

Facts, Alternative Facts, and Fact Checking in Times of Post-Truth Politics

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Immigrants and Minorities: Measures, Perceptions and Prejudice

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Motivation

- Alternative Facts are increasingly used by politicians in their political discourse
 - Donald Trump's campaign used false figures on unemployment and crime
 - Pro-Brexit campaign used false figures on cost of EU membership
- Alternative facts are noticed by voters:
 - Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) show that fake news in favor of Trump were shared 30 million times on Facebook
- As a response:
 - Governments consider anti-fake news regulations (e.g., Germany, France, EU)
 - Mainstream independent media and NGOs invest in fact-checking
 - Platforms auto regulate

Why keep using Alternative Facts in the presence of Fact Checking?

- Politicians seem to believe that fact checking is *not* effective against Alt Facts
- Two potential explanations:
 - Voters do not trust mainstream media and experts $\Rightarrow$
 - When faced with both Alt-Facts and true Facts, place higher weight on Alt-Facts
 - This is testable: RCT on Alt-Facts and Fact-Check and measure voters' beliefs ex post
 - Voters do learn the true facts but still vote for the anti-establishment politicians
 - For example, because of the increased *salience* of the issue

Research question and design

- We conducted an online randomized survey-experiment in the midst of French 2017 presidential election campaign exposing subgroups of participants to:
 - quotes from Marine Le Pen (MLP) containing misleading or false claims about immigrants and refugees in France
 - with or without facts from official sources to examine whether:
 - ① Alternative facts have an effect?
 - ② Fact Checking corrects the effect of Alt-Facts?
 - ③ Facts (correct information) alone affects voters?

Related literature

① Political persuasion:

- Traditional media: e.g., Gerber et al (2009), DellaVigna and Kaplan (2006), Enikopolov et al. (2011), Snyder & Stromberg (2010)
- New media: e.g., Mocanu et al. (2015) and Allcott & Gentzkow (2017), Enikopolov et al. (2016)

② The effects of lies on voting intentions and beliefs

- 2 papers in political science and psychology showing that telling Trump supporters that he lied has no effect on them: Nyhan et al. (2017), Swire et al. (2017)

③ Backfiring of information on facts

- Nyhan (2015), Berinsky et al. (2017)
- but this literature does not look at political outcomes

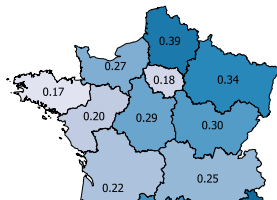
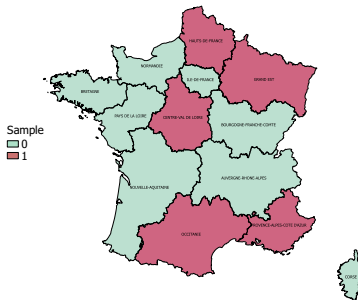
Our paper is the first to look at three outcomes jointly:
voting intention, beliefs about policy, and factual knowledge

Outline

Sample

- In March 2017, one month before the first round of the presidential election, we used the Qualtrics online platform to survey 2480 voting-age French individuals
- The sample was drawn at random from the pool of Qualtrics participants
 - Individuals who participate in online surveys for pay
 - Stratified terms of gender, age, and the level of education by treatment
 - Restricted to 5 out of 12 regions with the strongest support for the extreme right party (FN) in the previous (2015 regional) elections

Regions in the sample and extreme right vote in 2015 regional elections



The survey consisted of 4 parts:

- ① A short introduction followed by:
 - Questions on socio-economic and demographic information
 - One question on prior beliefs: *“What was the unemployment rate among immigrants in 2015?”*
- ② **Treatment:** participants were presented with different texts to read
- ③ Questions to measure voting intentions using 3 different methods
 - Direct question
 - List experiment
 - Dictator game
- ④ Questions to measure the knowledge of facts presented in Part 2

Treatments

Participants were randomly allocated to one of 4 groups, each group was presented with different text in Part 2 of the survey:

