

# How Do Beliefs About the Gender Wage Gap Affect the Demand for Public Policy? \*

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## 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.

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**Keywords:** gender wage gap, beliefs, policy preferences, fairness, information

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# 1 Introduction

Women across the developed world continue to receive lower wages than men on average. For instance, in the US, the average wages of full-time employed women have stalled at around 80 percent of male wages since the early 2000s (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). Many governments have started to implement policies aimed at closing the gender wage gap, such as equal pay legislation and requirements for companies to regularly report to authorities on their progress in achieving gender equality. However, the adequate degree of such government intervention remains a controversial topic at the center of the political discussion, with strong disagreement in views by partisanship (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 gender wage gap 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 gender wage gap 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.<sup>1</sup> Expressed beliefs about wage disparities differ substantially across the political spectrum (Pew

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<sup>1</sup>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>.)

Research Center, 2017), and the fact that wages are often unobserved might help to sustain different beliefs across groups (Cullen and Perez-Truglia, 2020).

Ex ante, it is unclear how strongly individuals' policy demand depends on perceived gender wage differentials. On the one hand, one may expect a particularly high elasticity of policy demand to beliefs in the gender context because of the absence of segregation between men and women and because the gender wage gap is subject to a peculiar set of reasons, some of which may be seen as unfair: For instance, while women (in the US) have outpassed men in terms of educational attainment (Goldin et al., 2006), their careers are adversely affected by child-rearing responsibilities (Kleven et al., 2019; Lundborg et al., 2017). In addition, there is evidence pointing to gender-based discrimination in labor markets – an arguably unfair source of inequality.<sup>2</sup>

On the other hand, policy preferences could be largely independent of the perceived size of the gender wage gap because the gap is attributed to women working in lower-paying industries and occupations – an objectively important factor in accounting for the wage gap (Blau and Kahn, 2017), which may arguably be seen as resulting from voluntary choice. In fact, there are public and scientific debates on the existence of inherent gender differences in preferences (Blau and Kahn, 2017; Campbell, 2013; Kuziemko et al., 2018).

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

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<sup>2</sup>See e.g. Goldin and Rouse (2000); Neumark et al. (1996); Sarsons (2019).

Next, I generate exogenous variation in beliefs about the size of the wage gap 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. 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 percent 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 percent. 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.

I start by documenting that people’s 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 wage gap is larger are more in favor of policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market.

Next, I exploit the randomized information provision to shed light on the causal effect of beliefs on policy demand. Individuals exposed to the high wage gap treatment express 0.6 standard deviations higher posterior beliefs about female’s relative wages compared to individuals in the low wage gap treatment. Moreover, they are 0.4 standard deviations more likely to view the wage gap as a problem and show a 0.2 standard deviation higher support for government intervention to mitigate the gap 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 report a 0.1 standard deviation higher demand for stricter equal pay legislation and 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 the information. 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. However, there is no significant treatment effect on donations to an NGO that lobbies for policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market. Changes in policy demand persist in an obfuscated follow-up survey conducted two weeks after the intervention, mitigating concerns related to experimenter demand effects or short-lived emotional responses to the information.

Despite these significant effects, my estimates imply that at most 6 percent of the partisan gap and 7 percent of the gender gap in policy demand can be causally explained by differences in perceived wage inequality. Why is the effect of beliefs about the gender wage gap 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 wage gap 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 and inefficient source of inequality.

I find that 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 social mobility (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 wage gap.

I contribute to a literature that uses information experiments to study the effect of beliefs about different types of inequality on related policy demand. 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, 2021) has a nuanced or limited effect on people’s demand for related government intervention.<sup>3</sup> My findings suggest that people’s policy demand may be more elastic to beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap than to beliefs about other dimensions of inequality, such as by race (Haaland and Roth, 2021). Nevertheless, wide-spread concerns about the effectiveness of policy intervention limit the average elasticity of policy demand even in the gender context.<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, this paper complements laboratory evidence on the role of perceived personal vs. impersonal causes of inequality in shaping policy demand

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<sup>3</sup>Other survey experiments study the role of information for people’s support for government spending (Lergetporer et al., 2018) and redistribution (Alesina et al., 2018a; Cruces et al., 2013; Karadja et al., 2017). For a review of the literature using information experiments, see Haaland et al. (2020). Alesina and Giuliano (2011) provide an excellent overview of the broader literature on preferences for redistribution.

<sup>4</sup>I also 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).

(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.

## 2 Experimental Design and Data

This section describes the survey administration, the experimental design and the data. For the full survey instrument see Appendix H.

### 2.1 Timeline and overview

Data collection took place in two waves between August 2018 and January 2019 in cooperation with the survey company pureprofile who recruited respondents through generic invitations by email. Minor changes in the survey design between the two waves, “Wave A” and “Wave B”, were pre-specified in an addendum to the original pre-analysis plan.<sup>5</sup> Each wave consists of a main survey and an obfuscated follow-up survey conducted around two weeks later. Figure 1 outlines the survey structure, which I detail in the next subsection.

### 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

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<sup>5</sup>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=2,500. In an addendum to the pre-analysis-plan published on November 21st, 2018 I specified the collection of an additional sample with N=1,500. Appendix G.3 reports the main results separately by wave.

opinion polls, it is straightforward and unambiguous. Second, since the wage statistic is rather specific, it cannot easily be looked up online.

Prior beliefs are incentivized on a random basis for roughly half of the respondents. For this purpose, 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 (see Figure 1). Incentivized subjects in  $T^{74}$  learn that they will receive a bonus of \$2 if their estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the objective value of the statistic based on the most recent available ACS as of the beginning of 2018. Incentivized respondents in  $T^{94}$  receive a similar message, but are incentivized based on the CPS instead of the ACS. For control group respondents in the incentivized condition, one of the two household surveys is randomly chosen as the objective benchmark. The accuracy incentive increases attention and mitigates politically motivated bias in reported beliefs (Bullock et al., 2015; Prior et al., 2015). A comparison across incentive conditions allows to test for the role of such factors.

**Information treatment** Subsequently, subjects in  $T^{74}$  learn that the relative wage of females in the group of 45-year-old full-time employees with a Bachelor’s degree corresponds to \$74 according to the most recent available ACS as of the beginning of 2018. Those in  $T^{94}$  learn that the objective wage statistic corresponds to \$94 based on the most recent available CPS as of early 2018. While the ACS is published on a yearly level, the CPS is published on a monthly level. In January 2018, the most recent available samples were the ACS of 2016 and the CPS of October 2017, respectively.<sup>6</sup>

Note that both treatment values are based on survey estimates, i.e. both

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<sup>6</sup>The approach of exploiting sampling variation in the ACS and CPS is similar to a recent field experiment on income comparisons and location choice by Bottan and Perez-Truglia (2021). Its main advantage, compared to an alternative approach of providing information based on random draws from one dataset, is the simplicity of the survey instructions.

are subject to reporting bias and sampling variation. While the ACS provides a larger sample, the CPS contains more recent information and is the official source of labor force statistics in the US. In addition to sampling variation, the two signals differ due to procedural differences between the ACS and the CPS, such as different rules for the top coding of incomes (see Appendix B.1).

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 for screenshots). 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 primary outcomes of interest, which are described in detail in Table 1. First, I ask respondents about their extent of agreement with statements i) that the gender wage gap 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 (Wave A only), v) a website on which gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published (Wave B only) 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 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/>. A progressive petition (“Petition I”) demands stricter requirements for large companies to report salary-related information by employee gender to a public authority. A conservative petition (“Petition II”) demands that the existing reporting requirements should be abolished (see Figure A.6 for screenshots of both petitions). Respondents who express their willingness to sign one of the two petitions are forwarded to the actual petition which they may sign by providing their contact details and by confirming their signatures via a link received per email.<sup>7</sup>

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, respondents may support the same NGO via a Facebook “like”.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Signatures on the White House Petition Website are confidential, i.e. I only observe the total number of signatures per petition rather than individual-level signatures. Therefore, I create several copies of each petition, which are completely identical except for their url. Respondents who want to sign a petition are then forwarded to a copy of their preferred petition depending on their gender, political orientation and treatment group. This setup allows me to infer the number of signatures for both petitions at the group level. Note that my petitions can be accessed exclusively via a link and do not become publicly accessible, which mitigates the concern that non-participants sign the petition.

<sup>8</sup>Online appendix B.2 explains technical details on the behavioral outcome measures.

