



## King's Research Portal

DOI:

[10.1177/1354068819857177](https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068819857177)

*Document Version*

Peer reviewed version

[Link to publication record in King's Research Portal](#)

*Citation for published version (APA):*

Jager, K. (2019). When do party supporters abandon the party leader? The intraparty conflict of the Alternative for Germany. *Party Politics*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1354068819857177>

### **Citing this paper**

Please note that where the full-text provided on King's Research Portal is the Author Accepted Manuscript or Post-Print version this may differ from the final Published version. If citing, it is advised that you check and use the publisher's definitive version for pagination, volume/issue, and date of publication details. And where the final published version is provided on the Research Portal, if citing you are again advised to check the publisher's website for any subsequent corrections.

### **General rights**

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the Research Portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognize and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the Research Portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the Research Portal

### **Take down policy**

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact [librarypure@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:librarypure@kcl.ac.uk) providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

*Forthcoming in Party Politics*

## **When Do Party Supporters Abandon the Party Leader?**

### **The Intraparty Conflict of the Alternative for Germany**

**Kai Jäger**

Department of Political Economy, King's College London  
Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES)

#### **ABSTRACT**

Drawing on a unique panel dataset of supporters of the Alternative for Germany (AfD) the study shows that programmatic differences between supporters of Frauke Petry and Bernd Lucke cannot sufficiently explain the crucial intra-party leadership contest of July 2015. Programmatic differences were minor in 2013, but became pronounced over time. Politically active supporters were disaffected with the old moderate leadership of Bernd Lucke, who pursued an organizational reform to reduce the influence of the rank-and-file. Social media also played a key role for the leadership turnover, as alternative news sources on social media were only politicized by the intra-party opposition. It is conceivable that the structure of social media networks influences opinion formation processes and internal affairs of right-wing populist parties in general, as their supporters tend to have low trust in mainstream news.

**Keywords:** Intra-Party Conflict, Leadership Contest, Alternative for Germany, Social Media, Party Activists.

## 1. Introduction

Germany has been a special case among Western postindustrial societies with regard to the absence of a successful right-wing populist party.<sup>1</sup> While such parties were well-established in many neighboring countries and have joined governing coalitions, their electoral appeal has been ephemeral and restricted to state and local elections in Germany. No right-wing party has passed the threshold for parliamentary representation on the national level until 2017 – a failure that had its roots in Germany’s political culture centered on the Nazi past, which reacted dismissively to any attempt to establish a right-wing populist party (Art, 2005).

The *Alternative für Deutschland* (Alternative for Germany, AfD) is the most promising attempt to establish a successful party at the right of the German party system – particularly after entering national parliament with 12.6 percent in Germany’s 2017 national election. It began as soft Eurosceptic party with a market-liberal orientation in 2013 (Arzheimer, 2015a; Jankowski et al., 2017; Schmitt-Beck, 2017). From the beginning, however, different factions were competing over the programmatic orientation of the party. The conflict culminated in July 2015 in a leadership contest, in which co-leader Frauke Petry defeated frontrunner and economist Bernd Lucke. Petry’s victory was widely considered as a victory of the relatively more radical wing over the moderates. The leadership change led to a split-off by Lucke supporters and constituted the beginning of a substantial change of the AfD’s policy platform, illustrating the relevance of the leadership position for the study of party politics (Ennsner-Jedenastik and Müller, 2015).

---

<sup>1</sup> There are several terms for right-wing populist parties in circulation. This paper uses the broad terms “right-wing” and “populist,” as a focus on national identities (right-wing) and an anti-establishment appeal (populist) are the defining characteristics of this party family (Rydgren, 2007: 243-246).

Prima facie, the AfD appeared to experience the same internal process that occurred in previous attempts to establish a right-to-the-center party in Germany and elsewhere: Initial electoral successes attracted radical activists, while potential social sanctions associated with being a member of a right-wing populist party induced moderates to stay away, eventually pushing the party further to the right (Art, 2011; Kitschelt, 1995: 237-239). The literature highlights that intra-party conflicts between radical and moderate factions are a major internal supply factor for the failure of right-wing populist parties (Mudde, 2007: 270-273). Klandermans and Mayer (2005) find that activists of such parties are often more radical than right-wing voters. Activists of niche parties, such as right-wing populist parties, tend to be ideologically motivated and attempts by the party leadership to moderate the programmatic appeal could provoke intra-party conflicts (Adams et al., 2006: 515). Particularly, this is the case if such parties enter a government coalition that requires moderation (Akkerman and De Lange, 2012: 581). The conflicts between moderate leadership and radical activists within the Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) led to the collapse of two governing coalitions in 1986 and 2002 (Heinisch, 2003). In addition, niche parties that start out with a single issue, as in the case of the AfD with the euro crisis, are likely to face internal division over the expansion of the policy platform (Lynch et al., 2012).

This paper analyzes the internal conflict of the AfD at the grassroots level. I argue that programmatic differences do not sufficiently explain the outcome of the leadership contest; an organizational reform and selective exposure on social media were key factors that made supporters abandon Lucke. First, Lucke pursued an organization reform to centralize power, effectively promoting an organizational structure similar to mainstream parties. But such a reform was too early in the party's life cycle, which was established on anti-party sentiments and grassroots involvement in internal affairs (Abedi and Lundberg 2009). The organization reform created a

conflict between Lucke and the rank-and-file activists who wanted to preserve the existing structure. Second, Lucke did not actively embrace social media to woo supporters, and his opponents dominated alternative news outlets on Facebook. The Lucke-critical messages were likely to be more persuasive for AfD supporters who were dissatisfied with the mainstream media, because the mistrust motivated them to seek out non-traditional news sources online.

This paper utilizes the advertising option ‘Facebook ads’ of the social media platform Facebook to obtain panel data of AfD supporters. Supporters of the AfD were invited via Facebook ads to an online questionnaire in September 2013 before the German national election, and the same participants were surveyed again in July 2015 on the party’s leadership dispute. The panel appears to be representative of the party’s political attitudes, as it approximates the outcomes of an online party referendum and correctly captured Petry’s 3-to-2 victory over Lucke. The panel provides insights into the attitudes of AfD supporters over time, which is unprecedented in the study of party organizations.

The empirical analysis shows that there were only minor programmatic differences between Petry and Lucke voters in 2013, which became more pronounced at the time of the 2015 leadership contest. Even when controlling for these programmatic convictions from both samples, activists were more likely to support Petry. In addition, social media consumption of supporters who were dissatisfied with real-world democracy was significantly associated with voting for Petry. The model estimates a Lucke victory in the leadership contest in the scenario of low political activism or low social media consumption.

The article begins with a discussion of the AfD and the programmatic differences between the Petry and Lucke factions, followed by the introduction of the non-programmatic hypotheses to

explain Petry's victory. The next section introduces the sample process, describes the data, and conducts the empirical analysis. The conclusion summarizes the findings and discusses the implications for studying the internal politics of right-wing populist parties.

## **2. The leadership contest over the programmatic orientation of the AfD**

The AfD was established months before the 2013 national election, in which it received 4.7 percent, barely missing the 5-percent threshold for parliamentary representation. The AfD's main campaign issue was the euro crisis; it rejected the bailout measures and proposed a reform of the Eurozone.

The AfD mostly appealed to conservative and market-liberal voters who were disgruntled by the euro bailout policies of Merkel's governing coalition of the Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) and the Free Democrats (FDP). Former members of radical right-wing parties or organizations that were observed by the *Verfassungsschutz* (federal or state offices for the Protection of the Constitution) were not allowed to join. Quantitative and qualitative evidence suggests that the AfD did not qualify as a right-wing populist party at this stage (Schmitt-Beck, 2017: 144): AfD candidates for the 2013 national election tended to have a market-liberal orientation (Jankowski et al., 2017). Arzheimer (2015a) finds that the soft Eurosceptic programmatic positions of the AfD 2014 European election manifesto closely resembled the CSU – the Bavarian sister party of Merkel's Christian Democrats.

The AfD received 7.1 percent in the European Parliament election of 25 May 2014 and 10-12 percent in the three East-German state elections of Saxony, Brandenburg, and Thuringia in

autumn 2014. Subsequently, however, the party descended into a month-long internal conflict. AfD frontrunner and co-leader Lucke wanted to solidify the AfD as a moderate center-right party (Goerres et al., 2018: 248). The national-conservative wing of the party rejected these plans, as they wanted to establish the AfD as a principled opposition party. They criticized Lucke for his support of the trade agreement TTIP with the United States, and for voting for sanctions against Russia in the EU parliament – which violated a party resolution that rejected sanctions. Another major source of conflict was the relationship with the anti-Islam movement Pegida (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West). Pegida’s weekly street protests peaked at about 25,000 participants in the city of Dresden and the federal state of Saxony in early 2015, but failed to draw sizeable support in the Western parts of Germany (Dostal, 2015). Patzelt and Klose (2016) find that Pegida participants overwhelmingly supported the AfD. Lucke wanted to distance the AfD from the Pegida movement, while local AfD leaders called for a closer cooperation with Pegida.