- ① **Control:** no text
- ② **Alt-Facts:** one-sentence intro + quotes from Marine Le Pen with Alt-facts about refugees and immigrants
- ③ **Facts:** one-sentence intro + figures from official sources (UN, INSEE) on the same issues
- ④ **Fact Check:** Alt-Facts + Facts

All introductions were neutral to eliminate the Experimenter Demand Effects

The content of the Alt-Facts treatment

In quotes used for the Alt-Facts treatment, the goal of MLP was to convince voters that immigration should be restricted

- Each quote contained an implicit argument backed by a false fact:
 - 1 If refugees came for security reasons, they would not have left their families behind
 - Alt-Fact: percentage of refugees that are men
 - 2 Migrants exploit generous French welfare system at the expense of the French
 - Alt-Fact: percentage of immigrants who work
 - 3 Migrants should fight for their countries not flee
 - Alt-Fact: share of French that fled during WWII

Argument 1: Reasons for refugees to come

Marine Le Pen: *“A very small minority of them are really political refugees (...) I have seen the pictures of illegal immigrants coming down, who were brought to Germany, to Hungary, etc... Well, on these pictures there are 99% of men (...) Men who leave their country leaving their families behind, it is not to flee persecution but of course for financial reasons. Let's stop telling stories. We are facing an economic migration, these migrants will settle.”*

Official: *The UNHCR evaluates that among the migrants crossing the Mediterranean in 2015, 17% are women, 25% are children and 58% are men.*

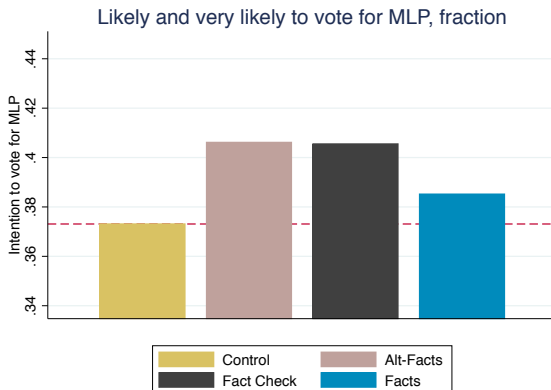
Argument 2: The effect of refugees on welfare system

Marine Le Pen: *“5% of the foreigners who come to France have a work contract. This means there is 95% who come to France who are taken care of by our nation (...) There is **95%** of people who settle in France who don't work, either because of their age, or because they can't as there is no work in France.”*

Official: *According to the National Statistics Institute (INSEE) in 2015, 54,8% of the immigrant population was active (worked or looking for a job) against 56,3% for the rest of the French population. The rate of unemployment for the immigrant population is 18,1% against 9,1% for the rest of the population. There is therefore **44,9%** of the immigrant population that works against 55,1% for the rest of the population.*

Outline

Voting intentions



- Fact Check and Alt Facts have same-size positive effect on MLP vote
- Facts alone also have a positive effect, but smaller in magnitude

Voting intentions: regression output and magnitudes

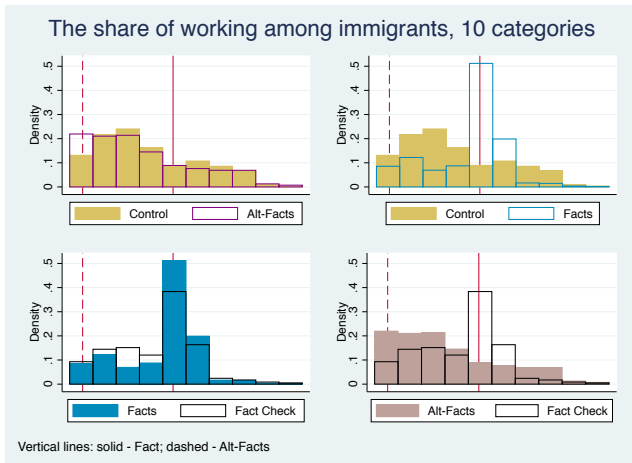
	Will vote for MLP	Persuasion rate
Alt-Facts	0.049** (0.023)	7.8%
Fact Check	0.048** (0.024)	7.7%
Facts	0.030 (0.023)	4.8%
Observations	2480	
Adjusted R^2	0.305	
Mean of DV in control group	0.373	
p-val: Alt-Facts=FactCheck	0.959	
p-val: Facts=FactCheck	0.432	
p-val: Alt-Facts=Facts	0.403	
p-val: Alt-Facts+Facts=FactCheck	0.351	