**Mechanisms** Next, I elicit to what extent respondents believe that a number of factors that may potentially be seen as drivers of the gender wage gap currently prevail in the US (Wave A only). I also elicit beliefs about the effectiveness of government intervention (Wave B only) and the 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 gender wage equality, either from a source that is described as progressive or from a source that is described as more conservative. 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.<sup>9</sup>

**Posterior belief elicitation** Finally, I elicit respondents’ posterior beliefs about females’ relative wages. Each respondent reports beliefs about a wage statistic (randomly selected out of five) that differs from the prior belief statistic, referring to 45-year-olds with a Bachelor’s degree, in one specific aspect. For instance, one of the five statistics refers to 45-year-old full-time employees who work in the same occupation. Another statistic holds constant the job and employer. The survey offers an accuracy incentive whenever an objective benchmark is available in the ACS and the CPS, regardless of whether prior

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<sup>9</sup>The majority of the “world views” items are included in Wave B only.

beliefs are incentivized or not.<sup>10</sup>

Eliciting posteriors about a wage statistic that differs slightly from the one used in the information treatment has several advantages: It allows me to i) capture posterior beliefs, as compared to testing the respondents' short-term memory, and ii) document whether individuals extrapolate from the information they received to related statistics.

### 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 gender wage gap. 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 survey and the follow-up (Haaland and Roth, 2020). First, the survey company I cooperate with sends out generic invitations by email, which respondents are used to receiving on a regular basis.<sup>11</sup> Second, at the beginning and throughout the follow-up survey, I ask questions that are unrelated to the gender wage gap but related to work. Lastly, the survey layout,

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<sup>10</sup>In Wave A respondents are randomly assigned to estimate a statistic referring i) to 25-year-olds, ii) to employees with a High School degree, or iii) to employees in the same occupation group. Respondents in Wave B are asked to estimate a statistic referring to employees who iv) have at least one child, or v) work in the same company and job. The remaining (unchanged) characteristics correspond to age 45, a Bachelor's degree and full-time employment. For all statistics except v), the ACS and the CPS provide objective benchmarks. All respondents who are randomly assigned to any of these statistics are informed that if their estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the objective value based on the ACS/CPS they will receive \$1 in addition to their regular survey payoff.

<sup>11</sup>Most respondents take the follow-up survey between two and three weeks after the main survey and should have taken about two to four other surveys in between.



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). 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.<sup>12</sup>

## 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. My pre-specified design offers important advantages for estimating the causal effect of beliefs about the gender wage gap 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

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<sup>12</sup>In Wave B, I also elicit the two survey items on specific policy demand for which I find a significant treatment effect based on the main survey of Wave A, i.e. demand for statutory affirmative action and for equal pay legislation. I do so shortly before the posterior belief elicitation in order to disclose the connection to the main survey as late as possible.

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 wage gap 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 wage gap. In my design, the only difference between the two treatment arms is the value of the information, whereas side-effects are arguably held constant.

## 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).<sup>13</sup> 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. In the follow-up sample, which is restricted to the treatment arms  $T^{74}$  and  $T^{94}$ ,

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<sup>13</sup>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. Moreover, 33 percent are self-reported Democrats, 27 percent Republicans and 39 percent 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 with “other” political orientation.

I z-score outcomes based on the full follow-up sample.

**Multiple hypothesis adjustment** I categorize the main outcome variables into three families capturing i) people’s sense of concern about the gender wage gap, ii) their demand for specific policies, and iii) their beliefs about the prevalence of impersonal factors that may be seen as drivers of the wage gap. In the experimental analysis, I use two methods to adjust for multiple hypothesis testing: First, I construct one summary index over each family of outcomes and test for the presence of an overall treatment effect on these indices. In the regressions using these indices I apply family-wise error rate (FWER) control, i.e. I calculate the probability of rejecting *any* true null hypothesis across the three outcomes. Second, for the individual outcomes within these broad families, I present sharpened q-values based on false discovery rate (FDR) control. The interpretation of sharpened q-values is similar to standard p-values. Compared to FWER control, FDR control allows for more statistical power in exchange for a slightly higher number of Type I errors. Both methods follow Anderson (2008) and are described in detail in Appendix D.7.

**Attrition and integrity of randomization** As demonstrated in Appendix B.4, 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. 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 assignment, and the resulting sample is balanced between the two treatment groups.

### 3 Beliefs about the Gender Wage Gap

In this section I provide descriptive evidence on respondents’ prior beliefs about the gender wage gap and the correlation of these beliefs with policy demand.<sup>14</sup> All patterns described in the remainder of the paper are significant at the 5 percent level, and most of them at the 1 percent level, unless otherwise noted. My first main result is the following:

**Result 1.** *Democrats and women hold systematically lower beliefs about females’ relative wages than Republicans and men, respectively. Similarly, Democrats, women and those with more pessimistic beliefs about women’s wages are more in favor of government intervention to mitigate the wage gap.*

**Distribution of prior beliefs** There is a large degree of dispersion in people’s beliefs about females’ relative wages (Figure A.8, Panel A). 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.<sup>15</sup> The median belief is \$81. When beliefs are incentivized, heaping, especially at 100, is less frequent, and respondents spend on average 16 seconds more on their prior estimate, consistent with higher effort in answering the question. That said, the overall distribution of beliefs is similar when beliefs are

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<sup>14</sup>The remainder of the paper follows a pre-analysis plan registered under AEARCTR-0003252, unless noted differently. For the sake of conciseness, some secondary analyses are omitted from the paper and Appendix. These are available in an earlier working paper version ([https://www.econ.ku.dk/cebi/publikationer/working-papers/CEBI\\_WP\\_13-19.rev.rev.pdf](https://www.econ.ku.dk/cebi/publikationer/working-papers/CEBI_WP_13-19.rev.rev.pdf)) and upon request. None of the omitted results are central to the paper or have any implications for the robustness of the findings.

<sup>15</sup>One concern could be that the dispersion in beliefs stems from an imprecision in the wording of the underlying survey item: It refers to “individuals with a Bachelor’s degree”, while the wage statistic is based on those with exactly a Bachelor’s degree. Practically, however, this imprecision is unlikely to explain the response patterns. Only about one third of individuals in the ACS with a Bachelor’s degree also hold a higher degree, and females’ relative wages remain almost the same when those individuals are included (\$75 vs. \$74).

incentivized based on the ACS, the CPS or not at all (Panels B-D), indicating that the patterns are credible also in the non-incentivized condition. A by-product of incentives could be an increase in spontaneous online searches among participants. However, there is no bunching around a specific value in the incentivized conditions, suggesting that online searches are unlikely to be a concern (Grewenig et al., 2020).

**Correlates of prior beliefs** Even when incentivized to provide their honest opinion, men and Republicans report significantly higher beliefs about females’ relative wages than women and Democrats (Table 2, Columns 1-3). The interaction effect between gender and partisanship is small and insignificant (Column 4), i.e. the two dimensions act independently in predicting beliefs. Employed individuals are more optimistic about females’ wages (Columns 5-6), whereas education does not matter significantly (Columns 7-8).

The partisan and gender differences in prior beliefs are both about 4.4 percentage points, or 21 percent of a standard deviation. These gaps are significant and economically meaningful. For comparison, the difference between the 10th and the 90th percentile of the distribution of females’ actual relative wages across occupation groups amounts to 18 percentage points. The difference between the 10th and the 90th percentile of females’ actual relative wages across states amounts to 7 percentage points.<sup>16</sup> The partisan difference in beliefs about females’ relative wages is similar in magnitude as in the context of social mobility (Alesina et al., 2018b) and about half as large as in the context of racial discrimination (Haaland and Roth (2021), see Table C.1). Gender differences in beliefs in other domains are less systematic, suggesting

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<sup>16</sup>For the occupation and state level calculations, I rely on data from the 2016 ACS, restrict it to the age groups 25 to 65 and to individuals who work, on average, 40 hours per week, pooling all levels of educational attainment. I use the occupation classification of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which distinguishes between 22 broad occupation groups.

that gender plays a specific role in beliefs about females' relative wages.

Unreported regressions show that both the gender and the partisan gap in prior beliefs are remarkably stable to including additional controls for age, education, ethnicity, rural residence and state fixed effects, suggesting that the partisan gap is unlikely to be driven by a different demographic composition of the two political groups or by different state-level experiences.

**Demand for policy intervention** How do people's views related to the gender wage gap and their policy demand vary with personal characteristics? Democrats in the control group are between 60 and 80 percent of a standard deviation more likely than Republicans to think that the gender wage gap is large, that it is a problem and that the government should generally do more to promote gender wage equality (Table 3, Panel A). The corresponding gender difference in these views is smaller, ranging between 15 and 25 percent of a standard deviation. In line with differences in general concerns, Democrat self-report a 70 percent 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 percent of a standard deviation (Table 4, Panel A).