Björn Höcke, the party leader of Thuringia, established the informal faction *Der Flügel* (The Wing) and published the “Erfurt Resolution,” which attacked Lucke’s leadership and programmatic positions. It demanded that the AfD should be “a principled patriotic and democratic alternative to the established parties” that becomes a “resistance movement against the continued erosion of Germany’s sovereignty and identity.” The Erfurt Resolution was signed by about 2,000 members. Lucke and his supporters responded with the “Germany Resolution” and the formal club *Der Weckruf* (The Wake-Up Call). *Weckruf* was joined by about 4,000 supporters, and warned that the AfD would turn into a radical sectarian party without Lucke.

Opponents of Lucke rallied behind Petry, the second leader of the party, who successfully challenged Lucke for leadership at the national party convention in July 2015. Petry was initially

an ally of Lucke, but broke with him once she had enough support to overthrow him. Lucke and his followers left the AfD to establish the Alliance for Progress and Renewal (Alfa), which was later rebranded as Liberal Conservative Reformers (LKR). Petry's victory led to a programmatic repositioning of the AfD towards a more national conservative platform (Jankowski et al., 2017: 714). The AfD fell to 3 percent in national polls directly after the leadership dispute in August 2015. The AfD strongly opposed Merkel's controversial refugee policy, which eventually paved the way into national parliament after receiving 12.6 percent in the 2017 national election.

Petry launched an attempt to expel Höcke from the party in January 2017 after he gave a speech demanding a 180 degree change in Germany's politics of commemoration, leading to a new intra-party conflict between Petry supporters and the national-conservatives. Petry was not nominated as frontrunner for the 2017 national election. As a consequence of her dwindling influence, Petry left the AfD directly after the national election to establish *Die blaue Partei* (The Blue Party). Sharing the fate of Lucke's LKR, Petry's Blue Party has failed to draw any considerable support so far.

### **3. Non-programmatic explanations for the outcome of the leadership contest**

#### ***3.1 The AfD's organization life cycle mismatch***

Prior research links the survival of party leaders with electoral performance and securing government positions, as internal competitors would rather strategically associate themselves with a successful leader to gain favors instead of seeking an unfavorable confrontation. Consequently, intra-party conflicts over the leadership tend to become more likely in general if intra-party



factions can blame the leadership for electoral losses (Ennser-Jedenastik and Müller, 2015; Greene and Haber, 2016: 614).

By contrast, Abedi and Lundberg (2009) argue that internal conflicts over the leadership could be more likely after rapid electoral gains in the case of right-wing populist organizations. The populist appeal also applies to their organizational structure, which often emphasizes intra-party democracy. This organizational structure is beneficial in the beginning of a party's life cycle to develop an identity and attract motivated activists. Vote-seeking strategies become more dominant at the second stage. Electoral successes lead to higher membership numbers and parliamentary representation, which require organizational reform that institutionalizes administrative processes and fosters the effectiveness of parliamentary work. At the third stage, the strategies switch to office-seeking, which requires that the party establishes relationships with other parties and develops a reputation of being a serious coalition partner in order to gain access to government positions. Such changes are likely to require organizational centralization.

Using UKIP as a case study, Abedi and Lundberg (2009) illustrate that intra-party conflicts between the leadership and rank-and-file activists are likely to emerge if a leader wants to pursue an organizational reform too early in the life cycle of a right-wing populist party after an electoral breakthrough. The disparity between leaders and activists as a consequence of a life cycle mismatch is connected to Robert Michels' (1915) seminal *Iron Law of Oligarchy*. According to the Iron Law, the leadership is more willing to adopt a vote maximization strategy in order to acquire public offices. By contrast, activists tend to care more about the purity of party principles than office-seeking strategies. Their ideological convictions and dissatisfaction with the status quo motivate them to participate relatively more often in unpaid campaigning and canvassing for the party, leading to a disparity of preferences between leaders and rank-and-file activists.

In the case of the AfD, the support for direct democracy indeed transcended to the organizational structure. As described by Reiser (2018), the AfD adopted participatory means for their internal affairs to differ from mainstream parties. The party had an unusual joint leadership with three co-leaders. Members were invited to vote on party programs and election manifestos in online referenda. The party congresses were frequently open to all members.

It is likely that AfD activists were disgruntled with Lucke, as the internal divide over the programmatic orientation of the AfD coincided with a conflict over the organizational structure. Lucke wanted to replace the joint leadership structure consisting of three leaders with him as single leader. This charter reform provoked stiff resistance from other party leaders at the end of 2014 (Arzheimer, 2015a: 552). A compromise was passed at the party's charter congress on January 31, 2015. The leadership structure was temporarily reduced to a dual leadership, which was supposed to be turned into a single leadership by the end of the year after another party congress would have adopted an official party manifesto. While the charter reform was generally considered as a victory for Lucke by the media, some reports highlight that this was a "lonely victory" for Lucke, as he aggravated many of his supporters (Schneider, 2015).

In fact, Lucke opponents implicitly evoked the Iron Law of Oligarchy against Lucke's charter reform and programmatic orientation. Höcke's Erfurt Resolution warned that the AfD is in jeopardy to be turned into a "technocratic oriented" party that unnecessarily restricts the diversity of opinions for the career aspirations of the leadership. Petry also incorporated the organizational aspect into her campaign. Her campaign ran under the slogan "gemeinsam statt einsam" (together instead of alone), criticizing Lucke for ignoring the rank-and-file and allegedly turning the AfD into a second CDU. A campaign video of Petry showed a montage of Lucke repeatedly saying "I",

which is followed by a montage of various rank-and-file members, party leaders, and Petry saying “we”.

The discussion suggests that Lucke pursued an organizational reform that did not match the life cycle of the AfD, provoking resistance from the rank-and-file activists. The life cycle mismatch gives rise to the following hypothesis:

**Activists Hypothesis (H1):** *Political activists were more likely to support Petry in the leadership contest.*

### ***3.2 The conditional impact of social media on intra-party opinion formation***

Scholars increasingly investigate how political information disseminated at social media platforms, such as Facebook or Twitter, affect political behavior and participation. Prior research suggests that the effect of social media on political opinion formation is not straightforward but contingent on other factors. In the case of perceived election fraud in Russia, awareness was only positively associated with social media usage for users who accessed networking platforms that were politicized by the opposition (Reuter and Szakonyi, 2015), and who were already critical of the government (Robertson, 2017). Thus, social media users who were not exposed to critical information or did not consider critical information as trustworthy, had no reason to believe that electoral fraud occurred.

I argue that two similar conditions – message intensity and regime satisfaction – are relevant for the opinion formation of right-wing supporters on social media platforms:

First, the literature on campaigning highlights that campaign effects are pronounced if a campaign message is frequently received by voters and if the message remains unchallenged by opposing campaigns, which suggests that voters are not familiar with alternative narratives (Zaller, 1992; Kriesi, 2002). Similarly, it is likely that intense and one-sided messages by opinion leaders on social media have the strongest influence on followers.

Second, regime satisfaction refers to the subjective satisfaction of real-world democratic processes. This includes the belief that votes are counted fairly, that freedom of speech and other human rights are protected, that the media is impartial, and that no party is disadvantaged by the political system. Social media users with low regime satisfaction are supposed to be less likely to consider mainstream stories shared by friends or well-established private media broadcasts on social media as trustworthy, while they are more likely to be motivated to seek out information of alternative news outlets or find alternative news stories trustworthy. Past studies show that at least AfD voters have low trust in political institutions and the mainstream media (Goerres et al., 2018). Thus, intense and one-sided messages on social media will not affect users if they mistrust the source.

The network analysis tool “Facebook insights” shows that the AfD had a dispersed network structure of different opinion leaders on Facebook in July 2015.<sup>2</sup> Among the 100.000 to 150.000 monthly active Facebook fans, the official party page had the largest audience with 51,800. The party leaders Petry and Lucke only had a reach of 12,900 each. Non-party actors had a higher reach within the AfD network, such as the Pegida movement (32,500), or the pro-Russian news outlets

---

<sup>2</sup> Facebook is the predominant social media platform in Germany. In the case of the official AfD page, Facebook likes (122,000) exceed Twitter followers (9,600) by over 12 times as of July 2014 (Arzheimer, 2015a: 548).

Russia Today (RT) (22,400) and Sputnik (13,400), and the newspaper *Junge Freiheit* (JF) (22,100),

Whereas Petry and her supporters actively used social media for intra-party campaigning, Lucke abstained from actively engaging in campaigning on social media, as he considered such a behavior to undermine his reputation in the long run.<sup>3</sup> Most of Lucke's entries on his Facebook page were comments on policies and events predominantly concerning the euro crisis with further links to stories by major German newspapers, while avoiding alternative news outlets completely. Most traditional news outlets echoed Lucke's argumentation, claiming that the AfD would suffer an exit of moderate forces and a downfall like the German Republicans after a Petry victory (Wessendorf, 2015).

On the official AfD Facebook page, Lucke had the most entries of all major AfD politicians in the month before the leadership contest. However, the frequency of entries by pro-Petry and pro-Lucke politicians were exactly equal<sup>4</sup>, and all Lucke entries resembled press releases in which he commented on policy issues. By contrast, Petry and her supporters posted campaign messages in the days before the leadership contest. The page administration even deleted posts supporting Lucke's *Weckruf* and banned pro-Lucke users from the page – a measure that the party committee repealed on June 9, 2015 prompted by Lucke.