- These are fairly large magnitudes
- The main focus is not on the absolute magnitudes, but on the direction of the effect and *relative* magnitudes
 - Fact Checking has the same effect as Alt-Facts
 - Facts alone help MLP (although no statistical significance)

Do people ignore information from official sources?

No: facts from official sources are learned

Figure: Posterior beliefs (2):

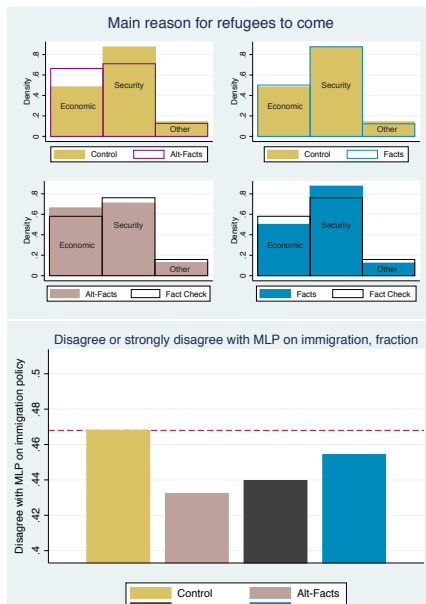


Do people ignore information from official sources?

	Distance to truth on %:		Correct posterior on %:		Persuasion rates	
	men-refugees	migr. working	men-refugees	migr. working	men-refugees	migr. working
Alt-Facts	0.298*** (0.070)	0.253*** (0.069)	-0.023 (0.021)	-0.006 (0.016)	-	-
Fact Check	-0.505*** (0.070)	-0.685*** (0.070)	0.312*** (0.025)	0.255*** (0.022)	37.0%	23.6%
Facts	-0.845*** (0.068)	-0.984*** (0.071)	0.444*** (0.025)	0.376*** (0.023)	52.7%	34.8%
Observations	2480	2480	2480	2480		
Adjusted R^2	0.137	0.175	0.188	0.172		
Mean of DV in control group	1.651	2.115	0.157	0.080		
p: Alt-Facts=Fact Check	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
p: Facts=Fact Check	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
p: Alt-Facts=Facts	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
p: Alt-Facts+Facts=Fact Check	0.708	0.605	0.002	0.000		

- Information from official sources retained in both Facts and Fact-Check treatments
- Posteriors updated in direction of treatment, with voters having much *more* confidence in official sources than MLP
- Alt-Facts only affect those did not know the truth to start with

Policy impressions



Treatments move policy impressions in the same direction as voting intentions

	Reason for refugees:	Agree with	Persuasion rates	
	Economic	MLP on migrants	Econ. reason	Agree w/MLP
Alt-Facts	0.127*** (0.027)	0.050** (0.024)	12.2%	3.7%
Fact Check	0.067** (0.027)	0.036 (0.024)	6.5%	2.6%
Facts	0.017 (0.027)	0.022 (0.025)	1.6%	1.6%
Observations	2480	2480		
Adjusted R^2	0.068	0.280		
Mean of DV in control group	0.322	0.532		
p-val: Alt-Facts=FactCheck	0.026	0.570		
p-val: Facts=FactCheck	0.062	0.576		
p-val: Alt-Facts=Facts	0.000	0.272		
p-val: Alt-Facts+Facts=FactCheck	0.046	0.300		

- Fact checking undoes half of the Alt-Facts effect on the reasons of refugees to come
... and is completely ineffective for impressions about how tough the anti-immigrant policy should be
- Facts treatment does not affect perception about the conclusion in MLP narrative

Main findings

Disconnect between effect on voting and effect on knowledge of facts:

- The effect on knowledge of facts
 - Fact-Checking corrects the impact of Alt-Facts
- The effect on policy impressions
 - Very small correcting effect of Fact-Checking
- The effect on voting intentions (and policy impressions)
 - Fact-Checking has zero correcting impact
 - Facts alone, if anything, increase support for MLP

Outline

Distrusting the elites vs. Salience

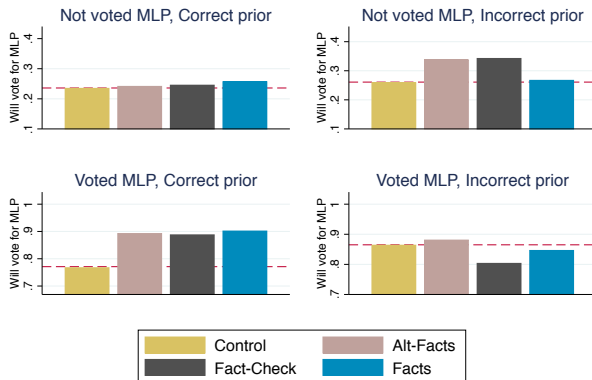
- **Distrusting the elites:** Not consistent with empirical findings
 - Voters do update their knowledge of facts
... with much higher confidence in official sources than in MLP
- **Salience:** Is consistent with findings on both factual knowledge and voting intentions:
 - Fact Check and Facts treatments should produce pro-MLP voting effect
 - At this stage in the campaign, economy and EU, rather than immigration were the main issue
 - Further evidence:
 - Fact Checking and Facts increase support for MLP *controlling for (posterior) beliefs.*
 - Beliefs about facts are related to political outcomes *independently* of the treatments.

The effect of the treatments on voting intention and policy preferences controlling for posterior knowledge

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Dep. Var:</i>	Will vote for MLP		Reason for refugees: Economic		Agree with MLP on immigration policy	
<i>Sample:</i>	Control	Full	Control	Full	Control	Full
(Posterior) knowledge about % men-refugees	0.021** (0.009)	0.020*** (0.005)	0.050*** (0.009)	0.042*** (0.005)	0.015* (0.009)	0.025*** (0.005)
(Posterior) knowledge about % working migrants	-0.027*** (0.009)	-0.021*** (0.004)	-0.019** (0.010)	-0.022*** (0.005)	-0.026*** (0.008)	-0.035*** (0.004)
Alt-Facts		0.028 (0.023)		0.089*** (0.027)		0.020 (0.024)
Fact-Check		0.058** (0.023)		0.080*** (0.027)		0.050** (0.024)
Facts		0.051** (0.023)		0.050* (0.027)		0.053** (0.025)
Observations	611	2480	611	2480	611	2480
Adjusted R^2	0.300	0.316	0.086	0.098	0.309	0.303

Heterogeneity by prior voting behavior and knowledge

Voting intentions by prior voting behavior and knowledge



Note: The range of the y-axis differs between the top-row and bottom-row graphs

Outline

Should we trust self-reported voting intentions?

Two alternative measures of voting intentions:

- 1 Dictator games
- 2 List experiment method

1: Dictator games

- Played two dictator games in a row
- In each game, a 10% chance to win 10 euros, can donate some of it to:
 - ① a random participant
 - ② a random participant who answered that he/she was likely or very likely to vote for MLP

1: Dictator games – overall behavior

- 42% of respondents did not share any money with a random counterpart
- 50% of respondents did not share money with a MLP supporter
- 18.5% of respondents decided to share a higher amount with a potential MLP voter than with a random participant
- 13.2% of respondents chose to give some money to a random participant and chose to give nothing to a MLP supporter

Participants seem to have contributed less than in a usual dictator games:

- could be due to a somewhat unusual formulation of the question

1: Voting intentions are not cheap talk: dictator games

Panel A: The results of the dictator game					
<i>Dep. Var.:</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Will vote for MLP			Donation to MLP	Give others not MLP
Donation to MLP	0.010*** (0.004)	0.039*** (0.005)			
Donation to anybody		-0.037*** (0.004)		0.679*** (0.024)	
Give others, not MLP			-0.184*** (0.018)		
Alt-Facts				0.004 (0.091)	-0.035* (0.019)
Fact-Check				-0.073 (0.092)	-0.017 (0.019)
Facts				0.029 (0.104)	-0.007 (0.020)
Observations	2480	2480	2480	2480	2480
Adjusted R^2	0.306	0.324	0.319	0.529	0.051