These differences are also reflected in behavioral measures: While 22 percent of Democrats and 19 percent of female respondents sign the petition in favor of increasing gender-related reporting requirements for companies (Petition I), only 9 percent of Non-Democrats and 12 percent of male respondents do so (Figure A.9, Panel A). In contrast, only 1 percent of Democrats and women, but 3 percent of Republicans and men, respectively, sign the petition

in favor of abolishing existing requirements (Petition II).<sup>17</sup> Women, perhaps surprisingly, donate less to the NGO lobbying for supportive policy-making, than men (p-value<0.1). Democrats, however, donate \$18 or 24 percent more than Republicans, suggesting that the donation decision captures an important element of policy demand (Panel B).<sup>18</sup>

I find a large negative correlation between people’s quantitative beliefs about women’s relative wages and their related qualitative views on whether the wage gap is large, a problem, and should be subject to government intervention at a general level (Table 3, Panel B).<sup>19</sup> The correlational link between beliefs and self-reported demand for specific policies is an order of magnitude smaller, but still considerable and precisely measured (Table 4, Panel B). 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. When controlling for gender and political orientation in addition to prior beliefs, the estimated correlation between beliefs and policy demand drops in size by about one third (Table 4, Panel C). One potential explanation is that omitted variables, such as people’s equality preferences, correlate with beliefs about the wage gap and also differ across the political spectrum and by gender. Also, measurement error could be larger for beliefs than for gender and political orientation. The experimental evidence presented in Section 4 relies on variation

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<sup>17</sup>The partisan difference in signatures for Petition II is significant at the 10 percent level.

<sup>18</sup>Facebook “likes” to the same NGO, in contrast, do not differ by partisanship (Table C.2, Column 4), suggesting a more cautious interpretation of this measure of policy views. Therefore, I focus on the petition and the donation decisions in the following.

<sup>19</sup>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.5 presents further details and the pre-specified analysis based on the full sample.

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

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

$Y_i$  represents the outcome variable of interest, for instance demand for a specific policy.  $T_i^{74}$  is a dummy that takes value one if individual  $i$  is randomly exposed to the information that female employees, on average, receive 74 percent of male employees’ wages and zero otherwise.  $X_i$  is a set of control variables, which, by design, are orthogonal to the treatment group.<sup>20</sup> I report robust standard errors and apply probability weights to all regressions.<sup>21</sup>

### 4.2 The causal effect of beliefs on policy demand

How do people’s beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap affect their general perceptions of the topic and their demand for government intervention?

**Result 2.** *Beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap have a strong causal effect on people’s sense of concern and unspecific policy demand. The effect of*

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<sup>20</sup>The vector  $X_i$  includes (pre-specified) controls for survey wave, gender, prior belief, census region of residence, five age categories, having at least one child, log of household income, having at least a 2-year college degree, being full-time employed, part-time employed, self-employed, unemployed, a student or out of the labor force (incl. retired), Democrat (incl. Independent leaning Democrat), Republican (incl. Independent leaning Republican), Independent and being of “other” political orientation. Including these covariates increases my effective power to estimate the treatment effect of interest,  $\beta_1$ .

<sup>21</sup>The probability weights adjust for a small accidental oversampling of young women by the survey company. They do not affect any of the results (Appendix G).



*these beliefs on demand for concrete policies is meaningful but more nuanced, i.e., it depends on the specific policy. Differences in beliefs across the political spectrum causally explain between zero and at most 6 percent of the partisan difference in demand for specific policies. Similarly, gender differences in beliefs causally explain up to 7 percent of the gender difference in policy demand.*

**Posterior beliefs and general perceptions** Respondents strongly update their quantitative beliefs about the gender wage gap in response to the information treatment. In the survey, each respondent is asked for her posterior belief about females’ relative wages in one out of five groups of employees. Based on these five different wage statistics, I find that respondents strongly extrapolate from the information treatment to women’s relative wages i) in a younger age group, ii) among individuals with lower educational attainment, iii) within occupation, iv) within employer and job description and v) among individuals with children. Pooling across the five wage statistics, posterior beliefs differ by around \$13 or two thirds of a standard deviation between the two treatment arms, on average (Table 5, Panel A, Columns 1-2), with similar degrees of extrapolation across the five statistics.<sup>22</sup>

Correspondingly, 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  $T^{94}$  (Columns 3-5).

**Self-reported policy demand** Does the large first-stage treatment effect translate into policy demand? Overall, the information treatment has a small, but precisely estimated and robust effect on a summary index for respondents’

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<sup>22</sup>Table D.1 shows regression results separately by the posterior belief statistic that was elicited and Figure A.10 illustrates the corresponding distributions of posterior beliefs by treatment arm.

demand for specific policies (Table 5, Panel B, Column 7). This effect is driven by nuanced effects across specific policies.

The treatment has a 0.1 standard deviation effect on respondents’ demand for affirmative action programs and for equal pay legislation (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). Moreover, equal pay legislation is tightly linked to fighting discriminatory wages, which may be part of the explanation for the significant 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 (p-value = 0.12, Column 5), similar to a UK policy.<sup>23</sup> 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 (Columns 1, 4 and 6).<sup>24</sup> One potential reason is that these policies may be seen as less direct ways of mitigating the gender wage gap. 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, policies such as public child care, wage transparency and gender quotas may be perceived as costly

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<sup>23</sup>This regression is less powered because the survey item was elicited in wave B only.

<sup>24</sup>I can rule out effects larger than 0.13, 0.07 and 0.07 standard deviations on demand for gender quotas, wage transparency and public child care, respectively, at a 95 percent confidence level.

in terms of tax money, or respondents could worry about unintended side-effects for women or inefficiencies for companies. Taken together, these findings suggest that a higher perceived gender wage gap increases people’s general support for policies to mitigate the gap, but there is no consensus on the specific policy that should be applied.

**Political behavior** In line with self-reported policy views, individuals exposed to  $T^{74}$  are more likely to sign Petition I, the petition in favor of increasing the gender-related reporting requirements of companies (p-value<0.1). 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 percent of the control group mean and the effect on signatures for Petition II corresponds to 1 percentage point or to 50 percent of the control group mean. In contrast, the average treatment effect on donations to the NGO that lobbies for policies aimed at supporting women in the labor market is small and noisily measured (Figure A.11). Overall, treatment effects on respondents’ behavior mirror those on self-reported policy demand: A higher perceived wage gap increases support for government intervention but the magnitude of the treatment response depends on the specific outcome measure.

**Magnitude of the effect** To facilitate the interpretation of the causal effect sizes, I employ a 2SLS framework in which I instrument posterior beliefs about females’ relative wages with the random treatment assignment.<sup>25</sup> I find that a one standard deviation decrease in beliefs about females’ relative wages leads to

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<sup>25</sup>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.3.

0.17 and 0.18 standard deviations increases in demand for statutory affirmative action programs and equal pay legislation, respectively (Table 5, Panel C).

In addition, 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 wage gap between Democrats and Republicans accounts for between zero and at most 6 percent of the partisan difference in policy demand. Similarly, gender differences in beliefs causally explain up to 7 percent of disagreement about the optimal degree of policy intervention between men and women (see Appendix D.3 for details). In sum, the effect of beliefs about the gender wage gap on policy demand is meaningful, but even if people agreed on the size of the gap, they would not converge in terms of their policy views.

### 4.3 Robustness

**Persistence of the treatment effect** To address concerns related to short-lived emotional responses to the treatment or experimenter demand effects, I study the persistence of my findings in the obfuscated follow-up survey. I find a strong persistent treatment effect on beliefs about the baseline wage statistic referring to 45-year-olds who hold a Bachelor’s degree and work 40 hours per week (Table 6, Panel A, Column 1). The effect size corresponds to around \$10, i.e. to 50 percent of the difference in the treatment information the respondents had received around two weeks earlier. Similarly, the treatment effects on respondents’ views on whether the wage gap constitutes a problem and on whether it should be addressed by government intervention (Columns 3-4) persist at a magnitude similar to the initial effect.

In the follow-up survey in wave B, I also re-elicited support for the two spe-

cific policies with a significant treatment effect in the main survey. Given the smaller sample, these regressions are naturally less powered than those based on both waves. While I find no persistent effect on support for affirmative action programs (Panel B, Column 1), the estimated effect on demand for equal pay legislation persists at a level similar to the immediate effect, but it is imprecisely measured (Column 2,  $p=0.17$ ). Moreover, I find a significant effect on respondents' demand for policies aimed at compensating disadvantages women may have due to family responsibilities (Column 3) and a marginally significant effect on demand for anti-discrimination policies (Column 4,  $p<0.1$ ), which I only elicited in the follow-up (Waves A and B).<sup>26</sup> There is no treatment effect on a range of placebo outcomes in the follow-up survey (Appendix D.4).<sup>27</sup> The persistence of the initial treatment effects suggests that these effects are driven by an updating of respondents' beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap, and that concerns related to experimenter demand effects or short-lived emotional responses to the treatment are less important.

