CEBI WORKING PAPER SERIES

HOW DO BELIEFS ABOUT THE GENDER WAGE GAP AFFECT THE DEMNAD FOR PUBLIC POLICY?

Sonja Settele

How Do Beliefs about the Gender Wage Gap Affect the Demand for Public Policy? *

Sonja Settele[†]

August 5, 2020

Abstract

I conduct a survey experiment to study the relationship between people's beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap and their demand for policies aimed at mitigating it. Beliefs causally affect support for equal pay legislation and affirmative action programs, but cannot account for the polarization in policy views by partisanship and gender. Changes in policy demand seem to be driven by changes in beliefs about discrimination in labor markets and fairness concerns, while self-interest appears less important. I provide evidence that pessimism about the effectiveness of government intervention limits the elasticity of policy demand to perceived wage differentials.

1 Introduction

Women across the developed world continue to receive lower wages than men on average. Several factors account for this wage gap and make it a peculiar case: First, while women in the US have outpassed men decades ago in terms of mere educational attainment (Goldin et al., 2006), men still work in higher-paying industries and occupations (Blau and Kahn, 2017). Second, child-rearing responsibilities (Kleven et al., 2019), work force interruptions and shorter working hours (Goldin, 2014) adversely affect women's career paths compared to men's (Goldin et al., 2017). Third, there is evidence pointing to gender-based discrimination in labor markets (Goldin and Rouse (2000); Moss-Racusin et al. (2012); Neumark et al. (1996); Sarsons (2017a,b)), which may contribute to wage differentials. With women representing close to half of the workforce, governments have started to implement policies aimed at closing the gender wage gap (GWG), such as equal pay legislation, reporting requirements for companies and public subsidies to child care. In many countries the adequate degree of such government intervention remains a controversial topic at the center of the political discussion, with strong disagreement in views across the political spectrum (see e.g. Gallup Social & Policy Issues (2016)). To date, the origins of the political polarization around gender wage inequality are not well understood.

In this paper, I examine how beliefs about the size of the GWG affect the demand for public policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market. If people have a distaste for inequality (Fehr and Schmidt, 1999), beliefs about the degree of gender-related wage inequality should determine the demand for government intervention aimed at mitigating this inequality. Indeed, the size of the GWG is at the core of the public policy discussion (Moore, 2014; Umoh,

2016) and politicians as well as political activists regularly cite statistics about gender differences in wages[1]. Expressed beliefs about wage disparities differ substantially across the political spectrum (Pew Research Center, 2017), and the fact that they are often unobserved might help to sustain different beliefs across groups (Cullen and Perez-Truglia, 2019, 2020).

On the one hand, one may expect people's elasticity of policy demand to the perceived extent of inequality to be particularly high in the gender context, for instance because of the absence of segregation between men and women and because people may perceive the reasons for gender-related inequality as unfair. Moreover, the female half of the population should interpret a signal about a larger GWG as a negative signal about the effect of their gender on their own relative wage and wage prospects, potentially leading to a high elasticity of policy demand among women based on self-interest. On the other hand, there is an open public and a scientific debate on the existence of inherent gender differences in preferences (Blau and Kahn, 2017; Campbell, 2013; Gneezy et al., 2009; Kuziemko et al., 2018), more than in the case of inequality by racial or socioeconomic background. If individuals attribute the GWG to a gender difference in, say, preferences for highly paid jobs, this might limit the elasticity of their policy demand to the perceived size of the GWG (Cappelen et al., 2007, 2010).

To study the relationship between people's beliefs about the GWG and their policy demand, I run a pre-registered online survey experiment with a

---

[1]One example is President Obama stating in 2016: "The typical woman who works full time still earns 79 cents for every dollar that the typical man does. The gap is even wider for women of color. The typical black working woman makes only 60 cents. The typical Latino woman makes only 55 cents for every dollar a white man earns. And that's not right. So today, we're taking one more step in the right direction. We are proposing to collect and report pay data by race, ethnicity, and gender from businesses." (`https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/01/29/remarks-president-advancing-equal-pay`.)

sample of 4,065 individuals that is representative of the US population aged 18 to 65 in terms of observables. I first elicit the respondents' prior beliefs about a well-defined measure of females' relative wages, namely a woman's average income for every $100 made by a man when both are 45-year-old employees, hold a Bachelor's degree and work 40 hours per week on average. The wage statistic I employ leaves scope for interpretation about the reasons for gender-based wage inequality – a feature I exploit later on to study the respondents' interpretation.

Next, I generate exogenous variation in beliefs about the size of the GWG via two randomly assigned information treatments, based on recent data from the American Community Survey (ACS) and from the Current Population Survey (CPS), respectively. The two surveys yield different estimates of the above wage statistic due to sampling variation and procedural differences.[2] Specifically, participants exposed to a "high wage gap" treatment learn that according to recent data from the ACS a female's wage amounts to 74% of a male's wage, on average, when both hold the previously described characteristics. Those assigned to a "low wage gap" treatment, in contrast, learn that based on the CPS the corresponding wage statistic amounts to 94%. Subsequently, I elicit the respondents' demand for policies that may be seen as supportive of women in the labor market, using self-reported as well as costly behavioral measures. As the only difference between the two information treatments is the value of the wage statistic, this experimental design allows for a clean identification of the

---

[2]This design is similar to a recent field experiment by Bottan and Perez-Truglia (2018) on location choice in which university graduates receive differential information about their relative income prospects in different US cities based on the ACS or the CPS before choosing where to start their career. Similarly, Roth and Wohlfart (2019) provide survey participants with one out of two differing individual forecasts about the likelihood of a recession (pre-selected out of 40 available predictions in the Philadelphia Fed's Survey of Professional Forecasters), with the aim of studying the effect of recession and personal job loss expectations on individual consumption and stock purchases.

causal effect of people's perceived level of gender-related wage inequality on their policy demand.

I start by documenting that people's incentivized prior beliefs about women's relative wages are highly dispersed, with Republicans and men holding more optimistic beliefs than Democrats and women. Moreover, in the control group that does not receive any information, women, Democrats and individuals who believe that the GWG is larger are more in favor of policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market.

I next exploit the randomized information provision to shed light on the causal effect of beliefs about the GWG on policy demand. Individuals exposed to the high wage gap treatment express a 0.6 standard deviation higher posterior beliefs about female's relative wages compared to individuals in the low wage gap treatment. Moreover, they are a 0.4 standard deviation more likely to view the GWG as a problem and show a 0.2 standard deviation higher support for government intervention to mitigate the GWG in general.

How does this shift in general support for government intervention translate into demand for specific policies? Respondents in the high wage gap treatment arm self-report a 0.1 standard deviation higher demand for stricter equal pay legislation and for statutory affirmative action programs for women than those in the low wage gap arm. The demand for gender quotas, wage transparency within companies and public subsidies to child care, however, is largely inelastic to information about the size of the GWG. The overall finding of a meaningful but nuanced treatment effect is reflected in a number of behavioral outcome measures: Individuals exposed to the high wage gap treatment are significantly more likely to sign a petition that calls for an increase in gender-related reporting requirements for companies and less likely to sign a petition calling for a decrease. There is no significant treatment effect, however, on

4

donations to an NGO that lobbies for policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market.

Around two weeks after the main survey I conduct an obfuscated follow-up survey, which hides the connection to the main survey. I find that the treatment effect on policy demand generally persists in this setting, suggesting that it is driven by an actual updating of beliefs about the GWG, rather than by experimenter demand effects or a short-lived emotional response to the treatment.

To what extent can beliefs about the GWG causally explain the large differences in policy demand across groups? Differences in prior beliefs across groups and the estimated causal effect of beliefs on policy demand imply that at most 6 percent of the partisan gap and 7 percent of the gender gap in policy demand can be explained by different perceptions of the level of the GWG. This implies that a convergence in beliefs would hardly generate a convergence in policy demand.

Why is the effect of beliefs about the GWG on specific policy demand not larger? First, self-interest would imply that a strong treatment effect for women is muted by a zero or even a backfiring effect for men. However, I find the effect of beliefs on policy demand to be similar for women and men. Second, survey respondents might attribute the GWG to arguably "fair" reasons such as gender differences in preferences or ambitions, which could mitigate the effect on demand for government intervention (Cappelen et al., 2007, 2010). Empirically, however, respondents attribute the update about females' relative wages mostly to gender-based discrimination in labor markets – an arguably "unfair" source of inequality.

Several other factors do restrict the overall elasticity of policy demand to perceived wage differentials: First, the positive average effect of the perceived

wage gap on policy demand is driven by Democrats and Independents, while it is zero for Republicans, similar to the context of beliefs about social mobility and related government intervention (Alesina et al., 2018b). Second, a substantial share of individuals, among which Republicans are over-represented, do not believe that government intervention can effectively increase women's relative wages. They prefer low levels of government intervention regardless of the perceived size of the GWG. Third, among individuals with extremely high or low beliefs about women's relative wages to start with, changes in these beliefs do not affect policy demand, possibly because extreme beliefs are linked to "dogmatic" policy views.

I provide additional evidence suggesting that people's beliefs about the size of the GWG are, at least to some extent, endogenous to their policy preferences. First, around half of the survey participants learn that they will receive an additional monetary bonus if their estimate of the GWG is close to the objective value based on a recent household survey. A comparison of incentivized and non-incentivized beliefs of men and women yields patterns that are consistent with politically motivated bias in reported beliefs (Prior et al., 2015). Second, there are systematic differences according to individuals' policy preferences in their willingness to pay for additional information from sources with a clearly described stance on women in the labor market. Such selective information acquisition might explain persistent disparities in politically relevant beliefs, despite the same public information being available to everybody (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010; Peterson and Iyengar, 2020).

I contribute to a literature that uses information experiments to study the effect of beliefs about different types of inequality on related policy demand. To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study that focuses on beliefs about the extent of gender differences in wages. Whereas existing literature

suggests that information on low social mobility (Alesina et al., 2018b), rising income inequality (Kuziemko et al., 2015) and racial discrimination (Haaland and Roth, 2019) has a nuanced or limited effect on people's demand for related government intervention, the gender context has some features, such as the fact that men and women live together, that ex-ante may point to a potentially higher elasticity of policy demand to perceived wage disparities.[3] My findings suggest that people's policy demand may indeed be more elastic to beliefs about the size of the GWG than, for example, to beliefs about racial discrimination (Haaland and Roth, 2019). Nevertheless, wide-spread concerns about the effectiveness of policy intervention limit the average elasticity of policy demand even in the gender context.

This paper complements existing laboratory evidence on the role of perceived personal vs. impersonal causes of inequality in shaping policy demand (Cappelen et al., 2007, 2010). I study in a field setting how people interpret an abstract statistic and update their beliefs about the prevalence of underlying drivers of inequality. My findings highlight that the elasticity of people's policy demand to perceived inequality may be muted by other concerns, even when inequality is causally attributed to impersonal factors.

Finally, I contribute to a literature on the role of labor markets for the political gender gap, i.e., the fact that women have become more "left-wing" than men (Edlund and Pande, 2002; Iversen and Rosenbluth, 2006; Newman, 2016). This paper is, to the best of my knowledge, the first to isolate the effect

---

[3]For an excellent summary of the evidence on racial, ethnic and religious fractionalization in shaping preferences for redistribution, see Stichnoth and Van der Straeten (2013). Other survey experiments study the role of information on relevant facts for people's support for government spending (Lergetporer et al., 2018; Roth et al., 2020), redistribution (Alesina et al., 2018a; Cruces et al., 2013; Karadja et al., 2017) and for policy-making by political leaders (Hjort et al., 2019). For a review of the literature using information experiments, see Haaland et al. (2020). Alesina and Giuliano (2011) provide an excellent overview of the literature on preferences for redistribution.

of beliefs about the size of the GWG. My findings suggest that part of the political gender gap is causally driven by gender differences in beliefs about the GWG, but other concerns play a larger role.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 describes the experimental design and the data. Section 3 provides descriptive evidence on beliefs about the size of the GWG and the correlation between these beliefs and people's demand for policy intervention. Section 4 presents the corresponding causal evidence. Section 5 sheds light on underlying mechanisms. Section 6 reports additional results on the endogeneity of people's beliefs about the GWG to their policy preferences. Section 7 concludes.

2   Experimental Design and Data

This section describes the survey administration, the experimental design and the data.[4]

2.1   Timeline and overview

Data collection took place in two waves, denoted "wave A" and "wave B" in the following, between August 2018 and January 2019.[5] Each wave consists of a main survey and an obfuscated follow-up survey around two weeks later. I cooperated with the online data provider *pureprofile* who recruited respondents through generic invitations by email. Figure 1 outlines the survey structure, which I describe in the following.

---

[4]For detailed survey instructions see `https://www.dropbox.com/s/merwo5j8823fq1x/Instructions_Gender_PolPref.pdf?dl=0`.

[5]Wave A was conducted between August 31st and October 9th, 2018 and Wave B between November 21st, 2018 and January 2nd, 2019. In the original pre-analysis-plan as of August 31st, 2018 I specified one wave with N=2500. In an addendum to the PAP published on November 21st, 2018 I specified the collection of an additional sample with N=1500. Appendix G.3 reports the main results separately by wave.

2.2 Main survey

Treatment assignment and prior belief elicitation First, I elicit the respondents' prior beliefs about women's average wages for every \$100 received by men in the group of 45-year-old employees in the US who hold a Bachelor's degree and work an average of 40 hours per week. This measure has a range of desirable features: First, compared to qualitative measures commonly used in opinion polls, it is straightforward and unambiguous. Second, it can easily be compared to objective benchmarks. Third, while some important determinants of wages, namely education, age and working hours, are held constant, I do not condition on occupation and industry. Thus, there is room for interpretation, which I use later in the survey to examine whether the respondents attribute changes in their perceived level of the GWG to gender differences in ambitions or preferences, which could be reflected in career choices.

Prior beliefs are incentivized on a random basis for roughly half of the respondents in order to mitigate politically motivated bias in reported beliefs (Bullock et al., 2015; Prior et al., 2015). In addition, each respondent is, already at this point, randomly assigned to one of two treatment arms, T^{74} or T^{94}, or to a pure control group. Table 1 summarizes the experimental design, with two incentive conditions and an orthogonal set of three information conditions. Incentivized subjects in T^{74} (T^{94}) learn that they will receive a bonus of \$2 if their estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the objective value of the wage statistic based on the most recent ACS (CPS) as of the beginning of 2018. For control group respondents in the incentivized condition, one of the two household surveys is randomly chosen as the objective benchmark. A comparison of incentivized and unincentivized beliefs allows me to test for the presence of politically motivated bias in reported beliefs for different political

interest groups.

Information treatment Subsequently, subjects in T^{74} (T^{94}) learn that, according to recent ACS (CPS) data, the relative wage of females in the group of 45-year-old full-time employees with a Bachelor's degree corresponds to \$74 (\$94). The difference between these two values is the result of sampling variation and procedural differences between the two underlying surveys, such as the sampling frame.[6] The information treatment is illustrated by a bar chart that contrasts the prior estimate of the respondent with the objective treatment value (see Appendix Figure A.5). Control group respondents do not receive any information at this stage but are reminded of their prior estimate.

Self-reported policy demand Post-treatment, I elicit the respondents' extent of agreement with statements that i) the GWG is large, ii) that it is a problem and iii) that the government should do more to promote wage equality between men and women, using categorical scales. Subsequently, I elicit the respondents' demand for the following specific policies: i) gender quotas for leading positions, ii) affirmative action programs for women, such as training and outreach programs, iii) equal pay legislation, iv) wage transparency within companies, v) a website on which gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published and vi) public subsidies to child care. For each policy, I provide a short briefing on the status quo in order to enable respondents to meaningfully express their support for the corresponding policy on a five-point-scale.

Behavior Experimenter demand effects and social desirability bias are commonly raised concerns about information experiments. Even though recent

---

[6]The approach of exploiting sampling variation in the ACS and the CPS is similar to a recent field experiment on income comparisons and location choice by Bottan and Perez-Truglia (2018). See Appendix B.1 for an exposition of how I derive the treatment values.

evidence shows that these concerns are of little empirical relevance (de Quidt et al., 2018; Mummolo and Peterson, 2018), I validate the self-reported survey responses by employing costly behavioral outcome measures.

First, following Grigorieff et al. (2020), survey participants can choose whether to sign one of two real online petitions on the official White House Petition Website, `https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/`.[7] A progressive petition, denoted "Petition I" in the following, demands stricter requirements for large companies to report salary-related information by employee gender. A more conservative petition, "Petition II", demands that the existing reporting requirements should be abolished. Respondents who express their willingness to sign one of the two petitions are forwarded to different but identical looking versions of their preferred petition, depending on their gender, political orientation and treatment group. This set-up allows me to infer the number of signatures for both petitions at the group level even though individual signatures are unobserved.

Second, survey participants get an opportunity to either increase their individual payoff from the survey or to make a donation to the American Association of University Women (AAUW), an NGO that lobbies for policy making to support women in the labor market. Similar to Alesina et al. (2018a), respondents learn that they have been enrolled in a lottery to win \$300. Before the winner is drawn, they are asked to commit to a donation amount between \$0 and \$300 for the NGO under the condition that every dollar donated will be subsidized by another \$0.5 through the experimenter. Subsequently,

---

[7]Signing a petition on the White House Petition Website has potential real-world implications and is costly in terms of time since one has to provide contact details and confirm any signature via a link received per email. See Appendix Figure A.6 for screenshots of the petitions.

respondents may support the same NGO via a Facebook "like".[8]

Mechanisms Subsequently, I also elicit the extent to which respondents believe that a number of factors, which may potentially be seen as drivers of the GWG, currently prevail in the US. Moreover, I elicit beliefs about the effectiveness of government intervention, the individually perceived fairness of the respondent's own wage and of women's wages in general.

Additional outcomes I employ multiple price lists to elicit people's willingness to pay for additional information that is relevant for the debate around the GWG, either from a more progressive or from a more conservative source of information. For each of these two sources, each respondent is exposed to three decision scenarios in which she has to choose between receiving additional information or receiving a monetary reward that increases across scenarios. Respondents learn that with a probability of five percent, one of the scenarios will be implemented at random. In the control group, I also elicit a range of self-reported beliefs and "world views", such as beliefs about monetary and non-monetary costs of government intervention, equality preferences and gender role attitudes.

Posterior belief elicitation To capture posterior beliefs about females' relative wages, I elicit beliefs about one out of five different wage statistics that differ from the prior belief statistic (referring to 45-year-olds with a Bachelor's degree) in one randomly selected demographic aspect. For instance, one of the five statistics refers to 25- instead of 45-year-old employees. As before, an accuracy incentive is offered, whenever an objective benchmark is available in the ACS and the CPS. By varying the relevant wage statistic compared to the prior belief statistic, I am able to i) capture posterior beliefs, as compared to

---

[8]Online appendix B.2 explains technical details on the implementation of the behavioral outcome measures.

testing the respondents' short-term memory, ii) document whether individuals extrapolate from the information they received to related statistics and iii) gain insights into people's perceptions of factors that account for the GWG.

2.3 Follow-up survey

Around two weeks after the main survey, all previously treated respondents, i.e. those in T^{74} and T^{94}, are invited to participate in another short survey. Participants are not reminded of the initial information and do not receive any new information. Instead, they are again asked about their views related to the GWG. This allows me to test for the persistence of the main treatment effect in a setting in which concerns about numerical anchoring and short-lived emotional responses are mitigated. To also address concerns about experimenter demand effects, I take several steps to obfuscate the connection between the main and the follow-up survey. First, the survey company I cooperate with sends out generic invitations by email, which respondents are used to receiving on a regular basis.[9] Second, at the beginning and throughout the follow-up survey, I ask questions that are unrelated to the GWG but related to work. Lastly, the survey layout, title, URL, consent form, contact details and the wording of questions and answer options differ from the main survey (see Appendix B.3 for screenshots). Note that at the end of the follow-up survey I again elicit beliefs about the baseline wage statistic referring to 45-year-old full-time employees with a Bachelor's degree. At this point respondents likely notice the connection to the main survey.

---

[9]Invitations for the follow-up survey are sent out roughly two weeks after the main survey, so most respondents take the follow-up survey between two and three weeks after the main survey, with an average time lapse of 16 days. In the subject pool for Wave A (Wave B) active individuals take, on average, around 5 (8) surveys per month. Thus, the average follow-up respondent should have taken at least two surveys since the main survey.

2.4 Discussion of the experimental design

My treatment-treatment design allows to compare respondents who have received different pieces of information, whereas an alternative treatment-control design would compare a treatment group that has received information to a pure control group that has not received information. While my main findings replicate in alternative specifications that include the pure control group (see Appendix D.7), I argue that my pre-specified design offers important advantages for estimating the causal effect of beliefs about the GWG on policy demand.

First, a treatment-control design would be based on a post-treatment comparison of outcomes between individuals whose beliefs have been shifted by information and individuals who were not exposed to new information and therefore still hold their (noisily measured) prior beliefs. The treatment effect in this alternative design would be estimated off of individuals with prior beliefs that differ from the treatment value ex-ante and are then "corrected" by the treatment. In my design, in contrast, the treatment effect stems from the difference between the two treatment values, which is orthogonal to prior beliefs and to respondent characteristics in general. Consequently, my design generates variation in beliefs among a broader set of individuals and regardless of prior beliefs, which arguably increases the external validity of my findings.

Second, and relatedly, since in a treatment-control design the treatment intensity is correlated with the level of the prior belief, heterogeneous treatment effects across groups would conflate differences in prior beliefs and a differential effect of beliefs about the GWG on policy demand. My design, in contrast, allows for a clean analysis of heterogeneous effects of beliefs on policy demand since the treatment intensity is orthogonal to prior beliefs.

Lastly, information may not only shift the level of individuals' beliefs but may potentially affect policy demand through "side-effects" such as reduced uncertainty about one's beliefs or increased salience of the GWG. In my design, the only difference between the two treatment arms is the value of the information, whereas side-effects are arguably held as constant as possible.

2.5 Data

Summary Statistics My final sample consists of 4,065 respondents. It is representative of the US population aged 18 to 65 in terms of gender, age, census region, employment status, political orientation and household income (see Appendix B.4).[10] One concern could be that my sample is, by definition, selected from the online population. Grewenig et al. (2018), however, show that the online and the offline population behave similarly in survey experiments on political opinions once demographic characteristics are controlled for. The median time to complete the survey was 15 minutes.

Standardization of outcomes I standardize qualitative outcome measures based on the means and standard deviations in the pure control group. For the follow-up sample, which is restricted to the treatment arms T^{74} and T^{94}, I z-score outcomes based on the full follow-up sample.

Multiple hypothesis adjustment I construct summary indices over three pre-specified families of outcomes capturing i) people's sense of concern about

---

[10]Similar to the population, around 50 percent of the sample is female, the average age is 42, 70 percent of the respondents are employed and close to 40 percent have a household income of less than $50,000. While the mean household income in my sample ($74,697) is lower than that of the US population ($88,362), the median household income in the sample ($61,275) is close to the median household income in the population ($65,000). Moreover, 33% are self-reported Democrats, 27% Republicans and 39% Independents (including Independent leaning Democrat or Republican). In the analysis, following the pre-analysis plan, I distinguish between Democrats (including Independents leaning Democrat), Republicans (including Independents leaning Republican), the remaining Independents, and those who reported "other" as their political orientation.

the GWG, ii) their demand for specific policies and iii) their beliefs about the prevalence of impersonal factors that may be seen as drivers of the GWG. In the experimental analysis, I apply the conservative method of family-wise error rate (FWER) control to these summary indices to test for the presence of an overall treatment effect. In addition, for more detailed outcomes within these broad families, I present sharpened q-values based on false discovery rate (FDR) control for multiple hypothesis adjustment. The interpretation of sharpened q-values is similar to standard p-values. Both methods are based on Anderson (2008) and described in detail in Appendix D.8.

Attrition and integrity of randomization The sample is globally balanced across the full list of pre-specified observables i) between treated and untreated respondents, ii) between the two treatment groups and iii) between respondents with incentivized and non-incentivized prior beliefs (see Table B.2 and Figure A.8). The follow-up sample consists of 1,105 observations, corresponding to a recall rate of 36%. Attrition between surveys is common in online panels and increases with the time distance. Reassuringly, however, participation in the follow-up is orthogonal to the treatment group assignment, and the resulting sample is globally balanced between the two treatment groups (Table B.3).

3 Beliefs about the Gender Wage Gap

What beliefs do people hold about the size of the GWG? Are there systematic predictors of these beliefs? And to what extent do they correlate with policy demand? My first main result answers these questions.

Result 1. *People's beliefs about the size of the GWG vary systematically by gender and political orientation. Similarly, both unspecific and specific policy demand correlate strongly with gender, political orientation and with individual beliefs about the size of the GWG.*

Distribution of prior beliefs about the GWG There is a large degree of dispersion in people's beliefs about females' relative wages. (See Appendix Figure A.9 for a histogram.) Roughly 20 percent of the respondents hold a prior belief below the ACS-based value of $74 while another 20 percent hold a belief above the CPS-based value of $94. The median belief is $81. Note that it is not possible to directly look up the value of the rather specific wage statistic, referring to 45-year-olds with a Bachelor's degree, online. Reassuringly, the prior belief distribution is overall similar when beliefs are incentivized based on the ACS, the CPS or not at all (Appendix Figure A.10).[11] In sum, the documented beliefs are both credible – due to the accuracy incentive – and unlikely to be influenced by spontaneous online searches, which one would expect to alter the belief distribution in the incentivized condition.

Predictors of prior beliefs Even when incentivized to provide their honest opinion, men and Republicans express significantly higher beliefs about females' relative wages than women and Democrats. The interaction effect between gender and political orientation is small and insignificant, suggesting that the two dimensions act independently in shaping beliefs (Table 2).[12]

A comparison of beliefs across slightly different wage statistics sheds light on the role people attribute to different factors in accounting for the GWG: People seem to underestimate the role of occupation and the widening of the GWG with age (Figure A.12). Moreover, they perceive a larger GWG among employees with a High School degree than among those with a College degree,

---

[11]Heaping, especially at 100, is less frequent in both incentivized conditions. Moreover, respondents spent on average 15 seconds more on their prior estimate of the GWG when incentivized. However, there is no bunching around a specific value in the incentivized conditions, suggesting that the incentive did not induce participants to search for the wage statistic online. Rather, it seems that incentivized respondents thought more carefully and reported their best possible estimate, instead of rounding to fives or tens.

[12]Employed individuals are more optimistic about females' relative wages (Columns 5 and 6 of Table 2) whereas education does not matter significantly (Columns 7 and 8).

which is at odds with reality (Blau and Kahn, 2017).

Demand for policy intervention How do people's views related to the GWG and their policy demand vary with personal characteristics? Democrats in the control group are between 60% and 80% of a standard deviation more likely than Republicans to think that the GWG is large, that it is a problem and that the government should generally do more to promote gender wage equality (Table C.1). The corresponding gender difference in these views is smaller, ranging between 15% and 25% of a standard deviation. In line with differences in general concerns, Democrat self-report a 70% of a standard deviation higher demand for specific policies, namely gender quotas for leading positions, affirmative action programs, equal pay legislation, wage transparency, a reporting website and public subsidies to child care, whereas women and men differ by around 30% of a standard deviation (Table 3, Panel A). These differences are also reflected in actual behavior: While 22% of Democrats and 19% of female respondents sign the petition in favor of increasing gender-related reporting requirements for companies (Petition I), only 9% of Republicans and 12% of male respondents do (Figure A.14). In contrast, only 1% of Democrats and women, but 3% of Republicans and men, respectively, sign the petition in favor of abolishing existing requirements (Petition II). Regarding donations to the NGO lobbying for supportive policy, women, perhaps surprisingly, donate less than men. Democrats, however, donate 21$ or 30% more than Republicans, on average, suggesting that the donation decision indeed captures an important element of policy demand (Table C.2).[13]

I find a large negative correlation between people's quantitative beliefs

---

[13]Facebook "likes" to the same NGO, in contrast, are about equally frequent for Democrats and Republicans (Table C.2), suggesting a more cautious interpretation of this measure of policy views. Therefore, I focus on the petition and the donation decisions in the following.

about women's relative wages and their related qualitative views on whether the GWG is large, a problem, and should be subject to government intervention at a general level (see Table C.1, Panel B).[14] The correlational link between beliefs and self-reported demand for specific policies is an order of magnitude smaller, but still considerable and precisely measured. On average across the different specific policies considered in the survey, a one standard deviation higher belief about females' relative wages is associated with a 0.3 standard deviation lower demand for specific policies (Table 3, Panel B). When controlling for gender and political orientation in addition to prior beliefs (Panel C of Table 3), the estimated correlation between beliefs and policy demand drops by one third, on average. One potential explanation is that omitted variables, such as people's (equality) preferences, correlate with the measure of beliefs about the GWG and also differ across the political spectrum and by gender. Also, measurement error could be larger for beliefs about the GWG than for gender and political orientation. The experimental evidence presented in Section 4 relies on variation in beliefs that is orthogonal to measurement error and omitted variables.

4   Beliefs and Policy Views: Causal Evidence

4.1   Main empirical specification

To study the effect of the information treatment on policy demand, I restrict the sample to the two treatment groups, and estimate the following specification:

---

[14]For the correlational analysis I deviate from the pre-analysis plan and drop observations below the 5th and above the 95th percentile of the prior belief distribution to account for extreme outliers. The results are similar when I use the 3rd and 97th percentile as cut-offs. Correlations are weaker in the full sample due to the high sensitivity of OLS to outliers. Appendix G presents further details and the pre-specified analysis based on the full sample.

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_i^{74} + \Theta^T X_i + u_i \tag{1}$$

Y_i represents the outcome variable of interest, for instance demand for a specific policy. T_i^{74} is a dummy that takes the value one (zero) if individual i is randomly exposed to the information that female employees, on average, receive 74% (94%) of male employees' wages. X_i is a set of pre-specified control variables, which, by design, are orthogonal to the treatment group.[15] I report robust standard errors and apply probability weights to all regressions.[16]

4.2 The causal effect of beliefs on policy demand

How do people's beliefs about the size of the GWG affect their general perceptions of the topic and their demand for government intervention?