The JF is the largest right-wing newspaper in Germany and it has supported the establishment of the AfD. In the leadership contest, the JF interviewed both sides and took a rather

---

<sup>3</sup> Based on interviews with former supporters and an associate of Lucke.

<sup>4</sup> Entries by AfD politicians who supported Lucke in the leadership contest: Lucke (13), Henkel (3), Kölmel (2), Starbatty (2). Entries by politicians who supported Petry: Adam (8), Petry (6), Gauland (4), von Storch (2). Arzheimer's (2015b) keyword-based shows that Lucke's name and agenda appeared the most often in AfD Facebook posts before the leadership contest, but topics championed by Lucke opponents, such as immigration and criticism of Islam, aroused more comments by users visiting the AfD fan page.

neutral position, emphasizing that a Lucke split-off and a radicalization endanger the electoral prospect of the party (Stein, 2015). Pegida, RT, and Sputnik did not comment on the AfD, but they were indirectly involved in the leadership contest as Lucke rejected any association of the AfD with Pegida and supported a pro-Western foreign policy. In general, Neuerer (2015) describes Facebook as a key “battle instrument” in the campaign for the leadership contest. Particularly, Lucke supporters complained about the fierce debates, accusations and insults on Facebook. They perceived that “fake news” about Lucke on Facebook persuaded many previous Lucke supporters to opt for Petry in the leadership contest.<sup>5</sup>

The analysis of opinion leaders in the AfD’s social media network reveals that the pro-Petry message dominated alternative news, while the mainstream media tended to portray Lucke more favorable who also shared their stories. The discrepancy between pro-Lucke and pro-Petry messages suggests that the effect of social media on political opinion formation is not straightforward but conditional on trust and self-selection to stories. Social media users with low regime satisfaction are less likely to consider mainstream stories shared by Lucke as trustworthy, while they are more likely to be motivated to seek out information of alternative news outlets or to find such stories trustworthy.

This discussion leads to the following conditional social-media hypothesis:

**Social-Media Hypothesis (H2):** *Social media users who had a low regime satisfaction were more likely to support Petry, while social media users with high regime satisfaction were more likely to support Lucke.*

---

<sup>5</sup> Based on interviews with former supporters and an associate of Lucke.

## 4. Empirical section

### *4.1 Sampling procedure*

A sample of AfD supporters was obtained by using the advertising option of the social media webpage Facebook. Facebook ads runs small advertising boxes for a selected target population. The researcher determines the target population by choosing a list of relevant fan pages for the political party of interest. Facebook Ads provides summary statistics about the aggregate demographics for the target population and specified subgroups. Thus, potential biases are tractable in advance and can be accounted for by imposing demographic-related quotas for age, education, or gender. Jäger (2017) provides a detailed description of the procedure. Previous studies suggest that Facebook sampling can be used to generate a representative sample of hard-to-reach population, particularly as it allows for pre-sample quotas and a large sample size, which in turn makes post-stratification weights more reliable for samples of voters (Samuels and Zucco, 2014) or party members or supporters (Jäger, 2017).

Shortly before the 2013 German national election, Facebook Ads were used to invite fans of the official fan pages of the AfD and Lucke to an online questionnaire in German between 10 and 22 September 2013. The sampling procedure was based on six advertising campaigns to ensure equal sampling quotas for the six age groups 18 to 24, 25 to 29, 30 to 39, 40 to 49, 50 to 59, and 60 years and older.<sup>6</sup> The sample consists of 1,254 AfD supporters who voted for the AfD. 658 of them stated that they would participate in future surveys, of which 31.8 percent or 209 participated in the survey of July 2015 shortly before and after the leadership contest. The answers of each participant from both waves were matched. The resulting panel allows us to evaluate to which

---

<sup>6</sup> Appendix A shows the advertisement boxes and the summary statistics of the sampling process.

extent AfD supporters from the 2013 sample, who stated that they would vote for Petry in 2015 differ from those supporting Lucke on various items from the 2013 and 2015 samples.

Concerning the representativeness of the sampling method, the second wave of AfD supporters accurately reflected intra-party decisions of the party (Jäger, 2017: 333-336). AfD members were invited to vote on the party's manifesto for the European Parliamentary election in an online referendum between 19 and 28 February 2014. The estimates of the panel coincide with the results of the intra-party referendum for items with similar questions. In the online referendum, 97.6 percent supported the introduction of national referenda. The result was 98.9 percent for AfD supporters who participated in the 2015 survey. Regarding the support for introducing gender quotas and for gender mainstreaming, a small minority of 4.6 and 12.1 percent in the online referendum, and 2.4 and 9.7 percent in the Facebook sample agreed with these policies. The similarity also occurred for issues that were closely contested within the AfD. In the online party referendum, a narrow majority of 52.6 percent rejected the idea of a minimum wage law. The estimated rejection is with 55.1 percent only slightly higher in the Facebook sample. 40.1 percent supported TTIP in the referendum, while 45.8 percent of respondents had a positive impression on the United States in the Facebook sample. The 95-percent confidence intervals for the estimates of these items are overlapping, suggesting that they are statistically indistinguishable from each other.

The estimates of 2015 sample for the leadership contest are also statistically indistinguishable at the 95-percent confidence level from the actual proportion of Petry's victory. Petry received 56.8 percent among AfD supporters in the survey, closely resembling the 61.1



percent of the actual leadership contest.<sup>7</sup> The comparisons indicate that the panel data of AfD supporters is representative of the AfD membership at least in terms of key political attitudes.

#### ***4.2 Data description***

The empirical analysis evaluates which factors can explain Petry's victory in the leadership contest. The binomial dependent variable is the vote choice of Petry over Lucke from the 2015 sample. In addition, participants were asked how much they like Petry and Lucke on a scale from 0 (strongly dislike) to 10 (strongly like). The sympathy difference of liking Petry over Lucke can range from -10 to 10, and is an alternative dependent variable.

The main explanatory variables are from the 2013 sample. An index of *Political Activism* is relevant for the Activists Hypothesis. It is generated by using the average score of the six survey items "putting up political posters," "handing out political flyers," "attending political demonstrations or rallies," "attending political party meetings," "donating money to a party," and "canvassing voters on behalf of the party." Respondents were asked how often they perform these activities. There were four answer options ranging from "never" to "often."

The interaction term between regime satisfaction and social media consumption is relevant for the Social-Media Hypothesis. *Regime Satisfaction* is measured by the average score on the seven survey items "votes are counted fairly," "TV news favors the governing party" (reversed), "journalists provide fair coverage of elections," "everyone enjoys freedom of opinion," "human rights are protected," "some parties are seriously hampered in their election campaigns" (reversed),

---

<sup>7</sup> Appendix Table B1 shows the comparison of these different items in tabular form.

and “Germany is governed democratically,”. There were five answer options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” The dichotomous variable *Social Media* equals one if respondents chose “online social networks (Facebook, Twitter)” on the survey item “which media sources do you frequently use to acquire political information.”

The following variables from the 2013 sample capture ideological convictions and programmatic positions on topics that were salient for AfD supporters: *Restricting Immigration* is based on the average score on three survey items that asked how many immigrants from different groups (same ethnic group, other ethnic group, from poor countries outside Europe) should be allowed to come to Germany. There were four answer options ranging from “many” to “none.” *Leave EU* is based on survey items that asked whether respondents want Germany to leave the EU. *Reduce Income Inequality* and *Support Free Trade* are based on the statement “the government should take measures to reduce differences in income” and “Germany benefits from free trade.” Respondents could choose options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” *Like Russia* is based on a sympathy score for Russia from 0 (strongly dislike) to 10 (strongly like).

Related programmatic items from the 2015 survey that were salient in the intra-party dispute are *Like Pegida*, *Support TTIP*, and *Support Russia-Sanctions*. *Like Pegida* measures how much respondents like Pegida on a scale from 0 (strongly dislike) to 10 (strongly like). The respondents were also asked whether they agree or disagree with the following statements: “Germany would benefit from the planned free trade agreement TTIP between the EU and USA,” and “the economic sanctions against Russia are appropriate and should continue.”

The next control variable is *Seeking Political Career*, which is based on the average score on two items asking whether respondents engage “not at all,” “a little bit,” or “a lot” in politics in

order to achieve party positions and to become a politician. Professional considerations are captured by the variables *Social Status*, which is based on the subjective status ranging from 0 (lowest status) to 10 (highest status), and four dummy variables: *High Position* (lawyer, doctor, blue- and white-collar worker with executive tasks, and high-ranked civil servants), *Civil Servant* (civil servants of all ranks, soldiers, and police officers), *Self-Employed* (professionals with an own business), and *Not Working* (unemployed, retirees, housewives). Further control variables are *AfD Member*, *Age*, *Education Level*, *Female*, and *East German*. All control variables are from the 2013 survey.

