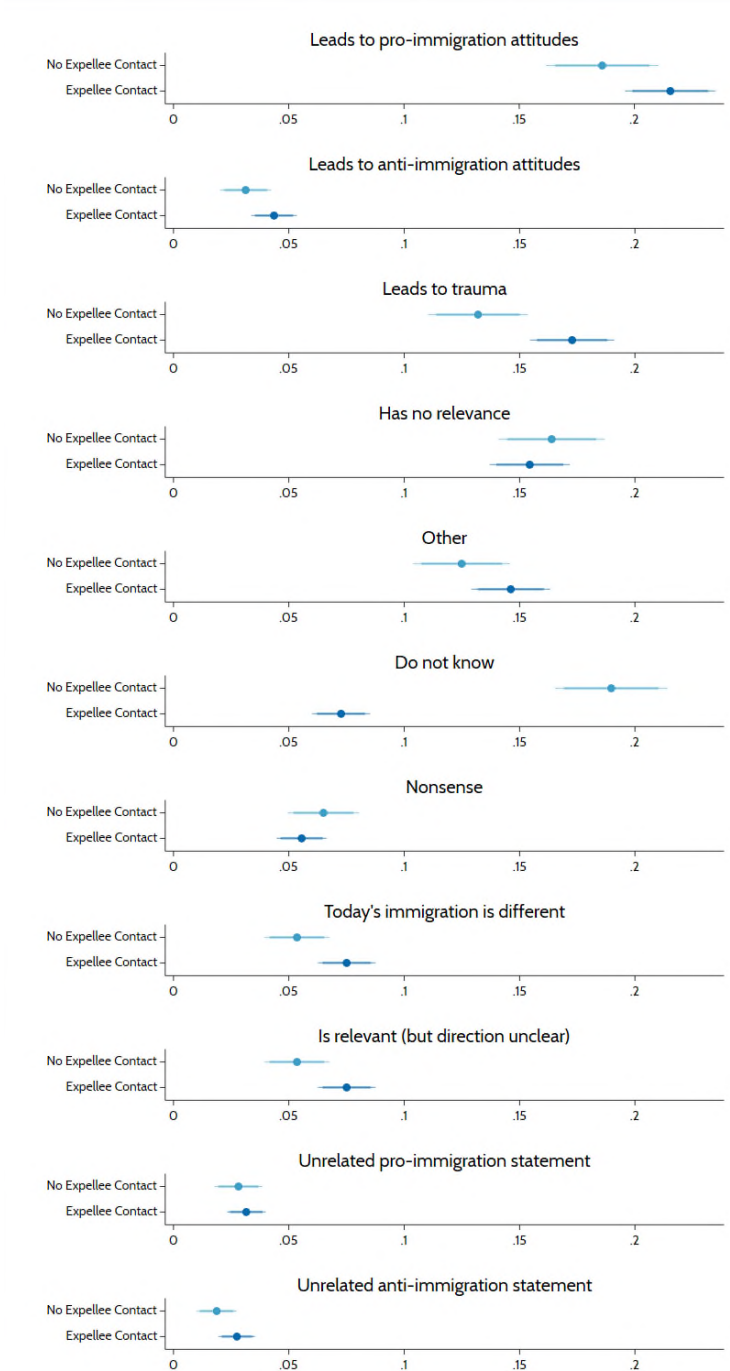


Figure L3: **Open Question: The Significance of Germany's Expellee Experience for Today**

This figure presents average predicted outcomes from five separate regressions. The dependent variables as indicated in the panel titles are indicators for different categories of answers coded from an open survey question on the meaning of Germany's expellee experience for today. Regressors consist of the variable for expellee contact as well as a set of control variables including self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. The horizontal bars represent 95% and 90% confidence intervals based on heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.