**Compliant subpopulation** A different concern could be that the information primarily shifts beliefs among respondents with a low interest in the topic, who are less well-informed, and whose policy demand might be particularly inelastic to their beliefs about the gender wage gap. In that case, my finding of a limited causal effect of beliefs on policy demand could be driven by the specific characteristics of the compliant subpopulation in my experiment, and might not hold in general.

To explore this concern, I proxy respondents' interest in the topic using self-reported consumption of information about gender wage differences in news-

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<sup>26</sup> Respondents also persistently update about the fairness of women's wages (Panel B, Column 7), supporting my evidence on mechanisms which I present in Section 5.

<sup>27</sup> Appendix D.4 also shows the treatment effects in the main survey restricting the sample to those participating in the follow-up, which are similar to those in the full sample.

papers, magazines or online over the three weeks before the main survey.<sup>28</sup> While the updating of beliefs in response to the treatment is indeed stronger for those who have not read about the topic recently (Table D.6, Panel A), it is also significant for those who are more interested in the topic. This suggests that the compliant subpopulation consists of a broad group of individuals.

In addition, the effect of the perceived size of the wage gap on policy demand in the second stage is driven by those who have *not* recently read about the topic (Panel B), contrary to the concern raised above.

**Alternative specifications and multiple hypothesis testing** My baseline findings are robust to specifications that include the pure control group, such as a specification that uses the difference between the received signal and the respondent’s prior as the main independent variable (Appendix D.6).

Moreover, the main estimated treatment effects on the pre-specified summary indices for different families of outcomes are robust to FWER adjustment for multiple hypothesis testing (Appendix D.7).

## 5 Mechanisms

In this section I shed light on potential mechanisms driving or mitigating the effect of the individually perceived wage gap on policy demand.

**Self-interest** An individual who learns about the size of the gender wage gap 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.

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<sup>28</sup>This analysis was not pre-specified.

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

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

$H_i$  indicates the dimension of heterogeneity of interest, in this case gender,  $\beta_2$  captures the reaction of the omitted group to the information treatment and  $\beta_3$  captures the differential reaction of group  $H$ . Given that the updating of beliefs about the size of the wage gap in response to the treatment is similar for females and males (Table 7, Panel A, Column 1), 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.<sup>29</sup> In fact, while women’s demand for gender quotas is inelastic to the treatment, the treatment effect for men is positive (Column 3). There is no gender difference for the other measures of specific policy demand. In sum, self-interest does not appear to be a dominant motive.<sup>30</sup>

**Perceived reasons for the gender wage gap and fairness concerns** Similar to information one may encounter in the media, the wage statistic I employ leaves scope for interpretation regarding the deep underlying reasons for gen-

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<sup>29</sup>The behavioral outcome measures confirm this 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.12). 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<0.1, Figure A.11).

<sup>30</sup>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 0.25 standard deviations for female and to zero for male respondents (p-value of the difference <0.05). This result is illustrated in Figure A.13, based on non-pre-specified regressions using the summary index of specific policy demand as the dependent variable. It is consistent with young individuals still facing the highest uncertainty about their lifetime income and thus having most to gain or lose from policy intervention.

der differences in wages. I exploit this “wobble 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 suggests 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, the limited causal effect of beliefs about the size of the wage gap on policy demand could be due to respondents attributing the update about the wage gap to “fair” reasons.

In the absence of an information treatment, individuals see a larger prevalence of impersonal factors that could be driving the wage gap, such as gender-based discrimination, than personal factors, such as gender differences in ambitions or talents.<sup>31</sup> Women and Democrats are more likely to believe in the prevalence of impersonal rather than personal factors compared to men and Republicans (Table 8).

How does the perceived size of the wage gap affect these beliefs? Beliefs about the prevalence of personal factors are unaffected by the treatment, on average (Table 8, Columns 1-3) – potentially because people have received many signals about women’s and men’s ambitions, talents and preferences prior to taking the survey. In contrast, respondents exposed to the high wage gap treatment express a 0.2 standard deviation higher belief in the prevalence of gender-based discrimination in the labor market than those in the low wage gap treatment (Column 5). This effect is reflected in a negative updating by 0.3 standard deviations about the fairness of women’s wages (Column 9). In

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<sup>31</sup>15, 14 and 36 percent of respondents in the pure control group agree that men are inherently more i) ambitious, ii) talented for demanding tasks and iii) interested in “technical” jobs, respectively. Conversely, 71, 70 and 62 percent believe that i) women face discrimination in the labor market, ii) men have been encouraged more to pursue ambitious careers and iii) women face larger difficulties in combining work and family in today’s society.



sum, the limited causal role of beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap 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 wage gap, I next examine differences in the treatment effect across the political spectrum. The two significant average treatment effects on demand for affirmative action, for equal pay legislation and the overall effect on the summary index are driven by Democrats and Independents (Table 7, Panel B, Columns 4, 5 and 9), although the differences are sometimes noisily measured.<sup>32</sup> Together with the homogeneous first stage effect on the perceived size of the wage gap (Column 1), these patterns imply that a higher perceived wage gap leads to a higher demand for specific policy intervention, but only among Democrats and Independents.<sup>33</sup> This finding is in line with evidence by Alesina et al. (2018b) and Haaland and Roth (2021) 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 do not see government intervention as a solution to inequality – a point I examine below.

**Perceived effectiveness of government intervention** A respondent who learns that the gender wage gap 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 redistribution

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<sup>32</sup>For Independents, the treatment effects on affirmative action and on the summary index are marginally significant (p-value<0.1).

<sup>33</sup>I had pre-specified to consider Democrats vs. Non-Democrats for this analysis. However, this specification conceals substantial differences between Republicans and Independents. Therefore, I present a more disaggregated specification that distinguishes between Democrats, Republicans and Independents. See Table G.11 for the regression results following the pre-analysis plan.

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 beliefs about the size of the wage gap (Table 9, Panel A).

Alternatively, 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 is effective in increasing females’ wages<sup>34</sup>, with Democrats holding more optimistic beliefs (Panel A). I also examine whether treatment effects vary with beliefs about the effectiveness of policies. This exercise should be interpreted cautiously given that i) beliefs about policy effectiveness are measured post-treatment, ii) they are available only for the smaller Wave B sample, leading to reduced power and iii) the analysis was not pre-specified. That said, the treatment effect on the demand for gender quotas is 0.25 standard deviations larger for respondents with above median beliefs about the effectiveness of policies (Panel C, Column 1), and the effects on demand for equal pay legislation and on the summary index are driven by this group (Columns 3 and 6), although differences are noisily measured.<sup>35</sup> In combination with the homogeneous first stage treatment effect on beliefs (Panel B), these results suggest that an overall skepticism about policy effectiveness limits the effect of a higher perceived size of the wage gap on policy demand.

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<sup>34</sup>34, 30 and 36 percent of the respondents believe that anti-discrimination, affirmative action and family policies, respectively, are “somewhat effective” or “highly effective” rather than “strongly/somewhat counterproductive” or “neither effective nor counterproductive”.

<sup>35</sup>The treatment effect on the summary index is marginally significant for those with above median beliefs about policy effectiveness (p-value<0.1, Column 7).

**Heterogeneity according to prior beliefs** In Appendix D.6, 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 convergence of beliefs about the size of the wage gap 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 may be more “dogmatic” about their policy views.

**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 wage gap 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 to start with, who may be more “dogmatic” in their policy views.*

In Appendix E I provide correlational 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 wage gap. 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 (Fernández, 2011).

## 6 Additional Evidence: Endogeneity of Beliefs

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

**Result 4.** *There is suggestive evidence of politically motivated bias in reported beliefs about the size of the wage gap 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 gender wage gap, 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 reported estimates of women’s wages by men and Republicans and to more optimistic estimates by women and Democrats in the presence of politically motivated bias (Prior et al., 2015). In line with this conjecture, I find that men’s estimates of females’ relative wages are 2.4 percentage points or 10 percent of a standard deviation lower when incentivized, whereas women’s estimates are 1.7 percentage points or 7 percent of a standard deviation higher (p-value<0.1,

Figure 3).<sup>36</sup> By contrast, there is no difference between incentivized and unincentivized estimates of females’ relative wages for neither Republicans nor Democrats. This suggests that partisan differences in reported estimates reflect actual beliefs, 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 using multiple price lists that trade off information against a small bonus of \$0.01/\$0.30/\$0.50. One source is introduced as an institution “that favors government intervention to support women’s progress in the labor market”, whereas the other source is described as “favoring a traditional role for women as caregivers for the family and arguing against related government intervention”. At this stage I do not reveal the identities of the institutions to the participants. The outcome variable of interest is the z-scored number of times the respondent chooses information over money across three decision scenarios for either source of information.<sup>37</sup>

In the pure control group, Democrats have a 0.4 standard deviation higher willingness to pay for additional information from the progressive source and a 0.2 standard deviation lower willingness to pay for the information from the traditional source, compared to Republicans (Table 10, Columns 1 and 5).<sup>38</sup> Similarly, women are about 0.2 standard deviations more likely to purchase the progressive information (p-value<0.1) and about 0.2 standard deviations less likely to purchase the traditional information (p-value<0.1), compared to men

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<sup>36</sup>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) wage gap, which could be mitigated through higher effort in the incentivized condition. However, the gender-patterns are unaffected by controlling for response time (interacted with gender) as a proxy for effort (Table F.1).