<<< **TABLE 1** >>>

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics of all variables, and t-tests of means for differences between Petry and Lucke voters. As suggested by the Activists Hypothesis, Petry voters were significantly more politically active relative to Lucke voters. Petry voters were also significantly less satisfied with democratic processes in Germany.<sup>8</sup> Significant programmatic differences did not exist for the 2013 items. For items from the 2015 sample, significant differences occurred for liking Pegida, supporting TTIP, and sanctions against Russia. In total, there were 77 and 11 programmatic survey items in the 2013 and 2015 samples. Petry and Lucke voters differed significantly from each other on 8 (10.4%) and 9 (81.8%) of these items, demonstrating that programmatic differences within the AfD were minor in 2013, but became pronounced over time.<sup>9</sup> AfD supporters who did not work or were from East Germany were more likely to favor Petry.

---

<sup>8</sup> The collinearity between the key explanatory variables does not appear to be strong. The correlation of Political Activism is -0.127 with Regime Satisfaction and 0.057 with Social Media. The value is 0.07 for Regime Satisfaction and Social Media. Additionally, there is not a strong correlation between the key explanatory variables and the ideological positions.

<sup>9</sup> Appendix Tables B2 and B3 show the descriptive statistics and a t-test of means for Petry and Lucke voters for all programmatic survey items.

### <<< **FIGURE 1** >>>

Figure 1 shows the self-placement of respondents on a left-right dimension for placement items from the 2013 and 2015 samples. Petry and Lucke supporter did not differ significantly from each other on the four dimensions economic policy-making, way of life, identity, and EU asked in 2013. But Lucke supporters placed themselves on average at the center (5.05), while Petry supporters situated themselves at the center-right (6.8) in the 2015 sample. The placement by both groups of the average AfD member is statistically indistinguishable from each other. Petry supporters placed Lucke significantly further to the left, suggesting that they perceived a stronger polarization between groups. Furthermore, Lucke supporters tended to situate the average AfD member closer to Petry (distance of 0.725) than to Lucke (distance of 1.775), which shows that even his followers thought that Lucke's policy position was relatively less representative of the party's majority.

### ***4.3 Empirical Analysis***

Table 2 shows the empirical results for five different models. Model 1 is based on the variables relevant for the hypotheses and the control variables. Model 2 includes the 2013 programmatic variables, and model 3 adds the 2015 programmatic variables. Model 4 is the main model with all variables. Including the programmatic variables increases the difficulty level to confirm the hypotheses, because any effect by political activism or social media on political attitudes over time will be absorbed by the programmatic variables. As the dependent variable is dichotomous, the empirical analysis is based on a binomial logistic regression model with robust standard errors for models 1-4. Model 5 is based on an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis with robust

standard errors as the dichotomous dependent variable is replaced with the like-difference variable as a robustness test.<sup>10</sup>

<<< **TABLE 2** >>>

When included, Political Activism is significantly positive at the 95-percent confidence interval across all model specifications, providing evidence for the Activists Hypothesis. The interaction term between social media and regime satisfaction is significantly negative at the 95-percent confidence interval in all model specification when included, as suggested by the Social-Media Hypothesis. Among the programmatic variables, liking Pegida was significantly associated with voting for Petry, while respondents supporting TTIP were significantly more likely to opt for Lucke. Among the professional career variables, non-working supporters were significantly more likely to vote for Petry. The results look similar for explaining like differences between Petry and Lucke in model 5.

<<< **FIGURE 2** >>>

The coefficients of the logistic regression analyses do not show directly how strongly they influence the dependent variable. As a consequence, I use the Stata-package Clarify to convert the estimates into predicted probabilities in order to improve the substantial interpretation of the findings (King et al., 2000; Tomz et al., 2003). Figure 2 shows the change of the predicted probability if the significant explanatory variables are separately moved from their mean to one standard deviation above while keeping all other explanatory variables at their mean. Such a

---

<sup>10</sup> Appendix B consists of further robustness tests, in which the programmatic variables are based on respondents' position on several ideological dimensions. Additionally, the measurement of social media discounts for TV consumption (Appendix Table B4). Finally, the average score of the index variables is replaced with factor scores (Appendix Table B5). Appendix Tables B6 and B7 show the descriptive statistics of the index composites and the principal factor analysis.

change in Political Activism increases the probability of voting for Petry by about 14.7 percent. Among the other variables, the estimated substantial impact is the highest for liking Pegida (24.7%).

<<< **FIGURE 3** >>>

Figure 3 shows the marginal effect of Social Media while Regime Satisfaction is kept at alternating values, which is relevant for the Social-Media Hypothesis. When regime satisfaction is set at two (one) standard deviations below its mean, social media consumption significantly increases the probability of voting for Petry by 60.3 (45.6) percent. The estimated probabilities are significant at the 99-percent confidence level. When regime satisfaction is kept at its mean, the probability for opting for Petry stands at 18.5 percent, but barely misses the 90-percent confidence interval. The probability for voting for Lucke becomes positive with 11.0 (29.7) percent when regime satisfaction is kept at one (two) standard deviation(s) above its mean, but is only significant at the 90-percent confidence level in the latter scenario.

The empirical analysis shows that programmatic differences between Petry and Lucke voters were negligible in 2013, but became more pronounced over time. Particularly, support for Pegida was an important intra-party fault line during the leadership contest. As suggested by the hypotheses, political activism and the selective exposure on social media were crucial factors for the dwindling support for Lucke. While the average probability for a Petry-vote was 61.7 percent, it increases to 81.7 percent if activism was one standard deviation above its mean and regime satisfaction was a standard deviation below its mean. If political activism (or social media consumption) was kept at its minimum, the average probability for a Lucke-vote increases to 56.0 (52.5) percent, thus predicting a Lucke victory.

## 5. Conclusion

The newly established AfD was the first right-to-the-center party to pass the 5-percent threshold for parliamentary representation in a national election in Germany. What preceded the electoral breakthrough was a crucial intra-party conflict: Petry's victory over Lucke in the leadership contest of July 2015 led to the defection of a large portion of moderates and to a programmatic shift of the AfD to the right. Panel data of AfD supporters provide a unique insight into the fault lines of the internal divide.

This study shows that initial programmatic differences between Petry and Lucke voters were negligible in 2013 but became pronounced at the time of the leadership contest, showing that polarization grew over time within the AfD. Politically active supporters and social media users with low regime satisfaction were significantly more likely to vote for Petry, while controlling for programmatic convictions from both sample waves. The relevance of activism and social media were fostered by two distinctive features of the AfD. First, Lucke was perceived by disgruntled supporters to pursue an organizational reform to increase his power at the expense of the rank-and-file activists. Second, the influence of Lucke in the Facebook network of AfD supporters was relatively small. In contrast to his opponents, he did not actively use social media for campaigning apart from sharing mainstream news stories that only appealed to supporters with prior trust in the mainstream media.

It is thus unlikely that these factors have an identical effect on internal dynamics of right-wing populist parties across Europe, which often have a strong leader actively utilizing social media to communicate with voters and supporters. Nonetheless, there are two wider implications for right-wing political parties.

First, populist strategies might help right-wing parties to gain voters and committed activists, but such successes eventually put pressure on the organization to centralize and institutionalize decision-making processes. Attempts by the leadership to initiate organizational reforms could drive a wedge between the leadership and activists if a challenger for the leadership emerges who can successfully appeal to disaffected activists by campaigning on protecting intra-party democracy.

Second, right-wing populist parties increasingly rely on social media to communicate with supporters. Subjective dissatisfaction about real-world democracy and distrust in mainstream media are relatively more common in right-wing networks. Prior research highlights that social media platforms often function as echo chambers in which users join groups of like-minded people and perceive selected information based on their own worldviews. The confirmation bias of users to promote their favorite stories contribute to information cascades while dissenting narratives – regardless of their validity – are often ignored, reinforcing the polarization of political groups (Del Vicario et al., 2006; Quattrociocchi et al., 2016). Consequently, alternative news sources are likely to play an important role in the opinion formation of right-wing supporters as well as in internal affairs of right-wing parties. Focusing on social media content, the relative influence of party leaders, and the structure of social media networks could improve our understanding of intra-party dynamics of right-wing populist parties and possibly of other party families as well.



## References

- Abedi A and Lundberg TC (2009) Doomed to failure? UKIP and the organisational challenges facing right-wing populist anti-political establishment parties. *Parliamentary Affairs* 62(1): 72-87.
- Adams, J, Clark M, Ezrow L and Glasgow G (2006) Are niche parties fundamentally different from mainstream parties? The causes and the electoral consequences of Western European parties' policy shifts, 1976–1998. *American Journal of Political Science* 50(3): 513-529.
- Akkerman T and De Lange SL (2012) Radical Right Parties in Office: Incumbency Records and the Electoral Cost of Governing. *Government and Opposition* 47(4): 574-596.
- Art D (2005) *The politics of the Nazi past in Germany and Austria*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Art D (2011) *Inside the radical right: The development of anti-immigrant parties in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Arzheimer K (2015a) The AfD: Finally a successful right-wing populist Eurosceptic party for Germany?. *West European Politics* 38(3): 535-556.
- Arzheimer K (2015b) The AfD's Facebook wall: A new hub for far-right mobilisation in Germany?. APSA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, 3–6 September.
- Del Vicario M, Vivaldo G, Bessi A, Zollo F, Scala A, Caldarelli G and Quattrociocchi W (2016) Echo chambers: Emotional contagion and group polarization on Facebook. *Scientific Reports* 6: 37825.
- Dostal JM (2015) The Pegida Movement and German Political Culture: Is Right-Wing Populism Here to Stay?. *The Political Quarterly* 86(4): 523-531.
- Ennsner-Jedenastik L and Müller WC (2015) Intra-party democracy, political performance and the survival of party leaders: Austria, 1945–2011. *Party Politics* 21(6): 930-943.
- Goerres A, Spies DC and Kumlin S (2018) The electoral supporter base of the Alternative for Germany. *Swiss Political Science Review* 24(3): 246-269.
- Greene Z and Haber M (2016) Leadership competition and disagreement at party national congresses. *British Journal of Political Science* 46(3): 611-632.
- Heinisch R (2003) Success in opposition–failure in government: explaining the performance of right-wing populist parties in public office. *West European Politics* 26(3): 91-130.
- Jäger K (2017) The potential of online sampling for studying political activists around the world and across time. *Political Analysis* 25(3): 329-343.