Result 2. *Beliefs about the size of the GWG have a strong causal effect on people's sense of concern and unspecific policy demand. The effect of these beliefs on demand for concrete policies is meaningful but more nuanced, i.e., it depends on the specific policy. Differences in beliefs about the GWG across the political spectrum (by gender) causally explain between zero and at most 6% (7%) of the partisan (gender) difference in demand for specific policies.*

Posterior beliefs and general perceptions Post-treatment, the respondents' quantitative beliefs about females' relative wages differ by around $13

---

[15]The vector X_i includes controls for survey wave, gender, prior belief, census region of residence, five age categories, has children, log of household income, has at least a 2-year college degree, full-time employed, part-time employed, self-employed, unemployed, student, out of the labor force (incl. retired), Democrat (incl. Independent leaning Democrat), Republican (incl. Independent leaning Republican), Independent and other political orientation. Including these covariates increases my effective power to estimate the treatment effect of interest, β_1.

[16]The probability weights adjust for a small accidental oversampling of young women through the survey company. None of the results are sensitive to the probability weights (Appendix G).

or two thirds of a standard deviation between the two treatment arms (Table 4, Panel A, columns 1-2). Respondents extrapolate to a similar degree from the information received to related beliefs about the GWG, regardless of whether the wage statistic they are asked to estimate post-treatment differs from the baseline wage statistic according to the relevant age group, educational attainment group, occupation or parental status (Table D.1). One may be concerned that respondents could think of the household survey from which the treatment value derives as an outlier that does not reflect the true GWG. In this case, they might report a (posterior) belief that differs from their actual belief. I believe that this is unlikely because the perceived trustworthiness and relevance of the information received is very high and does no differ by treatment arm (see Appendix D.2).

Does the updating of beliefs about the size of the GWG translate into an effect on people's related perceptions and sense of concern about the topic? Individuals exposed to T^{74} are substantially more likely to believe that gender differences in wages are large (0.6 st.dev.), are a problem (0.4 st.dev.) and should generally be subject to government intervention (0.2 st.dev.), compared to individuals exposed to T^{94} (Table 4, Panel A).

Self-reported policy demand Does the large first-stage treatment effect translate into policy demand? I find that the effect of beliefs about the size of the GWG on policy demand is meaningful and significant, but nuanced.

The information treatment has a 0.1 standard deviation effect on respondents' demand for affirmative action programs and for equal pay legislation (Table 4, Panel B, columns 2 and 3). Both policies should be expected to have a fairness-increasing effect if women, ex-ante, are discriminated against – a condition that is in line with respondents' perceptions (see Section 5). More-

over, equal pay legislation is tightly linked to fighting discriminatory wages, which may be part of the explanation for the relatively large treatment effect.

There is a similarly large but more noisily measured effect on demand for a website that publishes large companies' gender-related wage statistics (column 5), similar to a policy that was recently implemented in the UK.[17] Like the previously discussed policies, such a "naming and shaming" website does not require a large direct spending of tax money. Moreover, it protects the anonymity of individual employees, which may contribute to the relatively large treatment effect.

The remaining policies, namely gender quotas, wage transparency within companies and public subsidies to child care, are also regularly discussed in the context of gender differences in labor market outcomes. However, the treatment does not significantly affect people's demand for these policies, on average (see columns 1, 4 and 6). One potential reason is that these policies may be seen as less direct ways of mitigating the GWG. For instance, a gender quota for leading positions may be perceived as a boost to the careers of merely a small subset of working women. Moreover, respondents could have concerns about unintended side-effects of both gender quotas and wage transparency for women, especially when career gaps between men and women are perceived as large. Finally, both subsidies to child care and inefficiencies for companies through gender quotas could be perceived as prohibitively costly. Taken together, the findings described so far suggest that a higher perceived GWG increases people's general support for policies to mitigate the GWG,[18] but there is no consensus on the specific policy that should be applied.

---

[17]Note that this regression is less powered because the sample is limited to wave B.

[18]See the precisely estimated treatment effect on the summary index for policy demand in Table 4, Panel B, column 7. This effect is robust to FWER-correction (see Appendix D.8).

Political behavior In line with self-reported policy views, individuals in T^{74} are significantly more likely to sign Petition I, the petition in favor of increasing the gender-related reporting requirements of companies. At the same time, they are less likely to sign Petition II, which claims that existing requirements should be abolished (Figure 2). The effect on Petition II should be interpreted cautiously given that the overall number of signatures is very small. That said, the average treatment effect on signatures for Petition I corresponds to 2 percentage points or to 13% of the control group mean (p-value 0.09) and the effect on signatures for Petition II corresponds to 1 percentage point or to 50% of the control group mean (p-value 0.02). In contrast, the average treatment effect on people's donations to the NGO that lobbies for policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market is small and noisily measured (Figure A.15). Overall, treatment effects on respondents' behavior mirror those on self-reported policy demand: A higher perceived GWG increases support for government intervention but the magnitude of the treatment response depends on the specific measure.

Magnitude of the effect In order to facilitate the interpretation of the causal effect sizes, I employ a 2SLS framework in which I instrument beliefs about females' relative wages using a dummy for the high wage gap treatment.[19] I find that a one standard deviation decrease in beliefs about females' relative wages leads to 0.17 and 0.18 standard deviations increases in demand for statutory affirmative action programs and equal pay legislation, respectively (Table 4, Panel C). Note that even for these two policies with the largest treatment effects, the causal effect of beliefs on policy demand is somewhat smaller than the corresponding correlations reported in Table 3 – a point I explore in more

---

[19]Note that the 2SLS approach should be carefully interpreted as a scaling exercise. For the econometric model and a discussion of the IV assumptions see Appendix D.4.

detail in Section 6.

I also estimate a 2SLS specification in logs, and find that a 1% decrease in beliefs about females' relative wages leads to a 0.27% increase in demand for statutory affirmative action programs and to a 0.18% increase in demand for equal pay legislation, respectively (Appendix D.4). Both elasticities are precisely measured and confirm the estimated treatment effects in levels.[20]

Finally, in Appendix D.4 I conduct a back-of-the-envelope calculation in which I scale the treatment effect to correspond to a change in beliefs similar to the Democrat-Republican or the gender difference in prior beliefs. Depending on the specific policy, the causal effect of differences in beliefs about the size of the GWG between Democrats and Republicans (between men and women) accounts for between zero and at most 6% (7%) of the difference in policy demand between these groups. In sum, the effect of people's beliefs about the GWG on policy demand is meaningful, but even if people agreed on the size of the GWG, they would not converge in terms of their policy views.

4.3   Robustness

The strong estimated first stage effect of the information treatment could potentially be short-lived, or driven by a subpopulation that does not care about the topic. In this section, I rule out such concerns, suggesting that the estimated effect of the information treatment on policy demand is indeed driven by a limited causal effect of people's beliefs about the GWG on concrete policy demand.

Persistence of the treatment effect Based on an obfuscated follow-up survey (Haaland and Roth, 2020), I find a strong persistent treatment effect on

---

[20]The 2SLS specification in logs is informative about "classical" elasticities of policy demand to beliefs about the size of the GWG. For convenience, I also use the term elasticity when referring to my main specification in levels at various points in the paper.

beliefs about the baseline wage statistic referring to 45-year-olds who hold a Bachelor's degree and work 40 hours per week. The effect size corresponds to around $10, i.e. to 50% of the difference in the treatment information the respondents had received around two weeks earlier (Table 5, Panel A, Column 1). Moreover, the treatment effect on people's perceptions of whether the GWG constitutes a problem (Columns 2 - 4) and on the perceived fairness of women's wages (Column 5) persists at a magnitude similar to the initial effect. The same holds true for unspecific policy demand (Panel B, Column 1), demand for policies aimed at compensating disadvantages women may have due to family responsibilities (Columns 3) and, to some extent, demand for anti-discrimination policies (Column 2), but the latter effect is noisily measured.[21]

In Appendix D.5 I further corroborate the robustness of my main results by showing that i) attrition between the main survey and the follow-up survey is unrelated to the initial treatment effect and ii) there is no treatment effect on a range of placebo outcomes in the follow-up survey. Overall, the treatment effect on policy demand seems to be driven by an updating of respondents' beliefs about the size of the GWG, rather than by experimenter demand effects or a short-lived emotional response to the treatment.

Compliant subpopulation Another potential concern is that the identifying variation in respondents' beliefs about the GWG may be driven by a subset of individuals who are not particularly interested in the topic, while those who care have strong and inelastic prior beliefs. In that case, my finding of a

---

[21]In the follow-up survey of wave B, I also elicit support for the two specific policies for which the immediate treatment effect was largest in wave A. Given the smaller sample, these regressions are naturally less powered, i.e. with the given $N = 606$ the minimum detectable effect size is 0.23 at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$ and with a power of 0.8. While I find no persistent effect on support for affirmative action programs (Panel B, Column 5), the estimated effect of the information treatment on demand for equal pay legislation (Column 4) persists at a level that is similar to the immediate effect in the main survey, but it is imprecisely measured.

limited causal effect of beliefs on policy demand could be driven by a compliant subpopulation with particularly inelastic policy views and might not hold in general.

To explore this concern I use self-reported information on whether each respondent has, in the last three weeks, consumed information about gender differences in wages in newspapers, magazines or online. Consistent with Bayesian updating, those 80% of respondents who have not read about the topic recently and may therefore have weaker priors attach greater weight to the information and update more strongly about the size of the GWG (Appendix Table D.9, Panel A). That said, the first stage is significant also for those respondents who are more interested in the topic, suggesting that the compliant subpopulation consist of a broad range of individuals.[22]

Alternative specifications and multiple hypothesis testing My findings are robust to alternative specifications which compare each of the two treatment groups to the pure control group (Appendix D.7) and to FWER adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing (Appendix D.8).

5   Mechanisms

In the previous section I have established a robust, persistent effect of the information treatment on respondents' perceptions of the GWG and a more nuanced effect of these perceptions on specific policy demand. In this section I shed light on potential mechanisms which might drive or mitigate the effect of the individually perceived GWG on policy demand.

---

[22]Moreover, in the second stage, the effect of the perceived size of the GWG on policy demand is driven by those 80% who do *not* regularly read about the topic (Table D.9, Panel B). This suggests that those with weaker priors about the size of the GWG are *not* those who do not care about the topic and therefore may exhibit a low elasticity of policy views to beliefs.

Self-interest An individual who learns about the size of the GWG may update her beliefs about the effect of her gender on her personal wage and, consequently, about the potential effect of gender-related policy intervention on her current and future wage. Thus, self-interest or in-group concerns would imply a positive treatment effect for women and a zero or backfiring effect for men, resulting in a muted average effect.

Throughout the paper, I study heterogeneous treatment effects based on the following specification:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 H_i + \beta_2 T_i^{74} + \beta_3 T_i^{74} H_i + \Theta^T X_i + u_i \tag{2}$$

where H_i indicates the dimension of heterogeneity of interest, in this case gender, β_2 captures the reaction of the omitted group to the information treatment and β_3 captures the differential reaction of group H. Given that the updating of beliefs about the size of the GWG in response to the treatment is similar for females and males (Table D.1, Panel B), a reduced form specification is informative about the differential effect of beliefs on policy demand.

Perhaps surprisingly, I find no systematic evidence of a differential treatment effect by gender (Table 6, Panel B).[23] In fact, while women's demand for gender quotas is inelastic to the treatment, the treatment effect for men is significantly positive (p-value <0.05). There is no gender difference for the other measures of specific policy demand. In sum, self-interest is not a dominant motive.[24]

---

[23]The behavioral outcome measures confirm that there is no systematic gender pattern: The treatment effect on signatures for Petition I and for Petition II is noisily measured for subgroups but points in the expected direction for both genders (Figure A.16). For the donation decision, in contrast, female respondents do not respond significantly to the information treatment whereas male respondents donate more in T^{74} (p-value 0.068) (Figure A.15).

[24]Young individuals are an exception: The treatment effect on specific policy demand in the group of 18 to 24-year-olds corresponds to a substantial 0.3 standard deviations for female

Perceived reasons for the GWG and fairness concerns Similar to information one may encounter in the media, the wage statistic I employ in the survey leaves scope for interpretation regarding the deep underlying reasons for the GWG. I exploit this "wiggle room" to study how people extrapolate from a wage statistic to their beliefs about, e.g., the prevalence of constraints working women are facing. Evidence from laboratory experiments shows that individuals tend to perceive inequality caused by impersonal, rather than personal factors, as unfair and opt for more redistribution (Cappelen et al., 2007, 2010). Similarly, in my setting, people's interpretation of the GWG may ultimately determine the extent to which beliefs about the size of the GWG translate into policy demand.

I first document people's baseline beliefs about the prevalence of different factors. Around 75% of the control group respondents see a role for impersonal factors, namely gender-based discrimination in labor markets, society making it difficult for women to combine work and family, and a differential upbringing and encouragement of men and women to pursue ambitious careers (Figure A.18). Regarding personal factors, only few respondents believe in gender differences in ambitions or talents, whereas disagreement is highest about gender differences in preferences for different fields of work, such as "technical" vs. "social" jobs. Overall, women and Democrats see a larger role for impersonal instead of personal factors compared to men and Republicans (Table E.1).

How does the perceived size of the GWG affect these beliefs? The information treatment has a substantial effect of a 0.2 standard deviation on beliefs

and to zero for male respondents (p-value of the difference <0.001). This result is illustrated in Figure A.17, based on the summary index of specific policy demand. It is consistent with self-interest and the idea that young individuals still face the most uncertainty about their lifetime income and thus have most to gain or lose from policy intervention.

about the extent of gender-based discrimination in labor markets (Table 7).[25] This effect is reflected in a negative updating by a 0.3 standard deviation about the fairness of women's wages (Table E.3).[26] Beliefs about the prevalence of personal factors, in contrast, are unaffected by the treatment, on average. One reason may be that people have received many signals about women's and men's ambitions, talents and preferences prior to taking the survey. In sum, the limited causal role of beliefs about the size of the GWG in shaping policy demand is *not* the result of people's attribution of updates about the size of the wage gap to fair underlying factors.

Political orientation To better understand the limited average elasticity of policy demand to the perceived size of the GWG, I next examine differences in the treatment effect across the political spectrum. The two significant average treatment effects on demand for affirmative action programs and for equal pay legislation are driven by Democrats and Independents (Table 6, Panel B, columns 2-3) – a pattern that is reflected in the summary index of specific policy demand (column 7).[27] In the case of demand for equal pay legislation, the difference to the zero treatment effect among Republican respondents is large and statistically significant.[28]

---

[25]Future research could study how beliefs about the prevalence of statistical or taste-based discrimination differentially affect policy demand.

[26]In addition, only female respondents update by a 0.2 standard deviation about the prevalence of difficulties in combining work and family which society imposes on women (Table E.2). Moreover, female respondents update twice as strongly as male respondents about the fairness of women's wages (Table E.3). Neither women nor men, however, update their beliefs about the fairness of their own current or most recent wage (Table E.3, Columns 4-5), potentially because private information receives a very high weight in this rating.

[27]I had pre-specified to consider Democrats vs. Non-Democrats for this analysis, which turned out to be less informative than my now preferred, more disaggregated, specification.

[28]There are a few more nuanced patterns for outcomes with no significant average treatment effect: While the information treatment leads to a marginally significant backfiring effect on demand for public child care among Republicans, the treatment effect is significantly positive among Independents and zero among Democrats. Moreover, there is a marginally significant treatment effect on demand for gender quotas among Republicans.

Together with the homogeneous first stage effect on the perceived size of the GWG and closely related perceptions (see Table D.1, Panel C and Table D.2, Panel B, respectively), these patterns imply that a higher perceived GWG leads to a higher demand for specific policy intervention, but only among Democrats and Independents. This finding is in line with evidence by Alesina et al. (2018b) and Haaland and Roth (2019) in the context of social mobility and racial discrimination. Potential explanations could be differences in equality preferences (Cappelen et al., 2019) or, as suggested by Alesina et al. (2018b), the fact that Republicans have worse views of government intervention and do not see it as a solution to inequality – a point I examine in more detail in the following.[29]

Perceived effectiveness of government intervention A respondent who learns that the GWG is higher than she previously thought might attribute this update to a lower perceived effectiveness of policy intervention, similar to findings of Kuziemko et al. (2015) in the context of redistributive policies to mitigate overall income inequality. Such updating could act as a mitigating mechanism by partly offsetting the expected treatment effect on policy demand working through, e.g., fairness concerns. However, individual beliefs about the effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies, affirmative action policies and policies that help women combine work and family responsibilities, are not causally affected by the perceived size of the GWG (Table 8, Panel A).

Nevertheless, low baseline beliefs about policy effectiveness could limit the elasticity of people's policy demand to the perceived extent of inequality. In fact, only one third of the respondents believe that government intervention

---

[29]The higher elasticity of policy demand of Independents may be driven by similar factors as that of Democrats. In addition, Independents are arguably less influenced by their party affiliation or political identity (Barber and Pope, 2019; Grewenig et al., 2019).

is effective in increasing females' wages (see Figure A.19), with Democrats generally holding more optimistic beliefs (Table 8, Panel A). I also examine whether treatment effects vary with beliefs about the effectiveness of policies – an exercise that should be interpreted cautiously given that these beliefs are i) measured post-treatment and ii) available only for the smaller wave B sample, leading to reduced power. That said, the treatment effect on the demand for gender quotas is a 0.25 standard deviation larger for respondents with above median beliefs about the effectiveness of policies (Table 8, Panel C, column 1), and the effect on demand for equal pay legislation and on the summary index is driven by these groups (columns 3 and 6), although differences are noisily measured. In combination with the homogeneous first stage treatment effect on beliefs (Table 8, Panel B), these results suggest that an overall skepticism about the effectiveness of government intervention limits the effect of a higher perceived size of the GWG on policy demand.

Heterogeneity according to prior beliefs In Appendix D.7, I further exploit information contained in people's prior beliefs by running alternative specifications in which I compare each treatment group, T^{74} and T^{94}, to the pure control group. I find a strong converge of beliefs about the size of the GWG within each of the treatment groups compared to the control group. However, respondents with extreme beliefs to start with do not adjust their policy demand to the sometimes sizable shock to their beliefs. As a result, policy views do not converge even when beliefs do. This finding implies that beliefs are linked to other characteristics that determine how individuals react to information, i.e. respondents with extreme prior beliefs about the GWG may at the same time be more "dogmatic" about their policy views. In Section 6 I provide additional evidence suggesting that beliefs are, to some extent, an

outcome shaped by people's political preferences.

Summary My main findings on mechanisms can be summarized as follows:

Result 3. *The low average elasticity of policy demand to beliefs about the size of the GWG is not due to respondents attributing the wage gap to "fair" reasons, nor due to a zero or backfiring effect among men based on self-interest. Instead, the elasticity of policy demand to beliefs is limited by Republicans, by a substantial subset of individuals who do not believe that policies can effectively lead to an increase in women's relative wages, and by those with extreme beliefs about the GWG to start with, who may be more "dogmatic" in their policy views.*

In Appendix E.2 I provide evidence on alternative factors that account for the political polarization around the optimal degree of government intervention across groups. Beliefs about the costs of policy interventions to men and to tax payers have substantial explanatory power – more so than beliefs about the size of the GWG. Even more importantly, deeply-rooted preferences over the role of the government in society can account for much of the political polarization in the gender context – a finding that is in line with evidence of an important role for stable "cultural" values in shaping policy views (Luttmer and Singhal, 2011).

6   Additional Evidence: Endogeneity of beliefs

Given that people's beliefs about the GWG do not seem to explain the political disagreement about government intervention, what is driving the strong correlation between expressed beliefs about the GWG and policy demand in the public discussion and in my data? My final result suggests that people's beliefs about the size of wage differentials are, to some extent, endogenous to their political preferences.

Result 4. *There is suggestive evidence for politically motivated bias in reported beliefs about the size of the GWG across genders, but not by partisan affiliation. Moreover, people selectively acquire information in line with their policy preferences, which may explain persistent and systematic differences in beliefs.*

Politically motivated bias in reported beliefs First, I study the possibility that respondents, knowingly or subconsciously, misreport their beliefs about the GWG, in a way that "justifies" their policy views. In the survey, I incentivize prior beliefs for approximately half of the respondents. Using gender as well as political orientation as proxies for people's underlying policy preferences, a monetary incentive is expected to lead to more pessimistic (optimistic) reported estimates of women's relative wages by men and Republicans (women and Democrats) in the presence of politically motivated bias in reported beliefs (Prior et al., 2015).[30] In line with this conjecture, I find that men's estimates of females' relative wages are 2.4 percentage points or 10% of a standard deviation lower when incentivized, whereas women's estimates are 1.7 percentage points or 7% of a standard deviation higher (Figure 3).[31] By contrast, there is no difference between incentivized and unincentivized estimates of females' relative wages for both Republicans and Democrats, suggesting that partisan differences in reported estimates reflect actual beliefs,

---

[30]One concern could be that a $2 accuracy incentive might have little weight compared to other concerns. However, Prior et al. (2015) show that small incentives of $1 or $2 reduce partisan congenial answers to factual questions.

[31]An alternative explanation could be that women and men use simple heuristics subject to, e.g., recall bias. For instance, women (men) might spontaneously recall cues in line with a larger (smaller) GWG, which could be mitigated in the incentivized condition. I believe that a pure "effort"-channel is unlikely to be important. Even though respondents in the incentivized condition spent an average of 15 seconds more on the prior belief elicitation (p-value <0.001), the gender-patterns described above are unaffected by controlling for response time (interacted with gender) as a proxy for effort (see Appendix Table F.1).

33

potentially resulting from exposure to different sources of information.

Demand for information In the survey, I also elicit the respondents' demand for additional information from two sources with a clearly described stance towards working women by using multiple price lists that trade off information against a small bonus of $0.01/$0.30/$0.50. For both a "progressive" source, described as supportive of government intervention to reduce the GWG and a more "traditional" source opposed to such intervention, the outcome variable of interest is the (z-scored) number of times the respondent chooses information over money. I find that Democrats and women in the control group have a 40% and 15% of a standard deviation higher willingness to pay for additional information from the progressive source, respectively. Conversely, Republicans and men are 20% and 10% of a standard deviation more willing to pay for information from the traditional source.[32] Even conditional on gender and political orientation, control group respondents with a higher demand for government intervention or with less optimistic beliefs about females' relative wages are more likely to acquire information from the progressive source and less likely to acquire information from the traditional source (Appendix F). These patterns are consistent with a selective choice of information that supports one's political preferences (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010; Haaland and Roth, 2019; Peterson and Iyengar, 2020). They might explain how systematic differences in beliefs about the size of the GWG can persist despite the same public information being available to everybody.

---

[32]For both the progressive and the traditional source of information 92% of the respondents have a unique switching point in their willingness to pay. The estimated effects are highly similar when I restrict the sample to these respondents.

7   Conclusion

Using an information experiment conducted with a large representative online sample from the US, I document that people's beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap (GWG) have a strong causal effect on their sense of concern about the topic. The effect on people's demand for specific policies aimed at mitigating the GWG is meaningful but more nuanced, and can only account for a small part of the polarization in policy views by gender and partisanship. My results suggest that even when inequality is attributed to discrimination in labor markets, beliefs about the extent of inequalities may only have a small effect on policy demand due to an overall skepticism towards government intervention. Factors such as the absence of segregation between men and women, the attribution of the gender wage gap to unfair reasons, or self-interest among the female half of the population do not result in a high elasticity of policy demand to perceived wage differentials in the gender context.

The finding of a heterogeneous elasticity of policy demand to factual information across groups calls for future research on the determinants of this elasticity. Previous evidence indicates that personal experiences shape policy preferences (Giuliano and Spilimbergo, 2013; Roth and Wohlfart, 2018). In the gender context, important life events such as becoming a parent or getting divorced shape women's (policy) preferences (Edlund and Pande, 2002; Kuziemko et al., 2018). Future research could study how personal experiences affect not only levels of policy demand but also people's mental model of the world and their disposition to interpret new information in a certain way (Alesina et al., 2020).

Similarly, we do not know whether people's personal narratives around

gender-related wage differences may be altered in the short run. My results suggest that people misperceive educational attainment as a remedy for the GWG and underestimate the role of choice of occupation and of the child penalty. By actively "correcting" these perceptions through randomized information treatments, future research may generate additional insights into i) which sources of inequality individuals consider as fair or unfair and ii) how individuals' mental models of the origins of inequality affect their policy demand.

References

Alesina, Alberto and Paola Giuliano, "Preferences for redistribution," *Handbook of Social Economics*, 2011.

_ , **Armando Miano, and Stefanie Stantcheva**, "Immigration and redistribution," *Working Paper*, 2018.

_ , _ , **and** _ , "The polarization of reality," *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, 2020, *110*, 324–28.

_ , **Stefanie Stantcheva, and Edoardo Teso**, "Intergenerational mobility and preferences for redistribution," *The American Economic Review*, 2018.

Anderson, Michael L, "Multiple inference and gender differences in the effects of early intervention: A reevaluation of the Abecedarian, Perry Preschool, and Early Training Projects," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 2008, *103* (484), 1481–1495.

Barber, Michael and Jeremy C Pope, "Does party trump ideology? Disentangling party and ideology in America," *American Political Science Review*, 2019, pp. 1–17.

Blau, Francine D and Lawrence M Kahn, "The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 2017, *55* (3), 789–865.

Bottan, Nicolas L and Ricardo Perez-Truglia, "Choosing Your pond: Location Choices and Relative Income," *Working Paper*, 2018.

Bullock, John G, Alan S Gerber, Seth J Hill, Gregory A Huber et al., "Partisan bias in factual beliefs about politics," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2015, *10* (4), 519–578.

Campbell, Anne, *A mind of her own: The evolutionary psychology of women*, OUP Oxford, 2013.

Cappelen, Alexander W, Astri Drange Hole, Erik Ø Sørensen, and Bertil Tungodden, "The pluralism of fairness ideals: An experimental approach," *American Economic Review*, 2007, *97* (3), 818–827.

_ , **Erik Ø Sørensen, and Bertil Tungodden**, "Responsibility for what? Fairness and individual responsibility," *European Economic Review*, 2010, *54* (3), 429–441.

___ , **Ingar K Haaland, and Bertil Tungodden**, "Beliefs about behavioral responses to taxation," *Working Paper*, 2019.

Cruces, Guillermo, Ricardo Perez-Truglia, and Martin Tetaz, "Biased perceptions of income distribution and preferences for redistribution: Evidence from a survey experiment," *Journal of Public Economics*, 2013, *98*, 100–112.

Cullen, Zoë and Ricardo Perez-Truglia, "How much does your boss make? The effects of salary comparisons," *Working Paper*, 2019.

___ **and** ___ , "The salary taboo: Privacy norms and the diffusion of information," *Working Paper*, 2020.

de Quidt, Jonathan, Johannes Haushofer, and Christopher Roth, "Measuring and bounding experimenter demand," *American Economic Review*, 2018.

Edlund, Lena and Rohini Pande, "Why have women become left-wing? The political gender gap and the decline in marriage," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 2002, *117* (3), 917–961.

Fehr, Ernst and Klaus M Schmidt, "A theory of fairness, competition, and cooperation," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1999, *114* (3), 817–868.

Gallup Social & Policy Issues, "Fewer in U.S. say men and women have equal job opportunities," Online article: `https://news.gallup.com/poll/194036/fewer-say-men-women-equal-job-opportunities.aspx` [Accessed: 16.03.2019] November 2016.

Gentzkow, Matthew and Jesse M Shapiro, "What drives media slant? Evidence from US daily newspapers," *Econometrica*, 2010, *78* (1), 35–71.

Giuliano, Paola and Antonio Spilimbergo, "Growing up in a Recession," *Review of Economic Studies*, 2013, *81* (2), 787–817.

Gneezy, Uri, Kenneth L Leonard, and John A List, "Gender differences in competition: Evidence from a matrilineal and a patriarchal society," *Econometrica*, 2009, *77* (5), 1637–1664.

Goldin, Claudia, "A grand gender convergence: Its last chapter," *The American Economic Review*, 2014, *104* (4), 1091–1119.

﹘ **and Cecilia Rouse**, "Orchestrating impartiality: The impact of "blind" auditions on female musicians," *American Economic Review*, 2000, *90* (4), 715–741.

﹘ , **Lawrence F Katz, and Ilyana Kuziemko**, "The homecoming of American college women: The reversal of the college gender gap," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2006, *20* (4), 133–133.

﹘ , **Sari Pekkala Kerr, Claudia Olivetti, Erling Barth et al.**, "The expanding gender earnings gap: evidence from the LEHD-2000 Census," *American Economic Review*, 2017, *107* (5), 110–14.

Grewenig, Elisabeth, Philipp Lergetporer, Katharina Werner, and Ludger Woessmann, "Do party positions affect the public's policy preferences?," *Working Paper*, 2019.

﹘ , ﹘ , **Lisa Simon, Katharina Werner, and Ludger Woessmann**, "Can online surveys represent the entire population?," *Working Paper*, 2018.

Grigorieff, Alexis, Christopher Roth, and Diego Ubfal, "Does information change attitudes towards immigrants? Representative evidence from survey experiments," *Demography*, 2020.

Haaland, Ingar and Christopher Roth, "Beliefs about racial discrimination: Representative evidence," *Working Paper*, 2019.

﹘ **and** ﹘ , "Labor market concerns and support for immigration," *Working Paper*, 2020.

﹘ , ﹘ , **and Johannes Wohlfart**, "Designing Information Provision Experiments," *Working Paper*, 2020.

Hjort, Jonas, Diana Moreira, Gautam Rao, and Juan Francisco Santini, "How research affects policy: Experimental evidence from 2,150 Brazilian municipalities," *Working Paper*, 2019.

Iversen, Torben and Frances Rosenbluth, "The political economy of gender: Explaining cross-national variation in the gender division of labor and the gender voting gap," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2006, *50* (1), 1–19.

Karadja, Mounir, Johanna Mollerstrom, and David Seim, "Richer (and holier) than thou? The effect of relative income improvements on demand for redistribution," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 2017.