<sup>37</sup>The analysis presented in the remainder of this section was not pre-specified.

<sup>38</sup>Figure A.14 presents raw differences in demand for information by gender and partisanship.

(Columns 2 and 6).<sup>39</sup> Moreover, using the summary index for specific policy demand as a direct measure of policy preferences, I find that respondents with a higher policy demand are more likely to purchase the progressive information and less likely to purchase the information from the more conservative source (Columns 3 and 7). These patterns are consistent with a selective choice of information that supports one’s political preferences (Gentzkow and Shapiro, 2010; Golman, 2020; Haaland and Roth, 2021). They might explain how systematic differences in beliefs about the size of the wage gap can persist despite the same public information being available to everybody.

## 7 Conclusion

Using an information experiment conducted with a representative online sample from the US, I document that people’s beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap 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 wage gap 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 inequality 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. Overall, my findings suggest that the origins of the political polarization over policies in

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<sup>39</sup>For both the progressive and the traditional source of information 92 percent 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.

the gender context do not lie in different beliefs about the extent of wage disparities.

The results documented in this paper face some limitations: First, they are based on an information treatment referring to the size of the gender wage gap and leaving the interpretation of the gap to respondents. Alternative information treatments could directly “correct” misperceptions about reasons for the wage gap, such as choice of occupation or the child penalty, and thereby generate additional insights into i) which sources of inequality individuals consider as unfair, and ii) how individuals’ beliefs about the origins of inequality affect their policy demand.

Second, my experiment allows to study the effect of information on preferences over specific policies in a controlled environment. In the real world, individuals will encounter information in various forms, such as information communicated through politicians, the media or peers. Evidence from different setups is needed to shed light on the effect of information received in such natural settings on policy demand. Moreover, it is an open question to what extent beliefs about wage disparities ultimately affect voting decisions, which arguably result from multidimensional considerations.

Finally, 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). In the gender context, important life events such as becoming a parent or getting divorced shape individuals’ (policy) preferences (Edlund and Pande, 2002; Kuziemko et al., 2018; Washington, 2008). Future research could study how personal experiences affect not only levels of policy demand but also people’s disposition to interpret new information in a certain way.

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# Main Figures

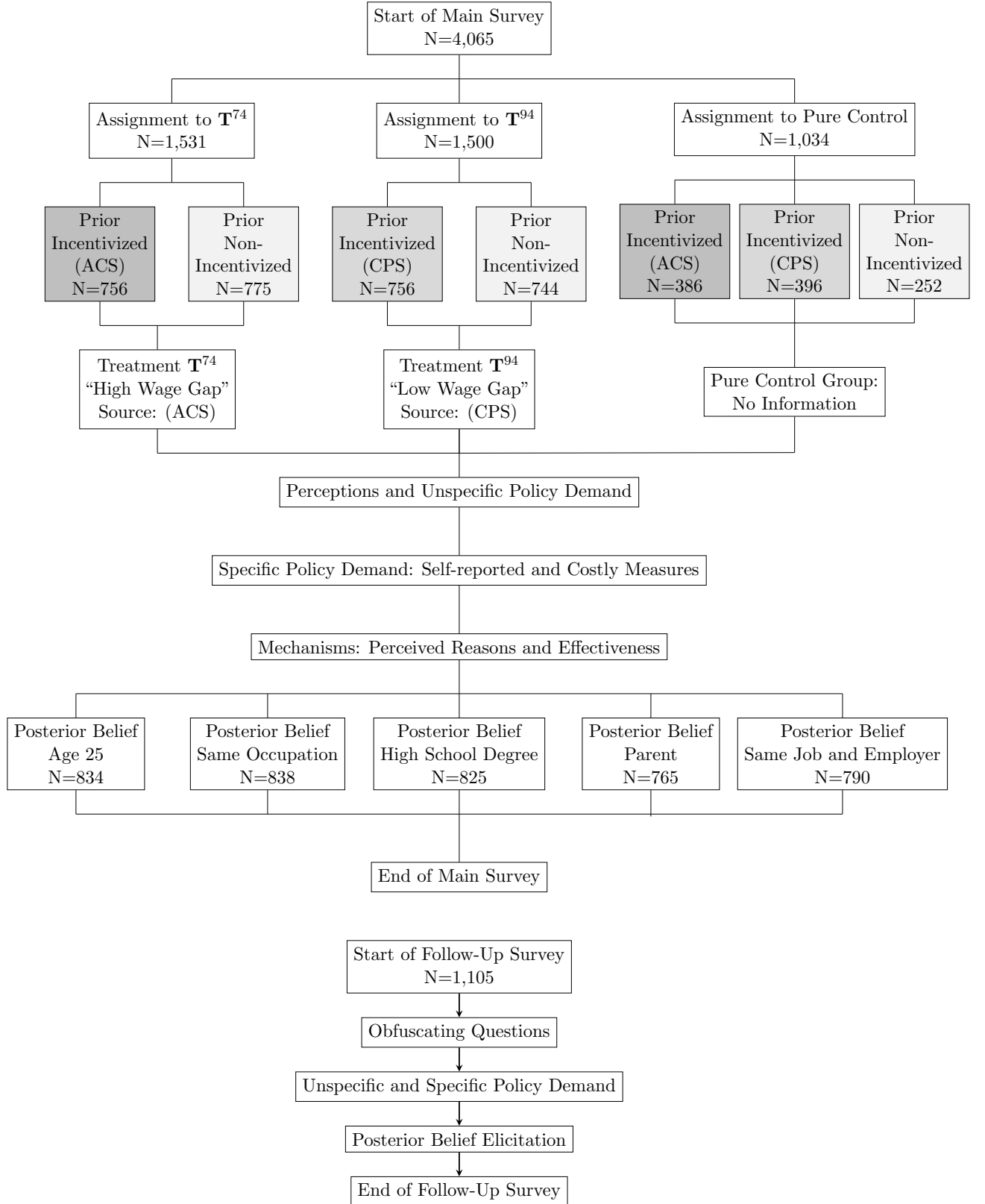


Figure 1: Outline of main survey and follow-up survey

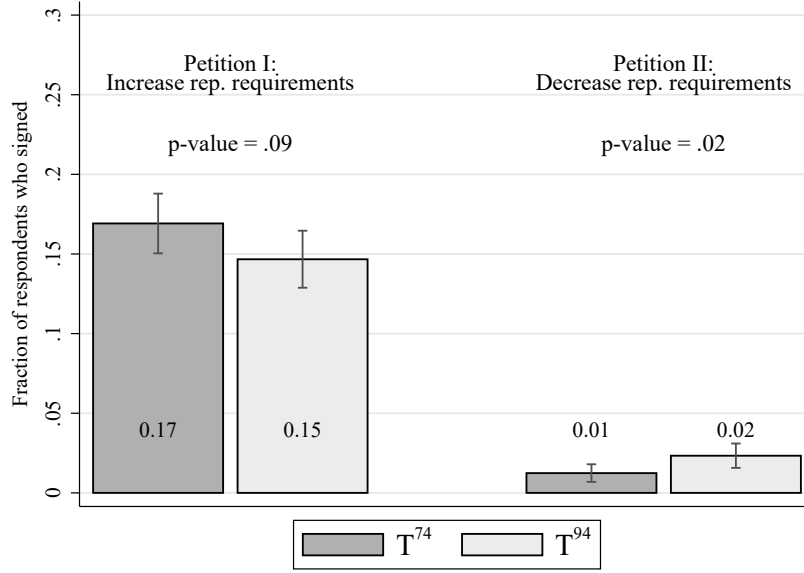


Figure 2: Treatment effect on signatures for real online petitions

*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 represent  $T^{94}$ . 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.