Jankowski M, Schneider S and Tepe M (2017) Ideological alternative? Analyzing Alternative für Deutschland candidates' ideal points via black box scaling. *Party Politics* 23(6): 704-716.

King G, Tomz M and Wittenberg J (2000) Making the most of statistical analyses: Improving interpretation and presentation. *American Journal of Political Science* 44(2): 347-361.

Kitschelt H (1995) *The radical right in Western Europe: A comparative analysis*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Klandermans B and Mayer N (2005) *Extreme right activists in Europe: Through the magnifying glass*. London: Routledge.

Kriesi H (2002) Individual opinion formation in a direct democratic campaign. *British Journal of Political Science* 32(1): 171-185.

Lynch P, Whitaker R and Loomes G (2012) The UK Independence Party: Understanding a niche party's strategy, candidates and supporters. *Parliamentary Affairs* 65(4): 733-757.

Michels R (1915) *Political parties: A sociological study of the oligarchical tendencies of modern democracy*. New York: Hearst's International Library Company.

Mudde C (2007) *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Neuerer D (2015) Wie Facebook die AfD-Krise befeuert. *Handelsblatt*, June 5.

Patzelt W and Klose J (2016) *PEGIDA*. Dresden: Thelem.

Quattrociocchi W, Scala A and Sunstein CR (2016) Echo chambers on Facebook. Discussion Paper No. 877. The Harvard John M. Olin Discussion Paper Series.

Reiser M (2018) Contagion effects by the AfD?: Candidate selection in Germany. In: Coller X, Cordero G and Jaime-Castillo AM (eds.) *The Selection of Politicians in Times of Crisis*. London: Routledge, pp. 81-97.

Reuter OJ and Szakonyi D (2015) Online social media and political awareness in authoritarian regimes. *British Journal of Political Science* 45(1): 29-51.

Robertson G (2017) Political orientation, information and perceptions of election fraud: Evidence from Russia. *British Journal of Political Science* 47(3): 589-608.

Rydgren J (2007) The sociology of the radical right. *Annual Review of Sociology* 33: 241-262.

Samuels D and Zucco C (2014) The Strength of Party Labels in Brazil: Evidence from Survey Experiments. *American Journal of Political Science* 58(1): 212-235.

Schmitt-Beck R (2017) The ‘Alternative für Deutschland in the electorate’: between single-issue and right-wing populist party. *German Politics* 26(1): 124-148.

Schneider J (2015) Luckes einsamer Sieg. *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, February 2.

Stein D (2015) Die Entscheidung. *Junge Freiheit*, May 12.

Tomz M, Wittenberg J and King G (2003) CLARIFY: Software for interpreting and presenting statistical results. *Journal of Statistical Software* 8(1): 1-30.

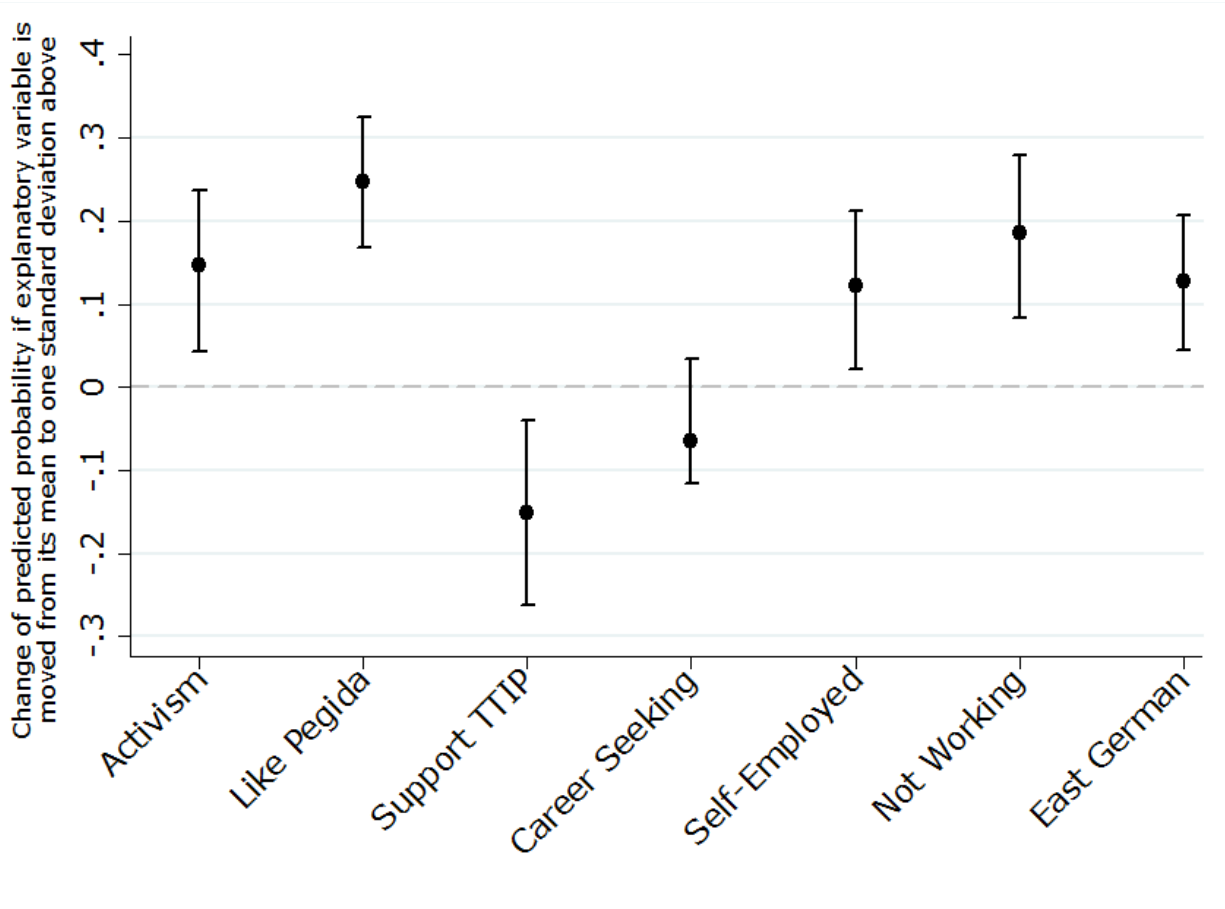
Wessendorf N (2015) Es droht das Schicksal der Republikaner. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, July 1.

Zaller J (1992) *The nature and origins of mass opinion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.



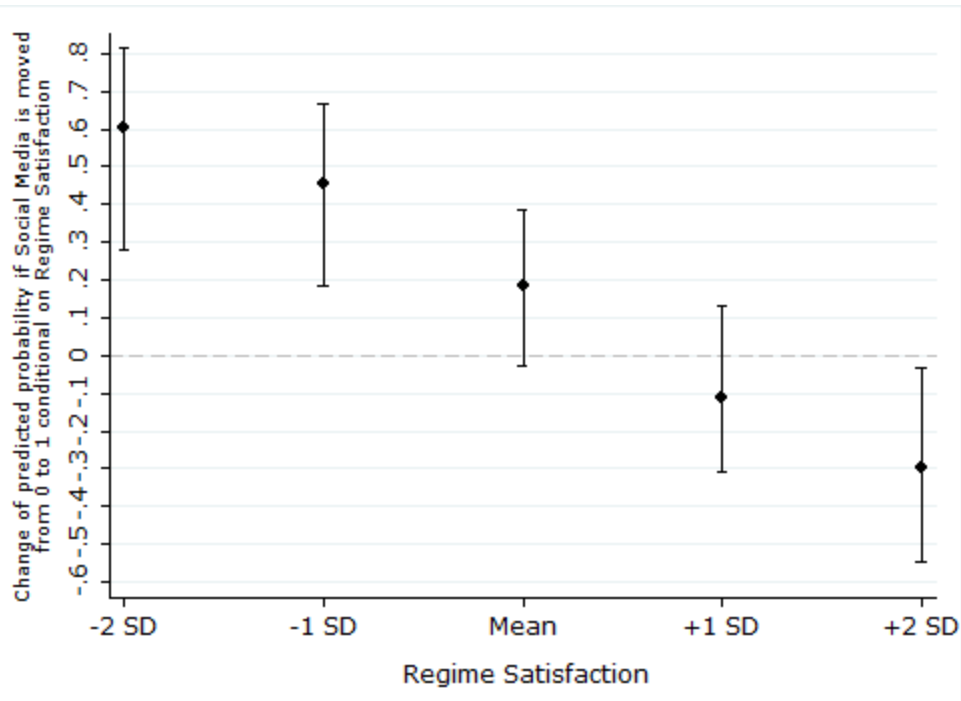
**Figure 1.** Positions by Petry and Lucke supporters in political space

*Note:* Error bars give the 95-percent confidence interval. Black entries refer to the 2013 sample, grey entries to the 2015 sample.