## L.4 Immigrants and Refugees

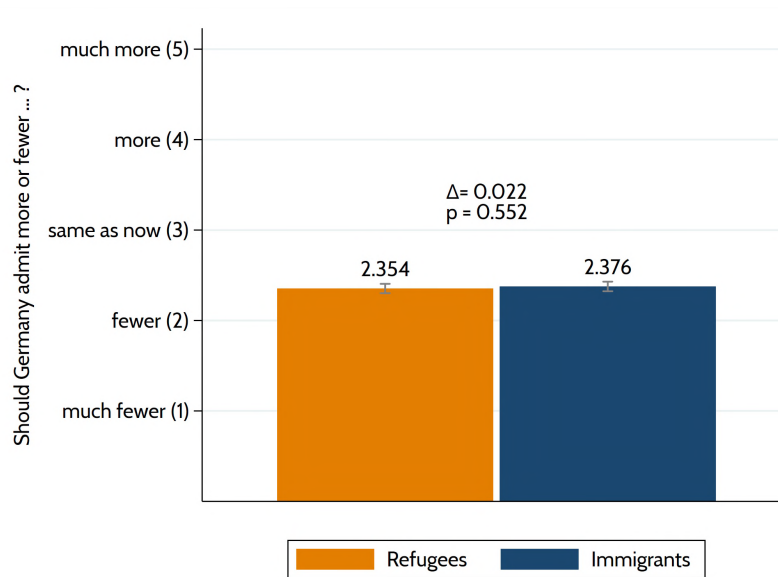


Figure L.4: **Refugees vs. Immigrants**

The figure plots the average response to the question: “Should Germany admit more or fewer [refugees]/[immigrants]?” Survey respondents were randomly split into two groups. One group saw the word “refugees”, the other group saw the word “immigrants.” The grey bars in the figure indicate 95% confidence intervals by group. The difference ( $\Delta = 0.022$ ) is not statistically significant at conventional levels ( $p = 0.552$ ).

## L.5 Norm Transmission within Families

Table L3: **Transmission of Immigration Views in Families**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<i>Mother's Immigration Views</i>	0.656*** (0.019)	0.418*** (0.032)	0.358*** (0.050)	0.476*** (0.061)	0.636*** (0.026)
<i>Father's Immigration Views</i>		0.320*** (0.030)	0.339*** (0.049)		
<i>Age</i>	-0.055*** (0.018)	-0.056*** (0.017)	-0.079*** (0.030)	-0.082*** (0.020)	
<i>Mother's Immigration Views</i> × <i>Age</i>				0.004*** (0.001)	
<i>Lives in Same Region as Ancestors</i>					-0.504** (0.233)
<i>Mother's Immigr. Views</i> × <i>Lives in Same Region</i>					0.064* (0.038)
Observations	2451	2252	905	2451	2314
Adjusted R-squared	0.417	0.470	0.409	0.420	0.421

This table shows the coefficients from five OLS fixed-effects regressions. The dependent variable is a respondent's own views on immigration on a scale from one (very negative) to ten (very positive). *Mother's Immigration Views* and *Father's Immigration Views* are assessed on the same scale. All regressions include age, age squared, gender, and indicators for the respondent's level of education as control variables. In column 3, the sample is reduced to respondents with expellee ancestors. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are in parentheses. \*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ .

## L.6 Individual-Level Determinants of Nationalist Voting

Table L4: **Determinants of AfD Vote**

	(1) Socio-Economic Background	(2) Views on Immigration	(3) Political Ideology
<i>Female</i>	-0.017 (0.013)		
<i>Age</i>	0.014*** (0.002)		
<i>Age<sup>2</sup></i>	-0.000*** (0.000)		
<i>Education</i>	-0.009** (0.004)		
<i>Income Category (log)</i>	-0.034** (0.015)		
<i>Catholic</i>	-0.026 (0.016)		
<i>Protestant</i>	-0.040** (0.018)		
<i>Other Religion</i>	0.005 (0.018)		
<i>Immigration Background</i>	-0.022 (0.016)		
<i>Immigration Benefits Economy</i>		-0.034*** (0.008)	
<i>Immigration Benefits Culture</i>		-0.016** (0.007)	
<i>Immigration Benefits Security</i>		-0.015* (0.008)	
<i>Expenditure for Immigrants</i>		-0.012** (0.006)	
<i>Allow More Immigration</i>		-0.018** (0.009)	
<i>Issue Salience</i>		0.063*** (0.006)	
<i>Pro-Immigration Views</i>		-0.018*** (0.004)	
<i>Left-Right Ideology</i>			0.039*** (0.004)
<i>More National Pride</i>			0.053*** (0.006)
Observations	2520	2643	2555
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.014	0.219	0.114

The table displays coefficients from three OLS regressions. The dependent variable is a binary indicator of AfD voting. The omitted religion category is “No Religion”/“Prefer not to report.” Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01.