Donations to MLP supporters are strongly correlated with voting intentions

2: The list experiment

- Participants are given a list of candidates for the presidential election
- Asked how many politicians they support on this list, without asking which ones
- They are randomly allocated to two groups
 - One half are presented with a list with MLP, the other half a list without MLP

2: Voting intentions and the list experiment

Panel B: The results of the list experiment					
<i>Dep. Var.:</i>	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Number of supported politicians on the list				
<i>Sample:</i>	Full	Will vote for MLP: Yes No		Full	Full
List with MLP	0.438*** (0.042)	0.915*** (0.061)	0.122** (0.055)		
Will vote MLP				-0.698*** (0.048)	
Will vote MLP $\times$ List with MLP				0.915*** (0.061)	
List with MLP $\times$ Control					0.380*** (0.070)
List with MLP $\times$ Alt-facts					0.457*** (0.069)
List with MLP $\times$ Fact Check					0.464*** (0.064)
List with MLP $\times$ Facts					0.447*** (0.070)
Observations	2480	974	1506	2480	2480
Adjusted R^2	0.041	0.187	0.003	0.083	0.040

- 44% of respondents support MLP according to the list experiment
- List experiment results also strongly correlate with voting intentions
- Differences across treatments are insignificant

Outline

Discussion

- Small positive effects facts have on subjective beliefs is compensated by an **increased salience** of immigration issue that pushes voters to MLP
 - overall no effect of fact checking on voting intentions
- Fact checking by following the agenda set by politicians may in fact reinforce their positions

Discussion

With the spread of fake news:

- governments react by regulating:
 - law adopted by the French Parliament
- some platforms take independent initiatives to regulate their
 - Facebook partners with fact checking organizations to flag suspicious content

BUT, all these interventions happen after exposure of individuals to content!

We have shown that initial exposure to fake news very hard to correct

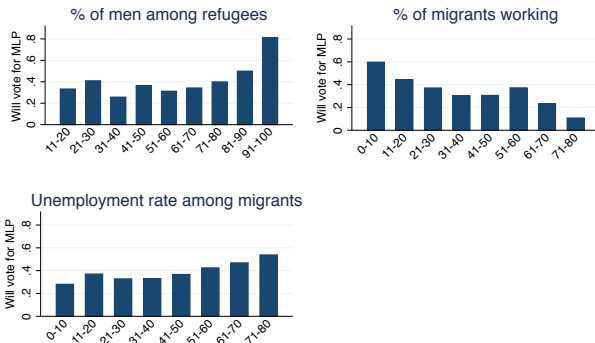
Control diffusion

- What seems to be needed from regulation or self regulation:
 - limit transmission of fake information: once transmitted, seems too late
 - transmission in networks is costless and painless, users do not consider externalities
 - Could increasing cost of sharing be a solution?
- Planned study during next European Elections:
 - same randomized setting
 - will divide participants in two groups.
 - members of first group can decide to transmit they were exposed to (fake news and/or fact check) to a random participant in the second group
 - test whether fact checking can influence decision to retransmit
 - test whether a small cost of sharing can correct externality

Outline

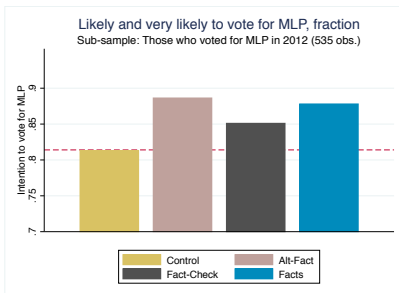
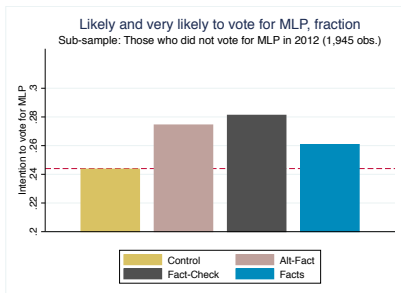
The relationship between beliefs and voting intentions in the control group