**Figure 2.** Simulated substantial impact on the probability of voting for Petry

*Note:* Simulation is based on Table 2, model 4. Error bars give the 90-percent confidence interval. An explanatory variable is changed from its mean to one standard deviation above while holding all other explanatory variables at their mean.



**Figure 3.** Simulated substantial impact of social media conditional on regime satisfaction

*Note:* Simulation is based on Table 2, model 4. Error bars give the 90-percent confidence interval. The interaction term and social media consumption are changed based on moving social media consumption from 0 to 1 and regime satisfaction is kept constant at five different stages. All other explanatory variables are held at their mean.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics for AfD supporters

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Petry Voters	Lucke Voters
Vote Petry <sub>2015</sub>	185	0.568	0.497	0	1		
<b>Like Difference: Petry over Lucke<sub>2015</sub></b>	185	0.557	6.108	-10	10	<b>4.962</b>	-5.225
<b>Political Activism</b>	181	1.834	0.753	1	3.833	<b>1.942</b>	1.688
<b>Social Media</b>	185	0.811	0.393	0	1	0.838	0.775
<b>Regime Satisfaction</b>	183	2.704	0.757	1.143	5	2.558	<b>2.897</b>
<b>Restricting Immigration</b>	183	2.454	0.613	1	4	2.519	2.367
<b>Leave EU</b>	184	3.076	1.552	1	5	3.269	2.825
<b>Reduce Income Inequality</b>	184	2.908	1.200	1	5	2.951	2.850
<b>Support Free Trade</b>	184	3.652	0.957	1	5	3.606	3.713
<b>Like Russia</b>	185	4.897	2.818	0	10	5.152	4.563
<b>Like Pegida<sub>2015</sub></b>	184	5.793	3.193	0	10	<b>7.144</b>	4.038
<b>Support TTIP<sub>2015</sub></b>	184	2	1.145	1	5	1.686	<b>2.418</b>
<b>Support Russia-Sanctions<sub>2015</sub></b>	184	2	1.310	1	5	1.638	<b>2.481</b>
<b>Seeking Political Career</b>	184	1.459	0.603	1	3	1.443	1.481
<b>Social Status</b>	185	5.735	1.591	1	10	5.543	5.988
<b>High Position</b>	185	0.157	0.365	0	1	0.143	0.175
<b>Civil Servant</b>	185	0.070	0.256	0	1	0.076	0.063
<b>Self-Employed</b>	185	0.265	0.442	0	1	0.267	0.263
<b>Not Working</b>	185	0.086	0.282	0	1	<b>0.133</b>	0.025
<b>AfD Member</b>	183	0.290	0.455	0	1	0.298	0.278
<b>Age</b>	185	42.33	13.181	18	72	43.029	41.413
<b>Education Level</b>	185	5.357	2.065	1	9	5.295	5.438
<b>Female</b>	184	0.103	0.305	0	1	0.087	0.125
<b>East German</b>	185	0.195	0.397	0	1	<b>0.276</b>	0.088

*Note:* East German includes Berlin. Bold entries indicate that entries are significantly higher based on a 95-percent confidence level.

**Table 2.** Regression analyses explaining Petry-vote (Models 1-4) and like differences (Model 5)

	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>H1: Political Activism</b>	0.96*** (2.67)			0.97** (2.23)	1.61** (2.39)
<b>H2: Interaction Term</b>	-1.32** (2.32)			-1.77** (2.50)	-2.59** (2.31)
<b>Regime Satisfaction * Social Media</b>					
<b>Social Media</b>	3.78** (2.44)			5.56*** (2.70)	7.17** (2.34)
<b>Regime Satisfaction</b>	0.51 (1.03)			1.54** (2.30)	1.96* (1.89)
<b>Restricting Immigration</b>		0.31 (1.09)	-0.17 (0.43)	-0.25 (0.58)	-0.33 (0.41)
<b>Leave EU</b>		0.14 (1.08)	-0.01 (0.08)	0.08 (0.48)	0.05 (0.22)
<b>Reduce Income Inequality</b>		-0.10 (0.59)	-0.18 (0.99)	-0.29 (1.46)	-0.52 (1.47)
<b>Support Free Trade</b>		-0.19 (0.96)	0.11 (0.33)	-0.03 (0.07)	0.15 (0.33)
<b>Like Russia</b>		0.03 (0.49)	-0.05 (0.65)	-0.04 (0.41)	-0.20 (1.27)
<b>Like Pegida<sub>2015</sub></b>			0.41*** (4.56)	0.44*** (4.27)	0.89*** (6.46)
<b>Support TTIP<sub>2015</sub></b>			0.54*** (2.68)	-0.47** (2.10)	-0.65* (1.73)
<b>Support Russia-Sanctions<sub>2015</sub></b>			-0.35* (1.81)	-0.34 (1.57)	-0.97** (2.55)
<b>Seeking Political Career</b>	-0.38 (1.17)	-0.49 (1.62)	-0.51 (1.39)	-0.73* (1.73)	-1.49** (2.16)
<b>Social Status</b>	-0.12 (0.95)	-0.12 (0.94)	-0.12 (0.85)	-0.11 (0.72)	-0.34 (1.36)
<b>High Position</b>	0.53 (0.91)	0.31 (0.59)	0.01 (0.02)	0.37 (0.46)	-0.27 (0.20)
<b>Civil Servant</b>	0.53 (0.87)	0.11 (0.17)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.09 (0.09)	0.87 (0.44)
<b>Self-Employed</b>	0.81* (1.72)	0.53 (1.20)	0.88 (1.50)	1.29* (1.88)	1.68* (1.71)
<b>Not Working</b>	2.99** (2.47)	2.65** (2.54)	3.08*** (3.19)	3.50*** (2.63)	2.75* (1.88)
<b>AfD Member</b>	-1.00* (1.90)	-0.02 (0.05)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.89 (1.18)	-0.41 (0.35)
<b>Age</b>	-0.01 (0.56)	0.00 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.81)	-0.03 (1.11)	-0.07 (1.65)
<b>Education Level</b>	-0.04 (0.46)	-0.03 (0.27)	0.01 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.04)	0.28 (1.14)
<b>Female</b>	-1.12* (1.73)	-0.86 (1.36)	-0.73 (0.88)	-1.39 (1.41)	-1.17 (0.68)
<b>East German</b>	1.39** (2.52)	1.72*** (3.20)	1.70*** (2.70)	1.54** (2.22)	1.43 (1.42)
<b>Observations</b>	177	178	177	172	172
<b>Pseudo R-squared</b>	0.1895	0.1389	0.3482	0.3894	0.4740
<b>Log likelihood</b>	-98.01	-105.07	-78.99	-71.78	

Note: \*\*\* p≤0.01; \*\* p≤0.05; \* p≤0.1. Absolute Z-values in parentheses.



## Appendix A: Summary of Facebook Ads Campaigns

### AfD Ad Campaign, 10-22 September 2013



**Figure A1.** Facebook Ads for supporters of the AfD, English translation.

*Note:* The header and description were limited to 40 and 90 characters for advertisement on the right column. These limits do not apply for Ads on the desktop news feed, allowing for more information about the survey, such as the university affiliation.

**Appendix Table A1:** Summary statistics of targeted fan pages “Alternative für Deutschland” and “Bernd Lucke”

Quotas	Cost (Euro)	Impressions	Reach	Clicks	CTR (I)	CTR (R)	Cost p. Cl.	Supporter Participation	Response Rate
Age: 17-24	13.66	557,486	17,368	266	0.05%	1.53%	0.051	131	49.2%
Age: 25-29	11.84	444,717	9,547	347	0.08%	3.63%	0.034	174	50.1%
Age: 30-39	12.52	493,907	12,163	394	0.08%	3.24%	0.032	233	59.1%
Age: 40-49	10.03	439,514	10,318	512	0.12%	4.96%	0.020	349	68.2%
Age: 50-59	8.06	293,815	6,175	303	0.10%	4.91%	0.027	236	77.9%
Age: 60+	4.59	175,473	4,019	206	0.12%	5.13%	0.022	94	45.6%
<b>Total</b>	60.70	2,404,912	59,590	2,028	0.08%	3.40%	0.030	1,217	60.0%

*Note:* CTR: Click-through rate for impressions and reach.