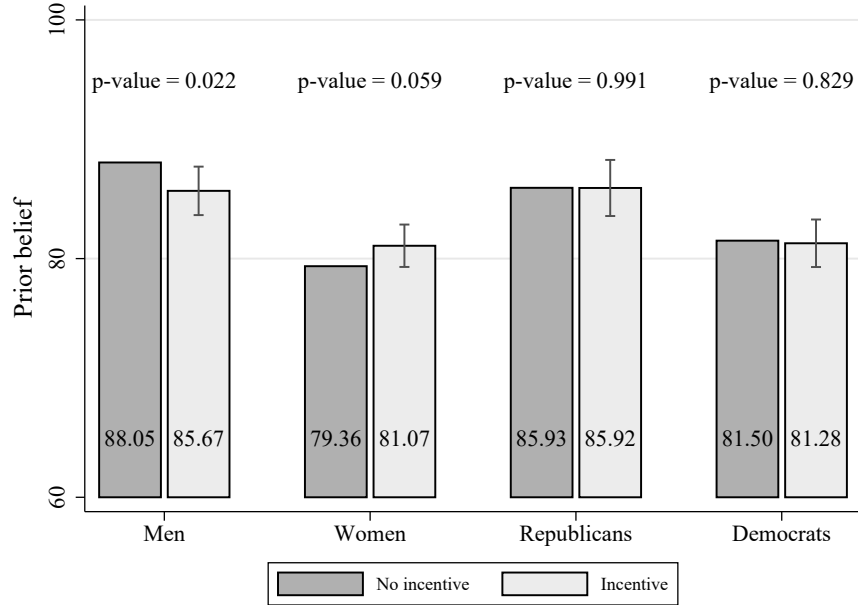


Figure 3: Incentivized vs. non-incentivized prior beliefs.

*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. Republicans (Democrats) include Independents leaning Republican (Democrat).

# Main Tables

Table 1: Main survey items in main survey (perceptions and policy demand)

Survey Block and Introductory Text	Survey Item	Answer Options	Survey Wave	Variable Name
General perceptions and unspecific policy demand	Gender differences in wages are <b>large</b> in the United States.	1,2,...,10	A and B	Gender differences in wages are large
Intro: How do you feel about the following statements where 1 means you <b>fully disagree</b> and 10 means you <b>fully agree</b> ?	Gender differences in wages are a <b>problem</b> in the United States.	1,2,...,10	A and B	Gender differences in wages are a problem
	The government should do more to <b>promote wage equality</b> between men and women.	1,2,...,10	A and B	Gov. should mitigate gender wage gap
Self-reported specific policy demand	Many countries currently have <b>gender quotas</b> in place in order to increase the representation of women in leading positions.	Strongly against Somewhat against Neither in favor nor against Somewhat in favor Strongly in favor	A and B	Introduce gender quotas
Intro: What is your <b>opinion</b> on the following labor market policies? When making your choice, please think of all potential <b>costs</b> and <b>benefits</b> .	Are you <b>in favor or against</b> the introduction of similar <b>statutory gender quotas</b> in the United States?	Softened a lot Softened somewhat Neither strengthen nor soften Strengthen somewhat Strengthen a lot	A and B	Statutory affirmative action
	Large public contractors are legally required to have so-called “ <b>Affirmative Action Plans</b> ”, i.e. they have to <b>support women</b> and minorities at all levels of the hierarchy through measures such as training programs and outreach efforts. Do you think the government should <b>strengthen or soften</b> this <b>requirement</b> in terms of strictness and the set of companies that have to comply?			
	Currently, federal law requires that men and women <b>get equal pay</b> for work that is comparable in terms of <b>skill effort, responsibility</b> and <b>working conditions</b> in the same establishment. In case of suspected discrimination employees may file a lawsuit against their employers. If they win the case, then they are to be compensated by their employers. Should the government give <b>more freedom in wage setting</b> to companies by making legislation <b>less strict</b> or would you like to see <b>stricter enforcement of the existing legislation</b> ?	A lot less strict Somewhat less strict Keep status quo Somewhat stricter A lot stricter	A and B	Stricter equal pay legislation
	<b>Wage transparency</b> within firms provides a basis for wage negotiations and may discipline companies by making discriminatory wages visible. Currently, wage transparency is <b>not legally required</b> . However, <b>employees are protected</b> by law from retaliation through employers in case they share information on their wages. Would you like the government to enforce <b>more or less wage transparency</b> ?	A lot less Somewhat less Keep current level Somewhat more A lot more	A	Wage transparency within companies
	In the U.K. large companies have to report their <b>gender pay gap</b> and the information is made <b>publicly available on a website</b> . Are you <b>in favor or against</b> the introduction of a <b>similar website</b> in the U.S.?	Strongly against Somewhat against Neither in favor nor against Somewhat in favor Strongly in favor	B	Introduce reporting website
	<b>Child day care</b> may enable mothers as well as fathers to work full-time if they want to. Should the government increase or decrease the <b>amount of resources</b> spent on making <b>child care available and affordable</b> ?	Decrease strongly Decrease somewhat Neither increase nor decrease Increase somewhat Increase strongly	A and B	Increase subsidies to child care

*Notes:* This table lists the main self-reported survey items elicited in Wave A and/or Wave B of data collection. The order of the items under “self-reported specific policy demand” was randomized.

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	-4.6*** (0.9)		-4.4*** (0.9)	-4.3*** (1.6)	-4.2*** (0.9)	-3.3** (1.3)	-2.9** (1.4)	-2.3 (1.6)
Democrat		-4.6*** (1.0)	-4.4*** (1.0)	-4.7*** (1.5)	-4.4*** (1.0)	-4.4*** (1.0)	-4.4*** (1.0)	-4.4*** (1.0)
Independent		-2.0* (1.2)	-1.8 (1.2)	-1.1 (1.7)	-1.7 (1.2)	-1.7 (1.2)	-1.6 (1.2)	-1.6 (1.2)
Female x Democrat				0.6 (2.1)				
Female x Independent				-1.3 (2.4)				
Employee					1.9** (0.9)	2.7** (1.3)		2.3* (1.3)
Female x Employee						-1.4 (1.8)		-0.8 (1.8)
Associate Degree +							2.2 (1.3)	1.6 (1.3)
Female x Ass. Degree +							-2.3 (1.8)	-2.2 (1.9)
Constant	85.7*** (0.6)	85.9*** (0.8)	88.0*** (0.9)	87.9*** (1.1)	86.6*** (1.0)	86.1*** (1.2)	86.5*** (1.2)	85.3*** (1.4)
Observations	2294	2294	2294	2294	2294	2294	2294	2294

*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%.

Table 3: Correlates of perceptions

	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)
<b>Panel A</b>				
Democrat	0.577*** (0.072)	0.683*** (0.073)	0.803*** (0.073)	0.691*** (0.066)
Female	0.173*** (0.064)	0.264*** (0.063)	0.153** (0.062)	0.181*** (0.057)
<b>Panel B</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.815*** (0.072)	-0.849*** (0.071)	-0.595*** (0.071)	-0.729*** (0.065)
<b>Panel C</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.742*** (0.070)	-0.757*** (0.067)	-0.498*** (0.069)	-0.643*** (0.062)
Democrat	0.482*** (0.067)	0.586*** (0.067)	0.739*** (0.071)	0.609*** (0.061)
Female	0.096 (0.059)	0.186*** (0.058)	0.102* (0.060)	0.115** (0.053)
Observations	921	921	921	921

*Notes:* Data base: Pure control group, restricted to observations with prior beliefs between the 5th and the 95th percentile. For the exact survey items, see Table 1. All outcomes are z-scored based on the control group. Column 4 uses a summary index over Columns 1-3, following the method described in Anderson (2008). All specifications include a dummy for Wave B of data collection. Panels A and C control for political orientation Independent and “other” in addition to the reported coefficients. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.



Table 4: Correlates of demand for specific policies

	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)
<b>Panel A</b>							
Democrat	0.688*** (0.072)	0.760*** (0.072)	0.684*** (0.070)	0.694*** (0.102)	0.542*** (0.099)	0.635*** (0.073)	0.669*** (0.051)
Female	0.254*** (0.062)	0.176*** (0.062)	0.339*** (0.061)	0.378*** (0.087)	0.467*** (0.087)	0.225*** (0.063)	0.291*** (0.043)
<b>Panel B</b>							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.234*** (0.071)	-0.363*** (0.073)	-0.292*** (0.072)	-0.396*** (0.102)	-0.296*** (0.097)	-0.302*** (0.070)	-0.302*** (0.054)
<b>Panel C</b>							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.122* (0.067)	-0.259*** (0.069)	-0.184*** (0.068)	-0.285*** (0.095)	-0.183** (0.091)	-0.205*** (0.069)	-0.195*** (0.048)
Democrat	0.672*** (0.072)	0.726*** (0.072)	0.661*** (0.071)	0.649*** (0.102)	0.523*** (0.100)	0.609*** (0.073)	0.644*** (0.051)
Female	0.241*** (0.063)	0.149** (0.062)	0.320*** (0.062)	0.358*** (0.087)	0.442*** (0.088)	0.204*** (0.063)	0.271*** (0.043)
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 outcome in Column 4 (Column 5) was elicited in Wave A (Wave B) only. For the exact survey items, see Table 1. All outcomes are z-scored based on the control group. Column 7 uses a summary index over Columns 1-6, following the method described in Anderson (2008). All specifications include a dummy for Wave B of data collection. Panels A and C control for political orientation Independent and “other” in addition to the reported coefficients. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