## L.7 Saliency

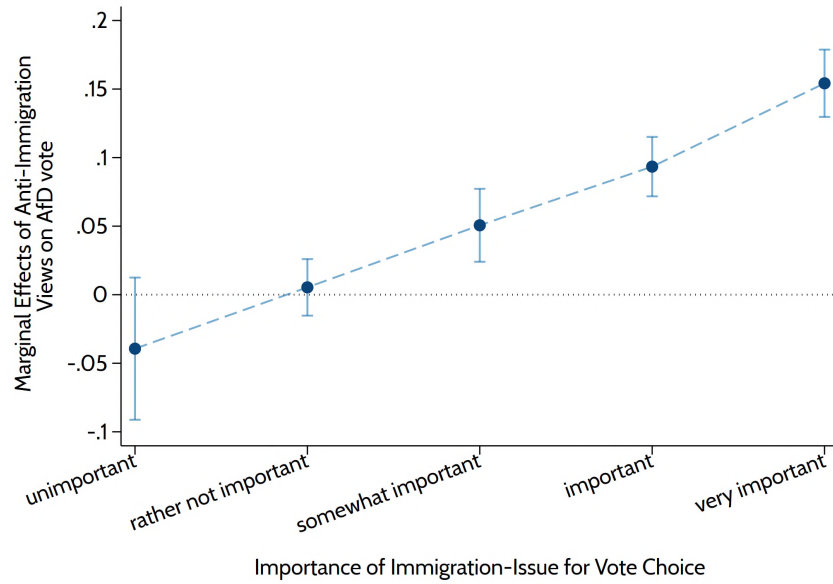


Figure L5: **Saliency**

This figure presents the marginal effects of self-reported importance of the topic of immigration on voting decisions, using a linear regression model. The dependent variable takes a value of 1 if the respondent indicated that they would vote for the AfD after being asked, “Which party would you vote for if there was a federal election next Sunday?” The variable of interest is derived from in which we asked respondents to rate the importance of immigration for their voting decision on a scale from 1 to 5. Dots in the figure represent coefficients and vertical bars show 95% confidence intervals based on heterogeneity-robust standard errors.