Kleven, Henrik, Camille Landais, Johanna Posch, Andreas Steinhauer, and Josef Zweimüller, "Child penalties across countries: Evidence and explanations," *AEA Papers and Proceedings*, 2019.

Kuziemko, Ilyana, Jessica Pan, Jenny Shen, and Ebonya Washington, "The Mommy Effect: Do women anticipate the employment effects of motherhood?," *Working Paper*, 2018.

__ , **Michael I Norton, Emmanuel Saez, and Stefanie Stantcheva**, "How elastic are preferences for redistribution? Evidence from randomized survey experiments," *The American Economic Review*, 2015, *105* (4), 1478–1508.

Lergetporer, Philipp, Guido Schwerdt, Katharina Werner, Martin R West, and Ludger Woessmann, "How information affects support for education spending: Evidence from survey experiments in Germany and the United States," *Journal of Public Economics*, 2018, *167*, 138–157.

Luttmer, Erzo FP and Monica Singhal, "Culture, context, and the taste for redistribution," *American Economic Journal: Economic Policy*, 2011, *3* (1), 157–79.

Moore, Stephen, "The real pay gap," Online article: `https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/commentary/the-real-pay-gap` [Accessed: 15.06.2018] November 2014.

Moss-Racusin, Corinne A, John F Dovidio, Victoria L Brescoll, Mark J Graham, and Jo Handelsman, "Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, 2012, *109* (41), 16474–16479.

Mummolo, Jonathan and Erik Peterson, "Demand effects in survey experiments: An empirical assessment," *American Political Science Review*, 2018, pp. 1–13.

Neumark, David, Roy J Bank, and Kyle D Van Nort, "Sex discrimination in restaurant hiring: An audit study," *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 1996, *111* (3), 915–941.

Newman, Benjamin J, "Breaking the glass ceiling: Local gender-based earnings inequality and women's belief in the American Dream," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2016, *60* (4), 1006–1025.

Peterson, Erik and Shanto Iyengar, "Partisan Gaps in Political Information and Information-Seeking Behavior: Motivated Reasoning or Cheerleading?," *American Journal of Political Science*, 2020.

Pew Research Center, "Wide partisan gaps in U.S. over how far the country has come on gender equality," Online article: `http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2017/10/18/wide-partisan-gaps-in-u-s-over-how-far-the-country-has-come-on-gender-equality/` [Accessed: 16.03.2019] October 2017.

Prior, Markus, Gaurav Sood, Kabir Khanna et al., "You cannot be serious: The impact of accuracy incentives on partisan bias in reports of economic perceptions," *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 2015, *10* (4), 489–518.

Roth, Christopher and Johannes Wohlfart, "Experienced inequality and preferences for redistribution," *Journal of Public Economics*, 2018, *167*, 251–262.

_ , Sonja Settele, and Johannes Wohlfart, "Beliefs about public debt and the demand for government spending," *Working Paper*, 2020.

Sarsons, Heather, "Interpreting signals in the labor market: evidence from medical referrals," *Working Paper*, 2017.

_ , "Recognition for group work: Gender differences in academia," *American Economic Review*, 2017, *107* (5), 141–45.

Stichnoth, Holger and Karine Van der Straeten, "Ethnic diversity, public spending, and individual support for the welfare state: A review of the empirical literature," *Journal of Economic Surveys*, 2013, *27* (2), 364–389.

Umoh, Ruth, "How to convince a skeptic the pay gap is real," Online article: https://www.cnbc.com/2018/04/10/6-ways-to-convince-a-skeptic-the-pay-gap-is-real.html [Accessed: 16.03.2019] November 2016.

Main Figures
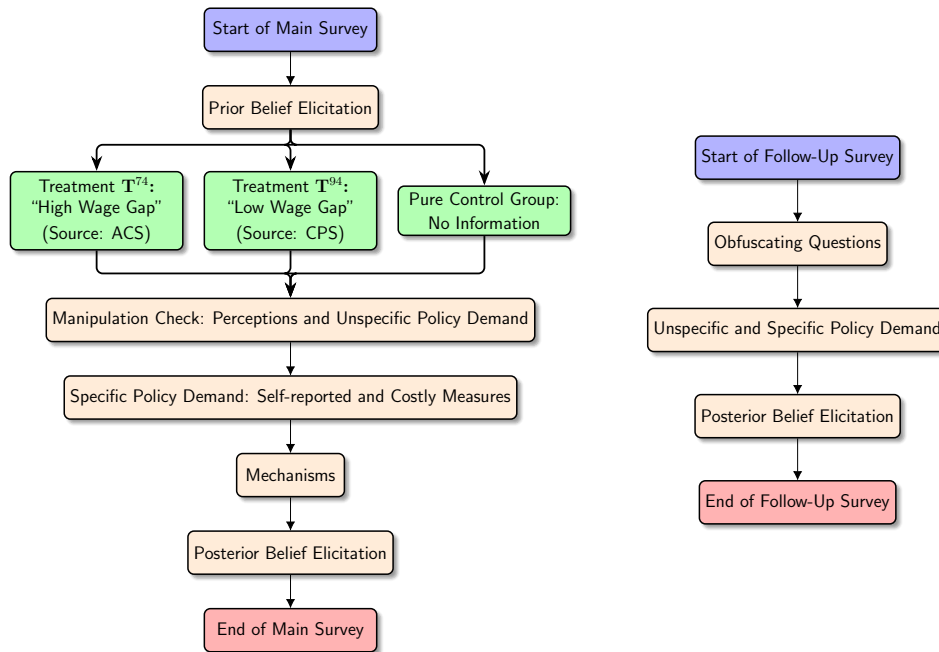
Figure 1: Outline of main survey and follow-up survey
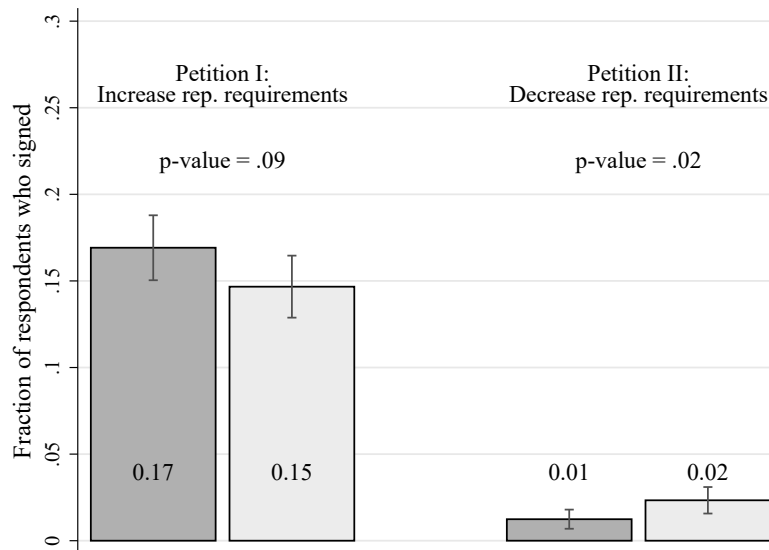
Figure 2: Signatures on real online petitions

Notes: Data base: Count data on the number of signatures for two real online petitions on the White House Petition Website, both survey waves (N=3,031). Dark bars represent signatures in T^{74}, light grey bars reflect T^{94}. The height of the bars reflects the fraction of respondents per treatment group that signed Petition I (Petition II) in favor of increasing (decreasing) requirements for companies to report employee wages by gender to a public authority. Whiskers show the 95% confidence intervals around the estimated fractions. P-values refer to two-sided petition-specific proportion tests.
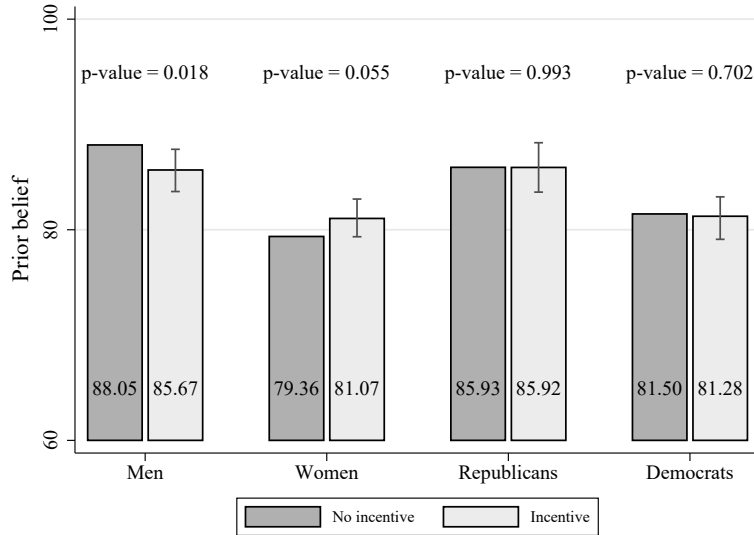
Figure 3: Incentivized vs. non-incentivized prior beliefs.

Notes: Data base: Full sample. Dark (light) bars illustrate mean prior beliefs in the unincentivized (incentivized) condition. Prior beliefs range between 0 and 200 and refer to females' wages, as a percentage of male wages, among 45-year-olds with a Bachelor's degree who work full-time. Whiskers show the 95% confidence intervals from a regression of beliefs on an indicator for the incentivized condition using robust standard errors and controlling for survey wave, census region, age group, parental status, log of household income, associate degree or more, full-time, part-time, self-, and unemployed, student and, when applicable, gender or political orientation. Republicans (Democrats) include Independents leaning Republican (Democrat).
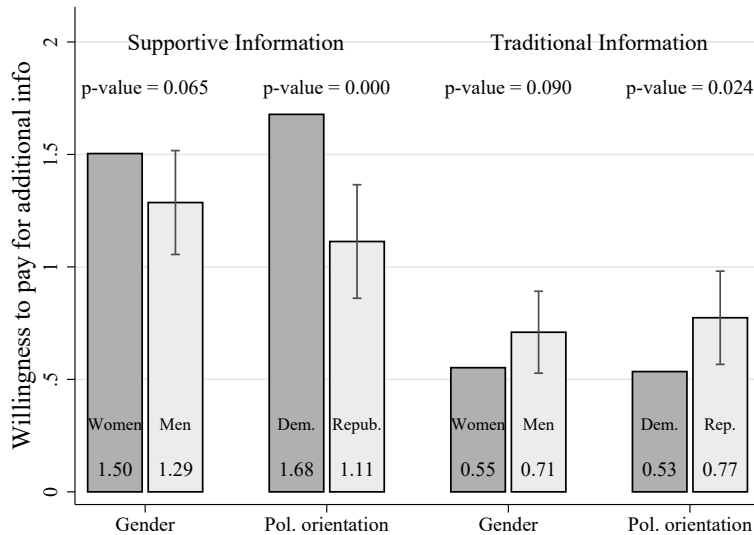
Figure 4: Willingness to pay for additional information.

Notes: Data base: Control group, wave A. The left bars, titled "Supportive Information", reflect the number of times (between 0 and 3) respondents choose information when faced with the choice to either receive information from a "source that favors government intervention to support women's progress in the labor market" or a payoff increase of $0.01/$0.3/$0.5. The bars to the right, titled "Traditional Information", reflect the corresponding willingness to pay (WTP) for information from a source that "favors a traditional role for women as caregivers for the family and argues against related government intervention". Whiskers show the 95% confidence interval calculated from a regression of WTP on an indicator for male/Republican using robust standard errors. Republicans (Democrats) include Independents leaning Republican (Democrat).

43

Main Tables

Table 1: Experimental design

	T^{74} (ACS)	T^{94} (CPS)	Control	Total
Incentivized prior belief	0.1875	0.1875	0.1875	0.5625
Unincentivized prior belief	0.1875	0.1875	0.0625	0.4375
Total	0.375	0.375	0.25	1.0

Notes: This table shows the probabilities with which respondents were assigned to the incentivized vs. unincentivized prior belief elicitation (rows) and to either of the treatment groups or the pure control group (columns).

Table 2: Correlates of prior beliefs about gender differences in wages

	Outcome variable: (Incentivized) prior belief							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Female	-4.603***		-4.406***	-4.280***	-4.179***	-3.300**	-2.919**	-2.276
	(0.891)		(0.886)	(1.595)	(0.888)	(1.300)	(1.418)	(1.607)
Democrat		-4.633***	-4.392***	-4.710***	-4.434***	-4.409***	-4.374***	-4.396***
		(1.038)	(1.034)	(1.490)	(1.033)	(1.031)	(1.035)	(1.033)
Independent		-1.992*	-1.789	-1.124	-1.726	-1.703	-1.625	-1.605
		(1.195)	(1.184)	(1.696)	(1.183)	(1.180)	(1.189)	(1.186)
Female x Democrat				0.600				
				(2.066)				
Female x Indep.				-1.314				
				(2.366)				
Employee					1.922**	2.657**		2.253*
					(0.872)	(1.266)		(1.260)
Female x Employee						-1.383		-0.802
						(1.753)		(1.791)
Associate Degree +							2.162	1.649
							(1.316)	(1.316)
Female x Ass. +							-2.324	-2.239
							(1.816)	(1.859)
Constant	85.675***	85.916***	87.960***	87.901***	86.632***	86.108***	86.528***	85.302***
	(0.644)	(0.803)	(0.921)	(1.138)	(1.050)	(1.158)	(1.240)	(1.383)
Observations	2293	2293	2293	2293	2293	2293	2293	2293

Notes: Data base: All observations with incentivized prior beliefs. The outcome variable is the respondent's prior belief about a female's (relative) wage for every \$100 received by a male when both are 45 years old, work as full-time employees in the US and hold a Bachelor's degree. Beliefs range between \$0 and \$200. Columns 2-8 control for political orientation "other" in addition to the variables shown. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat, the omitted group is Republicans, including Independents leaning Republican. Column 4 in addition controls for female interacted with "other" political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Panel A: Gender pol. orientation							
Democrat	0.688***	0.760***	0.685***	0.694***	0.542***	0.635***	0.670***
	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.070)	(0.102)	(0.099)	(0.073)	(0.051)
Female	0.254***	0.176***	0.338***	0.378***	0.467***	0.225***	0.290***
	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.087)	(0.087)	(0.063)	(0.043)
Panel B: Prior beliefs about GWG							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.235***	-0.365***	-0.294***	-0.396***	-0.296***	-0.302***	-0.302***
	(0.070)	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.102)	(0.097)	(0.070)	(0.053)
Panel C: Prior, gender and political orientation							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.122*	-0.260***	-0.186***	-0.285***	-0.183**	-0.205***	-0.195***
	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.095)	(0.091)	(0.069)	(0.048)
Democrat	0.672***	0.727***	0.661***	0.649***	0.523***	0.609***	0.644***
	(0.072)	(0.072)	(0.071)	(0.102)	(0.100)	(0.073)	(0.051)
Female	0.241***	0.149**	0.319***	0.358***	0.442***	0.204***	0.270***
	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.062)	(0.087)	(0.088)	(0.063)	(0.043)
Panel D: All controls							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.122*	-0.266***	-0.185***	-0.324***	-0.184**	-0.226***	-0.205***
	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.097)	(0.092)	(0.069)	(0.049)
Democrat	0.659***	0.699***	0.671***	0.645***	0.476***	0.574***	0.627***
	(0.073)	(0.075)	(0.072)	(0.104)	(0.102)	(0.074)	(0.051)
Female	0.239***	0.142**	0.324***	0.359***	0.460***	0.199***	0.270***
	(0.065)	(0.065)	(0.064)	(0.088)	(0.087)	(0.066)	(0.045)
Observations	921	921	921	443	478	921	921

Notes: Data base: Pure control group, restricted to observations with prior beliefs between the 5th and the 95th percentile. The dependent variables in columns 1-6 represent the respondent's agreement with statements advocating the introduction/strengthening of the following policies: Gender quotas for leading positions, statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs targeted at women, equal pay legislation, wage transparency within companies, a website where gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, and publicly financed subsidies to childcare. Outcomes in columns 1-6 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the pure control group. The dependent variable in Column 7 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1-6, following the method described in Anderson (2008). All specifications include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Panels A, C and D control for political orientation Independent and "other" in addition to the coefficients that are shown in the table. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat, the omitted group is Republicans including Independents leaning Republican. In Panel D, additional controls are: census region, age group, parental status, log of household income, associate degree or more, full-time, part-time, self-, and unemployed, student. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table 4: Treatment effect on perceptions and demand for specific policies

	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage (percent)	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage (z-scored)	Gender differences in wages are large	Gender differences in wages are a problem	Gov. should mitigate gender wage gap	Perception Index ((3)-(5))	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	
Panel A: First Stage							
T^{74}	-12.955***	-0.658***	0.597***	0.422***	0.243***	0.417***	
	(0.594)	(0.030)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.032)	
Sharpened q-value			[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]		
Observations	3022	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031	

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Policy demand index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Panel B: Reduced Form							
T^{74}	0.056	0.112***	0.115***	-0.015	0.098	0.003	0.056**
	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.042)	(0.063)	(0.035)	(0.025)
Sharpened q-value	[0.135]	[0.003]	[0.003]	[0.413]	[0.135]	[0.455]	
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031
Panel C: 2SLS							
$\widehat{\text{Posterior}}$	-0.085	-0.171***	-0.177***	0.026	-0.144	-0.009	-0.087**
(z-scored)	(0.054)	(0.053)	(0.053)	(0.065)	(0.092)	(0.053)	(0.038)
Observations	3022	3022	3022	2003	1019	3022	3022

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups. Regressions in Panels A and B follow the econometric model described in Section 4.1, i.e. T^{74} is a dummy that takes value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero for the low wage gap treatment. In Panel A, column 1 (2), the outcome variable is the raw (z-scored) posterior belief about females' relative wages, pooling across the different versions of the posterior wage statistic employed in the survey. The different versions are similar to the baseline wage statistic employed in the prior belief elicitation (referring to 45-year-old employees with a Bachelor's degree who work 40 hours per week) but differ in one of the following (randomized) characteristics: i) high school degree i) age 25, iii) parent, iv) working in the same occupation group, and v) working in the same job for the same employer. In columns 3-5 of Panel A, the dependent variables are measures of perceptions around the GWG and unspecific policy demand, which are z-scored using the mean and st.dev. in the pure control group. Column 6 uses a summary index over columns 3-5, following the method described in Anderson (2008). The dependent variables in Panel B and C, columns 1-6, are based on the respondent's agreement with statements advocating the introduction/strengthening of the following policies: Gender quotas for leading positions, statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs targeted at women, equal pay legislation, wage transparency within companies, a website where gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, and publicly financed subsidies to childcare. Outcomes are z-scored using the mean and st. dev. in the pure control group. Column 7 uses a summary index over columns 1-6, again following Anderson (2008). Sharpened q-values in Panels A and B are based on FDR-adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing and can be interpreted similar to regular p-values, see Appendix D.8 for technical details. Panel C shows a 2SLS specification where the first stage consists of Panel A, column 2 (F-stat=41.26). Additional controls in all regressions: gender, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Democrat, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table 5: Persistence of the treatment effect in obfuscated follow-up

	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage (percent)	GWG is a problem	GWG is a problem among high-skilled	GWG is a problem among low-skilled	Women's wages are fair
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel A: Perception of the GWG					
T^{74}	-10.668***	0.186***	0.124**	0.139**	-0.122**
	(1.177)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.058)	(0.055)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.003]	[0.028]	[0.018]	[0.023]
Female	-2.292*	0.272***	0.188***	0.197***	-0.155***
	(1.248)	(0.060)	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.057)
Democrat	0.554	0.547***	0.506***	0.392***	-0.459***
	(1.319)	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.066)	(0.063)
Observations	1089	1105	1105	1105	1105

	Demand for government intervention	Demand for anti-disc. policy	Demand for supportive policy	Demand for equal pay legislation	Demand for affirmative action
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Panel B: Demand for gov. policy					
T^{74}	0.183***	0.094*	0.152***	0.096	0.009
	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.057)	(0.079)	(0.078)
Sharpened q-value	[0.003]	[0.047]	[0.011]	[0.210]	[0.059]
Female	0.174***	0.221***	0.188***	0.197**	0.150*
	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.083)	(0.080)
Democrat	0.686***	0.678***	0.675***	0.642***	0.583***
	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.091)	(0.091)
Observations	1105	1105	1105	606	606

Notes: Data base: Follow-up sample based on an obfuscated follow-up survey conducted around two weeks after the main survey. Panel B columns 4 and 5 are based on wave B only. All regressions follow the econometric model described in Section 4.1, i.e. T^{74} is a dummy that takes value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment in the main survey and zero for those who received the low wage gap treatment. In Panel A, column 1, the outcome is the respondent's belief about the baseline wage statistic referring to a female's wage for every \$100 made by a male when both are 45-year-old full-time employees in the US with a Bachelor's degree. Beliefs range between \$0 and \$200. In columns 2-5 the outcomes are based on respondents' agreement with statements about women's wages. In Panel B, outcomes reflect respondents' unspecific demand for government intervention to support working women (column 1), for anti-discrimination policies (column2) and for policies that actively support women in the labor market (column 3), specific demand for equal pay legislation (column 4) and for statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs for women (column 5). All outcomes except Panel A, column 1 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the full follow-up sample. Additional controls: survey wave, prior belief, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed and unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat, the omitted group is Republicans including Independents leaning Republican. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Sharpened q-values are based on FDR-adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing and can be interpreted similar to regular p-values, see Appendix D.8 for technical details. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table 6: Treatment effect on the demand for specific policies: Heterogeneity

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Panel A: Het. by gender							
T^{74}	0.114**	0.112**	0.113**	-0.004	0.098	-0.015	0.066*
	(0.054)	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.063)	(0.098)	(0.050)	(0.038)
T^{74} x Female	-0.119*	0.003	0.009	-0.016	0.010	0.037	-0.017
	(0.071)	(0.069)	(0.070)	(0.085)	(0.125)	(0.069)	(0.050)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x female]	0.914	0.010	0.008	0.721	0.164	0.652	0.139
Female	0.315***	0.177***	0.234***	0.201***	0.303***	0.094*	0.212***
	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.049)	(0.060)	(0.090)	(0.050)	(0.036)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031
Panel B: Het. by pol. orientation							
T^{74}	0.107*	0.075	-0.027	-0.028	0.121	-0.114*	0.008
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.074)	(0.114)	(0.061)	(0.045)
T^{74} x Democrat	-0.056	0.050	0.250***	-0.005	-0.008	0.146*	0.075
	(0.080)	(0.078)	(0.078)	(0.095)	(0.142)	(0.078)	(0.057)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Dem.]	0.315	0.009	0.000	0.580	0.180	0.509	0.015
T^{94} x Independent	-0.133	0.078	0.204**	0.097	0.009	0.291***	0.101
	(0.107)	(0.103)	(0.100)	(0.126)	(0.187)	(0.103)	(0.076)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Indep.]	0.770	0.067	0.028	0.502	0.382	0.032	0.072
Democrat	0.587***	0.646***	0.495***	0.570***	0.609***	0.506***	0.558***
	(0.057)	(0.055)	(0.054)	(0.066)	(0.107)	(0.056)	(0.040)
Independent	0.225***	0.216***	0.133*	0.191**	0.247*	-0.039	0.141**
	(0.079)	(0.076)	(0.074)	(0.094)	(0.135)	(0.075)	(0.056)
Observations	2974	2974	2974	1974	1000	2974	2974

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups. Panel B excludes respondents with "other" political orientation. The dependent variables in columns 1 - 6 are based on the respondent's agreement with statements advocating the introduction/strengthening of the following policies: Gender quotas for leading positions, statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs targeted at women, equal pay legislation, wage transparency within companies, a website where gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, and publicly financed subsidies to childcare. Outcomes are z-scored using the mean and standard deviation in the pure control group. Column 7 uses a summary index over columns 1-6, following the method described in Anderson (2008). Both panels apply the empirical specification outlined in Section 5. T^{74} is a dummy that takes the value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero for those in the low wage gap treatment. Additional controls in Panel A only: Democrat, Independent and "other" political orientation. Additional controls in Panel B only: gender. Additional controls in both Panel A and B: survey wave, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, prior belief. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat, the omitted group is Republicans including Independents leaning Republican. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table 7: Treatment effect on beliefs about underlying factors

	Impersonal Factors				Personal Factors			
	(1) Discrimination	(2) Socialization	(3) Work-Family	(4) Index	(5) Ambitions	(6) Talent	(7) Preferences	(8) Index
T[74]	0.227***	0.014	0.076*	0.111***	0.032	0.016	0.050	0.035
	(0.042)	(0.046)	(0.045)	(0.032)	(0.045)	(0.042)	(0.043)	(0.036)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.973]	[0.311]		[0.917]	[0.973]	[0.490]	
Female	0.240***	0.268***	0.247***	0.251***	-0.467***	-0.419***	-0.378***	-0.418***
	(0.043)	(0.047)	(0.047)	(0.033)	(0.047)	(0.044)	(0.045)	(0.038)
Democrat	0.693***	0.413***	0.219***	0.442***	-0.276***	-0.281***	-0.431***	-0.340***
	(0.049)	(0.053)	(0.051)	(0.038)	(0.051)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.041)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, wave A. The dependent variables in columns 1 - 3 are based on the respondent's agreement with statements about the prevalence of the following impersonal factors that may be seen as reasons for the GWG: i) gender-based discrimination in labor markets, ii) a differential encouragement of men and women to pursue ambitious careers, especially in STEM fields and iii) society making it more difficult for women than for men to combine work and family. The outcomes in columns 5 - 7 are based on the respondent's agreement with statements about the existence of an inherent male advantage in i) career ambitions, ii) talent for highly demanding tasks such as strategic decision-making, working under pressure and leading others iii) preferences for certain fields of work such as more "technical" as compared to more "social" jobs. Higher values refer to a higher perceived prevalence of the corresponding factor. Outcomes in columns 1-3 and 5-7 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in column 4 (8) is a summary index over the dependent variables in Columns 1-3 (5-7), following the method described in Anderson (2008). Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Sharpened q-values are based on FDR-adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing and can be interpreted similar to regular p-values, see Appendix D.8 for technical details. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table 8: The role of beliefs about the effectiveness of policies

	Perceived effectiveness of anti-disc. policies	Perceived effectiveness of affirmative action action	Perceived effectiveness of work-family policies	Perceived effectiveness index ((1)-(3))
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Treatment Effect				
T^{74}	0.022	0.052	-0.014	0.019
	(0.063)	(0.069)	(0.067)	(0.049)
Female	0.105	0.040	0.031	0.059
	(0.066)	(0.072)	(0.070)	(0.050)
Democrat	0.245***	0.217***	0.213***	0.225***
	(0.076)	(0.082)	(0.080)	(0.058)

	Posterior belief about GWG	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should mitigate gender wage gap
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel B: First Stage				
T^{74}	-14.282***	0.560***	0.487***	0.019
	(1.382)	(0.089)	(0.087)	(0.059)
T^{74} x above median belief	1.919	0.124	0.023	0.100
	(2.035)	(0.124)	(0.121)	(0.090)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x above med. belief]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.082
Above median belief in effectiveness of policy	-0.811	0.229**	0.286***	0.240***
	(1.434)	(0.098)	(0.098)	(0.068)

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Policy demand index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel C: Reduced Form						
T^{74}	-0.054	0.047	0.105	0.068	-0.046	0.019
	(0.084)	(0.080)	(0.087)	(0.086)	(0.081)	(0.059)
T^{74} x above median belief	0.253**	0.042	0.091	0.049	0.040	0.100
	(0.126)	(0.123)	(0.125)	(0.123)	(0.121)	(0.090)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x above med. belief]	0.034	0.345	0.032	0.191	0.947	0.082
Above median belief in effectiveness of policy	0.104	0.178**	0.248***	0.235**	0.403***	0.240***
	(0.092)	(0.090)	(0.092)	(0.092)	(0.091)	(0.068)
Observations	1019	1019	1019	1019	1019	1019

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, Wave B. T^{74} is a dummy that takes value one for the high wage gap and zero for the low wage gap treatment. Outcomes in Panel A, columns 1-3, are based on survey items eliciting the individually perceived effectiveness of policies that help to detect and prevent discrimination, such as equal pay legislation, reporting requirements for companies and wage transparency (Column 1), policies that actively support women's progress in the labor market, such as statutory training and outreach programs targeted at women (Column 2) and policies that help women combine work and family responsibilities, such as public subsidies to child care (Column 3). Column 4 uses a summary index over Columns 1-3. Panels B and C show heterogeneous treatment effects by whether the respondent holds above median beliefs about the effectiveness of policies, based on the index in Panel A, column 4. The outcomes in Panel B are (raw) posterior beliefs about females' relative wages (column 1), perceptions of whether the GWG is large (column 2), of whether it is a problem (Column 3) and of whether the government should generally do more to mitigate it (column 4). The outcome variables in Panel C correspond to the measures of specific policy demand elicited in wave B. See the notes of Table 4 for a more detailed description of outcomes. All dependent variables are z-scored, except for posterior beliefs about the GWG in Column 1 of Panel B. Additional controls in all regressions are census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, Independent, Democrat (including Independent leaning Democrat) and other political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Appendix for online publication to "How do beliefs about the gender wage gap affect the demand for public policy?"

Sonja Settele[1]

A   Summary of the online appendix

The online appendix is structured as follows: **Section B** contains details on the **experimental design and the data** referred to in Section 2 of the paper. It describes the calculation of the two treatment values (Section B.1), provides technical details on the implementation of the behavioral outcome measures (Section B.2) and screenshots of important survey elements (Section B.3). Moreover, it shows summary statistics and demonstrates the integrity of randomization (Section B.4).

Section C refers to Section 3 of the paper. It presents additional descriptive and **correlational evidence** on people's beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap (GWG), on closely related perceptions (Section C.1) and on behavior (Section C.2).