Table 5: 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)	
<b>Panel A: First Stage</b>							
$T^{74}$	-12.955*** (0.594)	-0.658*** (0.030)	0.597*** (0.036)	0.422*** (0.035)	0.243*** (0.035)	0.417*** (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)
<b>Panel B: Reduced Form</b>							
$T^{74}$	0.056 (0.036)	0.112*** (0.034)	0.115*** (0.035)	-0.015 (0.042)	0.098 (0.063)	0.003 (0.035)	0.056** (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
<b>Panel C: 2SLS</b>							
Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage (z-scored)	-0.085 (0.054)	-0.171*** (0.053)	-0.177*** (0.053)	0.026 (0.065)	-0.144 (0.092)	-0.009 (0.053)	-0.087** (0.038)
Observations	3022	3022	3022	2003	1019	3022	3022

*Notes:* Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. The outcome in Panels B-C, Column 4 (5) was elicited in Wave A (Wave B) only. 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 wage gap 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. See Table 1 for the exact survey items. 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.7 for technical details. Panel C shows a 2SLS specification where the first stage consists of Panel A, Column 2. 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 6: Persistence of the treatment effect in obfuscated follow-up survey

	Re-elicited Outcomes				Newly elicited Outcomes		Summary Index
	(1) Post. belief about fem. rel. wage (0-200)	(2) Post. belief about fem. rel. wage (z-scored)	(3) Gender diff. in wages are a problem	(4) Government should mitigate gender wage gap	(5) Gender diff. in wages are a problem among high-skilled	(6) Gender diff. in wages are a problem among low-skilled	(7) Perception Index (3)-(6))
<b>Panel A: Perceptions</b>							
T <sup>74</sup>	-10.668*** (1.177)	-0.503*** (0.056)	0.186*** (0.057)	0.183*** (0.057)	0.124** (0.058)	0.139** (0.058)	0.156*** (0.045)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.011]	[0.007]	
Female	-2.292* (1.248)	-0.108* (0.059)	0.272*** (0.060)	0.174*** (0.058)	0.188*** (0.061)	0.197*** (0.062)	0.190*** (0.046)
Democrat	0.554 (1.319)	0.026 (0.062)	0.547*** (0.065)	0.686*** (0.063)	0.506*** (0.066)	0.392*** (0.066)	0.547*** (0.050)
Observations	1089	1089	1105	1105	1105	1105	1105
	Re-elicited Outcomes		Newly elicited Outcomes		Summary Indices		Mechanism
	(1) Statutory affirmative action	(2) Stricter equal pay legislation	(3) Supportive policy	(4) Anti- discrimination policy	(5) Policy demand index (1)-(2))	(6) Policy demand index (3)-(4))	(7) Women's wages are fair
<b>Panel B: Policy Demand</b>							
T <sup>74</sup>	0.009 (0.078)	0.096 (0.079)	0.152*** (0.057)	0.094* (0.057)	0.052 (0.069)	0.123** (0.052)	-0.110** (0.055)
Sharpened q-value	[0.833]	[0.819]	[0.015]	[0.052]			
Female	0.150* (0.080)	0.197** (0.083)	0.188*** (0.059)	0.221*** (0.059)	0.174** (0.071)	0.205*** (0.053)	-0.121** (0.058)
Democrat	0.583*** (0.091)	0.642*** (0.091)	0.675*** (0.063)	0.678*** (0.063)	0.612*** (0.077)	0.677*** (0.057)	-0.430*** (0.065)
Observations	606	606	1105	1105	606	1105	1105

*Notes:* Data base: Follow-up sample (only treated respondents), both waves. Outcomes in Panel B, Columns 1-2 were elicited in Wave B only.  $T^{74}$  is a dummy that takes value one for those who received the high wage gap treatment in the main survey and zero otherwise. All outcomes except the one in Panel A, Column 1 are z-scored, using the mean and standard deviation in the full follow-up sample. Outcomes in Panel A, Columns 1-2, are based on respondents' beliefs about 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. Outcomes in Columns 3-4 are based on survey items which are similar in spirit to items in the main survey, but differ in the wording, question order and answer scales. Outcomes in Columns 5 and 6 were not part of the main survey. The survey question for Columns 3,5 and 6 reads "Do you think wage differences between the following groups are a problem in the United States today?: i) High-skilled and low-skilled employees (not reported in this table), ii) Men and women, iii) Men and women who are high-skilled, iv) Men and women who are low-skilled. [Answer scales: "Not at all a problem" to "A very substantial problem".] The question for Column 4 reads "Do you think the government should increase or decrease efforts to support women in the labor market?", [Answer scale: "Decrease strongly" to "Increase strongly".] Column 7 uses a summary index over Columns 3-6, following Anderson (2008). Panel B, Columns 1-2 are based on items repeated from the main survey but do not include the introductory text explaining the status quo. Columns 3-4 use the following items, which were not part of the main survey: "Do you think the government should increase or decrease policy efforts to compensate disadvantages women may have in the labor market due to family responsibilities?" and "Do you think the government should increase or decrease the level of anti-discrimination policies for women?" [Answer scales: "Decrease a lot" to "Increase a lot".] Columns 5 and 6 use summary indices over Columns 1-2 and over Columns 3-4, following Anderson (2008). Column 7 is based on the item "How fair do you generally find the wages received by the following groups?": i) Low-skilled workers (not reported in this table), ii) Women. [Answer scales: "Much less than fair" to "Much more than fair"]. Additional controls and info on sharpened q-values: See notes to Table 5. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

Table 7: Heterogeneity in the treatment effect by gender and political orientation

	First Stage		Policy Demand						
	(1) Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage	(2) Perception index	(3) Introduce gender quotas	(4) Statutory affirmative action	(5) Stricter equal pay legislation	(6) Wage transp. within companies	(7) Introduce reporting website	(8) Increase subsidies to child care	(9) Policy demand index
<b>Panel A: Het. by gender</b>									
T <sup>74</sup>	-12.076*** (0.868)	0.413*** (0.050)	0.115** (0.053)	0.112** (0.052)	0.113** (0.052)	-0.004 (0.063)	0.096 (0.098)	-0.015 (0.051)	0.066* (0.038)
T <sup>74</sup> x Female	-1.616 (1.193)	0.007 (0.064)	-0.119* (0.071)	0.001 (0.069)	0.004 (0.070)	-0.021 (0.085)	0.003 (0.125)	0.035 (0.069)	-0.020 (0.050)
p-value [T <sup>74</sup> + T <sup>74</sup> x female]	0.000	0.000	0.935	0.012	0.011	0.658	0.202	0.672	0.160
Female	-0.814 (0.783)	0.274*** (0.049)	0.313*** (0.052)	0.178*** (0.050)	0.235*** (0.049)	0.208*** (0.061)	0.309*** (0.090)	0.094* (0.050)	0.213*** (0.036)
Observations	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031
<b>Panel B: Het. by pol. orientation</b>									
T <sup>74</sup>	-13.754*** (0.962)	0.385*** (0.062)	0.107* (0.061)	0.075 (0.061)	-0.027 (0.059)	-0.024 (0.074)	0.115 (0.114)	-0.114* (0.061)	0.008 (0.045)
T <sup>74</sup> x Democrat	1.610 (1.313)	0.014 (0.073)	-0.056 (0.080)	0.048 (0.078)	0.247*** (0.078)	-0.015 (0.095)	-0.006 (0.142)	0.145* (0.078)	0.073 (0.057)
p-value [T <sup>74</sup> + T <sup>74</sup> x Dem.]	0.000	0.000	0.309	0.010	0.000	0.516	0.198	0.522	0.018
T <sup>74</sup> x Independent	1.300 (1.634)	0.171* (0.101)	-0.132 (0.107)	0.072 (0.103)	0.198** (0.100)	0.081 (0.126)	0.008 (0.186)	0.290*** (0.103)	0.097 (0.075)
p-value [T <sup>74</sup> + T <sup>74</sup> x Indep.]	0.000	0.000	0.781	0.077	0.034	0.570	0.407	0.033	0.083
Democrat	-0.741 (0.876)	0.659*** (0.055)	0.587*** (0.057)	0.646*** (0.055)	0.494*** (0.054)	0.574*** (0.066)	0.601*** (0.107)	0.505*** (0.056)	0.557*** (0.040)
Independent	-0.268 (1.122)	0.166** (0.079)	0.224*** (0.079)	0.218*** (0.076)	0.135* (0.074)	0.199** (0.094)	0.244* (0.135)	-0.038 (0.075)	0.143** (0.056)
Observations	2965	2974	2974	2974	2974	1974	1000	2974	2974