## Appendix B: Descriptive statistics and robustness tests

**Appendix Table B1.** Comparing the AfD Facebook sample with actual internal outcomes

	<b>AfD Members</b>	<b>2015 Sample</b>
<i>2014 Online Membership referendum</i>		
<b>Support national referenda</b>	97.6% [97.1, 98.0]	98.9% [97.4, 100]
<b>Support Gender Quotas</b>	4.6% [4.0, 5.2]	2.4% [0.1, 4.8]
<b>Support Gender Mainstreaming</b>	12.1% [11.2, 13.0]	9.7% [5.0, 14.4]
<b>Support Minimum Wage</b>	48.0% [46.5, 49.4]	44.9% [37.0, 52.8]
<b>Support TTIP / Like the USA</b>	40.1% [38.7, 41.5]	45.8% [37.9, 53.7]
<i>2015 National Party Convention</i>		
<b>Support Petry against Lucke</b>	61.1% [59.5, 62.8]	56.8% [49.6, 64.0]

Note: 95% confidence intervals in brackets. Answer options are transformed to fall into the categories “support” and “oppose”; “Neither now,” “Neutral,” “Undecided,” or “Don’t know” answers for both surveys are removed.

**Appendix Table B2.** Descriptive statistics of other programmatic items, 2013 sample

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Petry Voters	Lucke Voters
Social Media – (1/2 * TV)	185	0.446	0.436	-0.5	1	0.486	0.394
Money for the Poor vs. Tax Cuts	185	3.346	1.251	1	5	3.333	3.363
Economic Growth vs. National Culture	183	3.825	1.070	1	5	3.913	3.709
Environment vs. Economic Growth	182	3.522	1.086	1	5	3.529	3.513
Social Stability vs. Personal Liberty	185	3.438	1.041	1	5	3.438	3.438
Civil Rights vs. Reduce Crime Rights	183	2.951	1.327	1	5	3.058	2.810
Different gender roles are natural	183	4.016	1.008	1	5	4.125	3.873
Support Minimum Wage	184	2.859	1.407	1	5	2.875	2.838
Reduce Government Spending	184	4.332	0.720	1	5	4.298	4.375
Private enterprise is more efficient than state-owned	183	3.929	1.011	1	5	3.856	4.025
Subsidies for declining industries	184	2.418	1.093	1	5	<b>2.567</b>	2.225
Support comprehensive school	185	1.865	1.200	1	5	1.857	1.875
Smaller Eurozone	185	4.643	0.685	1	5	4.533	<b>4.788</b>
Special German Responsibility	185	1.870	1.096	1	5	1.714	<b>2.075</b>
People should provide for themselves	185	2.876	1.180	1	5	2.838	2.925
Support gender quotas	184	1.478	0.796	1	5	1.4	1.582
Leave Eurozone	185	3.908	1.036	1	5	3.943	3.863
Banning minarets	184	4.076	1.303	1	5	<b>4.295</b>	3.784
Banning Islamic veil	185	4.130	1.287	1	5	<b>4.362</b>	3.825
Expulsion of criminal foreigners	185	4.804	0.568	1	5	4.819	4.785
Introducing same-sex marriage	185	2.389	1.507	1	5	2.133	<b>2.725</b>
Higher taxes for the rich	184	2.734	1.422	1	5	2.762	2.696
Tariffs for cheap products	185	3.086	1.384	1	5	3.057	3.125
Nuclear phaseout	185	2.519	1.471	1	5	2.438	2.625
Justifiable: Using official position to help family	184	2.424	1.252	1	5	2.410	2.443
Justifiable: Claiming welfare without entitlement	185	1.232	0.537	1	5	1.238	1.225
Justifiable: Homosexuality	185	3.492	1.364	1	5	3.390	3.625
Justifiable: Prostitution	185	3.108	1.156	1	5	3.124	3.088
Justifiable: Abortion	183	3.164	1.345	1	5	3.115	3.228
Justifiable: Divorce	183	3.940	1.033	1	5	3.835	4.075

Justifiable: Soft drugs	185	2.627	1.292	1	5	2.676	2.563
Justifiable: Parents teach obedience	184	3.908	1.044	1	5	3.894	3.925
Justifiable: National Pride	184	4.342	0.787	1	5	4.390	4.278
Justifiable: Sexist jokes	185	3.243	1.147	1	5	3.295	3.175
Justifiable: Waste energy	184	2.516	1.091	1	5	2.625	2.375
Justifiable: Accepting bribes	185	1.109	0.376	1	5	1.133	1.076
Justifiable: Woman becomes housewife	185	3.714	1.108	1	5	3.724	3.700
Position Economy: Self	185	6.341	2.321	0	10	6.162	6.575
Position Economy: AfD	185	6.184	2.184	0	10	6.038	6.375
Position Way of Life: Self	185	6.222	2.703	0	10	6.543	5.800
Position Way of Life: AfD	185	6.378	1.893	0	10	6.543	6.163
Position Identity: Self	185	6.703	2.362	0	10	6.819	6.550
Position Identity: AfD	185	6.314	1.690	0	10	6.410	6.188
Position EU: Self	185	8.416	2.200	0	10	8.352	8.500
Position EU: AfD	185	8.086	1.937	0	10	8.048	8.138
Desired influence: Labor unions	185	1.870	0.755	1	4	1.886	1.850
Desired influence: Employer associations	185	1.865	0.641	1	4	1.857	1.875
Desired influence: States	185	2.681	0.745	1	4	2.686	2.675
Desired influence: Constitutional Court	184	3.201	0.795	1	4	3.192	3.213
Desired influence: International Courts	185	1.676	0.775	1	4	1.695	1.650
Desired influence: EU	185	1.422	0.595	1	4	1.400	1.450
Desired influence: Referenda	185	3.562	0.682	1	4	<b>3.676</b>	3.413
Proud to be German	185	2.070	0.933	1	4	2.000	2.163
Like: USA	185	4.503	3.025	0	10	4.381	4.663
Like: China	184	3.560	2.598	0	10	3.558	3.563
Like: EU	184	2.158	2.387	0	10	1.865	2.538
Like: UN	185	4.238	2.956	0	10	4.143	4.363
Like: France	184	4.337	2.541	0	10	4.343	4.329
Like: UK	185	5.524	2.423	0	10	5.390	5.700
Like: Austria	184	7.141	1.928	0	10	7.286	6.949
Like: Switzerland	184	7.908	2.082	0	10	8.095	7.658
Like: Greece	185	3.216	2.351	0	10	3.257	3.163
Like: Italy	185	4.484	2.432	0	10	4.657	4.253
Like: Turkey	184	1.973	1.979	0	10	1.673	<b>2.363</b>
Like: Israel	185	4.427	3.293	0	10	4.552	4.263
Important: Germany being a democracy	185	9.146	1.792	0	10	9.248	9.013
Lots of political groups cause chaos in society	184	2.076	0.966	1	5	2.058	2.100

Best way to let experts find solutions for pol. Problems	184	2.815	1.241	1	5	2.913	2.688
Vote of educated should count more	185	1.832	1.161	1	5	1.771	1.913
Large amount of public with inadequate political knowledge	185	4.097	0.945	1	5	4.086	4.112
In a difficult situation, everyone should follow gov.	185	2.119	1.015	1	5	2.171	2.050

*Note:* Bold entries indicate that entries are significantly higher based on a 95-percent confidence level.

**Appendix Table B3.** Descriptive statistics of other programmatic items, 2015 sample

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Petry Voters	Lucke Voters
Greece should leave Eurozone	183	4.601	0.711	1	5	4.610	4.590
Relax austerity measures in Eurozone	183	2.454	1.320	1	5	2.105	<b>2.923</b>
After NSA-scandal, Germany should become more independent from USA	185	4.249	1.007	1	5	<b>4.419</b>	4.025
EU should adopt Australia's strict asylum policy (sending all boats back)	185	4.189	1.129	1	5	<b>4.4</b>	3.913
Minimum wage was a mistake	184	3.250	1.264	1	5	3.105	3.443
Like: USA	185	3.995	2.955	0	10	3.581	<b>4.538</b>
Like: Russia	184	5.864	2.891	0	10	<b>6.731</b>	4.738
Like: Pegida	184	5.793	3.193	0	10	<b>7.144</b>	4.038

*Note:* Bold entries indicate that entries are significantly higher based on a 95-percent confidence level.