Section D presents additional **causal evidence** discussed in Section 4 of the paper. It shows results on the main treatment effect on beliefs about the GWG and closely related perceptions (Section D.1), on the perceived trustworthiness of the treatment information (Section D.2), and on the behavioral outcome measures (D.3). It also presents additional exercises that facilitate the interpretation of the magnitude of the main treatment effect, such as 2SLS specifications and estimated elasticities of policy demand (Section D.4). Lastly, it demonstrates the robustness of my results to an obfuscated follow-up survey (Section D.5), it rules out that the local average treatment effect is driven by a subset of the population that does not care about the GWG (Section D.6), shows the robustness of the main treatment effect to alternative specifications (Section D.7) and presents technical details and additional evidence on multiple hypothesis adjustment (Section D.8).

Section E presents additional evidence on **mechanisms** discussed in Section 5 of the paper, such as self-interest, fairness concerns, partisanship and the perceived effectiveness of government intervention (Section E.1). Moreover, it presents evidence on the role of people's preferences in shaping policy demand (Section E.2).

Section F presents additional evidence on the **endogeneity of beliefs** about the GWG discussed in Section 6 of the paper.

Section G refers to the pre-analysis plan (PAP). It first documents minor deviations from the PAP (Section G.1), then presents the main results separately for wave A and B of data collection (Section G.3) and finally shows pre-specified regressions where the main paper deviates from the PAP (Section G.4).

---

[1]Sonja Settele, Department of Economics, University of Copenhagen, e-mail: sonja.settele@econ.ku.dk

B   Survey design and implementation

B.1   Calculation of the treatment values

I obtained the objective values of females' relative wages for the information treatment in T^{74} (T^{94}) from the most recent available data of the American Community Survey (Current Population Survey) as of the beginning of 2018 (Flood et al., 2018; Ruggles et al., 2018). The ACS is published on a yearly level and the CPS on a monthly level. In January 2018 the most recent available sample was the ACS of 2016 and the CPS of October 2017, respectively. Whereas in the ACS all survey respondents answer wage-related questions, in the CPS a sub-sample of around one fourth, the "Outgoing Rotation Group" or "Earner Study"-sample, receives questions on wages.

In the ACS, wage income is defined as each respondent's total pre-tax wage and salary income - that is, money received as an employee - for the previous calendar year. In the CPS I use weekly earnings, which is a variable that takes on the maximum of the following two values: 1) the respondent's answer to the question "How much do you usually earn per week at this job before deductions?", which refers to the individual's current job; and 2) the reported number of hours the respondent usually worked at the job, multiplied by the hourly wage rate. Due to the self-reported nature, the resulting variables in both surveys are subject to measurement error. Moreover, there is top coding, which differs between the two samples. Namely, in the ACS wage income above the 99.5th percentile in the state of residence is coded as the state mean of values above the top code value for the specific census year. In the CPS, weekly income is top-coded at \$2885.

I restrict both samples to individuals working 40 hours per week on average. For the ACS sample, I do so based on the number of hours per week that the respondent usually worked if she worked during the previous calendar year. The reference period for usual hours worked is the 12 months preceding the interview. In the CPS, I use a variable capturing the usual number of hours per week the respondent reports being at their main job. There is no concrete reference period specified. Lastly, I restrict both samples to those aged 45 who are employees and hold a Bachelor's degree, based on similar variables in both samples.

B.2   Technical details on the behavioral outcome measures

Donation decision: Respondents learn that they have been enrolled in a lottery to win \$300. Before they find out whether they won or not, they are asked to commit to an amount between \$0 and \$300 they want to donate to an NGO that supports women in the labor market under the condition that every dollar donated will be subsidized by another \$0.5 through the experimenter. (Without the subsidy, respondents would have no incentive to make the donation instantly but might instead decide to keep the full amount for themselves and make a donation privately after the survey has ended.) As soon as the participant enters an amount, a note appears summarizing the amount entered, the corresponding increase in

payoff for the respondent and the total donation (including the 50 percent subsidy) that will be made in case the participant wins the lottery. The respondent has the option to adjust her choice as many times as she likes before confirming it.

Facebook like button: Facebook offers "like"-buttons as easily implementable plug-ins which e.g. external users can integrate in their websites. As of 2018, Facebook does not allow external users to capture clicks on "like"-buttons. My aim was to construct a measure which proxies the respondent's actual decision to give a Facebook-"like" as closely as possible. At the same time I wanted to protect the individual respondent's data from facebook in case she was not interested in giving a "like".[2] In order to achieve both objectives, I implemented the following workaround: On the relevant page, survey respondents are told that if they want to give a "like" to the American Association of University Women (AAUW) on facebook, they should click on a button that says "Give facebook like to AAUW". There is also a notification that when clicking on the button, Facebook will link the respondent to her Facebook profile and will likely draw data such as her IP-address. When a respondent clicks on the square, two things happen: First, the click is captured in my data and second, the Facebook plug-in, i.e. the actual "like"-button is loaded and displayed. At the same time, the respondent is notified that one additional click on the newly appeared "like"-button is necessary in order to complete the "like".

The cost of this behavioral measure in terms of time and effort is comparatively low, it just takes two clicks to express one's support. The idea was to capture a different dimension of political behavior than the preceding donation decision or the petition before: Due to the "like" being visible to one's social network on Facebook, at least when standard settings are chosen, respondents' motivation to give a "like" may be to raise awareness and to motivate others in their social networks to follow their own opinion, thereby supporting the NGO's mission in a non-financial way (Brandtzaeg and Haugstveit, 2014).

---

[2]It is possible that the Facebook plug-in already captures user data at the moment it is loaded, i.e. without a user clicking on it. This is legal in the US as of 2018. Nevertheless, I wanted to inform survey participants so that they could make a voluntary decision knowing that they might share data with facebook.

B.3   Screenshots of Survey Elements
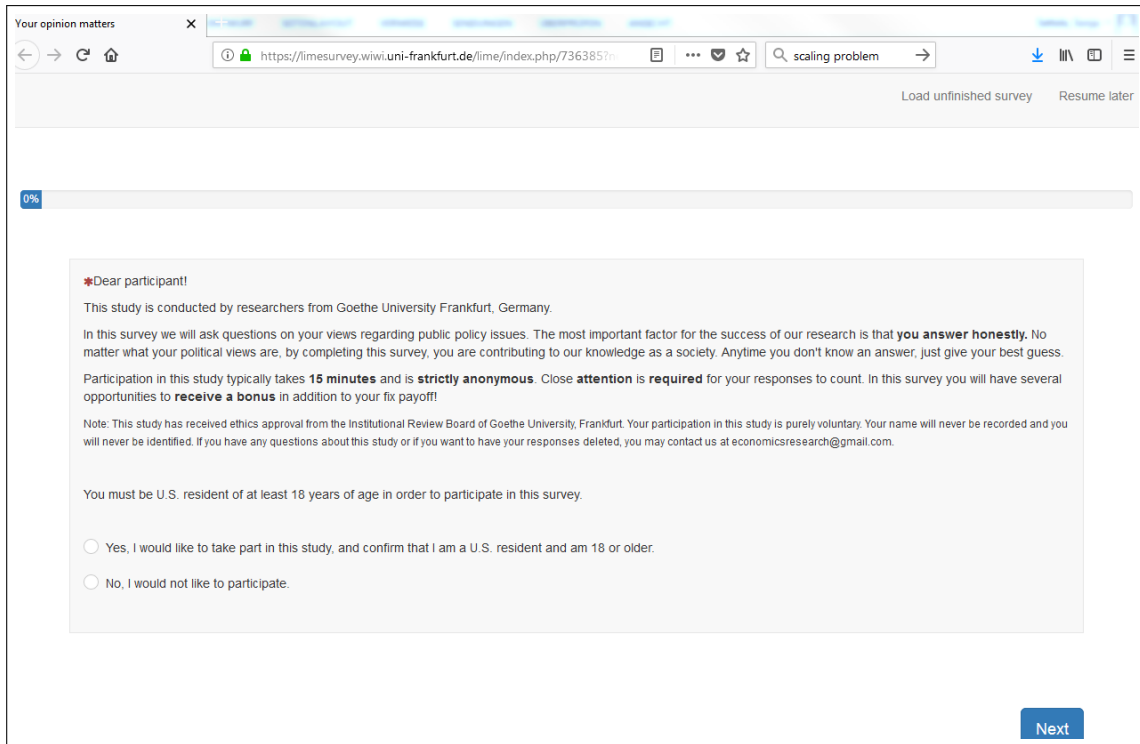
Figure A.1:   Welcome page of main survey
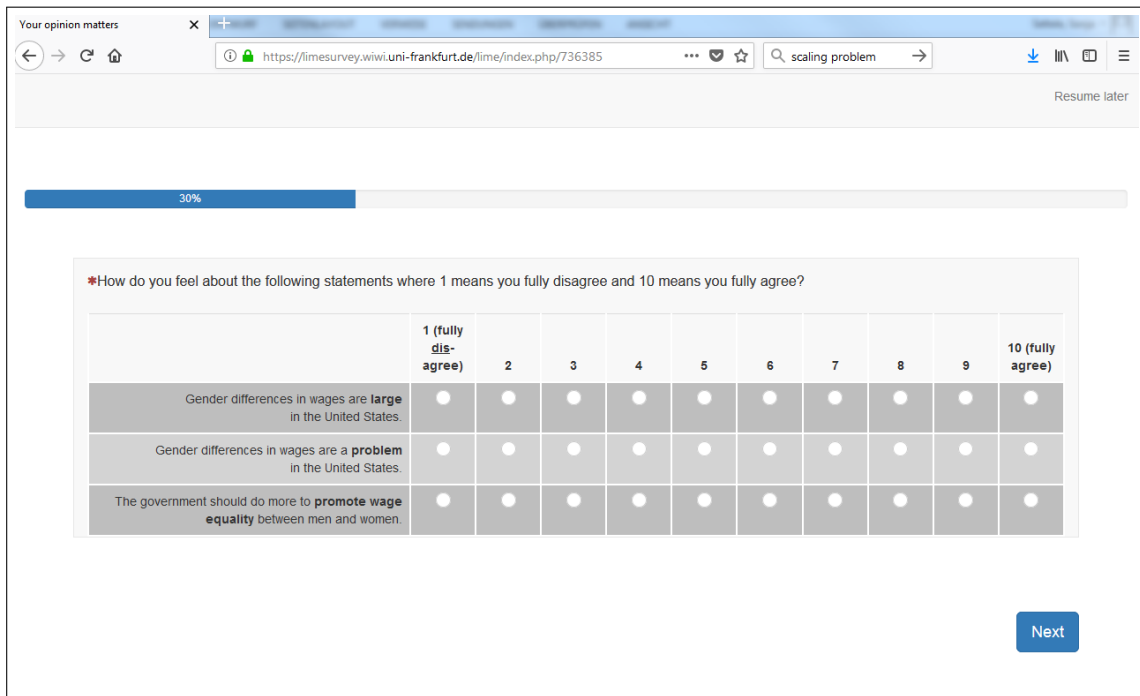
Figure A.2:   Matrix question in main survey
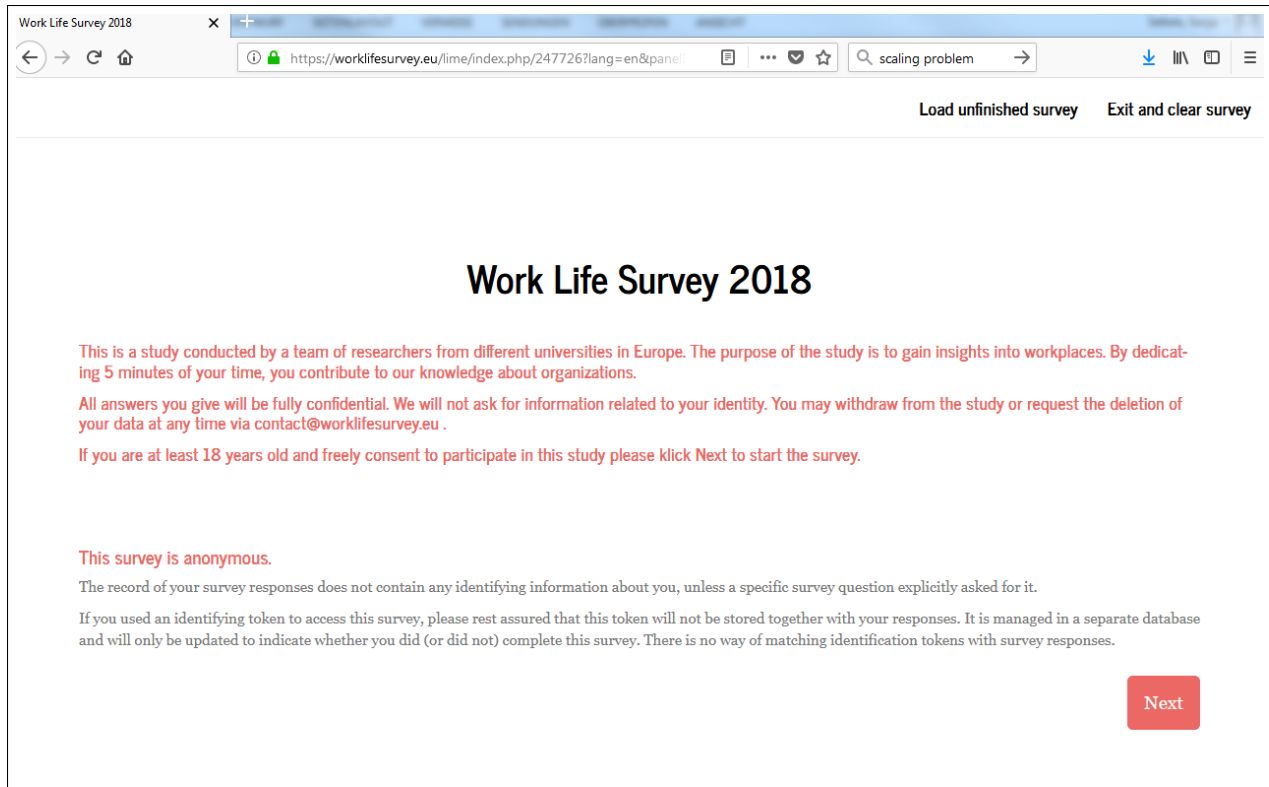
Figure A.3: Welcome page of follow-up survey
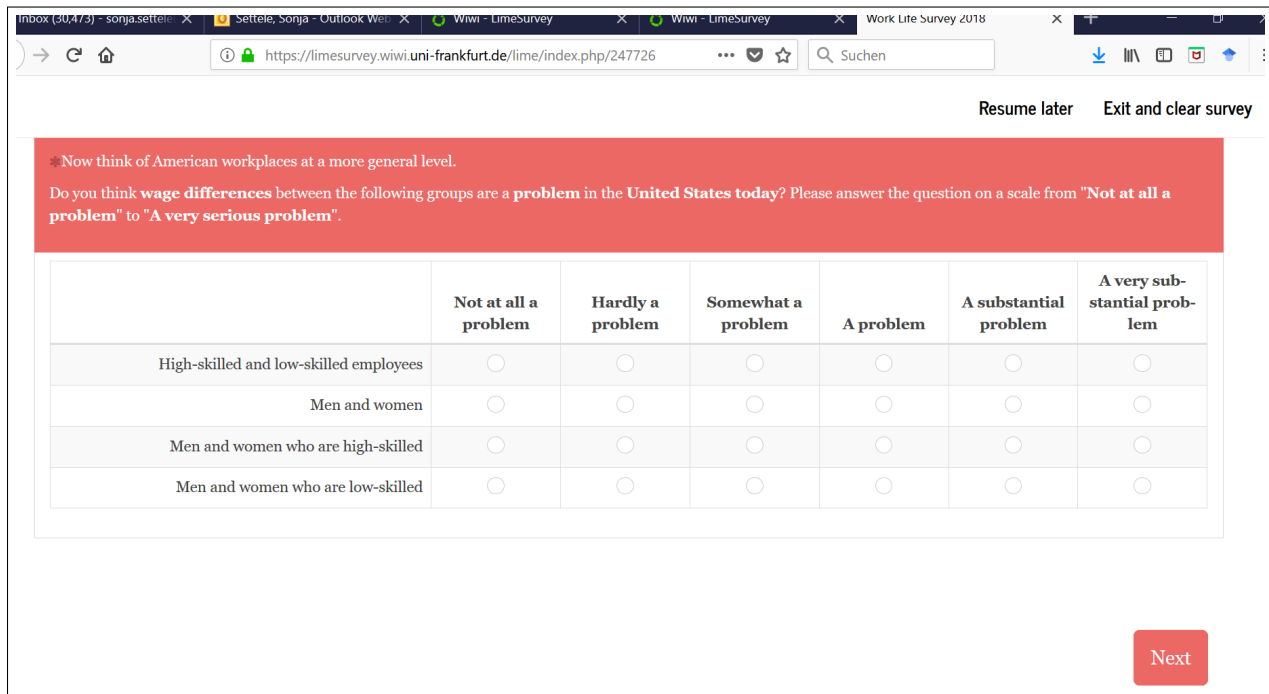
Figure A.4: Matrix question in follow-up survey
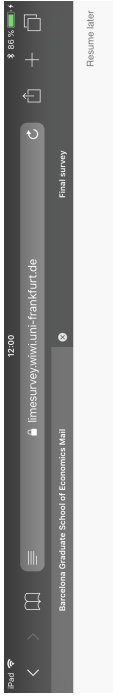
The topic of this question is (**pre-tax**) **wages of men and women in the United States.** This question is **not** about how you think **things should be** but about **how you think they actually are.**

Please think of all individuals in the U.S., men and women, who are **45 years old**, hold a **Bachelor degree** and **work 40 hours per week** as **full-time employees.** How many dollars, do you think, does **a woman with these characteristics** make on average for every $100 made by a man with the **same characteristics?**

If your estimate deviates by less than $2 from the value found by the most recent American Community Survey as of the beginning of 2018 you will receive a bonus of $2.

Please use the slider at the bottom of this page to communicate your estimate.

Wages in the US

$200.00

$100.00 100$ Men

83$ Women

$0.00

0$ 200$

Next
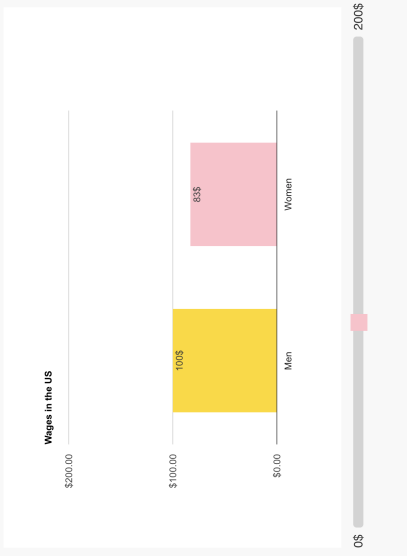
Here is the true value for the wage difference you have just estimated:

In fact, for every **$100** earned by a **male**, a **female** earned **57$** when both are 45 years old, hold a Bachelor degree and work 40 hours per week as employees.

Wages in the U.S.

200

100 actual value: 100$

your estimate: 83$ actual value: 74$

0 Men   Women

Thank you for your estimate!
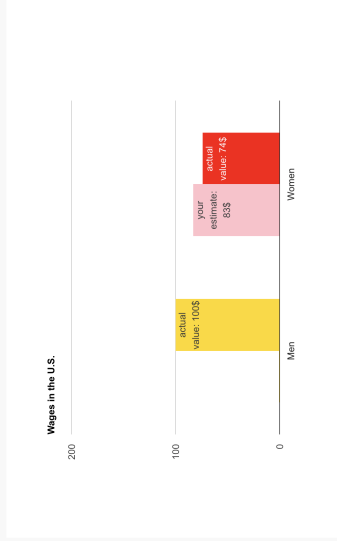
The actual value is based on the most recent available wage statistics from the American Community Survey as of January 2018. The American Community Survey is regularly conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau among households in the United States.

Next

Figure A.5: Screenshots of survey screen.

Notes: The screenshots show the prior belief elicitation (left panel) and the information treatment (right panel). Both correspond to the incentivized condition and to the "high wage gap"-treatment (T^{74}).

Left panel (Petition I):

WE the PEOPLE

YOUR **VOICE** IN THE WHITE HOUSE

SIGN A PETITION

WE THE PEOPLE ASK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE AN EXISTING ADMINISTRATION POLICY:

Revise employer information report "EEO‑1": Add information on wages by gender and job category.

Created by S.S. on August 29, 2018

We request that employers with 100 or more employees report information about W‑2 earnings and hours worked of their employees, organized by income category, gender and ethnicity in their annual reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"). So far, these reports have to include information on demographics of employees, but not on their earnings and hours worked.

The objective of the change we request is to better position federal agencies to enforce pay discrimination laws, while respecting concerns about confidentiality and minimizing employers' data collection burden.

ECONOMY & JOBS

Sign This Petition

Needs **99,979 signatures** by **September 28, 2018** to get a response from the White House

21 SIGNED   100,000 GOAL

First Name *

Last Name *

Email Address *

THE WHITE HOUSE MAY SEND ME EMAILS ABOUT THIS AND OTHER ISSUES.

Sign Now

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS OF PARTICIPATION AND

Right panel (Petition II):

WE the PEOPLE

YOUR **VOICE** IN THE WHITE HOUSE

SIGN A PETITION

WE THE PEOPLE ASK THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO CHANGE AN EXISTING ADMINISTRATION POLICY:

Decrease reporting requirements for companies: Abolish annual employer information report "EEO‑1".

Created by S.S. on August 29, 2018

We request that employers with 100 or more employees no longer have to report information about number of employees, organized by income category, gender and ethnicity.

The annual reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC") pose an undue burden for employers. By reducing this burden, companies can invest their resources into more productive activities.

ECONOMY & JOBS

Sign This Petition

Needs **99,979 signatures** by **September 28, 2018** to get a response from the White House

21 SIGNED   100,000 GOAL

First Name *

Last Name *

Email Address *

THE WHITE HOUSE MAY SEND ME EMAILS ABOUT THIS AND OTHER ISSUES.

Sign Now

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS OF PARTICIPATION AND

Figure A.6: Screenshots of real online petitions

Notes: The screenshots show the real online petitions on the White House Petition Website: Petition I (left panel) and Petition II (right panel).

B.4   Summary statistics, sample balance and attrition

Table B.1: Representativeness of the sample in terms of targeted variables

	Mean: Sample	Mean: U.S. population age 18-65
Northeast	0.18	0.18
Midwest	0.21	0.21
South	0.37	0.38
West	0.24	0.24
Age	42.03	41.05
Female	0.50	0.50
Male	0.50	0.50
Employed (full- or part-time or self-emp.)	0.71	0.71
Not employed (unempl., student, out of labor force)	0.29	0.29
Household inc < \$50,000	0.39	0.39
Household inc. > \$50,000	0.61	0.61
Democrat	0.33	0.33
Republican	0.27	0.26
Independent (including Indep. leaning Dem. or Rep.)	0.39	0.37

Notes: Sample size for the left-hand column: N = 4,065 (full sample). The right-hand column is based on 18-65-year-old individuals in the ACS 2016 except for political orientation which is based on Pew Research Center (2018).
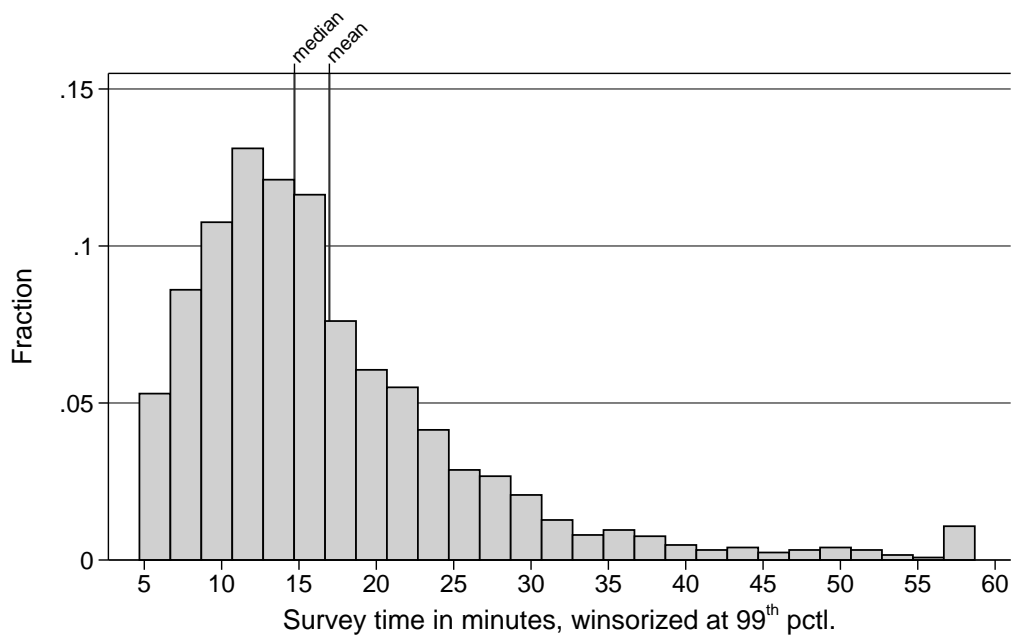
Figure A.7: Duration of survey

Table B.2: Main survey: Integrity of randomization

	(1) Full Sample	(2) Treatment Groups	(3) Control Group	(4) T^{74}	(5) T^{94}	(6) Prior incentivized	(7) Prior not incentivized	(8) p-value (2) = (3)	(9) p-value (4) = (5)	(10) p-value (6) = (7)
					Main survey					
Female	0.52	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.51	0.51	0.53	0.574	0.561	0.444
Democrat	0.44	0.44	0.46	0.45	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.431	0.625	0.379
Republican	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.414	0.698	0.827
Independent	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.858	0.943	0.381
Other pol. orientation	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.619	0.832	0.133
Prior belief	83.36	83.39	83.30	83.34	83.43	83.25	83.52	0.916	0.910	0.698
Northeast	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.731	0.689	0.787
Midwest	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.22	0.948	0.295	0.283
South	0.37	0.37	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.649	0.694	0.512
West	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.884	0.844	0.598
Age 18-24	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.012	0.710	0.066
Age 25-34	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.734	0.883	0.796
Age 35-44	0.21	0.22	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.22	0.058	0.766	0.414
Age 45-54	0.21	0.20	0.22	0.21	0.20	0.20	0.21	0.420	0.538	0.618
Age 55-65	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	0.606	0.862	0.694
Has children	0.53	0.54	0.51	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.53	0.123	0.594	0.756
Log household income	10.90	10.91	10.88	10.89	10.93	10.90	10.90	0.323	0.118	0.887
Associate degree or more	0.61	0.61	0.60	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.601	0.940	0.974
Full-time employee	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.51	0.55	0.51	0.55	0.822	0.040	0.005
Part-time employee	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.12	0.09	0.12	0.09	0.852	0.012	0.001
Self-employed	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.346	0.904	0.157
Unemployed	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.850	0.282	0.940
Student	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.561	0.026	0.350
Out of labor force	0.19	0.19	0.17	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.19	0.352	0.994	0.706
Observations	4065	3031	1034	1531	1500	2293	1772			

Notes: Columns 1 to 8 show sample means for the denoted subgroups. Column 8 shows p-values from t-tests comparing the mean of each variable between subjects that received any information treatment to those that received none. A joint F-test based on regressing a dummy that takes on value one for respondents in T^{74} or T^{94} on all covariates gives a p-value of 0.87. Column 9 shows p-values from t-tests comparing the mean of each variable between subjects that were in T^{74} as compared to those in T^{94}. The p-value of a joint F-test when regressing a dummy for T^{74} on all covariates, omitting the pure control group is 0.35. Column 10 shows p-values from t-tests comparing the mean of each variable between subjects who received an incentive for a correct (prior) estimate of the size of the GWG to those who did not receive any incentive. The p-value of a joint F-test when regressing the dummy for incentivized prior beliefs on all covariates is 0.15.
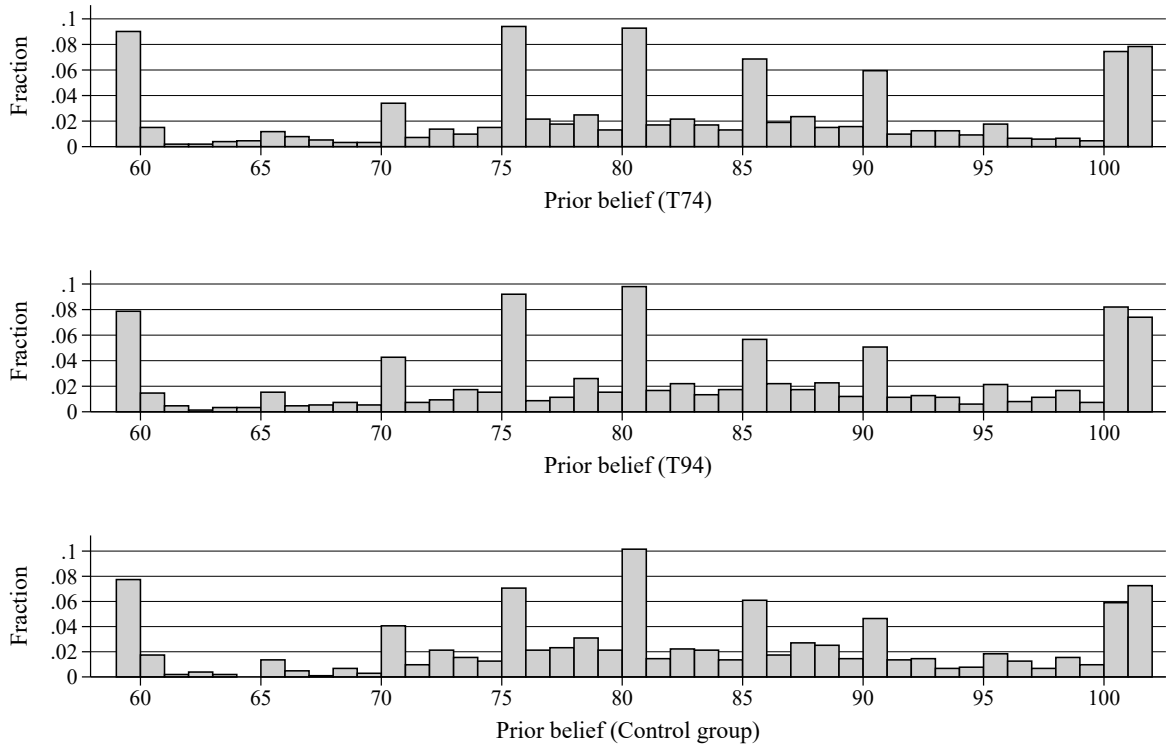
Figure A.8: Sample balance in terms of prior belief distributions

Notes: Data base: All observations. Graph shows the distribution of respondents' prior beliefs about the baseline wage statistic (women's average wage for every $100 made by a man when both are 45 years old, hold a Bachelor degree and work 40 hours per week as full-time employees). The three panels show the prior belief distribution separately by across the three treatment groups T^{74}, T^{94} and the pure control group. For better readability, beliefs are winsorized at 59 and 101 in all subfigures. The median prior belief is 81 in all three conditions. The mean prior belief is statistically similar across the three conditions, too corresponding to 83.3, 83.4 and 83.3 respectively. A Kolmogorov Smirnov test confirms that the distribution of beliefs is statistically similar between T^{74} and T^{94} (p=0.65).