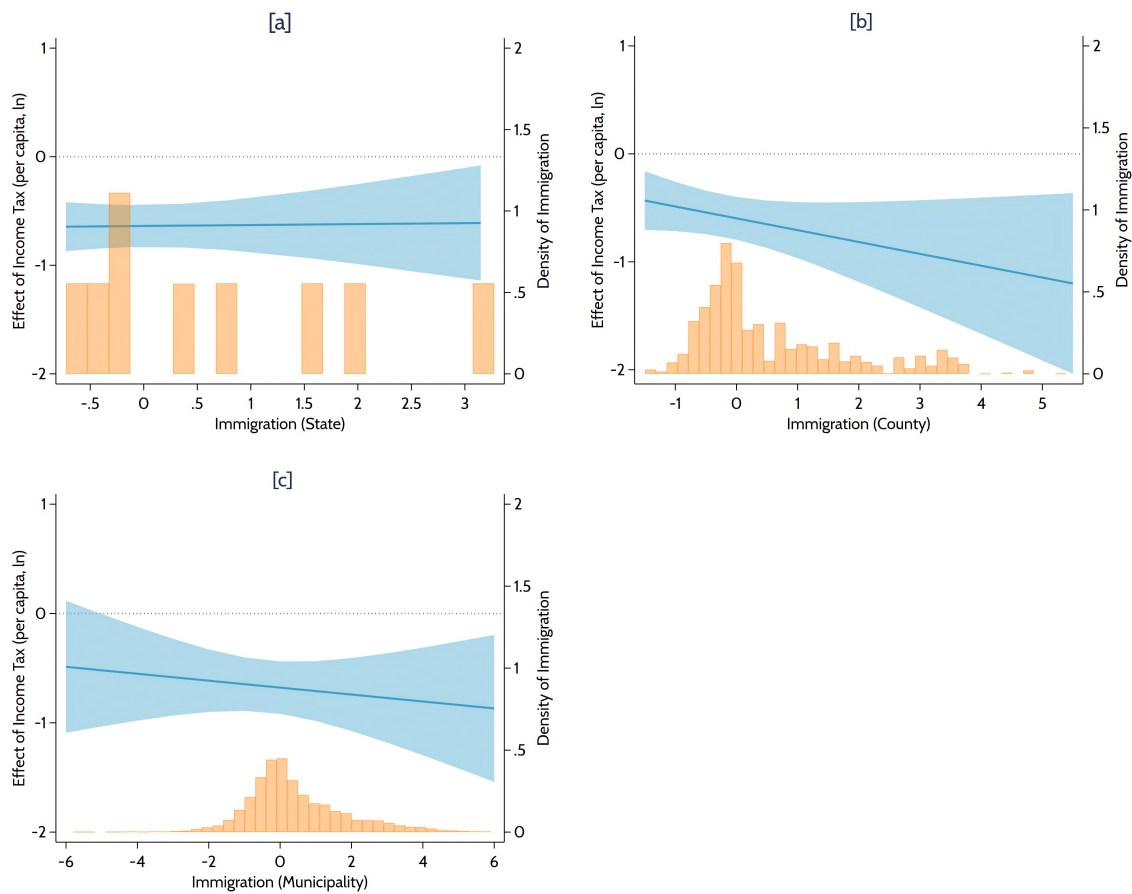
## M Additional Results on Channels

### M.1 Interaction of Immigration and Income

Table M1: Elections and Income Tax: The Role of Current Immigration, 1976-2021

Dep. var.: <i>Far-Right Vote Share</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Income Tax (p.c., ln)</i>	-0.633*** (0.130)	-0.611*** (0.111)	-0.678*** (0.209)	-0.638*** (0.118)	-0.597*** (0.120)	-0.678*** (0.146)
<i>Income Tax (p.c., ln) × Immigration (State)</i>				0.009 (0.095)		
<i>Immigration (County)</i>					0.535 (0.496)	
<i>Income Tax (p.c., ln) × Immigration (County)</i>					-0.110 (0.087)	
<i>Immigration (Municipality)</i>						0.163 (0.339)
<i>Income Tax (p.c., ln) × Immigration (Municip.)</i>						-0.032 (0.060)
Year FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Periods of Low/High Immigration	All	Low	High	All	All	All
Observations	9896	6596	3300	9896	9896	8066
Municipalities	1101	1101	1100	1101	1101	932

The dependent variable is the vote share of far-right parties in federal elections. Standard errors adjusted for clustering at the municipality level in parentheses. The specifications mirror those reported in Table 2 but look at the interaction of local income levels and contemporary immigration.



**Figure M1: Marginal Effects of Income on Far-Right Vote Shares Depending on Immigration**

The figure plots results from three OLS regressions. The dependent variable is *Far-Right Vote Share*. The blue lines display marginal effects of *Income Tax (p.c., ln)* given different levels of current *Immigration* at the state level (Panel [a]), county level (Panel [b]), and municipality level (Panel [c]) with 95% confidence intervals (shaded blue areas). Table M1 reports the regression output. The orange bars provide histograms of *Immigration* at the state, county, and municipality level, respectively.