Voting intentions in control group
as a function of factual beliefs



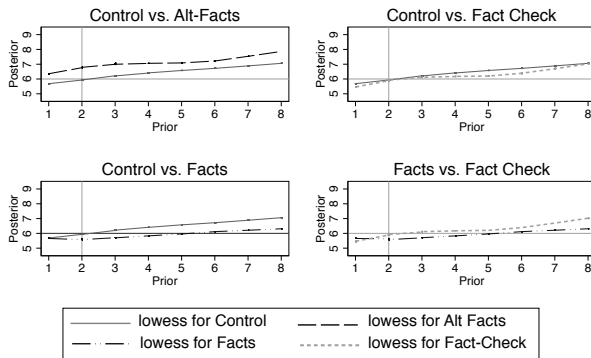
Voting intentions calculated for categories of x-variable with at least 20 observations in each graph

Voting intentions separately for prior non-supporters of MLP (left) and prior supporters of MLP (right)



The relationship between posteriors and priors by treatment

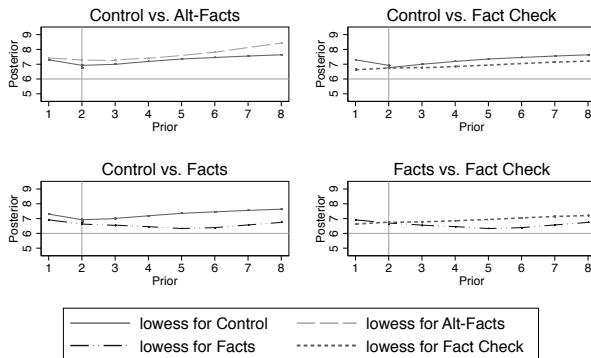
Posterior on men among refugees vs.
Prior on unemployment rate among immigrants



Vertical and horizontal lines indicate the truth for prior and posterior, respectively.

The relationship between posteriors and priors by treatment

Posterior on migrants not working vs.
Prior on unemployment rate among immigrants



Vertical and horizontal lines indicate the truth for prior and posterior, respectively.

Balancing tests (1). Socio-economic characteristics

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Mean of variable by treatment			
	Alt-Fact	Fact-Check	Facts	Control
Have children	0.68	0.71	0.70	0.70
Number of children	2.08	2.19	2.10	2.10
Married	0.49	0.48	0.43	0.41
Single	0.18	0.20	0.23	0.21
Income level	4.95	5.03	4.91	4.76
Land owner	0.50	0.53	0.51	0.48
Student	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.04
Unemployed	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.08
Full or part time worker	0.52	0.48	0.51	0.53
Retired	0.24	0.31	0.26	0.26
Source of income – wage	0.63	0.53	0.57	0.62
Source of income – social benefits	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.06
Source of income – pension	0.25	0.32	0.29	0.26
Source of news – TV	0.58	0.65	0.61	0.60
Source of news – radio	0.11	0.09	0.10	0.09
Source of news – internet	0.23	0.20	0.21	0.24
Religion – Catholic	0.54	0.60	0.56	0.57
Religion – Muslim	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02
Religion – none	0.38	0.34	0.38	0.37

Balancing tests (2). Socio-economic characteristics: P-value for the test of equality of means