Table B.3: Follow-up survey: Attrition and integrity of randomization

	Follow-up survey (Eligible respondents only)					
	(1) In Stage II sample	(2) Not in Stage II sample	(3) T^{74} (Stage II sample)	(4) T^{94} (Stage II sample)	(5) p-value (1) = (2)	(6) p-value (3) = (4)
Female	0.50	0.53	0.51	0.49	0.110	0.489
Democrat	0.42	0.45	0.41	0.43	0.061	0.419
Republican	0.38	0.35	0.39	0.37	0.106	0.584
Independent	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.777	0.727
Other pol. orientation	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.735	0.990
Prior belief	83.80	83.15	83.94	83.66	0.426	0.841
Northeast	0.19	0.17	0.20	0.19	0.129	0.736
Midwest	0.21	0.21	0.22	0.20	0.929	0.692
South	0.35	0.38	0.35	0.36	0.097	0.657
West	0.24	0.23	0.24	0.25	0.548	0.848
Age 18-24	0.05	0.14	0.05	0.05	0.000	0.906
Age 25-34	0.20	0.27	0.20	0.20	0.000	0.976
Age 35-44	0.20	0.23	0.20	0.21	0.094	0.569
Age 45-54	0.21	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.316	0.493
Age 55-65	0.34	0.16	0.33	0.34	0.000	0.848
Has children	0.58	0.51	0.58	0.58	0.000	0.867
Log household income	10.92	10.90	10.91	10.94	0.460	0.499
Associate degree or more	0.61	0.62	0.60	0.62	0.588	0.467
Full-time employee	0.50	0.55	0.49	0.51	0.016	0.452
Part-time employee	0.10	0.11	0.13	0.08	0.591	0.014
Self-employed	0.09	0.07	0.09	0.08	0.058	0.294
Unemployed	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.927	0.427
Student	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.02	0.000	0.643
Out of labor force	0.24	0.16	0.22	0.25	0.000	0.332
Observations	1105	1926	554	551		

Notes: 36% of all eligible respondents participated in the follow-up survey. Columns 1 to 4 show sample means for the denoted subgroups. Column 5 shows p-values from t-tests comparing the mean of each variable between subjects who took part in the follow-up survey to those who were eligible but did not. The p-value of a joint F-test when regressing a dummy for participation in the follow-up survey on all covariates, omitting the pure control group, is <0.01. Column 6 shows p-values from t-tests comparing the mean of each variable between follow-up subjects that were in T^{74} as compared to those in T^{94}. The p-value of a joint F-test when regressing a dummy for T^{74} on all covariates in the follow-up sample is 0.92.

C Additional correlational evidence

C.1 People's beliefs about the GWG
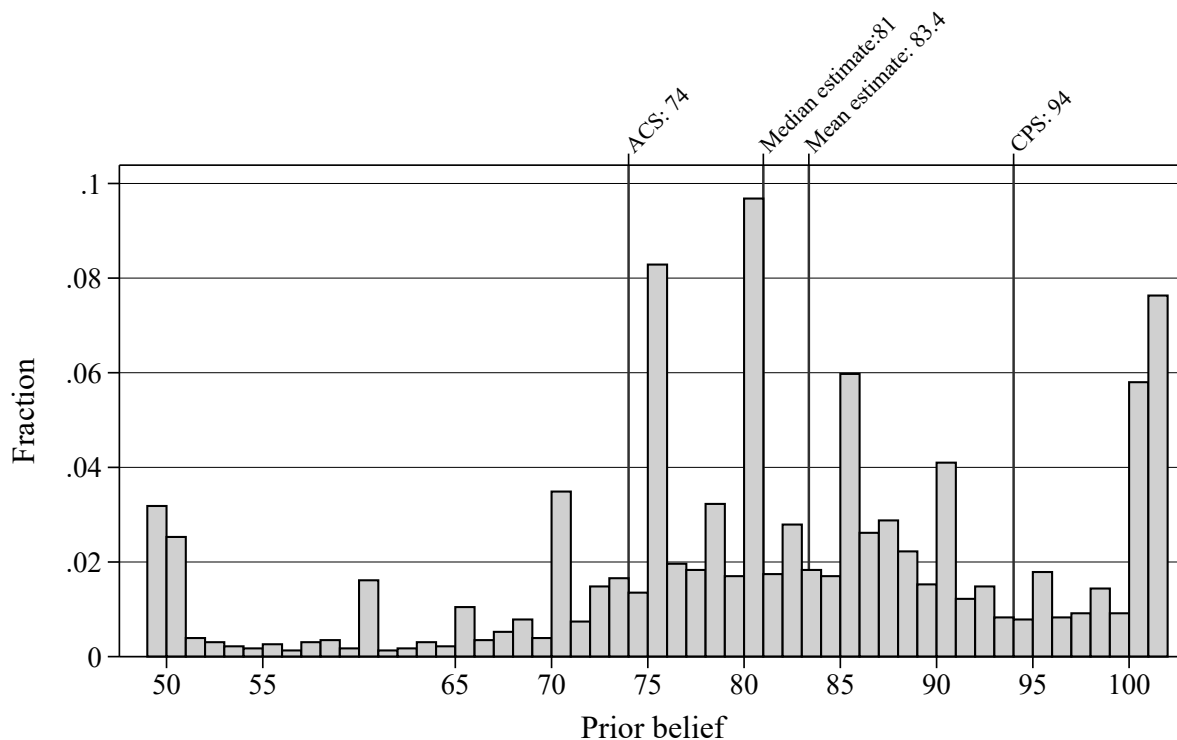
Figure A.9: Distribution of prior beliefs about women's relative wages

Notes: Data base: Observations with incentivized prior beliefs, wave A and B. Graph shows the distribution of respondents' prior beliefs about the baseline wage statistic (women's average wage for every $100 made by a man when both are 45 years old, hold a Bachelor degree and work 40 hours per week as full-time employees). Beliefs range between 0 and 200 by experimental design. The mean (incentivized) belief in the sample is 83.2 (st.dev. 21.3). For better readability, beliefs in this figure are winsorized at 49 and 101.
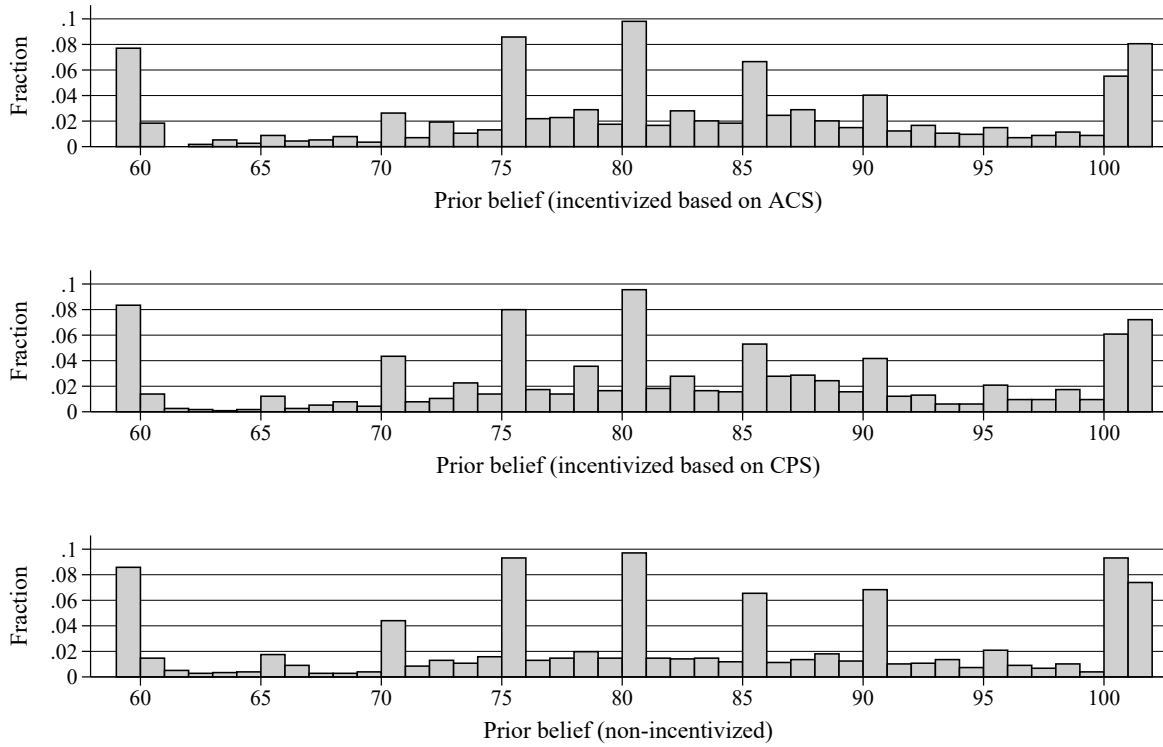
Figure A.10: Distribution of prior beliefs about women's relative wages across conditions
Notes: Data base: All observations. Graph shows the distribution of respondents' prior beliefs about the baseline wage statistic (women's average wage for every $100 made by a man when both are 45 years old, hold a Bachelor degree and work 40 hours per week as full-time employees). The three panels show the prior belief distribution separately by whether the prior belief was incentivized based on the ACS (upper panel), the CPS (middle panel) or not incentivized (lower panel). For better readability, beliefs are winsorized at 59 and 101 for the figure. The median prior belief is 81 in all three conditions. The mean prior belief is statistically similar across the three conditions, corresponding to 83.6 when incentivized based on the ACS, 82.9 when incentivized based on the CPS and 83.5 if not incentivized.
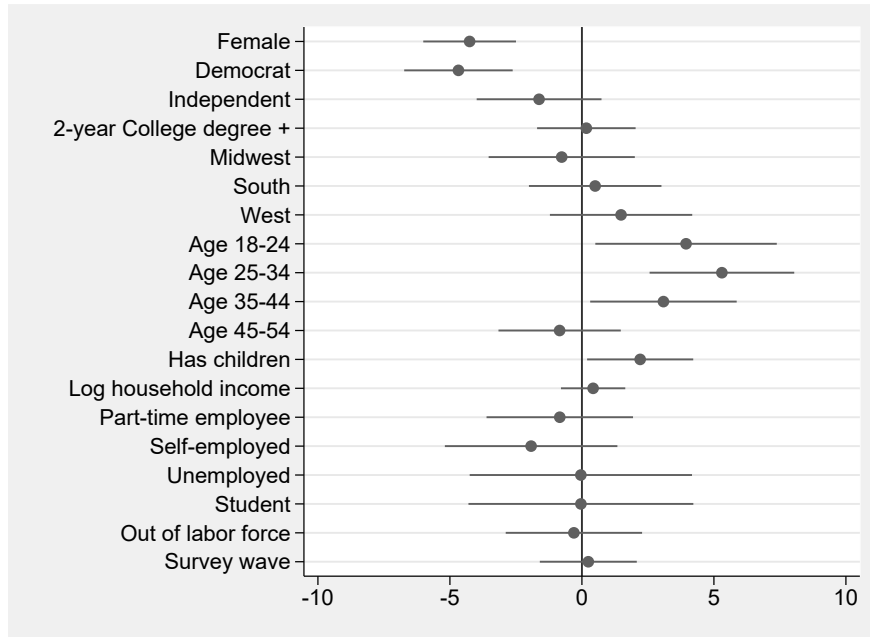
Figure A.11: Predictors of incentivized prior beliefs

Notes: Data base: Observations with incentivized prior beliefs, wave A and B. Graph shows coefficient estimates including 95% confidence intervals for the full set of pre-specified predictors of prior beliefs about the baseline wage statistic. A positive coefficient stands for a higher belief about females' relative wages. A constant and a dummy for "other" political orientation are included in the specification but not shown in the graph. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Omitted categories in the case of dummy variables are: male, Republican (including Independents leaning Republican), less than a 2-year College degree, Northeast, Age 55-65, no children, full-time employed.

Figure A.12 illustrates people's beliefs about the GWG prevailing in groups with varying demographic characteristics. The evidence is consistent with the possibility that respondents underestimate the role of the choice of occupation (Blau and Kahn, 2017) and the widening of the GWG with age[3] (Goldin et al., 2017). Also, respondents on average report a significantly higher perceived GWG for individuals with a high school degree as compared to the baseline statistic, which is suggestive of a mis-perceived role of pure educational attainment as a remedy for the GWG (Blau and Kahn, 2017; Goldin et al., 2006). This interpretation is supported by evidence from the two treatment groups (Figure A.13): Regardless of the treatment group, respondents on average believe that among those with a high school degree the GWG is higher than among those with a Bachelor degree.

Table C.1 illustrates the strong correlation between people's beliefs about the size of the GWG and their related perceptions, such as whether they perceive the GWG to be large or a problem and whether they would like to see more government intervention. Regarding the deep underlying reasons of the GWG, Table E.1 shows that Republicans as well as men

---

[3]The wage statistic about 25-year-olds of course asks not only about a different age group but also about a different cohort than the baseline wage statistic. However, given that the GWG has generally been decreasing over time (Blau and Kahn, 2017), the respondents should definitely report a lower perceived GWG for 25-year-olds nowadays than for 45-year-olds nowadays.
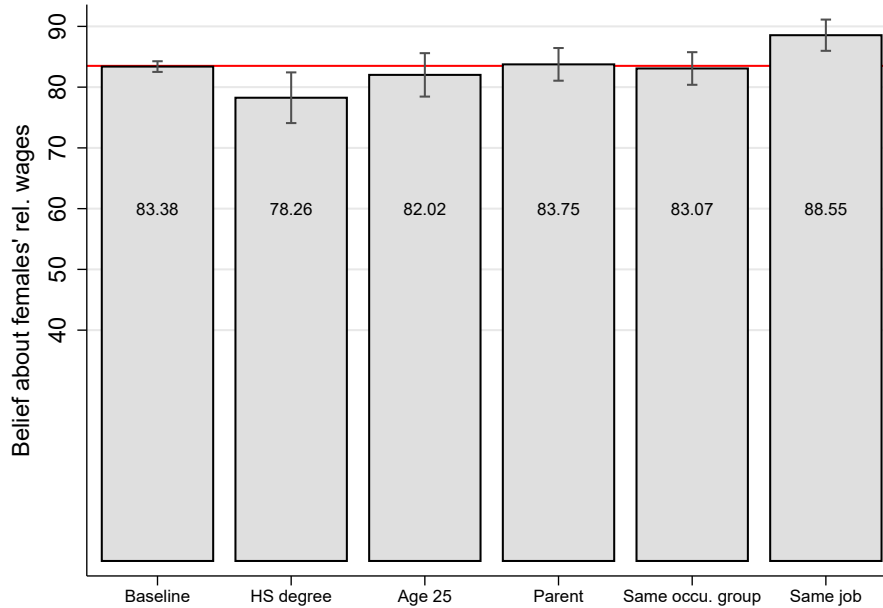
Figure A.12: Beliefs about different wage statistics

Notes: Data base for the left bar: All respondents with incentivized (prior) beliefs. Data base for the remaining bars: Pure control group (All beliefs incentivized, except for the rightmost bar). The left bar represents people's beliefs about the baseline wage statistic, i.e. women's relative wages in the group of 45-year-olds who work 40 hours per week on average as employees and hold a Bachelor's degree. The remaining bars correspond to wage statistics which differ according to the following characteristic, while all remaining characteristics are the same as in the baseline wage statistic: i) high school degree i) age 25, iii) restriction to parents, iv) working in the same occupation group, and v) individuals working in the same job for the same employer.

are relatively more likely to perceive personal and less likely to perceive impersonal factors. Political orientation (gender) is the strongest predictor of people's beliefs about impersonal reasons (personal reasons) (Panel A). Individuals who believe female wages to be higher are less likely to perceive external reasons, especially gender-based discrimination and at the same time more likely to perceive personal reasons (Panel B).
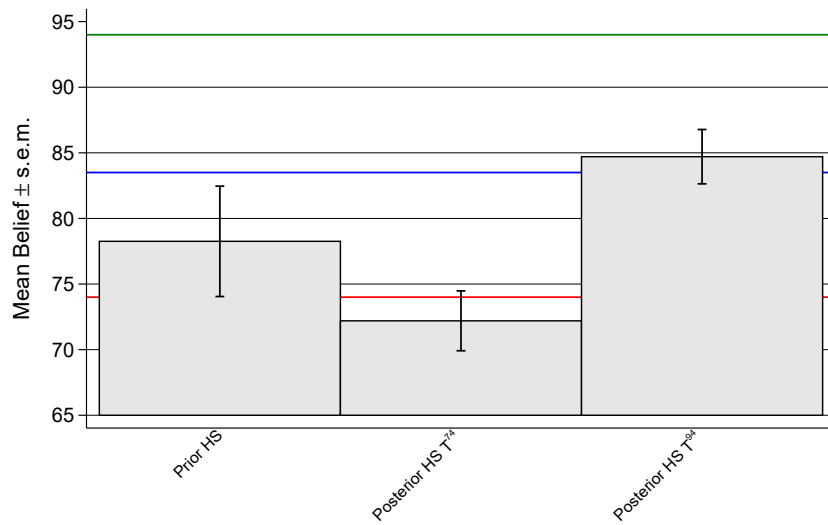
Figure A.13: The perceived role of educational attainment in driving the GWG

Notes: The blue line indicates the mean prior belief about the baseline wage statistic, which refers to females' relative wages in the group of Bachelor graduates who are 45 years old and work 40 hours per week as employees. The red and the green line show the treatment values in T^{74} and T^{94}, respectively. The three bars indicate the mean beliefs in the control group, in T^{74} and T^{94}, about the wage statistic referring to the relative earnings of women in the group of High School graduates who are 45 years old and work 40 hours per week as employees.

Table C.1: Correlates of views related to gender differences in wages

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Perception Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Gender and political orientation				
Democrat	0.577***	0.683***	0.803***	0.691***
	(0.072)	(0.073)	(0.073)	(0.066)
Female	0.173***	0.264***	0.153**	0.181***
	(0.064)	(0.063)	(0.062)	(0.057)
Observations	921	921	921	921
Panel B: Prior belief about GWG				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.815***	-0.849***	-0.595***	-0.729***
	(0.072)	(0.071)	(0.071)	(0.065)
Observations	921	921	921	921
Panel C: Prior, gender, pol. orientation				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.742***	-0.757***	-0.498***	-0.643***
	(0.070)	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.062)
Democrat	0.482***	0.586***	0.739***	0.609***
	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.071)	(0.061)
Female	0.096	0.186***	0.102*	0.115**
	(0.059)	(0.058)	(0.060)	(0.053)
Observations	921	921	921	921
Panel D: Full set of controls				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.739***	-0.760***	-0.509***	-0.647***
	(0.069)	(0.067)	(0.069)	(0.062)
Democrat	0.513***	0.600***	0.730***	0.620***
	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.072)	(0.063)
Female	0.115*	0.209***	0.115*	0.132**
	(0.060)	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.053)
Observations	921	921	921	921

Notes: Data base: Pure control group, both waves, restricted to respondents with prior beliefs between the 5th and the 95th percentile of the distribution. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 3. The variable "prior" is z-scored as well, based on the mean and standard deviation in the full sample. All specifications include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Panels A, C and D control for political orientation "Independent" and "other" in addition to the coefficients shown in the table. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. In Panel D, additional controls are included for census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

C.2 Correlates of behavioral measures of policy demand
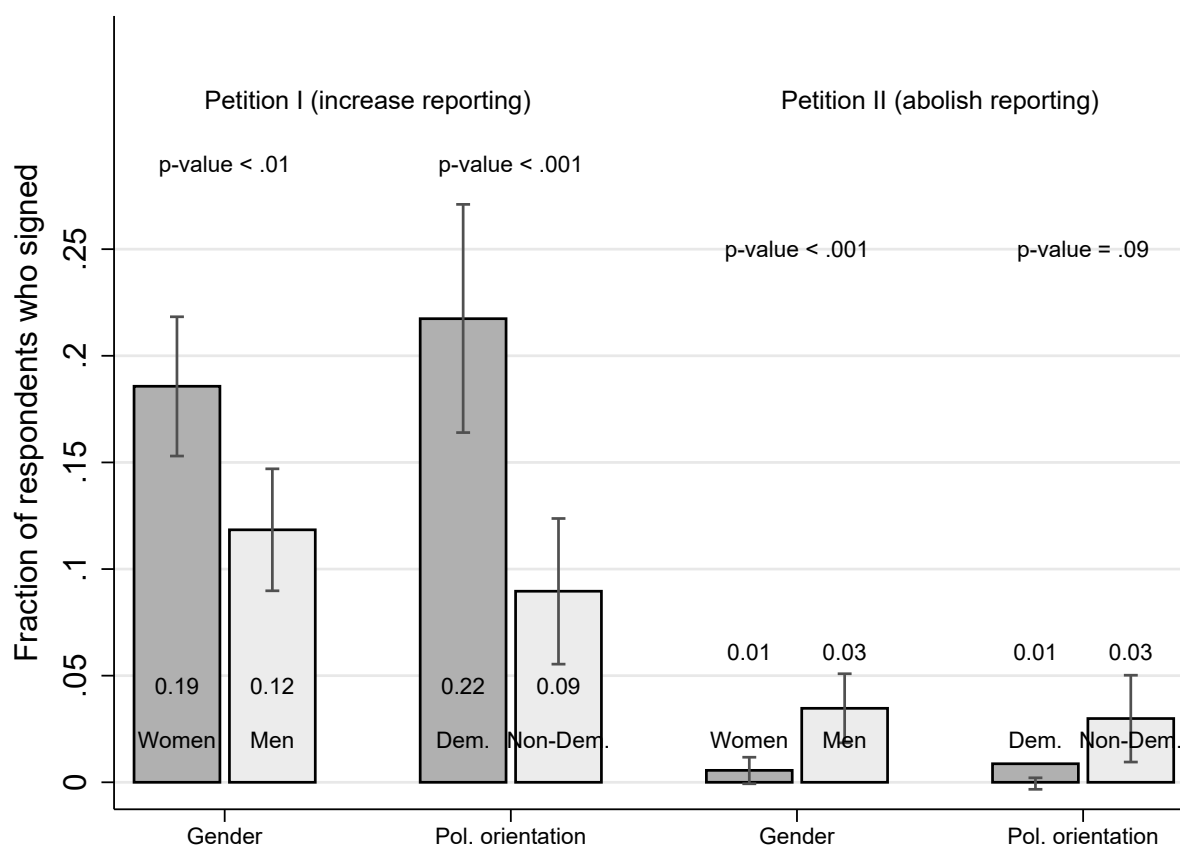
Figure A.14: Propensity to sign a petition: Petition-specific proportion tests

Notes: This graph is based on the number of actual signatures of online petitions made by control group respondents. The bars on gender are based on wave A and wave B. The bars on political orientation are based on wave A only. Democrats include self-identified Democrats as well as Independents leaning Democrat. Non-Democrats refers to all remaining respondents, i.e. Independents, Republicans, Independents leaning Republican and those with "other" political orientation. The height of the bars represents the fraction of respondents per group that signed the respective petition. Whiskers show the 95% confidence intervals around the estimated mean fractions. P-values are based on two-sided petition-specific proportion tests.

Table C.2: Correlates of behavioral proxies of demand for government intervention

	Intention to sign Petition I	Intention to sign Petition II	Amount donated to supportive NGO	Facebook Like
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Gender and political orientation				
Democrat	0.297***	-0.118***	21.375***	0.018
	(0.036)	(0.023)	(6.788)	(0.030)
Female	0.046	-0.068***	-11.384*	-0.005
	(0.032)	(0.019)	(5.990)	(0.026)
Panel B: Prior belief about GWG				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.145***	0.087***	-2.337	-0.044
	(0.032)	(0.022)	(6.045)	(0.027)
Panel C: Prior, gender, pol. orientation				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.103***	0.072***	-0.778	-0.042
	(0.032)	(0.021)	(6.058)	(0.028)
Democrat	0.284***	-0.109***	21.275***	0.013
	(0.036)	(0.023)	(6.815)	(0.030)
Female	0.036	-0.061***	-11.464*	-0.009
	(0.032)	(0.019)	(5.996)	(0.027)
Panel D: Full set of controls				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.111***	0.077***	-1.159	-0.035
	(0.033)	(0.021)	(6.097)	(0.029)
Democrat	0.280***	-0.099***	22.567***	0.030
	(0.037)	(0.023)	(6.998)	(0.030)
Female	0.042	-0.062***	-9.393	-0.019
	(0.033)	(0.019)	(6.248)	(0.027)
Mean outcome (control group)	0.52	0.10	82.02	0.14
Observations	921	921	921	707

Notes: Data base: Pure control group. In Column 4 the sample is restricted to respondents who self-report to have a Facebook account. The dependent variable in Column 1 (Column 2) is a dummy taking on value 1 for respondents who expressed their intention to sign Petition I (Petition II) in the survey. The dependent variable in Column 3 is the respondent's donation decision, ranging from $0 to $300. Column 4 looks at respondents' clicks on a Facebook "like"-button. Additional controls are included for census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student, political orientation "other" and Independent. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D   Additional causal evidence

D.1   First stage treatment effect

Table D.1: Treatment effect on posterior beliefs

	High school Degree	Age 25	Same occupation	Parent	Same job	Posterior (pooled)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Avg. Treatment Effect						
T^{74}	-12.993***	-11.386***	-13.699***	-11.882***	-15.354***	-12.879***
	(1.404)	(1.148)	(1.148)	(1.535)	(1.341)	(0.584)
Observations	676	670	657	523	496	3022
Panel B: Het by Gender						
T^{74}	-12.951***	-9.746***	-14.276***	-9.943***	-14.583***	-12.076***
	(1.945)	(1.711)	(1.717)	(2.104)	(2.347)	(0.868)
T^{74} * Female	-0.085	-3.366	1.118	-3.966	-1.550	-1.607
	(2.804)	(2.329)	(2.461)	(2.912)	(2.923)	(1.193)
p-value [$T^{74} + T^{74}$ x Female]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Female	-1.744	-0.300	-0.071	0.647	-3.458*	-0.823
	(1.912)	(1.472)	(1.554)	(2.019)	(1.938)	(0.783)
Observations	676	670	657	523	496	3022
Panel C: Het by pol. attitude						
T^{74}	-14.182***	-10.803***	-17.548***	-9.643***	-15.860***	-13.755***
	(2.380)	(1.828)	(1.812)	(2.057)	(2.693)	(0.962)
T^{74} * Democrat	3.129	0.480	5.978**	-5.061	0.123	1.610
	(3.183)	(2.649)	(2.410)	(3.142)	(3.379)	(1.313)
p-value [$T^{74} + T^{74}$ x Democrat]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Democrat	-1.730	0.318	-1.867	2.097	-1.085	-0.744
	(2.081)	(1.725)	(1.515)	(2.452)	(2.414)	(0.876)
T^{74} * Independent	-1.472	-4.626	8.617**	0.886	1.274	1.327
	(4.284)	(3.141)	(3.597)	(4.028)	(3.783)	(1.634)
p-value [$T^{74} + T^{74}$ x Independent]	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.014	0.000	0.000
Independent	1.805	2.460	-3.613**	0.305	-0.513	-0.297
	(3.206)	(2.360)	(1.803)	(2.620)	(2.682)	(1.122)
Observations	662	660	643	513	487	2965

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. In Panel C, respondents with "other" political orientation are excluded. The dependent variables correspond to posterior beliefs about females' wages as a percentage of male wages proxied by five different wage statistics. The five wage statistics are similar to the baseline wage statistic employed in the prior belief elicitation (referring to 45-year-old employees with a Bachelor's degree who work 40 hours per week) but differ in one of the following (randomized) characteristics: i) high school degree i) age 25, iii) parent, iv) working in the same occupation group, and v) working in the same job for the same employer. Beliefs take on values between 0 and 200. Columns 1-3 (4-5) are based on wave A (wave B) whereas Column 6 pools observations from Columns 1-5 and includes dummies to control for the specific wage statistic. Additional controls in Panel A: gender and Democrat. Additional controls in all panels: survey wave, prior belief, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table D.2: Heterogeneous treatment effect on views related to the GWG

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Perception Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)

Panel A: Het. by gender

T^{74}	0.630***	0.427***	0.201***	0.413***
	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.050)
T^{74} x Female	-0.066	-0.011	0.084	0.007
	(0.071)	(0.070)	(0.071)	(0.064)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Female]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Female	0.268***	0.302***	0.266***	0.274***
	(0.054)	(0.054)	(0.053)	(0.049)
Democrat	0.526***	0.656***	0.802***	0.665***
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.037)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	3031

Panel B: Het. by pol. orientation

T^{74}	0.602***	0.389***	0.177**	0.385***
	(0.065)	(0.066)	(0.070)	(0.062)
T^{74} x Democrat	-0.029	0.004	0.058	0.014
	(0.080)	(0.079)	(0.080)	(0.073)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Democrat]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
T^{74} x Independent	0.074	0.184*	0.257**	0.171*
	(0.109)	(0.110)	(0.114)	(0.101)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Indep.]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Female	0.230***	0.295***	0.304***	0.273***
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.033)
Democrat	0.539***	0.653***	0.774***	0.659***
	(0.061)	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.055)
Independent	0.165**	0.159*	0.170**	0.166**
	(0.084)	(0.085)	(0.087)	(0.079)
Observations	2974	2974	2974	2974

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. In Panel B, respondents with "other" political orientation were excluded. The dependent variables in Columns 1-3 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1-3. T^{74} is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero otherwise. Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D.2 Perceived trustworthiness and relevance of the information

Respondents in wave A are asked how trustworthy they find the information they received during the survey, how much they trust survey data provided by the Census Bureau in general, and how relevant they find the information received for the discussion about related policies. Note that the trust-related questions were restricted to the control group, which received the randomized information treatment *after* the elicitation of outcomes. The purpose of this restriction was to avoid compromising the follow-up results by questioning the trustworthiness of the information treatment.