**M.2 Income Taxes and Household Incomes**

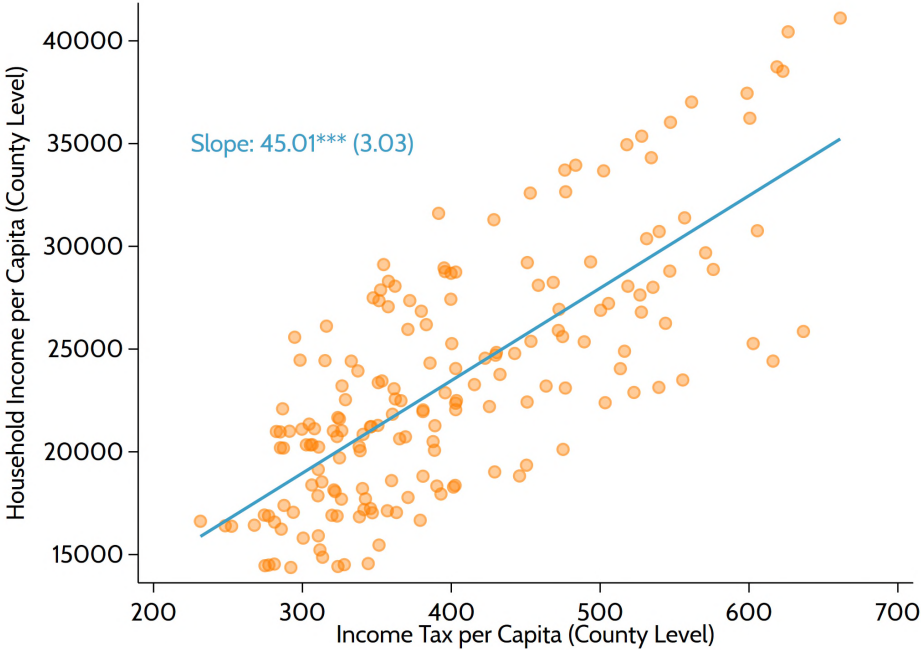


Figure M2: **Income Tax**

The figure shows the correlation of county-level income tax revenues and mean household incomes.



### M.3 Demographic Effects

**Demographic Effects.** To examine alternative channels, we test whether there is evidence for long-term effects on the demography of the municipalities. Table M2 looks at population density, population growth, the share of women, the share of immigrants, annual immigration rates, the share of people over the age of 65 and the share of Catholics. We find that the forced migrants' effect on local population density persists in the long run for a period of more than 75 years.<sup>36</sup> Other than that, there is no evidence for long-lasting effects on other demographic characteristics of the municipalities.

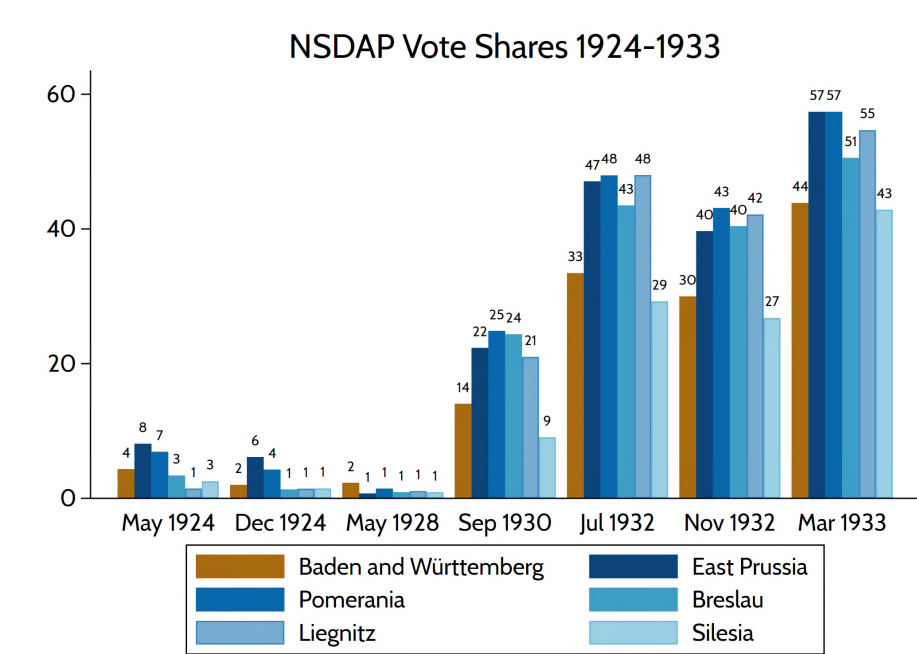
Table M2: **Long-Term Demographic Effects**