**Appendix Table B4.** Robustness tests with positional programmatic variables (models 1-2), different measurement for social media consumption (model 3), and like-differences as dependent variable (model 4)

	1	2	3	4
<b>H1: Political Activism</b>		1.36*** (3.22)	1.28*** (3.01)	2.90*** (4.28)
<b>H2: Interaction Term</b>		-1.64** (2.50)	-1.41** (2.07)	-3.54** (2.55)
<b>Regime Satisfaction * Social Media</b>				
<b>Social Media</b>		5.04*** (2.82)	4.76** (2.49)	9.39** (2.45)
<b>Regime Satisfaction</b>		0.94 (1.64)	0.28 (0.70)	2.13 (1.58)
<b>Position: Economy</b>	0.00 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.05)	-0.03 (0.29)	-0.20 (1.00)
<b>Position: Way of Life</b>	0.04 (0.47)	0.02 (0.23)	0.00 (0.04)	-0.02 (0.12)
<b>Position: Identity</b>	0.03 (0.31)	0.07 (0.71)	0.05 (0.52)	0.29 (1.32)
<b>Position: EU</b>	-0.10 (1.10)	-0.15 (1.36)	-0.17 (1.54)	-0.29 (1.46)
<b>Position: Intra-Party<sub>2015</sub></b>	0.45*** (3.98)	0.54*** (4.48)	0.55*** (4.67)	1.03*** (5.43)
<b>Seeking Political Career</b>	-0.59* (1.93)	-0.90** (2.30)	-0.91** (2.34)	-1.78** (2.48)
<b>Social Status</b>	-0.21 (1.57)	-0.23 (1.62)	0.20 (1.37)	-0.54* (1.81)
<b>High Position</b>	0.60 (0.98)	1.17 (1.62)	1.19 (1.56)	1.52 (1.10)
<b>Civil Servant</b>	0.74 (1.08)	0.84 (1.26)	1.09 (1.51)	2.37 (1.60)
<b>Self-Employed</b>	0.75 (1.49)	1.30** (2.15)	1.16* (1.93)	2.61** (2.32)
<b>Not Working</b>	3.13*** (2.88)	3.53*** (3.01)	3.59*** (3.00)	4.05** (2.57)
<b>AfD Member</b>	-0.23 (0.46)	-1.60** (2.46)	-1.60** (2.39)	-2.46** (2.00)
<b>Age</b>	-0.00 (0.27)	-0.02 (1.31)	-0.02 (1.11)	-0.06 (1.43)
<b>Education Level</b>	0.03 (0.27)	-0.02 (0.23)	-0.03 (0.19)	0.33 (1.38)
<b>Female</b>	-0.45 (0.73)	-0.96 (1.43)	-0.90 (1.27)	-0.87 (0.52)
<b>East German</b>	1.60*** (3.18)	1.54** (2.54)	1.60*** (2.68)	1.55 (1.45)
<b>Observations</b>	182	177	117	177
<b>Pseudo R-squared</b>	0.2365	0.3270	0.3282	0.3598
<b>Log likelihood</b>	-95.11	-81.37	-81.24	

Note: \*\*\* p≤0.01; \*\* p≤0.05; \* p≤0.1. Absolute Z-values in parentheses. Social Media in model 4 discounts for TV consumption and is based on social media – (1/2 \* TV).

**Appendix Table B5.** Continued robustness tests with factor scores for index variables

	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>H1: Political Activism</b>	0.79*** (2.79)			0.89** (2.55)	1.35** (2.48)
<b>H2: Interaction Term</b>	-1.06** (2.19)			-1.45** (2.50)	-2.24** (2.45)
<b>Regime Satisfaction * Social Media</b>					
<b>Social Media</b>	0.24 (0.56)			0.77 (1.36)	0.15 (0.14)
<b>Regime Satisfaction</b>	0.37 (0.88)			1.30** (2.32)	1.61* (1.89)
<b>Restricting Immigration</b>		0.27 (1.25)	-0.05 (0.17)	-0.13 (0.41)	-0.15 (0.24)
<b>Leave EU</b>		0.13 (1.02)	-0.03 (0.19)	0.09 (0.51)	0.03 (0.11)
<b>Reduce Income Inequality</b>		-0.09 (0.55)	-0.18 (0.98)	-0.29 (1.45)	-0.51 (1.43)
<b>Support Free Trade</b>		-0.19 (0.95)	0.11 (0.34)	-0.06 (0.17)	0.16 (0.33)
<b>Like Russia</b>			-0.06 (0.66)	-0.03 (0.39)	-0.20 (1.26)
<b>Like Pegida<sub>2015</sub></b>			0.40*** (4.49)	0.45*** (4.22)	0.89*** (6.37)
<b>Support TTIP<sub>2015</sub></b>			0.53*** (2.64)	-0.46** (2.07)	-0.61 (1.61)
<b>Support Russia-Sanctions<sub>2015</sub></b>			-0.36* (1.87)	-0.34 (1.55)	-0.96** (2.52)
<b>Seeking Political Career</b>	-0.26 (1.14)	-0.34 (1.63)	-0.37 (1.43)	-0.79* (1.80)	-1.50** (2.16)
<b>Social Status</b>	-0.11 (0.83)	-0.12 (0.97)	-0.12 (0.89)	-0.12 (0.76)	-0.33 (1.32)
<b>High Position</b>	0.58 (0.99)	0.32 (0.60)	-0.02 (0.02)	0.41 (0.52)	-0.26 (0.20)
<b>Civil Servant</b>	0.50 (0.83)	0.09 (0.14)	-0.02 (0.02)	0.11 (0.11)	0.88 (0.44)
<b>Self-Employed</b>	0.77* (1.66)	0.53 (1.20)	0.88 (1.51)	1.33* (1.94)	1.68* (1.72)
<b>Not Working</b>	3.03** (2.47)	2.64** (2.52)	3.06*** (3.15)	3.57*** (2.60)	2.75* (1.86)
<b>AfD Member</b>	-1.02* (1.93)	-0.02 (0.05)	0.01 (0.02)	-1.00 (1.34)	-0.48 (0.41)
<b>Age</b>	-0.01 (0.55)	0.00 (0.05)	-0.02 (0.79)	-0.03 (1.12)	-0.06 (1.59)
<b>Education Level</b>	-0.05 (0.51)	-0.03 (0.29)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.05)	0.27 (1.10)
<b>Female</b>	-1.26* (1.92)	-0.85 (1.33)	-0.70 (0.85)	-1.51 (1.46)	-1.27 (0.73)
<b>East German</b>	1.38** (2.52)	1.72*** (3.20)	1.71*** (2.70)	1.57** (2.29)	1.44 (1.44)
<b>Observations</b>	177	178	177	172	172
<b>Pseudo R-squared</b>	0.1898	0.1401	0.3476	0.3938	0.4761
<b>Log likelihood</b>	-97.97	-104.92	-79.07	-71.25	

Note: \*\*\* p≤0.01; \*\* p≤0.05; \* p≤0.1. Absolute Z-values in parentheses.

**Appendix Table B6.** Principal factor analysis for the index variables

Index Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Factor 1 Eigenvalue	Factor 2 Eigenvalue
Political Activism (6 items)	0.878	<b>3.326</b>	0.152
Regime Satisfaction (7 items)	0.779	<b>2.456</b>	0.221
Restricting Immigration (3 items)	0.676	<b>1.173</b>	-0.036
Seeking Political Career (2 items)	0.862	<b>1.331</b>	-0.184

**Appendix Table B7.** Descriptive statistics of index composites

	Obs.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	Petry Voters	Lucke Voters
<b>Political Activism</b>	181	1.834	0.753	1	3.833	<b>1.942</b>	1.688
<b>Political Activism - Factor</b>	181	0	0.945	-0.945	2.385	<b>0.134</b>	-0.181
<i>Putting up posters</i>	182	1.582	0.899	1	4	1.673	1.462
<i>Handing out flyers</i>	184	1.870	1.016	1	4	<b>2.019</b>	1.675
<i>Attending demonstrations</i>	183	1.705	0.785	1	4	<b>1.817</b>	1.557
<i>Attending party meetings</i>	184	2.179	1.074	1	4	2.240	2.100
<i>Donating to the party</i>	183	2.016	0.946	1	4	2.067	1.949
<i>Canvassing/Campaigning</i>	184	1.728	1.009	1	4	1.837	1.588
<b>Regime Satisfaction</b>	183	2.704	0.757	1.143	5	2.558	<b>2.897</b>
<b>Regime Satisfaction - Factor</b>	183	0	0.890	-1.839	2.565	-0.174	<b>0.229</b>
<i>Votes are counted fairly</i>	185	3.541	1.132	1	5	3.333	<b>3.813</b>
<i>TV does not favor government</i>	184	2.158	1.198	1	5	1.943	<b>2.443</b>
<i>Fair news coverage of elections</i>	184	2.060	1.062	1	5	2.019	2.113
<i>Freedom of opinion for everyone</i>	185	3.038	1.184	1	5	2.952	3.150
<i>Human rights are protected</i>	185	3.589	1.423	1	5	3.467	<b>3.750</b>
<i>No campaign disadvantages for some parties</i>	185	1.757	1.048	1	5	1.505	<b>2.088</b>
<i>Germany is governed democratically</i>	185	2.751	1.190	1	5	2.648	2.888
<b>Restricting Immigration</b>	183	2.454	0.613	1	4	2.519	2.367
<b>Restricting Immigration - Factor</b>	183	0	0.805	-1.966	1.707	0.094	-0.123
<i>Allow immigration: Same race/ethnic group</i>	183	1.754	0.726	1	4	1.769	1.734
<i>Allow immigration: Other race/ethnic group</i>	183	2.661	0.822	1	4	2.740	2.557
<i>Allow immigration: From poor non- European countries</i>	183	2.945	0.810	1	4	<b>3.048</b>	2.810
<b>Seeking Political Career</b>	184	1.459	0.603	1	3	1.443	1.481
<b>Seeking Political Career - Factor</b>	184	0	0.870	-0.663	2.228	-0.024	0.032
<i>Engage to achieve party positions</i>	184	1.446	0.625	1	3	1.429	1.468
<i>Engage to become politician</i>	185	1.470	0.660	1	3	1.457	1.488

Note: Bold entries indicate that entries are significantly higher based on a 95-percent confidence level.