In general, the perceived relevance and trustworthiness of the information is very high: 88% of the respondents find the information received trustworthy, the same share trusts survey data provided by the US Census Bureau and 77% of the respondents find the information received at least somewhat relevant for the discussion about related policies. Reassuringly, these shares do not differ across treatment arms.

Table D.3: Perceived trustworthiness and relevance of information

	Info perceived trustworthy	Census survey data trustworthy	Info perceived relevant
	(1)	(2)	(3)
T^{74}	0.028	0.012	-0.008
	(0.028)	(0.029)	(0.019)
Female	-0.000	-0.016	-0.013
	(0.029)	(0.029)	(0.019)
Democrat	0.062**	0.102***	0.035
	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.021)
Mean	0.88	0.88	0.77
Observations	498	474	2012

Notes: Columns 1 and 2 are based on the pure control group of wave A. Column 3 is based on treated respondents of wave A. The outcome variable in column 1 is a dummy taking the value one if the respondent self-reports to find the treatment information "somewhat trustworthy" or "trustworthy", as compared to "somewhat untrustworthy" or "untrustworthy". In column 2, the outcome takes value one if the respondent finds census survey data "somewhat trustworthy", "largely trustworthy" or "fully trustworthy" and zero for "not at all trustworthy" or "not fully trustworthy". The outcome in column 3 takes value one when the respondent finds the information received "somewhat relevant" or "highly relevant" for the policy discussion, and zero for "absolutely irrelevant" or "somewhat irrelevant". Additional control variables are census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D.3 Treatment effect on behavior
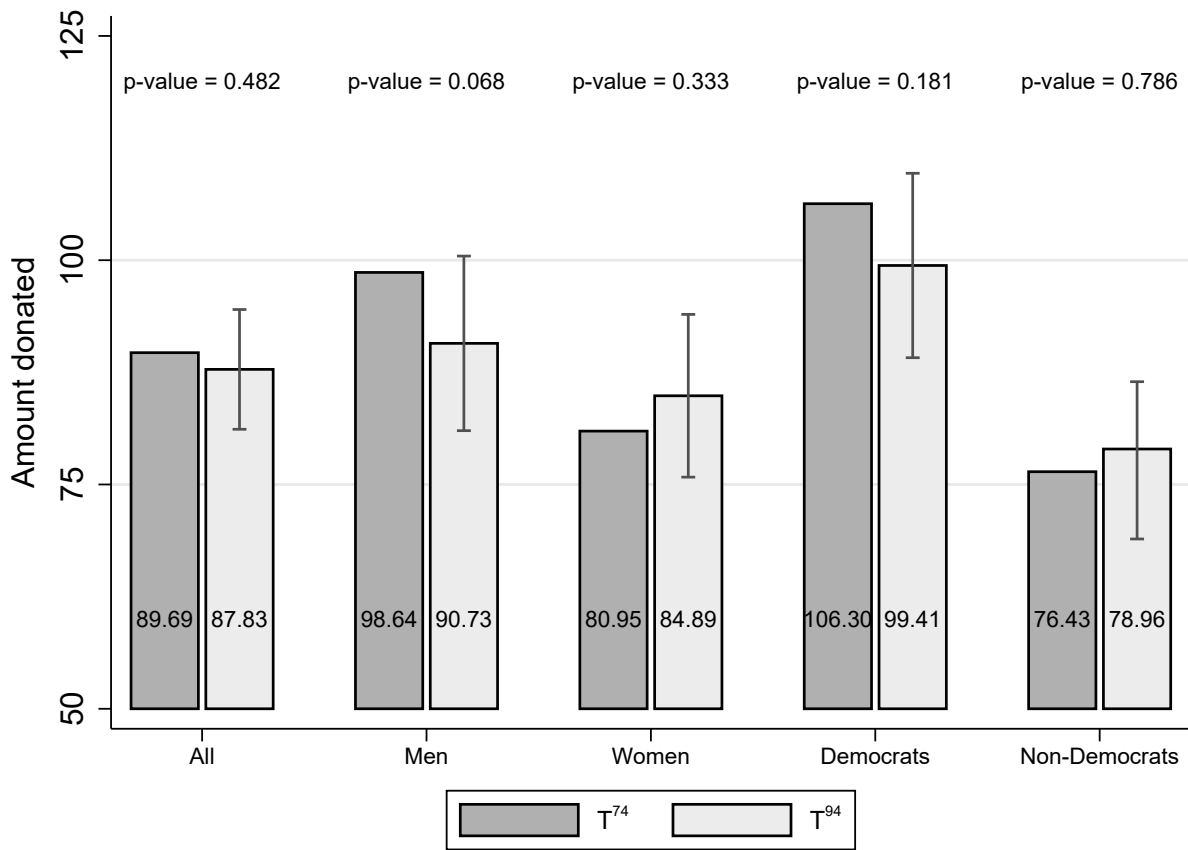
Figure A.15: Donation Decision

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. The graph shows, by treatment group, the mean amounts donated to an NGO that lobbies for policies to support women in the labor market. Donations range between 0 and 300. Whiskers show the 95% confidence interval calculated from a regression of the outcome on an indicator for T^{94} using robust standard errors and controlling for survey wave, prior belief, census region, age group, parental status, log of household income, associate degree or more, full-time, part-time, self-, and unemployed, student and, when possible, gender and political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat.
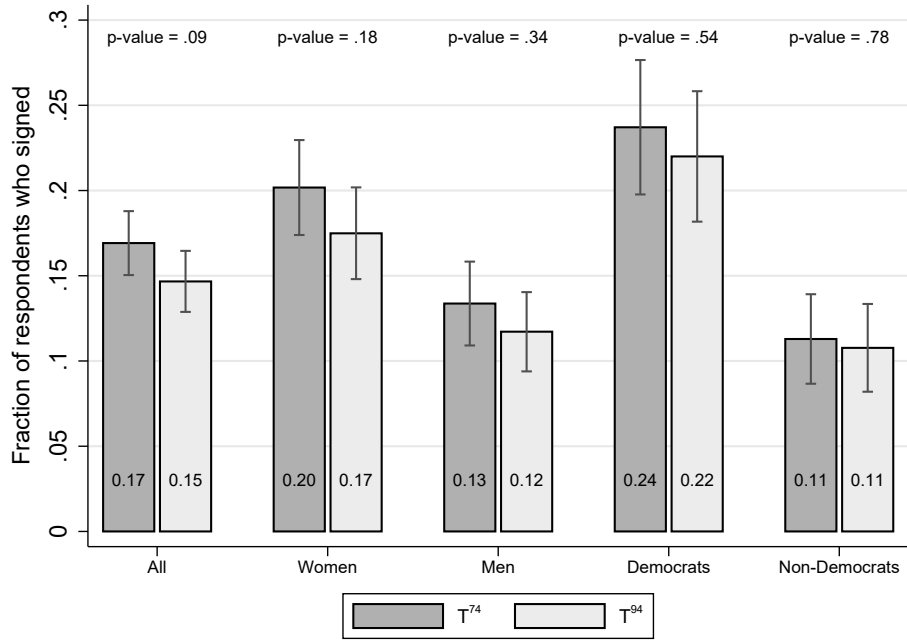
(a) Petition I (Increase reporting)
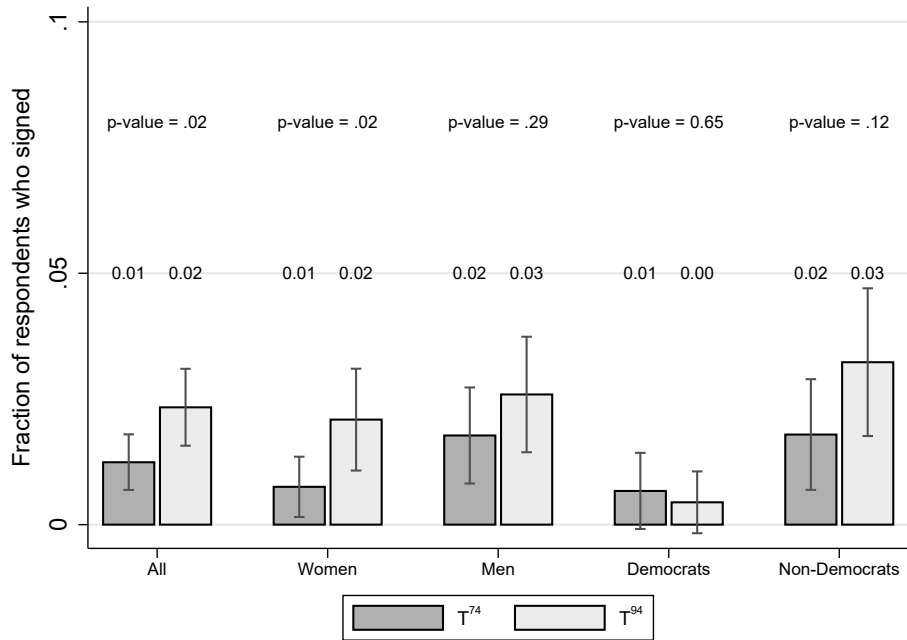
(b) Petition II (Decrease reporting)

Figure A.16: Signatures on real online petitions

Notes: Data base: Count data on the number of actual signatures of real online petitions made by respondents, both treatment groups. The height of the bars represents the fraction of respondents per group that signed Petition I (Petition II) in favor of increasing (decreasing) requirements for companies to report employee wages by gender to a public authority. Whiskers show the 95% confidence intervals around the estimated fractions. Results for the full sample (N=3,031) for men (N=1,467) and for women (N=1,564) are based on both wave A and wave B. Results for Democrats (including Independents leaning Democrat) (N=897) and Non-Democrats (N=1,115) are based on wave A only. P-values refer to two-sided petition-specific proportion tests.

24

D.4 2SLS, elasticities and back-of-the-envelope calculation

This section refers to Section 4.2 of the main paper, where I discuss the magnitude of the main estimated effect of beliefs about the GWG on policy demand. It presents details on the 2SLS specification, the estimated elasticities of policy demand to beliefs, and the back-of-the-envelope calculation discussed in Section 4.2.

Table 4, Panel C of the main paper presents 2SLS results. The idea is to scale the reduced form treatment effect by the first-stage effect on respondents' beliefs about females' relative wages. I apply the following IV regression framework:

$$1^{st} Stage : \text{Belief}_i = \pi_0 + \pi_1 T_i^{74} + \Theta' X_i + u_i \tag{3}$$

$$2^{nd} Stage : Y_i = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 \widehat{\text{Belief}_i} + \Gamma' X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{4}$$

In the first stage, I instrument respondents' z-scored beliefs about females' relative wages, i.e. the first-stage outcome corresponds to the dependent variable in Table 4, Panel A, column 2 in the main paper. Random assignment to T^{74} or T^{94}, respectively, serves as exogenous instrument. In the second stage, I estimate the causal effect of beliefs about the females' relative wages on specific policy demand. The vector of controls, X_i includes census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation.

Monotonicity should hold because one would expect a given respondent assigned to T^{74} to perceive a higher (or at least not a lower) GWG than she would in a counterfactual scenario in which she had been assigned to T^{94}. The first-stage F-statistic corresponds to 41.26, lending credence to instrument relevance. Regarding the exclusion restriction, one should note that beliefs do not exist in isolation but generally consist of several related aspects. For instance, shifting beliefs about the GWG among 30-year-olds will have spillover effects on beliefs about the GWG among 40-year-olds. Therefore, the IV approach should be carefully interpreted as a scaling exercise that allows us to better understand the magnitude of estimated effects.[4]

In Table D.4 I apply a similar approach to estimate elasticities of policy demand to beliefs about females' relative wages. I use the following empirical specification:

$$1^{st} Stage : ln(\text{Belief}_i) = \pi_0 + \pi_1 T_i^{74} + \Theta' X_i + u_i \tag{5}$$

$$2^{nd} Stage : ln(Y_i) = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 ln(\widehat{\text{Belief}_i}) + \Gamma' X_i + \epsilon_i \tag{6}$$

---

[4]For another application of a 2SLS framework to interpret the order of magnitude of causal belief effects, see Haaland and Roth (2020) who study the effect of beliefs about the labor market impact of immigrants on preferences over immigration policy.

Table D.4: Estimated elasticities of policy demand

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
ln($\widehat{\text{Posterior}}$)	-0.193*	-0.273***	-0.183**	0.050	-0.246	-0.014
	(0.107)	(0.089)	(0.079)	(0.111)	(0.157)	(0.078)
Observations	3022	3022	3022	2003	1019	3022

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. Table shows estimated elasticities of policy demand to beliefs about the GWG, pooling across the different versions of posterior beliefs elicited in the survey. The regression is based on a 2SLS specification (see above). Additional controls in all regressions: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Finally, in a back-of-the-envelope calculation, I estimate the share of the Democrat-Republican difference and the gender difference in policy demand that can be explained by the causal effect of differences in (prior) beliefs about the size of the GWG between these groups. Based on pure control group and on the four measures of the GWG for which beliefs were incentivized, I find that the average Democrat-Republican gap in these beliefs corresponds to $4.5 and the average gender gap corresponds to $1.8 (Table D.5, Panel A). The treatment effect on the same four beliefs amounts to $13.36 (Panel B) on average.

Table D.6 illustrates the actual back-of-the-envelope calculation based on the two measures of specific policy demand for which the estimated treatment effect is significant, namely demand for affirmative action programsa and for equal pay legislation. For each of the two measures, I scale the treatment effect such that it corresponds in size to the difference in beliefs between Democrats and Republicans (females and males). Subsequently, I compare the resulting causal effect to the difference in policy demand in the control group between Democrats and Republicans (females and males). I find that the causal effect of Democrat-Republican (female-male) differences in beliefs about the size of the GWG can account for between 5% and 6% of the Democrat-Republican (4% and 9% of the female-male) difference in policy demand, depending on the specific policy. Note that these shares correspond to upper bounds and that in the case of demand for wage transparency, public subsidies for child care and gender quotas the causal effect of beliefs about the GWG plays an even smaller role in explaining differences in policy demand across the political spectrum and between genders.

Table D.5: Correlates of beliefs and treatment effect on beliefs about the GWG

	Outcome: (Incentivized) beliefs about the size of the GWG				
	(1) Age 25	(2) HS degree	(3) Same occu.	(4) Parent	(5) Average
Panel A: Correlations					
Female	-0.973 (3.531)	-0.202 (4.710)	-5.134 (2.748)	-0.899 (2.734)	1.802
Democrat	-5.015 (3.609)	-5.894 (5.394)	-3.106 (3.363)	-4.017 (3.137)	4.508
Observations	164	149	181	269	763
Panel B: Treatment effect					
T^{74}	-11.386 (1.148)	-12.993 (1.404)	-13.699 (1.148)	-15.354 (1.341)	13.358
Observations	670	676	657	496	3022

Notes: Sample for Panel A: Pure control group. Sample for Panel B: Treatment groups. Columns 1-3 are based on wave A, columns 4 and 5 on wave B. The dependent variables correspond to posterior beliefs about females' wages as a percentage of male wages proxied by four different wage statistics. The four wage statistics are similar to the baseline wage statistic employed in the prior belief elicitation (referring to 45-year-old employees with a Bachelor's degree who work 40 hours per week) but differ in one of the following (randomized) characteristics: age 25 (column 1), high school degree (column 2), working in the same occupation group (column 3), parent (column 4). Beliefs take on values between 0 and 200. Additional controls in Panel A: Independent and "other" pol. orientation. Additional controls in Panel B: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, Democrat, Independent and "other" pol. orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table D.6: Back-of-the-envelope calculations

	Affirmative Action	Equal Pay Legislation	Average
Treatment effect T^{74}	0.112	0.115	0.11
Dem. - Rep. difference in policy demand (control group)	0.760	0.685	0.72
Predicted causal effect of Dem. - Rep. difference in prior belief about the GWG	4.51/13.36 * 0.112 = 0.038	4.51/13.36 * 0.115 = 0.039	0.04
Share of Dem. - Rep. difference in policy demand that is explained by causal effect of Dem. - Rep. diff. in prior	0.038 / 0.760 = 0.05	0.039/0.685 = 0.06	**0.06**
Gender difference in policy demand (control group)	0.176	0.338	0.26
Predicted causal effect of gender difference in prior belief about the GWG	1.80/13.36 * 0.112 = 0.015	1.80/13.36 * 0.115 = 0.015	0.02
Share of gender difference in policy demand that is explained by causal effect of gender diff. in prior belief	0.015/0.176= 0.09	0.015/0.338= 0.04	**0.07**

Notes: The block titled "Treatment effect T^{74}" replicates the effect of the information treatment on the two self-reported measures of demand for specific government intervention with statistically significant treatment effects. In the remaining two blocks, I conduct the following steps separately for the political and the gender dimension: First, I list the raw difference in policy demand, based on the control group. In the subsequent row, I calculate the predicted causal effect on policy demand resulting from the raw difference in beliefs about the GWG. Finally, I calculate the share of the raw difference in policy demand that is accounted for by the predicted causal effect of the raw difference in prior beliefs about the GWG.

D.5 Additional evidence from the follow-up survey

If the obfuscation of the link between the main and the follow-up survey did not work and experimenter demand effects were a concern, respondents might try to guess the political orientation of the experimenter based on the treatment information received during the main survey and answer accordingly in the follow-up survey. Table D.7 illustrates the treatment effect on a set of placebo outcomes that are unrelated to gender differences in wages but related to wage inequality between high- and low-skilled employees. Reassuringly, there is no significant treatment effect on these outcomes. In addition, Table D.8 shows that there is no systematic selection into the follow-up survey based on the initial treatment effect in the main survey.

Table D.7: Follow-up survey: No treatment effect on placebo outcomes

	Wage differences btw high- and low-skilled are a prob.	Low skilled workers's wages are fair	Government should support low-skilled workers more
	(1)	(2)	(3)
T[74]	-0.031	-0.045	0.042
	(0.059)	(0.056)	(0.057)
Female	0.199***	-0.062	0.066
	(0.062)	(0.057)	(0.059)
Democrat	0.411***	-0.360***	0.597***
	(0.067)	(0.063)	(0.066)
Observations	1105	1105	1105

Notes: Data base: Follow-up sample (treatment groups only), both waves. Outcomes are based on ratings of agreement with three statements on wage differences between high- and low-skilled employees. They are z-scored using the mean and standard deviation of the full follow-up sample. Additional controls: survey wave, census region, age group, parenthood, log of total household income, at least a two-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Table D.8: Follow-up survey: No role for attrition

	Posterior belief	GWG is a problem	Women's wages are fair	Demand for gvmt. intervention	Demand for affirm. action	Demand for equal pay legislation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Panel A: Main results						
T^{74}	-12.955***	0.425***	-0.306***	0.245***	0.112***	0.115***
	(0.594)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.035)
Female	-1.623***	0.301***	-0.345***	0.311***	0.179***	0.237***
	(0.615)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)
Democrat	0.048	0.664***	-0.440***	0.810***	0.665***	0.618***
	(0.705)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.040)
Observations	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031	3031
Panel B: Main results (follow-up sample)						
T^{74}	-13.044***	0.415***	-0.350***	0.234***	0.157***	0.098
	(1.085)	(0.059)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.060)
Female	-1.934*	0.223***	-0.208***	0.278***	0.174***	0.243***
	(1.107)	(0.060)	(0.061)	(0.059)	(0.060)	(0.061)
Democrat	0.447	0.710***	-0.481***	0.820***	0.741***	0.626***
	(1.239)	(0.066)	(0.067)	(0.067)	(0.068)	(0.068)
Observations	1102	1105	1105	1105	606	606
Panel C: Follow-up results						
T^{74}	-10.668***	0.186***	-0.122**	0.183***	0.009	0.096
	(1.177)	(0.057)	(0.055)	(0.057)	(0.078)	(0.079)
Female	-2.292*	0.272***	-0.155***	0.174***	0.150*	0.197**
	(1.248)	(0.060)	(0.057)	(0.058)	(0.080)	(0.083)
Democrat	0.554	0.547***	-0.459***	0.686***	0.583***	0.642***
	(1.319)	(0.065)	(0.063)	(0.063)	(0.091)	(0.091)
Observations	1089	1105	1105	1105	606	606

Notes: This table shows that there is no systematic selection into the follow-up survey based on the treatment response in the main survey. The sample in Panel A is based on the main survey, treatment groups, both waves. Panel B shows results from the main survey, but the sample is restricted to those who participated in the follow-up. Panel C the results from the follow-up survey based on the follow-up sample. Outcomes are z-scored using the mean and standard deviation in the control group in Panels A and B and using the mean and standard deviation of the full follow-up sample in Panel C. Additional controls: survey wave, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, student, self-employed and unemployed, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Missing observations in Column 1 are due to a bug in the survey software that inhibited the recording of the beliefs in a few cases. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D.6 Compliant subpopulation

Table D.9: First stage, reduced form and 2SLS: Heterogeneity by interest in topic

	Posterior belief about GWG	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Policy Demand Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: First Stage/Reduced Form				
T^{74}	-13.921***	0.645***	0.492***	0.070**
	(0.632)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.028)
T^{74} x read	4.161**	-0.187**	-0.249***	-0.039
	(1.756)	(0.090)	(0.089)	(0.068)
p-value $[T^{74} + T^{74}$ x read]	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.625
Observations	2788	2796	2796	2796

	Policy Demand Index		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Panel B: 2SLS			
$\widehat{\text{Perception}}$	-0.005**	0.108***	0.142***
	(0.002)	(0.042)	(0.053)
$\widehat{\text{Perception}}$ x read	0.002	-0.042	-0.017
	(0.007)	(0.138)	(0.251)
p-value $[\widehat{\text{Perception}} + \widehat{\text{Perception}}$ x read]	0.642	0.618	0.613
Perception measure	Posterior belief about GWG	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem
Observations	2788	2796	2796

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves, sample restricted to those who reported that they either read or did not read about gender differences in wages in the three weeks prior to taking the survey. 235 individuals who reported "not sure" are not included. T^{74} is a dummy that takes value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero for those who received the low wage gap treatment. The variable "read" is a dummy that takes value one for those who self-report that they read about the GWG at some point in the three weeks prior to taking the survey. Panel A reports reduced first stage effects of T^{74} on (raw) posterior beliefs ranging from 0 to 200 (column 1), z-scored perceptions of the GWG as large (column 2) and as a problem (column 3). Column 4 shows reduced form evidence. The dependent variable is a summary index, following Anderson (2008), over demand for the following specific policies: Gender quotas for leading positions, statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs targeted at women, equal pay legislation, wage transparency within companies, a website where gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, and publicly financed subsidies to childcare. Panel B reports 2SLS results with the first stage corresponding to the regressions reported in the same column of Panel A. In the second stage, the outcome variable corresponds to the same summary index of policy demand used in Panel A, column 4. Additional controls in all regressions: survey wave, prior belief, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D.7 Alternative specifications

In this section I consider several alternative specifications in which I exploit variation generated by the two information treatments as compared to the pure control group. I start with the following specification:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 T_i^{74} + \beta_2 T_i^{94} + \Theta^T X_i + u_i. \tag{7}$$

where T^{74} (T^{94}) takes the value one if respondent i receives the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. Given that more than half of the survey participants hold prior beliefs between the two treatment values, 74 and 94, T^{74} constitutes an update towards a higher wage gap for most respondents, whereas the opposite is true for T^{94}. In line with this conjecture, T^{74} (T^{94}) on average leads to a downward- (upward-)shift of respondents' beliefs about females' relative wages, compared to control group respondents (column 1 of Table D.10). People's general perceptions of the GWG move accordingly (columns 2 - 5).

Table D.10: Treatment effect on beliefs about the GWG and related perceptions

	Posterior belief	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Index (2)-(4)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
T^{74}	-5.163***	0.254***	0.179***	0.085**	0.170***
	(0.738)	(0.039)	(0.038)	(0.039)	(0.035)
T^{94}	7.860***	-0.344***	-0.243***	-0.161***	-0.249***
	(0.712)	(0.042)	(0.042)	(0.041)	(0.038)
p-value [T^{74} - T^{94} = 0]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Observations	4052	4065	4065	4065	4065

Notes: Data base: Full sample, both waves. The dependent variable in Column 1 ranges between 0 and 200, those in Columns 2 - 4 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 5 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 2 - 4. T^{74} (T^{94}) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Similarly, compared to the control group, T^{74} has a (small and noisily measured) positive effect and T^{94} has a negative effect on the respondents' demand for statutory affirmative action and for equal pay legislation[5], confirming the robustness of my main findings to including the control group (Table D.11).

---

[5] For equal pay legislation, both effects are noisily measured.

Table D.11: Treatment effect on the demand for specific policies

	Introduce Gender quotas	Increase Affirm. action	Increase Equ. pay legislation	Introduce Wage transp.	Introduce Public website	Increase Publ. child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
T^{74}	0.053	0.031	0.055	-0.070	0.043	-0.059	0.010
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.055)	(0.059)	(0.040)	(0.028)
T^{94}	-0.003	-0.082**	-0.060	-0.059	-0.050	-0.061	-0.046
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.055)	(0.061)	(0.040)	(0.029)
p-value [T^{74} - T^{94} = 0]	0.115	0.001	0.001	0.793	0.139	0.969	0.025
Observations	4065	4065	4065	2510	1555	4065	4065

Notes: Data base: Full sample, both waves. (Column 4 is based on wave A only, column 5 is based on wave B only.) The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 6 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 7 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 6. T^{74} (T^{94}) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Next, I examine whether a convergence in beliefs about the GWG reduces the polarization in attitudes towards government intervention. More specifically, I study how information affects different groups based on whether it constitutes a positive or negative signal compared to the respondents' prior beliefs. I estimate the following specification:

$$
\begin{aligned}
Y_i =& \beta_0 T_i^{74}(74 \leq \text{Prior} \leq 94)_i + \beta_1 T_i^{94}(74 \leq \text{Prior} \leq 94)_i + \\
& \beta_2 T_i^{74}(\text{Prior} < 74)_i + \beta_3 T_i^{94}(\text{Prior} < 74)_i + \\
& \beta_4 T_i^{94}(\text{Prior} < 74)_i + \beta_5 T_i^{94}(\text{Prior} > 94)_i + \Theta^T X_i + u_i
\end{aligned} \tag{8}
$$

where (74≤Prior≤94) is a dummy that takes value one if respondent i's prior belief about females' relative wages lies between 74 and 94, (Prior < 74) is a dummy that takes the value one for beliefs lower than 74 and (Prior > 94) takes the value one for priors larger than 94.

I find that, as expected, the effect of both T^{74} and T^{94} on beliefs about the GWG and general perceptions depends in direction and in magnitude on the deviation of the respondent's prior belief from the treatment value. In other words, respondents exposed to the same information converge in terms of beliefs and closely related perceptions (Table D.12).

Table D.12: Treatment effect on beliefs about the GWG and related perceptions

	Posterior belief	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Index (2)-(4)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
T^{74} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94)	-6.831***	0.299***	0.180***	0.101**	0.194***
	(0.664)	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.047)	(0.040)
T^{94} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94)	7.677***	-0.421***	-0.314***	-0.193***	-0.306***
	(0.656)	(0.050)	(0.050)	(0.052)	(0.046)
p-value [T^{74} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94)]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
T^{74} x (prior < 74)	4.598***	0.056	0.028	0.006	0.030
	(1.728)	(0.067)	(0.063)	(0.066)	(0.057)
T^{94} x (prior < 74)	16.382***	-0.336***	-0.279***	-0.180***	-0.260***
	(1.799)	(0.071)	(0.067)	(0.070)	(0.062)
p-value [T^{74} x (prior < 74) = T^{94} x (prior < 74)]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
T^{74} x (prior > 94)	-10.604***	0.344***	0.347***	0.131	0.256***
	(2.367)	(0.109)	(0.104)	(0.106)	(0.097)
T^{94} x (prior > 94)	-0.610	-0.068	0.075	-0.002	-0.014
	(2.015)	(0.107)	(0.105)	(0.103)	(0.096)
p-value [T^{74} (prior > 94) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.00
p-value [T^{74} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) = T^{74} x (prior < 74)]	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.24	0.02
p-value [T^{74} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) = T^{74} x (prior > 94)]	0.12	0.70	0.14	0.79	0.56
p-value [T^{74} x (prior < 74) = T^{74} x (prior > 94)]	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.31	0.04
p-value [T^{94} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x (prior < 74)]	0.00	0.32	0.67	0.88	0.55
p-value [T^{94} x (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.01
p-value [T^{94} x (prior < 74) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.15	0.03
Control group mean (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94)	83.00	0.05	0.10	0.03	0.05
	605	607	607	607	607
Control group mean (prior < 74)	67.57	0.40	0.36	0.31	0.35
	225	226	226	226	226
Control group mean (prior > 94)	103.45	-0.62	-0.73	-0.47	-0.58
	200	201	201	201	201
Observations	4052	4065	4065	4065	4065

Notes: Data base: Full sample, both waves. The dependent variable in Column 1 ranges between 0 and 200, those in Columns 2-4 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 5 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 2-4. T^{74} (T^{94}) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. (prior < 74) ((prior > 94)) is a dummy that takes value one if the respondent's prior belief is below 74 (above 94), and zero otherwise. (74 ≤ prior ≤ 94) takes the value one for all remaining respondents. Additional controls: (prior < 74), (prior > 94), (74 ≤ prior ≤94), census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

Focusing on policy demand, I first document that, in the pure control group, people's demand for specific policies is larger, the lower their beliefs about the size of the GWG (see the bottom rows of Table D.13), reflecting the correlation between beliefs and policy demand documented in Section 3 of the paper.