	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	Alt-Fact	Fact-Check	Facts	Alt-Fact	Facts	Alt-Fact	Signif. under
	vs	vs	vs	vs	vs	vs	Sig multiple
	Control	Control	Control	Fact-Check	Fact-Check	Facts	hypotheses
							testing:
Have children	0.48	0.69	0.97	0.27	0.73	0.46	No
Number of children	0.73	0.18	0.97	0.09	0.18	0.77	No
Married	0.01	0.02	0.67	0.87	0.06	0.04	No
Single	0.30	0.72	0.36	0.49	0.20	0.05	No
Income level	0.17	0.05	0.27	0.55	0.38	0.78	No
Land owner	0.53	0.10	0.27	0.31	0.60	0.63	No
Student	0.41	0.62	0.54	0.74	0.27	0.15	No
Unemployed	0.90	0.99	0.68	0.89	0.68	0.59	No
Full or part time worker	0.86	0.08	0.55	0.11	0.24	0.67	No
Retired	0.49	0.05	0.99	0.01	0.05	0.48	No
Source of income – wage	0.83	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.15	0.03	Yes (at 1%)
Source of income – social benefits	0.73	0.16	0.21	0.29	0.90	0.36	No
Source of income – pension	0.72	0.01	0.14	0.01	0.36	0.06	Yes (at 10%)
Source of news – TV	0.35	0.10	0.74	0.01	0.19	0.21	No
Source of news – radio	0.20	0.76	0.62	0.11	0.42	0.42	No
Source of news – internet	0.82	0.09	0.22	0.15	0.66	0.32	No
Religion – Catholic	0.25	0.32	0.59	0.03	0.12	0.54	No
Religion – Muslim	0.26	0.73	0.43	0.14	0.25	0.73	No
Religion – none	0.67	0.30	0.62	0.14	0.13	0.95	No

In regressions, we control for wage earner, voted for MLP in 2012, gender, age, family status, income, education, region, religion

Balancing tests (2): Voting behaviour and prior knowledge

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
	Mean of variable by treatment			
	Alt-Fact	Fact-Check	Facts	Control
<u>Prior voting behavior</u>				
Voted in 2012 – Hollande	0.22	0.21	0.22	0.19
Voted in 2012 – Sarkozy	0.20	0.21	0.23	0.20
Voted in 2012 – Melenchon	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.07
Voted in 2012 – Le Pen	0.22	0.22	0.20	0.23
Voted in 2012 – Other candidate	0.12	0.10	0.12	0.12
Did not vote in 2012	0.18	0.20	0.18	0.20
Voted for FN in the past	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.38
<u>Prior knowledge</u>				
Unemployment rate				
among immigrants, scale 1-10	3.56	3.54	3.63	3.60
Correct prior, dummy	0.62	0.62	0.60	0.60

Balancing tests (3): Voting behaviour and prior knowledge

P-value for the test of equality of means

	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)
	P-value for the test of equality of means						Signif. under
	Alt-Fact	Fact-Check	Facts	Alt-Fact	Facts	Alt-Fact	multiple
	vs	vs	vs	vs	vs	vs	hypotheses
	Control	Control	Control	Fact-Check	Fact-Check	Facts	testing:
<u>Prior voting behavior</u>							
Voted in 2012 – Hollande	0.21	0.29	0.13	0.83	0.64	0.80	No
Voted in 2012 – Sarkozy	0.97	0.73	0.16	0.76	0.28	0.17	No
Voted in 2012 – Melenchon	0.81	0.88	0.19	0.93	0.24	0.29	No
Voted in 2012 – Le Pen	0.61	0.70	0.27	0.90	0.47	0.56	No
Voted in 2012 – Other candidate	0.61	0.28	0.99	0.11	0.28	0.62	No
Did not vote in 2012	0.30	0.94	0.28	0.32	0.31	0.97	No
Voted for FN in the past	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.99	0.99	0.99	No
<u>Prior knowledge</u>							
Unemployment rate							
among immigrants, scale 1-10	0.74	0.60	0.78	0.54	0.85	0.42	No
Correct prior, dummy	0.49	0.58	0.96	0.51	0.89	0.60	No