Outcome variable:	<i>Population Density</i>	<i>Population Growth</i>	<i>Immigrants Share</i>	<i>Annual Immigration</i>	<i>Elderly Share</i>	<i>Catholics Share</i>
2020	0.027*** (0.009)	-0.005 (0.016)	0.050 (0.066)	-0.003 (0.011)	0.035 (0.036)	0.251 (0.216)
2015	0.027*** (0.009)	0.006 (0.017)	0.032 (0.064)	-0.003 (0.012)		
2010	0.027*** (0.009)	-0.001 (0.012)	-0.001 (0.092)	0.002 (0.010)		
2005	0.027*** (0.009)	0.003 (0.013)	-0.004 (0.136)	-0.001 (0.011)		
2000	0.028*** (0.009)	0.030* (0.018)	-0.019 (0.185)	0.002 (0.011)		
1995	0.026*** (0.009)	0.031 (0.022)	-0.076 (0.234)	0.004 (0.012)		
1990	0.027*** (0.009)	-0.027 (0.024)	-0.091 (0.279)	-0.005 (0.012)		
1976	0.028*** (0.010)	0.002 (0.024)	-0.038 (0.424)	-0.002 (0.014)		
1970	0.025*** (0.010)	0.090*** (0.034)	-0.082 (0.485)			
1950	0.020** (0.008)	0.077*** (0.007)				

The table displays coefficients from separate fuzzy spatial RD regressions. The treatment variable is the 1950 share of expellees per municipality in percent. The various dependent variables are indicated in the top row and measured at the municipality level. The first column indicates the year in which the outcomes are measured. Cells are empty if data are not available. Apart from the outcome variables, the specifications are the same as before. Note that for some variables values for 2020 are not yet available; in this case the most recent values are used. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01.

<sup>36</sup>Schumann (2014) identified this persistence until the 1970s.

#### M.4 The Political Views of Expellees Before the Expulsion



**Figure M3: Election Results in Expellee Home Regions, 1924-1933**

The figure plots the vote shares (in percent) of the Nazi party NSDAP in Baden and Württemberg as well as in the Eastern German regions from which ethnic Germans have been expelled in 1945.

## M.5 Excluding Expellee Home Regions

Table M3: **Robustness: Excluding Expellee Regions**

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Excluded home regions	-	Silesia	Bohemia/ Moravia	East Prussia	Sudetenland	Pommerania	Other
<b>Panel A: Immigrants Bring Economic Advantages</b>							
Expellee Ancestors	0.153*** (0.040)	0.131*** (0.044)	0.203*** (0.044)	0.151*** (0.043)	0.187*** (0.042)	0.127*** (0.041)	0.155*** (0.042)
Observations	2453	2154	2160	2165	2251	2344	2255
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Panel B: Immigrants Bring Cultural Advantages</b>							
Expellee Ancestors	0.134*** (0.041)	0.121*** (0.046)	0.196*** (0.046)	0.116** (0.045)	0.163*** (0.044)	0.139*** (0.043)	0.104** (0.044)
Observations	2452	2153	2160	2164	2250	2344	2254
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Panel C: Immigrants Bring Security Advantages</b>							
Expellee Ancestors	0.090** (0.041)	0.086* (0.046)	0.130*** (0.045)	0.095** (0.046)	0.107** (0.044)	0.069 (0.043)	0.076* (0.044)
Observations	2452	2153	2160	2164	2250	2344	2254
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

OLS regressions. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors are in parentheses. \* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01. Outcome variables are indicated in bold. Control variables include self-reported gender, age, age-squared, income, nine religion, and eight education categories, as well as county and answer-day fixed effects. Each regression excludes survey respondents with expellee ancestors from the respective home region that is indicated at the top. Column 1 shows the full sample for comparison.

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