For the analysis of treatment effects, I first consider individuals with "moderate" beliefs between 74 and 94. For these individuals T^{94} should lead to a decrease in policy demand whereas T^{74} should lead to an increase. Table D.13 shows that, as expected, this group's demand for statutory affirmative action programs and for equal pay legislation converges towards respondents with very high beliefs about female's relative wages in response to T^{94}. The corresponding reaction of individuals with similar prior beliefs exposed to T^{74} is more noisily measured, but at least qualitatively the increase in demand for equal pay legislation is as expected.

Next, I focus on respondents with "extreme" beliefs below 74. For information to cause convergence in policy demand, T^{74} should have a negative effect on the policy demand of these respondents, given that the treatment information on average means a positive signal about females' relative wages. Empirically, however, I find an (insignificant) increase in demand for both policies in response to T^{74} as compared to similar control group respondents. Moreover, the same group, which is expected to strongly lower their policy demand in response to the sizeable information shock induced by T^{94}, empirically does not do so.

Similarly, respondents with extremely optimistic prior beliefs above 94 do not increase their policy demand as strongly as expected in response to the sizeable negative signal about women's relative wages implied by T^{74}. In sum, the political polarization in terms of specific policy demand at the "extremes" of the prior belief distribution is barely mitigated by providing respondents with identical information.

One plausible reason for the muted reaction of respondents with initially extreme beliefs about females' relative wages is that beliefs are linked to other characteristics that determine how individuals react to information, i.e. it seems that individuals with extreme beliefs to start with are at the same time "dogmatic" about their policy views. The example of beliefs about the GWG and policy views illustrates the limitations of a treatment-control design when it comes to estimating people's elasticity of policy demand to their beliefs. My pre-specified design does not rely on variation in prior beliefs for identification and is therefore immune to the described limitations.

Table D.13: Treatment effect on the demand for specific policies

	Introduce Gender quotas	Increase Affirm. action	Increase Equ. pay legislation	Introduce Wage transp.	Introduce Public website	Increase Publ. child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
T^{74} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94)	0.047	-0.009	0.050	-0.062	0.066	-0.070	0.002
	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.048)	(0.067)	(0.072)	(0.050)	(0.034)
T^{94} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94)	-0.038	-0.109**	-0.112**	-0.088	-0.068	-0.083*	-0.078**
	(0.051)	(0.050)	(0.048)	(0.067)	(0.081)	(0.050)	(0.035)
p-value [T^{74} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94)]	0.07	0.02	0.00	0.64	0.09	0.76	0.01
T^{74} x (prior < 74)	0.085	0.069	0.117	-0.190*	-0.012	-0.025	0.027
	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.086)	(0.103)	(0.125)	(0.079)	(0.056)
T^{94} x (prior < 74)	0.081	-0.080	0.019	-0.232**	0.059	-0.000	-0.010
	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.086)	(0.104)	(0.119)	(0.079)	(0.055)
p-value [T^{74} x (prior < 74) = T^{94} x (prior < 74)]	0.95	0.03	0.18	0.64	0.57	0.74	0.48
T^{74} x (prior > 94)	0.044	0.115	-0.003	0.026	0.048	-0.062	0.018
	(0.099)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.138)	(0.155)	(0.100)	(0.073)
T^{94} x (prior > 94)	0.013	0.024	0.032	0.234*	-0.035	-0.035	0.033
	(0.096)	(0.098)	(0.097)	(0.135)	(0.140)	(0.098)	(0.071)
p-value [T^{74} (prior > 94) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.72	0.29	0.69	0.05	0.59	0.75	0.81
p-value [T^{74} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) = T^{74} x (prior < 74)]	0.68	0.39	0.49	0.29	0.59	0.62	0.70
p-value [T^{74} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) = T^{74} x (prior > 94)]	0.98	0.26	0.63	0.56	0.92	0.95	0.84
p-value [T^{74} x (prior < 74) = T^{74} x (prior > 94)]	0.74	0.72	0.36	0.20	0.76	0.77	0.92
p-value [T^{94} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x (prior < 74)]	0.20	0.76	0.18	0.23	0.38	0.37	0.29
p-value [T^{94} x ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.64	0.22	0.18	0.03	0.84	0.66	0.15
p-value [T^{94} x (prior < 74) = T^{94} x (prior > 94)]	0.58	0.41	0.92	0.01	0.61	0.78	0.63
Control group mean ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94)	-0.04	0.03	0.08	0.05	0.10	0.02	0.03
	607	607	607	299	308	607	607
Control group mean (prior < 74)	0.23	0.22	0.06	0.23	0.05	0.12	0.15
	226	226	226	111	115	226	226
Control group mean (prior > 94)	-0.15	-0.34	-0.35	-0.46	-0.38	-0.24	-0.29
	201	201	201	88	113	201	201
Observations	4065	4065	4065	2510	1555	4065	4065

Notes: Data base: Full sample, both waves. (Column 4 is based on wave A only, column 5 is based on wave B only.) The dependent variables in Columns 1-6 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 7 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1-6. T^{74} (T^{94}) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. (prior < 74) ((prior > 94)) is a dummy that takes value one if the respondent's prior belief is below 74 (above 94), and zero otherwise. ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94) takes the value one for all remaining respondents. Additional controls: (prior < 74), (prior > 94), ($74 \leq$ prior ≤ 94), census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

D.8 Correction for multiple hypothesis testing

To adjust for multiple inference, I follow Anderson (2008) in applying a combined approach: First, I group the main outcome variables of interest into families and test for an overall treatment effect in a highly conservative way. Second, I test for a treatment effect on disaggregated outcomes within each family, allowing for more power in exchange for a small number of Type I errors. In the remainder of this section I describe the implementation of this combined approach and the intuition behind it.

For the first step, I start by reducing the number of outcomes by creating summary indices for the three main pre-specified families of outcomes: i) people's general perceptions related to the GWG ("manipulation check"), ii) self-reported demand for specific policies and iii) beliefs about the prevalence of external factors that may be seen as drivers of the GWG. When constructing an index, I weight its inputs by the inverse of the covariance matrix of the standardized outcomes such that outcomes that are highly correlated with each other receive less weight, while outcomes that are uncorrelated, and thus contain new information, receive more weight. Even though the set of outcomes is now reduced, I am still testing multiple hypothesis. I adjust for this fact by applying the highly conservative method of **family-wise error rate (FWER)** control. Its idea is to fix the probability of *any* Type I error. The corresponding FWER-adjusted p-values (see Table D.14) are calculated using the free step-down resampling methodology of Westfall and Young (1993). They can be interpreted similar to standard p-values except that they stand for the probability that *at least one* true null hypothesis is rejected across the three regressions, when the corresponding null-hypothesis is rejected. As Table D.14 illustrates, the overall treatment effect is robust to FWER-adjustment.

Second, for larger sets of more disaggregated outcomes, I control for the **false discovery rate (FDR)** or the *proportion* of rejections in the family of outcomes that are "false discoveries", i.e. Type I errors (Benjamini et al., 2006). Compared to the highly conservative FWER-control, this method allows a small number of Type I errors in exchange for more power. I present "sharpened q-values" for all tests of a treatment effect on the disaggregated variables within each of the three main families of outcomes. The corresponding results are reported in Tables 4 and 7 in the main paper. The "sharpened q-values" reflect the proportion of Type I errors as a share of all rejections of null hypothesis in the family that has to be allowed, such that the respective null hypothesis can still be rejected.

Table D.14: Robustness of main treatment effect to FWER control

| | Outcome: Summary Index over... | | |
	(1) General Perceptions	(2) Spec. Policy Demand	(3) Perceived Imp. Reasons
T^{74}	0.417***	0.056**	0.111***
Standard p-value	(0.000)	(0.025)	(0.001)
FWER-adjusted p-value	[0.000]	[0.013]	[0.002]
Female	0.277***	0.203***	0.251***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Democrat	0.665***	0.594***	0.442***
	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)
Observations	3031	3031	2012

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. Column 3 is based on wave A only. The table demonstrates the robustness of the overall treatment effect on the pre-specified main sets of outcomes to family-wise error rate (FWER)-control (Anderson, 2008). I apply FWER control to the following summary indices: i) general perceptions of gender differences in wages ("manipulation check") (Column 1), ii) self-reported demand for specific policies (Column 2) and iii) the perceived prevalence of impersonal reasons that potentially drive the GWG (Column 3). Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed and unemployed, student, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust p-values are in parenthesis and FWER-adjusted p-values are in squared brackets. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

E   Additional evidence on mechanisms

E.1   Self-interest, fairness concerns, political spectrum and perceived effectiveness
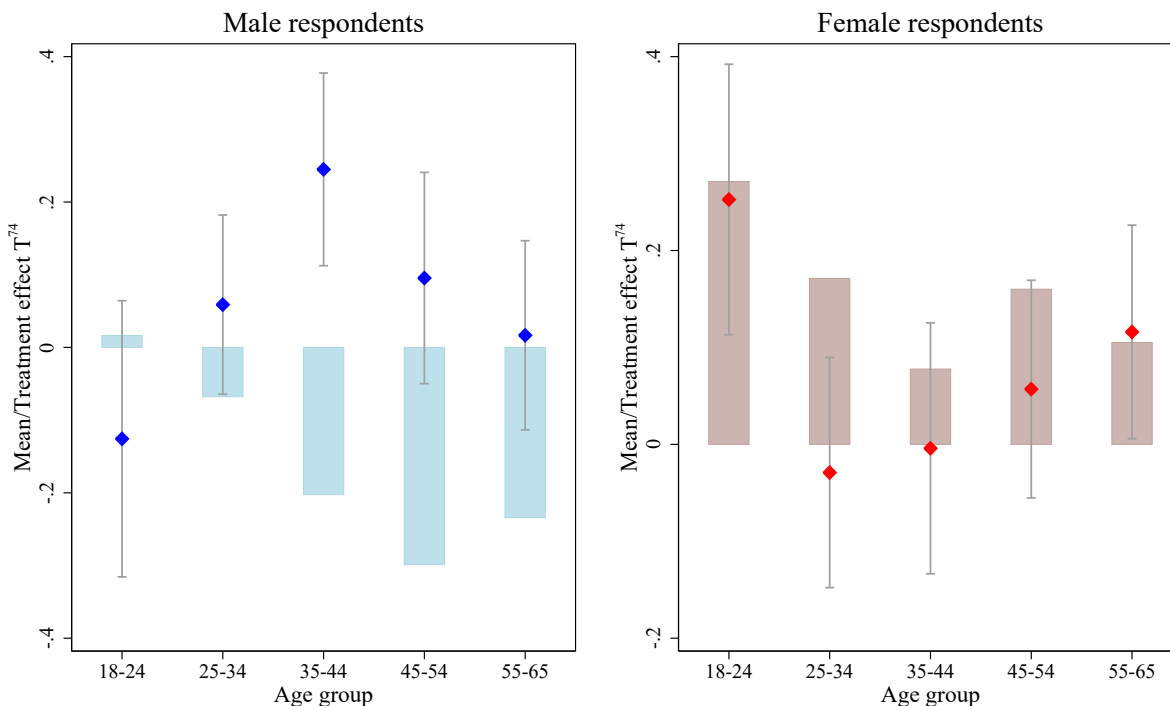
Figure A.17: Heterogeneity in policy demand by gender x age

Notes: Data base: All observations, wave A and B. Left panel: male respondents; right panel: female respondents. The bars represent control group means and the point estimates represent treatment effects (i.e. differences in means between T^{74} and T^{94}), including 90% confidence intervals. Dependent variable: Summary index over self-reported demand for the following specific policies: Gender quotas for leading positions, statutory affirmative action programs such as training and outreach programs targeted at women, equal pay legislation, wage transparency within companies, a website where gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, and publicly financed subsidies to childcare. Additional controls for the treatment effects are survey wave, prior belief, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed and unemployed, student, Democrat (including Independents leaning Democrat), Independent and "other" political orientation.
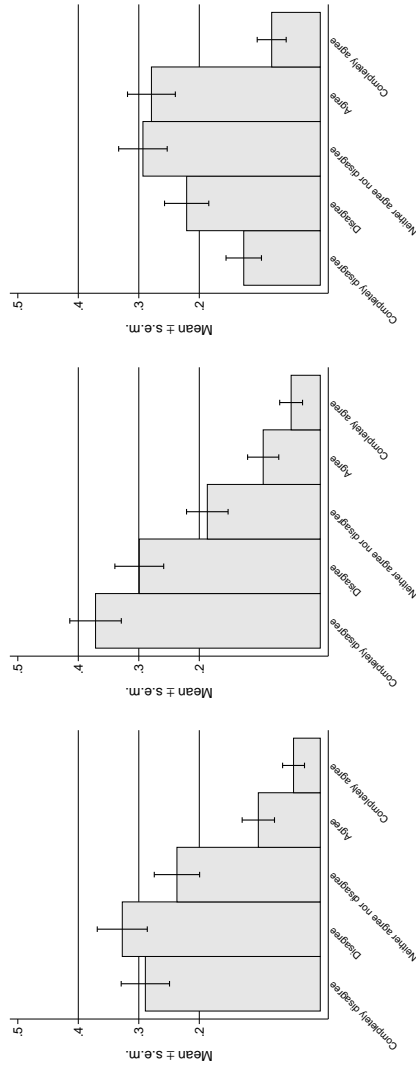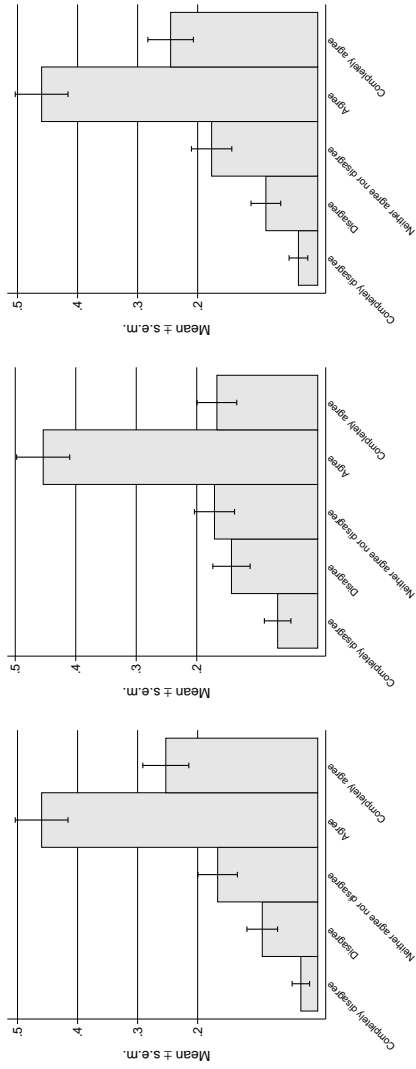
Figure A.18: Distribution of perceived underlying factors

Notes: Graphs are based on the control group, Wave A. Histograms are based on survey items capturing respondents' (dis-)agreement with six different statements referring to the prevalence of factors that may potentially be seen as drivers of the GWG. Answers are measured on 5-point-scales ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree". The top panel shows respondents' perceived prevalence of external factors, namely i) gender-based discrimination in labor markets, ii) society making it more difficult for women than for men to combine work and family iii) a differential encouragement of men and women to pursue ambitious careers. The bottom panel shows perceptions of personal factors, namely i) ambitions, ii) talents and iii) preferences.

Table E.1: Correlates of perceived reasons

	Impersonal Factors				Personal Factors			
	(1) Discrimination	(2) Socialization	(3) Work-Family	(4) Index	(5) Ambitions	(6) Talents	(7) Preferences	(8) Index
Panel A: Gender, pol. orientation								
Democrat	0.765***	0.419***	0.049	0.409***	-0.326***	-0.396***	-0.430***	-0.387***
	(0.099)	(0.105)	(0.104)	(0.072)	(0.099)	(0.099)	(0.101)	(0.082)
Female	0.193**	0.275***	0.095	0.182***	-0.450***	-0.498***	-0.447***	-0.462***
	(0.088)	(0.094)	(0.093)	(0.063)	(0.088)	(0.085)	(0.090)	(0.071)
Observations	443	443	443	443	443	443	443	443
Panel B: Prior belief about GWG								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.643***	-0.301***	-0.100	-0.349***	0.330***	0.305***	0.452***	0.373***
	(0.095)	(0.101)	(0.097)	(0.071)	(0.096)	(0.099)	(0.085)	(0.077)
Observations	443	443	443	443	443	443	443	443
Panel C: Prior, gender, pol. orient.								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.516***	-0.213**	-0.074	-0.270***	0.262***	0.217**	0.367***	0.292***
	(0.094)	(0.100)	(0.099)	(0.069)	(0.095)	(0.097)	(0.084)	(0.074)
Democrat	0.684***	0.386***	0.038	0.367***	-0.285***	-0.362***	-0.373***	-0.342***
	(0.097)	(0.105)	(0.105)	(0.072)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.100)	(0.082)
Female	0.156*	0.260***	0.090	0.164***	-0.432***	-0.483***	-0.421***	-0.441***
	(0.086)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.062)	(0.087)	(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.071)
Observations	443	443	443	443	443	443	443	443
Panel D: Full set of controls								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.535***	-0.267***	-0.066	-0.289***	0.271***	0.218**	0.391***	0.305***
	(0.093)	(0.100)	(0.099)	(0.069)	(0.095)	(0.096)	(0.084)	(0.073)
Democrat	0.681***	0.356***	0.010	0.347***	-0.303***	-0.372***	-0.400***	-0.361***
	(0.099)	(0.110)	(0.109)	(0.074)	(0.105)	(0.106)	(0.105)	(0.086)
Female	0.180**	0.260***	0.091	0.172***	-0.428***	-0.492***	-0.447***	-0.453***
	(0.087)	(0.096)	(0.099)	(0.064)	(0.092)	(0.090)	(0.095)	(0.074)
Observations	443	443	443	443	443	443	443	443

Notes: The sample is restricted to the pure control group of wave A with prior beliefs between the 5th and the 95th percentile of the distribution. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 and 5 - 7 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 (Column 8) is a summary index over the dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 (Columns 5 - 7). The variable "prior" is z-scored as well, based on the mean and standard deviation in the full sample. All specifications include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Panels A, C and D control for political orientation "Independent" and "other" in addition to the coefficients shown in the table. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. In Panel D, additional controls are included for census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table E.2: Heterogeneous treatment effect on beliefs about underlying factors

	Impersonal Factors				Personal Factors			
	(1) Discrimination	(2) Socialization	(3) Work-Family	(4) Index	(5) Ambitions	(6) Talent	(7) Preferences	(8) Index
Panel A: Gender								
T^{74}	0.240***	0.017	-0.023	0.081*	0.001	-0.010	0.010	0.002
	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.064)	(0.047)	(0.067)	(0.062)	(0.061)	(0.053)
T^{74} * Female	-0.024	-0.006	0.198**	0.060	0.060	0.053	0.080	0.066
	(0.084)	(0.091)	(0.090)	(0.064)	(0.089)	(0.084)	(0.087)	(0.072)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Female]	0.000	0.862	0.006	0.001	0.294	0.460	0.147	0.167
Female	0.252***	0.271***	0.148**	0.221***	-0.497***	-0.445***	-0.418***	-0.451***
	(0.061)	(0.064)	(0.065)	(0.046)	(0.064)	(0.060)	(0.062)	(0.052)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012
Panel B: Pol. orientation								
T^{74}	0.307***	-0.013	0.059	0.125**	0.053	0.068	0.138*	0.092
	(0.080)	(0.080)	(0.075)	(0.059)	(0.074)	(0.071)	(0.071)	(0.058)
T^{74} * Democrat	-0.132	-0.022	-0.027	-0.062	-0.049	-0.089	-0.155	-0.103
	(0.095)	(0.103)	(0.101)	(0.073)	(0.100)	(0.095)	(0.097)	(0.081)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Democrat]	0.001	0.583	0.626	0.152	0.955	0.736	0.806	0.841
T^{74} * Independent	-0.060	0.180	0.085	0.062	-0.010	-0.070	-0.141	-0.080
	(0.129)	(0.137)	(0.131)	(0.097)	(0.131)	(0.126)	(0.126)	(0.105)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Independent]	0.014	0.134	0.180	0.015	0.692	0.980	0.981	0.890
Democrat	0.758***	0.423***	0.234***	0.473***	-0.249***	-0.234***	-0.354***	-0.288***
	(0.069)	(0.071)	(0.070)	(0.052)	(0.069)	(0.064)	(0.068)	(0.055)
Independent	0.437***	0.087	-0.058	0.158**	0.014	-0.012	-0.121	-0.048
	(0.096)	(0.102)	(0.099)	(0.072)	(0.094)	(0.091)	(0.091)	(0.075)
Observations	1974	1974	1974	1974	1974	1974	1974	1974

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, wave A. In Panel C, respondents with "other" political orientation were excluded. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 and 5 - 7 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group.The dependent variable in Column 4 (Column 8) is a summary index over the dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 (Columns 5 - 7). Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Panel A also controls for Democrat and Panel B for gender, in addition to the variables shown in the Table. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table E.3: Treatment effect on perceived fairness of women's wages

	Perceived fairness of women's wages			Perceived fairness of own wage	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
T^{74}	-0.304***	-0.201***	-0.284***	-0.056	-0.053
	(0.034)	(0.054)	(0.047)	(0.036)	(0.050)
T^{74} x female		-0.205***			-0.007
		(0.069)			(0.071)
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x female]		0.000			0.233
T^{74} x Democrat			-0.046		
			(0.069)		
p-value [T^{74} + T^{74} x Democrat]			0.000		
Female	-0.342***	-0.239***	-0.342***	-0.221***	-0.217***
	(0.035)	(0.048)	(0.035)	(0.037)	(0.050)
Democrat	-0.435***	-0.433***	-0.412***	-0.156***	-0.156***
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.051)	(0.041)	(0.041)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2946	2946

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. In columns 4 and 5 the sample is restricted to individuals who are working or have ever worked. The outcome variables are based on subjective fairness ratings of women's wages (one's personal wage), elicited on a 5-point scale and z-scored based on the mean and standard deviation in the control group. Additional controls: survey wave, census region, age group, parenthood, log of total household income, at least a two-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.
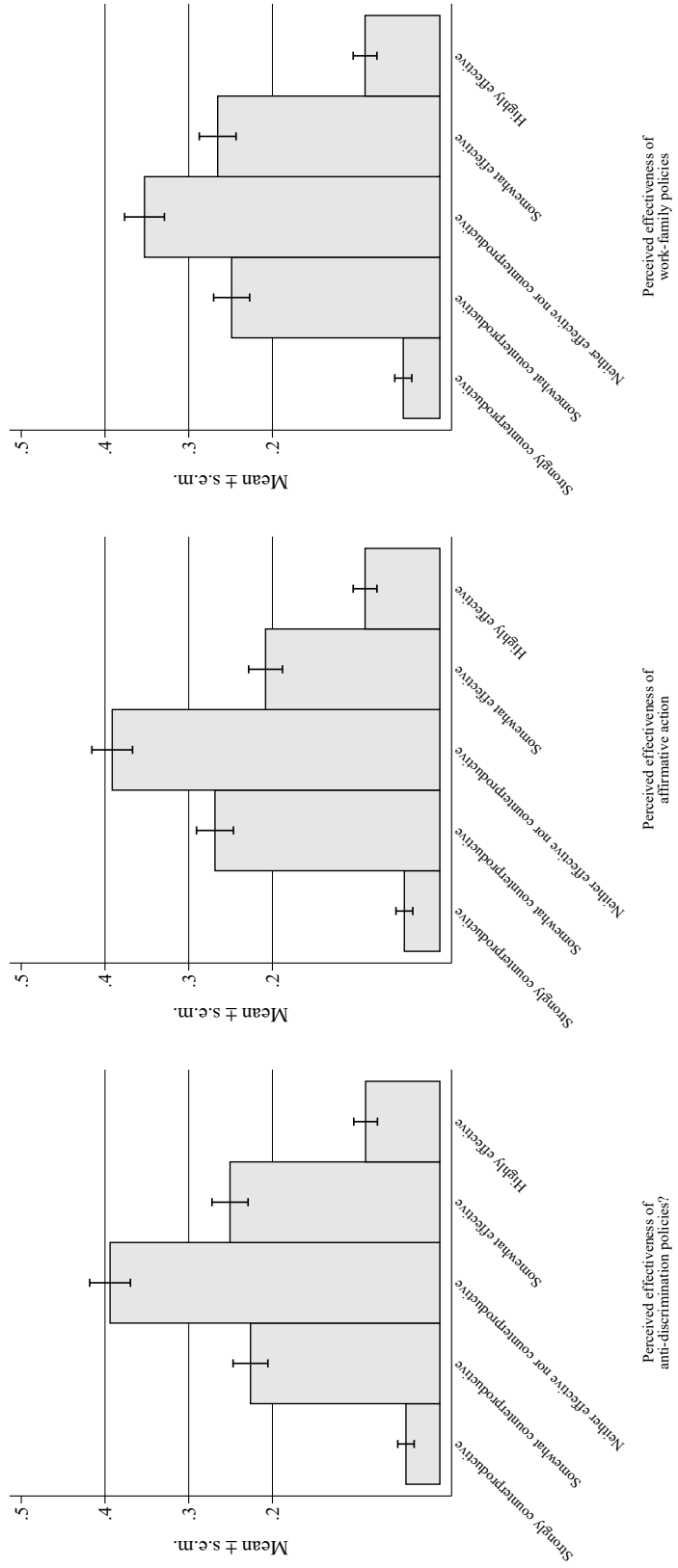
Figure A.19: Perceived effectiveness of policy intervention

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, wave B (N=1,555). Each subfigure shows a histogram illustrating responses to a survey question on how effective respondents perceive the following types of government intervention to be: i) policies that help to detect and prevent discrimination, such as equal pay legislation, reporting requirements for companies and wage transparency (left figure), ii) policies that actively support women's progress in the labor market, such as statutory training and outreach programs targeted at women (middle) and iii) policies that help women combine work and family responsibilities, such as public subsidies to child care (right figure).

E.2 The role of other beliefs and preferences

Beliefs about the size of the GWG do have a meaningful and significant effect on policy demand. Quantitatively, however, this causal effect cannot account for the strong disagreement about the optimal degree of government intervention between Democrats and Republicans and between females and males.

In Table E.4 I compare the role of beliefs about the size of the GWG to the role of other beliefs and preferences in accounting for the political polarization around government intervention to support women in the labor market. Using the summary index of self-reported demand for specific policies as the outcome of interest, I start by documenting that Democrats and females in the control group are, on average, 0.6 and 0.3 of a standard deviation more in favor of specific government intervention to support women in the labor market than Republicans and men, respectively (Table E.4, Column 1). In a correlational exercise, people's quantitative beliefs about the size of the GWG account for a mere 3% of the political and 10% of the gender difference in policy demand (column 2).

I subsequently account for measures of people's beliefs about potential costs of government intervention to different stakeholders: In column 3, I add a summary index of beliefs about the costs of polices that support women in the labor market in the form of monetary costs for the public and bureaucracy and distortions created for companies. In column 4 I add a summary index of beliefs about adverse effects for men through the advancement of women in the labor market and through policies that actively support women. Accounting for either of these measures in addition to prior beliefs reduces the partisan difference in policy demand down to two thirds and the gender difference to around 60 to 70% of its initial value, respectively. Both measures of perceived costs of government intervention have a large and direct impact on respondents' policy demand, i.e. a one standard deviation increase in either of them leads to a decrease of around 25% of a standard deviation in policy demand. The interaction effects with prior beliefs about females' relative wages point in the expected direction, i.e. higher perceived costs mute the effect of the perceived size of the GWG on policy demand. The interaction terms are small and noisy, however, whereas the direct effect of perceived costs is precisely estimated.

Next, I separately control for aspects of people's preferences that may potentially be important in shaping policy views in the gender context. I find that people's gender role attitudes, i.e. whether they prefer a traditional division of labor between men and women, accounts for some of the polarization in policy demand (Column 5), but the coefficient becomes insignificant when I jointly control for all additional measures of beliefs and preferences (Column 7). A measure of people's preferred role for the government in the context of inequality, in contrast, is highly predictive for policy demand. It is based on respondents' agreement with the statement "Some people are tall, others are short. Some people are smart, others not. Inequalities exist and it is not the government's job to compensate for them." A one standard deviation increase in agreement with this statement is associated with a decrease

Table E.4: Importance of other beliefs and preferences

	Policy Demand (Index)						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Democrat	0.605***	0.584***	0.404***	0.391***	0.515***	0.387***	0.296***
	(0.071)	(0.070)	(0.070)	(0.073)	(0.072)	(0.066)	(0.069)
Female	0.304***	0.273***	0.218***	0.176***	0.235***	0.188***	0.161***
	(0.061)	(0.062)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.061)	(0.060)	(0.056)
Prior belief		-0.203***	-0.208***	-0.201***	-0.187***	-0.137**	-0.162***
(z-scored)		(0.067)	(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.069)	(0.060)	(0.058)
High costs			-0.249***				-0.119***
			(0.038)				(0.045)
High costs x prior			0.099				0.101
			(0.068)				(0.103)
Adverse effects men				-0.263***			-0.116**
				(0.038)			(0.049)
Adv. effects x prior				0.055			-0.073
				(0.068)			(0.107)
Traditional gender role attitudes					-0.139***		0.011
					(0.036)		(0.038)
Traditional GRA x prior					0.101		0.069
					(0.062)		(0.074)
No role for government						-0.287***	-0.182***
						(0.033)	(0.036)
No role for gov. x prior						0.037	-0.039
						(0.061)	(0.078)
R²	0.21	0.23	0.34	0.33	0.26	0.35	0.40
Observations	474	474	474	474	474	474	474

Notes: Data base: Wave B, pure control group. The sample is restricted to respondents with prior beliefs about female's relative wages between the 5th and the 95th percentile of the distribution. The outcome variable is a summary index over the six self-reported z-scored measures of demand for specific policies (see the notes of Table 4 for more detail). Additional controls: Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat, the omitted group is Republicans, including Independents leaning Republican. The measure of prior beliefs introduced in column 2 is a z-scored measure of beliefs about the baseline wage statistic referring to the wage of a female for every $100 made by a male, when both are 45-year-old full-time employees with a Bachelor's degree. Column 3 introduces a summary index of z-scored beliefs about i) monetary costs, ii) distortions and iii) bureaucracy caused by government intervention to support women in the labor market. Column 4 introduces a summary index of beliefs that i) an advancement of women negatively affects men in the labor market and ii) policies that support women in the labor market lead to a reverse discrimination of men. Column 5 introduces a z-scored measure of preference for traditional gender roles and Column 6 introduces a z-scored measure of a preference for a limited role of the government in the context of inequality. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at *10%, **5%, ***1%.

of almost 0.3 standard deviations in policy demand (column 6). Maybe surprisingly, this

effect is independent of beliefs about the size GWG. The unaccounted partisan gap in policy demand shrinks to 64% of its original value and the gender gap shrinks to 62% of its initial value when I account for this measure in addition to prior beliefs about the GWG.