Heterogeneity by prior voting behavior and knowledge

Reason for refugees: Economic

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Sample restriction</i>						
- on voting for MLP in 2012:	Not voted for MLP			Voted for MLP		
- on correctness of prior:	Correct	Incorrect		Correct	Incorrect	
<i>p-value of test:</i>			(1)=(2)			(4)=(5)
Panel B:	<i>Dependent variable:</i> Reason for refugees: Economic					
Alt-Facts	0.148*** (0.038)	0.066 (0.052)	0.251	0.061 (0.093)	0.240** (0.093)	0.303
Fact-Check	0.065* (0.037)	0.038 (0.051)	0.672	0.024 (0.084)	0.112 (0.096)	0.457
Facts	0.033 (0.037)	-0.023 (0.050)	0.638	-0.105 (0.087)	0.097 (0.103)	0.160
Observations	1223	722		289	246	
R^2	0.082	0.111		0.122	0.109	
Mean of Dep. Var. in control	0.238	0.337		0.534	0.424	

Heterogeneity by prior voting behavior and knowledge

Agree with MLP on immigration policy

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<i>Sample restriction</i>						
- on voting for MLP in 2012:	Not voted for MLP			Voted for MLP		
- on correctness of prior:	Correct	Incorrect		Correct	Incorrect	
<i>p-value of test:</i>	<i>(1)=(2)</i>			<i>(4)=(5)</i>		
Panel C:	<i>Dependent variable:</i> Agree with MLP on immigration policy					
Alt-Facts	0.035 (0.038)	0.076 (0.052)	0.435	0.053 (0.042)	0.013 (0.034)	0.660
Fact-Check	0.008 (0.039)	0.066 (0.050)	0.311	0.072* (0.041)	0.044 (0.029)	0.802
Facts	0.037 (0.039)	-0.019 (0.050)	0.460	0.082** (0.038)	-0.034 (0.045)	0.077*
Observations	1223	722		289	246	
R^2	0.150	0.175		0.167	0.179	
Mean of Dep. Var. in control	0.381	0.466		0.918	0.955	

Questionnaire's introduction

We are running a study of electoral behavior and attitudes toward migrants. This survey involves a series of questions about yourself and your political beliefs. You will also be asked to play short games that will allow you to win up to 5000 Maximille points. Finally, at the end of the survey you will be asked a series of questions on your political attitudes. You should be able to complete the survey in 10 minutes. Your answers will remain anonymous and we will only publish aggregate results of the study. You can now decide whether you want to continue answering the survey:

- Yes
- No

Treatment's introductions

Alt-Facts:

You will read several statements by Marine Le Pen about migrants: their reasons for coming and the impact of migrants on French working and retired population; please read them carefully.

Facts:

You will read below several numbers and statistics about migrants, related to their reasons to come and their impact on French working and retired population; please read them carefully.

Argument 1: Reasons for refugees to come

Marine Le Pen: *“A very small minority of them are really political refugees (...) I have seen the pictures of illegal immigrants coming down, who were brought to Germany, to Hungary, etc... Well, on these pictures there are 99% of men (...) Men who leave their country leaving their families behind, it is not to flee persecution but of course for financial reasons. Let's stop telling stories. We are facing an economic migration, these migrants will settle.”*

Official: *The UNHCR evaluates that among the migrants crossing the Mediterranean in 2015, 17% are women, 25% are children and 58% are men.*

Argument 2: The effect of refugees on welfare system

Marine Le Pen: *“5% of the foreigners who come to France have a work contract. This means there is 95% who come to France who are taken care of by our nation (...) There is **95%** of people who settle in France who don't work, either because of their age, or because they can't as there is no work in France.”*

Official: *According to the National Statistics Institute (INSEE) in 2015, 54,8% of the immigrant population was active (worked or looking for a job) against 56,3% for the rest of the French population. The rate of unemployment for the immigrant population is 18,1% against 9,1% for the rest of the population. There is therefore **44,9%** of the immigrant population that works against 55,1% for the rest of the population.*

Argument 3: Refugees' cowardice

Marine Le Pen: *"Everyone of us has good reasons to flee war, but there are also some who fight. Imagine during the Second World War, there were surely many French, believe me, who had good reasons to flee the Germans and yet, they went to fight against the Germans."*

Official: *During the First and Second World Wars, the French fled war zones in much larger numbers than the current refugees. After the defeat of the French army in the North of France in the Spring 1940, 8 million civilians, that is one quarter (25%) of the population of the time, took the road to go to the South of the country that stayed free according to Jean-Pierre Azema, a French historian.*