Together, the described measures of beliefs and preferences have substantial explanatory power for the political polarization around gender policies, i.e. they account for around half of the partisan and the gender difference in policy demand. Moreover, the total share of explained variation increases by 100% through the full set of controls, whereas beliefs about the size of the GWG lead to an increase in the R^2 of only 2% compared to the simple specification in column 1.

Given that this exercise is only correlational, it should be interpreted cautiously. Also, it does not imply that individuals do not take the extent of gender-based wage inequality into account. In fact, the causal evidence presented in Section 4 illustrates that there is a meaningful and statistically significant role of beliefs about the GWG in shaping people's demand for some policies. However, the correlational evidence is consistent with a world in which people's deeply-rooted preferences and world views are more important than their beliefs about factual inequality in shaping their demand for specific government intervention. This finding is in line with concurrent evidence on an important role for stable "cultural" values in shaping policy views (Luttmer and Singhal, 2011).

F   Additional results on beliefs and their origins

Table F.1: Incentivized vs. unincentivized beliefs about the GWG

| | Outcome variable: Prior belief about gender wage gap | | | | | |
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Incentive	-0.384	1.596*	-0.505	1.853*	1.612*	1.891*
	(0.689)	(0.908)	(1.010)	(1.111)	(0.912)	(1.114)
Incentive x male		-3.974***		-5.107***	-3.866***	-4.977***
		(1.357)		(1.660)	(1.365)	(1.665)
Incentive x Republican			0.478	-0.762		-0.912
			(1.549)	(1.902)		(1.914)
Inc. x male x Republican				3.034		3.062
				(2.868)		(2.889)
Male	6.615***	8.847***	5.510***	9.487***	9.279***	9.907***
	(0.815)	(1.142)	(0.981)	(1.281)	(1.196)	(1.344)
Republican	2.398**	2.376**	4.468***	2.801*	2.334**	
	(1.183)	(1.181)	(1.328)	(1.559)	(1.181)	
Male x Republican	-1.660	-1.659	-0.548	-3.383	-1.665	-3.135
	(1.431)	(1.431)	(1.547)	(2.153)	(1.431)	(2.344)
Constant	69.507***	68.358***	67.309***	68.197***	68.726***	70.742***
	(5.379)	(5.396)	(6.197)	(5.422)	(5.412)	(5.516)
Baseline controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Control for response time x gender	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Control for resp. time x (Repub. and gender x Repub.)	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Observations	4065	4065	4065	4065	4065	4065

Notes: Data base: Full sample, both waves. The dependent variable is the prior belief about females' relative wages, ranging between 0 and 200 (mean=83,5; median=81). Baseline controls are survey wave, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, student, self-employed and unemployed, Independent and "other" political orientation. Republicans include Independents leaning Republican. The additional control for response time in Columns 5 and 6 is based on the time, in seconds, the respondent spent on the prior belief elicitation during the survey (5th percentile corresponds to 18 seconds, 95th percentile corresponds to 3 minutes, the maximum is 46 minutes). In Column 5, this measure is interacted with the male-dummy, in Column 6 with the male-dummy, the Republican-dummy, and the interaction of the male and the Republican dummy. The results are robust to using a winzorized measure (top 5%) of response time. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table F.2: Correlates of propensity to acquire additional information

	Willingness to pay for progressive info				Willingness to pay for traditional info			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Democrat	0.417***	0.377***	0.124	0.115	-0.209*	-0.195*	-0.147	-0.143
	(0.108)	(0.107)	(0.113)	(0.113)	(0.107)	(0.107)	(0.124)	(0.123)
Female	0.157	0.142	0.052	0.049	-0.111	-0.105	-0.089	-0.087
	(0.097)	(0.096)	(0.095)	(0.095)	(0.095)	(0.096)	(0.098)	(0.098)
Prior		-0.244**		-0.143		0.086		0.066
		(0.096)		(0.095)		(0.110)		(0.115)
Policy Demand (Index)			0.410***	0.390***			-0.086	-0.077
			(0.067)	(0.069)			(0.081)	(0.084)
Observations	443	443	443	443	443	443	443	443

Notes: Data base: Wave A, pure control group, respondents with prior beliefs about the GWG between the 5th and the 95th percentile of the distribution. The outcome variables are coded as the number of times respondents choose information over money, originally ranging between 0 and 3, and then standardized. Prior beliefs are standardized as well. The policy demand index corresponds to a summary index over the six measures of demand for specific policies. Additional control variables in all regressions: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table F.3: Propensity to acquire additional information in response to the treatment

	Willingness to pay for progressive info				Willingness to pay for traditional info		
	(1)	(2)	(3)		(4)	(5)	(6)
T^{94}	0.001	-0.051	-0.016	T^{74}	-0.088**	-0.116**	-0.119***
	(0.036)	(0.050)	(0.048)		(0.036)	(0.048)	(0.043)
T^{94} x female		0.103		T^{74} x male		0.055	
		(0.071)				(0.071)	
T^{94} x Democrat			0.038	T^{74} x Republican			0.084
			(0.071)				(0.076)
Female	0.034	-0.018	0.034	Male	0.217***	0.189***	0.216***
	(0.037)	(0.051)	(0.037)		(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.037)
Democrat	0.319***	0.317***	0.300***	Republican	0.211***	0.210***	0.170***
	(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.062)		(0.052)	(0.052)	(0.065)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	Observations	3031	3031	3031

Notes: Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. Columns 1 - 3 test whether Democrats' (women's) willingness to pay for information from a "progressive" source increases when exposed to T^{94} more than that of Republicans (men). Similarly, Columns 4 - 6 test whether Republicans (men's) willingness to pay for information from a "traditional" institution increases when exposed to T^{74} more than that of Democrats (women). The dependent variables correspond to the number of times the respondent chose information over a monetary bonus, ranging from 0 to 3 and z-scored using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. Additional controls are: census region, wave, prior belief, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

G   Compliance with the pre-analysis-plan

G.1   Description of minor deviations from the pre-analysis-plan

- **Additional data collection:**   In the pre-analysis-plan (PAP) as of 31st of August 2018 I had pre-specified a follow-up response rate of at least 50%. Due to internal problems at the survey company I collaborated with, only 25% were achieved. The survey company offered to collect a second wave of data through a partner company in compensation, which I accepted. In an addendum to the PAP as of 21st of November 2018 I set out the details. The results replicate remarkably well. **Tables G.3 and G.4** show the main treatment effect on general perceptions and self-reported policy demand separately by wave. **Tables G.6 and G.7** show the numbers of signatures on real online petitions and **Table G.5** replicates the main results based on the follow-up survey by wave. Further results by wave are available on request.

- **Oversampling of women, adjustment through probability weights:** In wave B, the age group 18-24 was filled by female respondents to a large degree due to a mistake of the survey company. Sticking to the pre-specified quotas would have implied a gender imbalance across age groups. I decided to allow for a minor increase in the total sample size to boost the number of young males. The youngest age group in wave B consists of 181 women and 78 men, and I use probability weights of 0.6298 and 1.4615, respectively, to account for the fact that 114 observations per gender were pre-specified. A similar but smaller imbalance occurred in the age group 55-65, resulting in a final 191 female and 163 male observations and probability weights of 0.8691 and 1.0184, respectively. Tables G.1 and G.2 show that dropping the probability weights leaves the main results literally unaffected.

- **Correlational analysis without outliers:** I exclude prior beliefs below the 5th and above the 95th percentile of the distribution from the correlational analysis in Section 3. The cutoffs correspond to a relative wage of female employees of 50 and 116 percent of male wages, respectively. **Tables G.8, G.9 and G.10** replicate the analysis based on the pre-specified full sample. Bin scatter plots in Figure A.20 illustrate how outliers lead to considerable attenuation, given the sensitivity of OLS to outliers.

- **Heterogeneity by political orientation:** In had pre-specified to report heterogeneity in the treatment effect by Democrats vs. Non-Democrats. It turned out that the treatment response of Independents is quite different from that of Republicans, making Non-Democrats a heterogeneous group. I therefore use a more differentiated specification, based on Republicans as the baseline group, and report separate differential effects for Democrats and Independents. The pre-specified, more aggregated regression results are available upon request.

G.2 Main results unweighted

Table G.1: Treatment effect on general views without probability weights

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Perception Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
T[74]	0.598***	0.421***	0.244***	0.417***
	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.032)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Female	0.232***	0.296***	0.306***	0.275***
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.033)
Democrat	0.523***	0.653***	0.795***	0.661***
	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.037)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	3031

Notes: This Table shows the same specification as Table 4, Panel A without probability weights.

Table G.2: Treatment effect on policy demand without probability weights

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transparency within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase public subsidies to child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
T[74]	0.055	0.116***	0.122***	-0.015	0.114*	0.012	0.062**
	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.042)	(0.061)	(0.035)	(0.025)
Sharpened q-value	[0.131]	[0.002]	[0.002]	[0.322]	[0.085]	[0.322]	
Female	0.255***	0.180***	0.236***	0.197***	0.307***	0.110***	0.203***
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.044)	(0.062)	(0.036)	(0.026)
Democrat	0.557***	0.662***	0.619***	0.565***	0.584***	0.583***	0.592***
	(0.041)	(0.039)	(0.040)	(0.048)	(0.072)	(0.040)	(0.029)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031

Notes: This Table shows the same specification as Table 4, Panel B without probability weights.

G.3 Main results separately for wave A and wave B

Table G.3: Treatment effect on views related to the GWG (by wave)

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Perception Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Both waves				
T^{74}	0.597***	0.422***	0.243***	0.417***
	(0.036)	(0.035)	(0.035)	(0.032)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.525***	0.656***	0.803***	0.665***
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.037)
Female	0.235***	0.297***	0.309***	0.277***
	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.036)	(0.033)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	3031
Panel B: Wave A				
T^{74}	0.585***	0.383***	0.228***	0.399***
	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.039)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.506***	0.660***	0.814***	0.663***
	(0.049)	(0.049)	(0.050)	(0.045)
Female	0.213***	0.316***	0.319***	0.276***
	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.044)	(0.040)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012
Panel C: Wave B				
T^{74}	0.628***	0.504***	0.280***	0.460***
	(0.064)	(0.061)	(0.063)	(0.057)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.540***	0.630***	0.754***	0.646***
	(0.073)	(0.070)	(0.070)	(0.064)
Female	0.280***	0.266***	0.299***	0.286***
	(0.064)	(0.062)	(0.063)	(0.057)
Observations	1019	1019	1019	1019

Notes: Data base: treatment groups. Panel A pools the two waves, Panel B is restricted to wave A and Panel C to wave B. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 3. T^{74} is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero otherwise. Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, unemployed, student, prior belief, survey wave, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Sharpened q-values in Columns 1 - 3 are based on FDR-adjustment.

Table G.4: Treatment effect on demand for specific policies (by wave)

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)

Panel A: Both waves

T^{74}	0.056	0.112***	0.115***	-0.015	0.098	0.003	0.056**
	(0.036)	(0.034)	(0.035)	(0.042)	(0.063)	(0.035)	(0.025)
Sharpened q-value	[0.133]	[0.003]	[0.003]	[0.413]	[0.085]	[0.455]	
Female	0.254***	0.179***	0.237***	0.197***	0.310***	0.112***	0.203***
	(0.037)	(0.035)	(0.036)	(0.044)	(0.063)	(0.036)	(0.026)
Democrat	0.559***	0.669***	0.618***	0.565***	0.596***	0.578***	0.594***
	(0.041)	(0.040)	(0.040)	(0.048)	(0.074)	(0.040)	(0.029)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031

Panel B: Wave A

T^{74}	0.044	0.129***	0.098**	-0.015		0.011	0.046
	(0.043)	(0.041)	(0.042)	(0.042)		(0.042)	(0.030)
Sharpened q-value	[0.440]	[0.008]	[0.038]	[0.926]		[0.926]	
Female	0.251***	0.169***	0.224***	0.197***		0.120***	0.193***
	(0.045)	(0.043)	(0.043)	(0.044)		(0.045)	(0.031)
Democrat	0.556***	0.678***	0.644***	0.565***		0.580***	0.597***
	(0.049)	(0.047)	(0.048)	(0.048)		(0.048)	(0.035)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012		2012	2012

Panel C: Wave B

T^{74}	0.076	0.071	0.156**		0.098	-0.018	0.075
	(0.064)	(0.062)	(0.064)		(0.063)	(0.061)	(0.046)
Sharpened q-value	[0.327]	[0.327]	[0.080]		[0.315]	[0.445]	
Female	0.266***	0.221***	0.285***		0.310***	0.098	0.235***
	(0.065)	(0.062)	(0.065)		(0.063)	(0.064)	(0.046)
Democrat	0.554***	0.640***	0.557***		0.596***	0.580***	0.581***
	(0.074)	(0.074)	(0.073)		(0.074)	(0.073)	(0.053)
Observations	1019	1019	1019		1019	1019	1019

Notes: Data base: treatment groups. Panel A pools the two waves, Panel B is restricted to wave A and Panel C to wave B. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 6 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 7 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 6. T^{74} is a dummy that takes on the value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero otherwise. Additional controls: survey wave, census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Sharpened q-values in Columns 1 - 6 are based on FDR-adjustment.

Table G.5: Persistence of first stage treatment effect after 2-4 weeks (by wave)

	Posterior	GWG is a problem	GWG is a prob. among high-skilled	GWG is a prob among low-skilled	Women's wages are fair	Demand for more gvrnt. intervention	Demand for more anti-disc. policy	Demand for more Supportive policy	Demand for more AA	Demand for more equal pay legislation
Panel A: Wave A										
T^{74}	-10.121***	0.196**	0.144*	0.210**	-0.139**	0.282***	0.114	0.241***		
	(1.851)	(0.085)	(0.086)	(0.089)	(0.070)	(0.082)	(0.089)	(0.085)		
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.022]	[0.042]	[0.022]	[0.035]	[0.002]	[0.069]	[0.009]		
Female	-0.956	0.180**	0.075	0.063	0.066	0.191**	0.240***	0.178**		
	(1.972)	(0.091)	(0.090)	(0.096)	(0.073)	(0.085)	(0.090)	(0.088)		
Democrat	2.125	0.551***	0.482***	0.456***	-0.409***	0.693***	0.640***	0.753***		
	(2.102)	(0.091)	(0.096)	(0.097)	(0.077)	(0.092)	(0.096)	(0.095)		
Observations	494	499	499	499	499	499	499	499		
Panel B: Wave B										
T^{74}	-11.178***	0.187**	0.114	0.113	-0.102	0.093	0.074	0.078	0.013	0.109
	(1.518)	(0.078)	(0.079)	(0.078)	(0.080)	(0.077)	(0.075)	(0.076)	(0.078)	(0.079)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.079]	[0.357]	[0.357]	[0.357]	[0.357]	[0.402]	[0.402]	[0.491]	[0.357]
Female	-3.183**	0.340***	0.291***	0.317***	-0.317***	0.184**	0.228***	0.206***	0.150*	0.193**
	(1.556)	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.081)	(0.083)	(0.080)	(0.078)	(0.079)	(0.080)	(0.083)
Democrat	-0.397	0.554***	0.531***	0.367***	-0.524***	0.698***	0.739***	0.627***	0.586***	0.630***
	(1.709)	(0.092)	(0.093)	(0.093)	(0.098)	(0.088)	(0.084)	(0.087)	(0.091)	(0.090)
Observations	595	606	606	606	606	606	606	606	606	606

Notes: Data base: Follow-up sample (treatment groups). Panel A is restricted to wave A and Panel B to wave B. The dependent variable in Column 1 ranges between 0 and 200. The remaining outcomes in Columns 2 - 10 are z-scored using the mean and standard deviation in the full follow-up sample. T^{74} is a dummy that takes on the value one for those who received the high wage gap-treatment and zero otherwise. Additional controls: census region, age group, has children, log household income, has at least 2-year college degree, full-time, part-time employment, self-employed, student, unemployed, prior belief, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Sharpened q-values are based on FDR-adjustment for Panel A and B separately.

	Male	Female	p-value (diff)
Petition I	23/248	51/250	<0.001
Petition II	7/248	3/250	0.20
	Non-Democrat	Democrat	p-value (diff)
Petition I	24/268	50/230	<0.001
Petition II	8/268	2/230	0.09

(a) Wave a

	Male	Female	p-value (diff)
Petition I	35/242	50/294	0.42
Petition II	10/242	0/294	<0.001

(b) Wave b

Table G.6: Signatures on petitions by survey wave, control group

Notes: Data base: Count data on actual numbers of signatures in the control group, separately by wave. The tables show the ratio between the number of actual signatures and the maximum number of possible signatures by gender and political orientation. The column denoted "p-value (diff)" shows p-values from two-sided proportion tests comparing the shares of signatures between male and female (Non-Democrat and Democrat) respondents.

	T^{74}	T^{94}	p-value ($T^{74} = T^{94}$)	p-value ($T^{74} \lesseqgtr T^{94}$)
Overall				
Petition I	169/1005	159/1007	0.53	0.27
Petition II	13/1005	20/1007	0.22	0.11
Men				
Petition I	63/499	58/503	0.60	0.30
Petition II	8/499	11/503	0.50	0.25
Women				
Petition I	106/506	101/504	0.72	0.36
Petition II	5/506	9/504	0.28	0.14
Democrats				
Petition I	106/447	99/450	0.54	0.27
Petition II	3/447	2/450	0.65	0.68
Non-Democrats				
Petition I	63/558	60/557	0.78	0.39
Petition II	10/558	18/557	0.12	0.06

(a) Wave a

	T^{74}	T^{94}	p-value ($T^{74} = T^{94}$)	p-value ($T^{74} \lesseqgtr T^{94}$)
Overall				
Petition I	90/526	61/493	0.03	0.02
Petition II	6/526	15/493	0.03	0.02
Men				
Petition I	35/234	28/231	0.37	0.19
Petition II	5/234	8/231	0.39	0.19
Women				
Petition I	55/292	33/262	0.04	0.02
Petition II	1/292	7/262	0.02	0.01

(b) Wave b

Table G.7: Signatures on petitions by survey wave, treatment effect

Notes: Data base: Count data on actual numbers of signatures in the treatment groups, separately by wave. The columns denoted T^{74} (T^{94}) show the number of actual signatures divided by the number of respondents in the high wage gap (low wage gap)-treatment group. The upper block in each table, denoted "Overall", shows aggregate numbers of signatures, whereas subsequent blocks show disaggregated numbers by gender and by self-reported political orientation. The columns denoted "p-value ($T^{74}=T^{94}$)" reports p-values from two-sided proportion tests comparing the shares of signatures between the treatment group. The column denoted "p-value ($T^{74} \lesseqgtr T^{94}$)" reports p-values from one-sided proportion tests with the alternative hypothesis corresponding to the expected result, i.e. $T^{74} > T^{94}$ for Petition I and $T^{94} > T^{74}$ for Petition II.

G.4 Correlational analysis including outliers

Table G.8: Correlates of views related to the GWG (including outliers)

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should promote gender wage equality	Perception Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Panel A: Priors only				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.166***	-0.188***	-0.117***	-0.150***
	(0.041)	(0.041)	(0.036)	(0.036)
Observations	1034	1034	1034	1034
Panel B: Additional controls				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.137***	-0.154***	-0.082**	-0.117***
	(0.039)	(0.039)	(0.034)	(0.034)
Female	0.162***	0.233***	0.175***	0.181***
	(0.059)	(0.058)	(0.059)	(0.053)
Democrat	0.532***	0.618***	0.729***	0.630***
	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.061)
Independent	1034	1034	1034	1034

Notes: Data base: Pure control group, both waves. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 3. The variable "prior" is z-scored as well, based on the full distribution of prior beliefs. Both panels include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Additional controls in Panel B: census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table G.9: Correlates of specific policy demand (including outliers)

	Introduce gender quotas	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation	Wage transparency within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase public subsidies to child care	Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Panel A: Priors only							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.061*	-0.105***	-0.055	-0.186***	-0.096*	-0.049	-0.080***
	(0.035)	(0.038)	(0.040)	(0.047)	(0.053)	(0.037)	(0.029)
Observations	1034	1034	1034	498	536	1034	1034
Panel B: Prior, gender, pol. orient.							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.024	-0.070*	-0.018	-0.134***	-0.068	-0.015	-0.044*
	(0.033)	(0.036)	(0.038)	(0.046)	(0.053)	(0.035)	(0.026)
Female	0.238***	0.165***	0.304***	0.392***	0.404***	0.241***	0.277***
	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.059)	(0.083)	(0.084)	(0.060)	(0.041)
Democrat	0.675***	0.708***	0.641***	0.616***	0.525***	0.619***	0.638***
	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.097)	(0.095)	(0.069)	(0.048)
Observations	1034	1034	1034	498	536	1034	1034

Notes: Data base: Pure control group, both waves. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 6 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 7 is a summary index over the outcomes in Columns 1 - 6. The variable "prior" is z-scored as well, based on the full distribution of prior beliefs. Both panels include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Additional controls in Panel B: census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.

Table G.10: Correlates of beliefs about underlying reasons (including outliers)

	Impersonal Factors				Personal Factors			
	(1) Discrimination	(2) Socialization	(3) Work-Family	(4) Index	(5) Ambitions	(6) Talents	(7) Preferences	(8) Index
Panel A: Priors only								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.182***	-0.087*	-0.010	-0.093**	0.144***	0.144***	0.148***	0.146***
	(0.051)	(0.048)	(0.049)	(0.040)	(0.053)	(0.052)	(0.050)	(0.046)
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498	498	498
Panel B: Prior, gender, pol. orient.								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.129***	-0.050	0.003	-0.059	0.108**	0.102*	0.108**	0.106**
	(0.048)	(0.045)	(0.049)	(0.037)	(0.053)	(0.055)	(0.052)	(0.048)
Female	0.195**	0.275***	0.099	0.185***	-0.482***	-0.471***	-0.403***	-0.447***
	(0.083)	(0.087)	(0.089)	(0.060)	(0.086)	(0.086)	(0.085)	(0.071)
Democrat	0.709***	0.413***	0.149	0.423***	-0.232**	-0.339***	-0.375***	-0.319***
	(0.097)	(0.098)	(0.101)	(0.070)	(0.099)	(0.102)	(0.099)	(0.084)
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498	498	498

Notes: Data base: Pure control group, wave A. The dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 and 5 - 7 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the control group. The dependent variable in Column 4 (Column 8) is a summary index over the dependent variables in Columns 1 - 3 (Columns 5 - 7). The variable "prior" is z-scored as well, based on the mean and standard deviation in the full sample. Both panels include a dummy for wave B of data collection. Additional controls in Panel B: census region, age group, parental status, log of total household income, two-year college degree or more, full-time employee, part-time employee, self-employed, unemployed, student, Independent and "other" political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis.
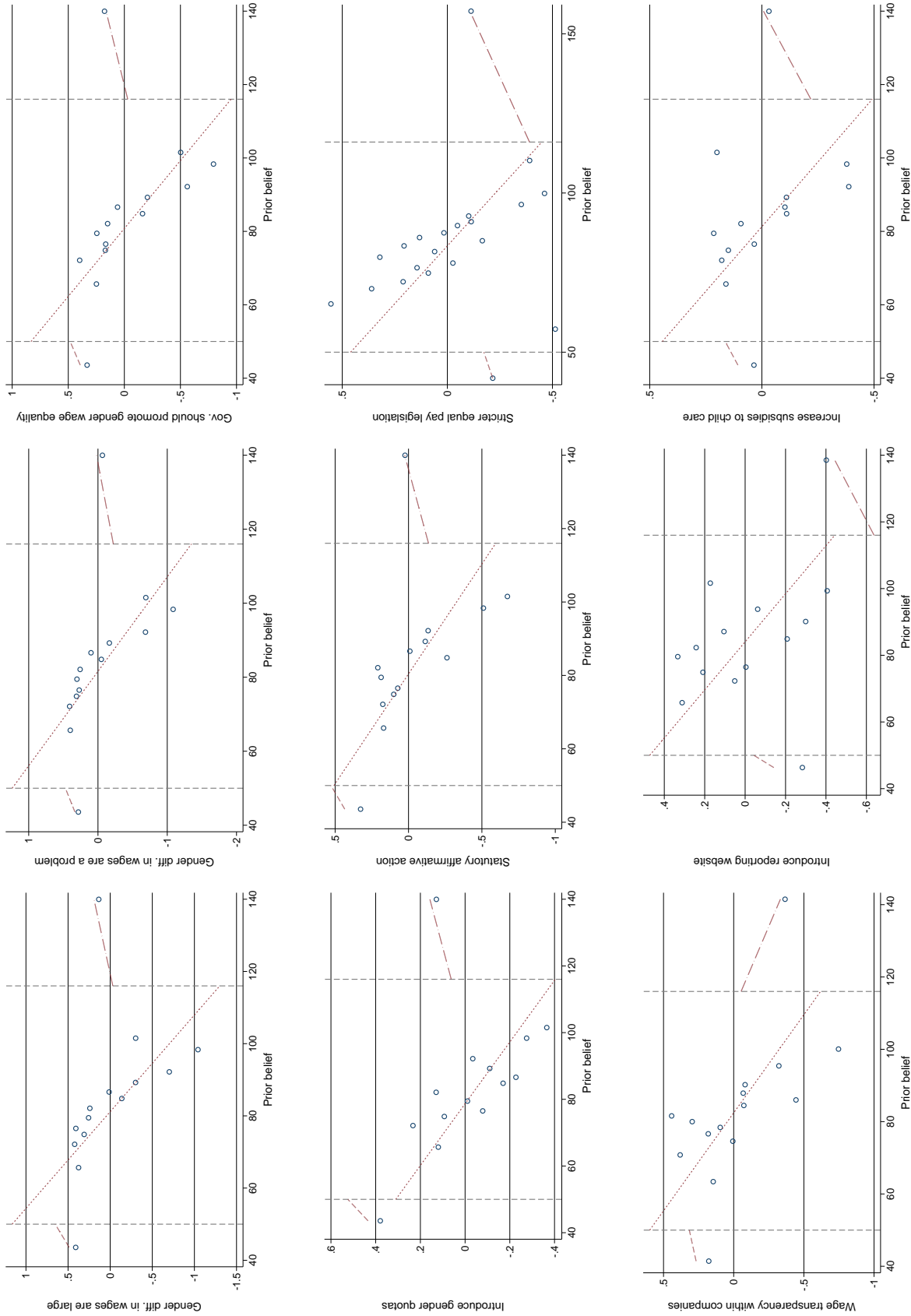
58

Figure A.20: Non-linearity in correlation between beliefs about the GWG and outcomes

Notes: Data base: Control group, both waves. The graph shows bin scatter plots on the correlation between prior beliefs about the GWG and the main outcome variables of interest. The dependent variables in the top row are people's perception of whether the GWG is large, whether it is a problem and their unspecific demand for government intervention. In the remaining two rows, the dependent variables are the six measures of demand for specific policy intervention. Each scatter plot contains a linear fit which allows for a discontinuity at the 5th and the 95th percentile of the prior belief distribution.

References for the Appendix

Anderson, Michael L, "Multiple inference and gender differences in the effects of early intervention: A reevaluation of the Abecedarian, Perry Preschool, and Early Training Projects," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, 2008, *103* (484), 1481–1495.

Benjamini, Yoav, Abba M Krieger, and Daniel Yekutieli, "Adaptive linear step-up procedures that control the false discovery rate," *Biometrika*, 2006, *93* (3), 491–507.

Blau, Francine D and Lawrence M Kahn, "The gender wage gap: Extent, trends, and explanations," *Journal of Economic Literature*, 2017, *55* (3), 789–865.

Brandtzaeg, Petter Bae and Ida Maria Haugstveit, "Facebook likes: A study of liking practices for humanitarian causes," *International Journal of Web Based Communities*, 2014, *10* (3), 258–279.

Flood, Sarah, Miriam King, Renae Rodgers, Steven Ruggles, and J. Robert Warren, Integrated Public Use Microdata Series, Current Population Survey: Version 6.0 [dataset], Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, IPUMS, 2018, https://doi.org/10.18128/D030.V6.0 2018.

Goldin, Claudia, Lawrence F Katz, and Ilyana Kuziemko, "The homecoming of American college women: The reversal of the college gender gap," *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2006, *20* (4), 133–133.

_ , **Sari Pekkala Kerr, Claudia Olivetti, Erling Barth et al.**, "The expanding gender earnings gap: evidence from the LEHD-2000 Census," *American Economic Review*, 2017, *107* (5), 110–14.

Pew Research Center, "Wide gender gap, growing educational divide in voters' party identification," Online article: `https://www.people-press.org/2018/03/20/wide-gender-gap-growing-educational-divide-in-voters-party-identification/` [Accessed: 15.05.2018] 2018.

Ruggles, Steven, Sarah Flood, Ronald Goeken, Josiah Grover, Erin Meyer, Jose Pacas, and Matthew Sobek, IPUMS USA: Version 8.0 [dataset]. Minneapolis, MN: IPUMS, 2018, https://doi.org/10.18128/D010.V8.0 2018.

Westfall, Peter H. and S. Stanley Young, *Resampling-Based Multiple Testing*, New York: Wiley, 1993.