*Notes:* Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. The outcome in Column 6 (7) was elicited in Wave A (Wave B) only. Panel B excludes respondents with “other” political orientation. All regressions apply the specification outlined in Section 5. The outcome in Column 1 is the respondent’s posterior belief about females’ relative wages, pooling across five different wage statistics (see notes of Table 5 for details) and including a dummy for the specific statistic. Z-scored outcomes in Columns 2-8 are based on the respondent’s support of the specific policies (see Table 1 for the exact items). The outcome in Column 2 is the summary index over people’s perceptions related to the wage gap, corresponding to Table 5, Panel A, Column 6. Column 9 uses a summary index over Columns 2-8. Both indices follow the method described in Anderson (2008). Additional controls in Panel A: Democrat, Independent and “other” political orientation. Additional controls in Panel B: gender. Additional controls in both panels: 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. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

Table 8: Treatment effect on beliefs about underlying factors and fairness perceptions

	Personal Factors				Impersonal Factors				Fairness
	(1) Ambitions	(2) Talent	(3) Preferences	(4) Index	(5) Discrimination	(6) Socialization	(7) Work-Family	(8) Index	(9) of Women's Wages
T <sup>74</sup>	0.032 (0.045)	0.016 (0.042)	0.050 (0.043)	0.035 (0.036)	0.227*** (0.042)	0.014 (0.046)	0.076* (0.045)	0.111*** (0.032)	-0.304*** (0.034)
Sharpened q-value	[1.000]	[1.000]	[1.000]		[0.001]	[0.337]	[0.105]		
Female	-0.467*** (0.047)	-0.419*** (0.044)	-0.378*** (0.045)	-0.418*** (0.038)	0.240*** (0.043)	0.268*** (0.047)	0.247*** (0.047)	0.251*** (0.033)	-0.342*** (0.035)
Democrat	-0.276*** (0.051)	-0.281*** (0.049)	-0.431*** (0.050)	-0.340*** (0.041)	0.693*** (0.049)	0.413*** (0.053)	0.219*** (0.051)	0.442*** (0.038)	-0.435*** (0.041)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	2012	3031

*Notes:* Data base: Treatment groups. Outcomes in Columns 1-8 were elicited in wave A only, the outcome in Column 9 is based on both waves. The dependent variables in Columns 1-3 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. The dependent variables in Columns 5-7 are based on the respondent's agreement with statements about the prevalence of the following impersonal factors: 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. Higher values refer to a higher perceived prevalence of the corresponding factor. The dependent variable in Column 9 is based on subjective fairness ratings of women's wages, elicited on a 5-point scale ["much less than fair" - "much more than fair"]. Outcomes in columns 1-3, 5-7 and 9 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.7 for technical details. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

Table 9: The role of beliefs about the effectiveness of policies

	Perceived effectiveness of anti-disc. policies	Perceived effectiveness of affirmative action	Perceived effectiveness of work-family policies	Perceived effectiveness index ((1)-(3))		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)		
<b>Panel A: Treatment Effect</b>						
T <sup>74</sup>	0.022 (0.063)	0.052 (0.069)	-0.014 (0.067)	0.019 (0.049)		
Female	0.105 (0.066)	0.040 (0.072)	0.031 (0.070)	0.059 (0.050)		
Democrat	0.245*** (0.076)	0.217*** (0.083)	0.213*** (0.080)	0.225*** (0.058)		
	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Perception index ((2)-(4))	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
<b>Panel B: First Stage</b>						
T <sup>74</sup> (a)	-14.311*** (1.381)	0.561*** (0.089)	0.487*** (0.087)	0.229** (0.091)	0.408*** (0.082)	
T <sup>74</sup> x 1 (Perceived effectiveness > p50) (b)	1.951 (2.034)	0.124 (0.124)	0.022 (0.121)	0.091 (0.122)	0.092 (0.111)	
1 (Perceived effectiveness > p50)	-0.840 (1.434)	0.229** (0.098)	0.286*** (0.098)	0.262*** (0.094)	0.253*** (0.088)	
p-value [(a) + (b) = 0]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	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)
<b>Panel C: Reduced Form</b>						
T <sup>74</sup> (a)	-0.054 (0.084)	0.047 (0.080)	0.105 (0.087)	0.068 (0.086)	-0.046 (0.081)	0.020 (0.059)
T <sup>74</sup> x 1 (perceived effectiveness > p50) (b)	0.253** (0.126)	0.041 (0.123)	0.091 (0.125)	0.049 (0.123)	0.040 (0.121)	0.099 (0.090)
1 (perceived effectiveness > p50)	0.104 (0.092)	0.178** (0.090)	0.248*** (0.092)	0.236** (0.092)	0.403*** (0.091)	0.240*** (0.068)
p-value [(a) + (b) = 0]	0.034	0.345	0.032	0.191	0.947	0.082
Observations	1019	1019	1019	1019	1019	1019

*Notes:* Data base: Treatment groups, Wave B. (Perceived effectiveness was elicited in Wave B only.)  $T^{74}$  is a dummy that takes value one for the high wage gap treatment and zero otherwise. Outcomes in Panel A are based on respondents' perceived effectiveness of anti-discrimination policies, 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, 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 posterior beliefs about females' relative wages (Column 1), perceptions of whether the wage gap is large (Column 2), a problem (Column 3) and should be subject to government intervention (Column 4). Column 5 uses a summary index over Columns 2-4. The outcomes in Panel C are measures of specific policy demand elicited in Wave B (See Table 1 for a detailed description). All outcomes are z-scored, except for posterior beliefs about females' rel. wages in Panel B, Column 1, which range between 0 and 200. 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, Independent, Democrat (including Independent leaning Democrat) and other political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

Table 10: Correlates of willingness to pay for additional information

	Willingness to pay for progressive info				Willingness to pay for traditional info			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Democrat	0.429*** (0.098)			0.121 (0.107)	-0.230** (0.102)			-0.170 (0.117)
Female		0.165* (0.089)		0.030 (0.086)		-0.152* (0.089)		-0.118 (0.092)
Policy Demand (Index)			0.453*** (0.056)	0.409*** (0.065)			-0.132** (0.066)	-0.069 (0.079)
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498	498	498

*Notes:* Data base: Wave A, pure control group. (In the control group, willingness to pay for additional information was elicited in Wave A only.) The outcome variables are coded as the number of times respondents choose information over money for each source of information, originally ranging between 0 and 3, and then standardized. The policy demand index corresponds to a summary index over the six measures of demand for specific policies (see Table 1 for the precise items), following Anderson (2008). Additional control variables in Columns 1,4,5 and 8: Independent and “other” political orientation. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. 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<sup>1</sup>

## 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, 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 wage gap and closely related perceptions (Section D.1) and on the behavioral outcome measures (D.2). It also presents additional exercises that facilitate the interpretation of the magnitude of the main treatment effect, such as 2SLS specifications and a back-of-the-envelope calculation (Section D.3). Lastly, it demonstrates the robustness of my results to an obfuscated follow-up survey (Section D.4), it rules out that the local average treatment effect is driven by a subset of the population that does not care about the wage gap (Section D.5), shows the robustness of the main treatment effect to alternative specifications (Section D.6) and presents technical details and additional evidence on multiple hypothesis adjustment (Section D.7).

**Section E** presents additional evidence discussed in Section 5 of the paper, such as heterogeneous treatment effects across gender-age cells (Section E.1) and evidence of 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 wage gap 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.5).

**Section H** contains the complete survey instrument.

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## 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”.<sup>2</sup> 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).

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<sup>2</sup>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

Your opinion matters

0%

\*Dear participant!

This study is conducted by researchers from Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany.

In this survey we will ask questions on your views regarding public policy issues. The most important factor for the success of our research is that **you answer honestly**. No matter what your political views are, by completing this survey, you are contributing to our knowledge as a society. Anytime you don't know an answer, just give your best guess.

Participation in this study typically takes **15 minutes** and is **strictly anonymous**. Close **attention is required** for your responses to count. In this survey you will have several opportunities to **receive a bonus** in addition to your fix payoff!

Note: This study has received ethics approval from the Institutional Review Board of Goethe University, Frankfurt. Your participation in this study is purely voluntary. Your name will never be recorded and you will never be identified. If you have any questions about this study or if you want to have your responses deleted, you may contact us at [economicsresearch@gmail.com](mailto:economicsresearch@gmail.com).

You must be U.S. resident of at least 18 years of age in order to participate in this survey.

☐ Yes, I would like to take part in this study, and confirm that I am a U.S. resident and am 18 or older.

☐ No, I would not like to participate.

Next

Figure A.1: Welcome page of main survey

Your opinion matters

30%

\*How do you feel about the following statements where 1 means you fully disagree and 10 means you fully agree?

	1 (fully disagree)	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 (fully agree)
Gender differences in wages are <b>large</b> in the United States.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender differences in wages are a <b>problem</b> in the United States.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The government should do more to <b>promote wage equality</b> between men and women.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Next

Figure A.2: Matrix question in main survey

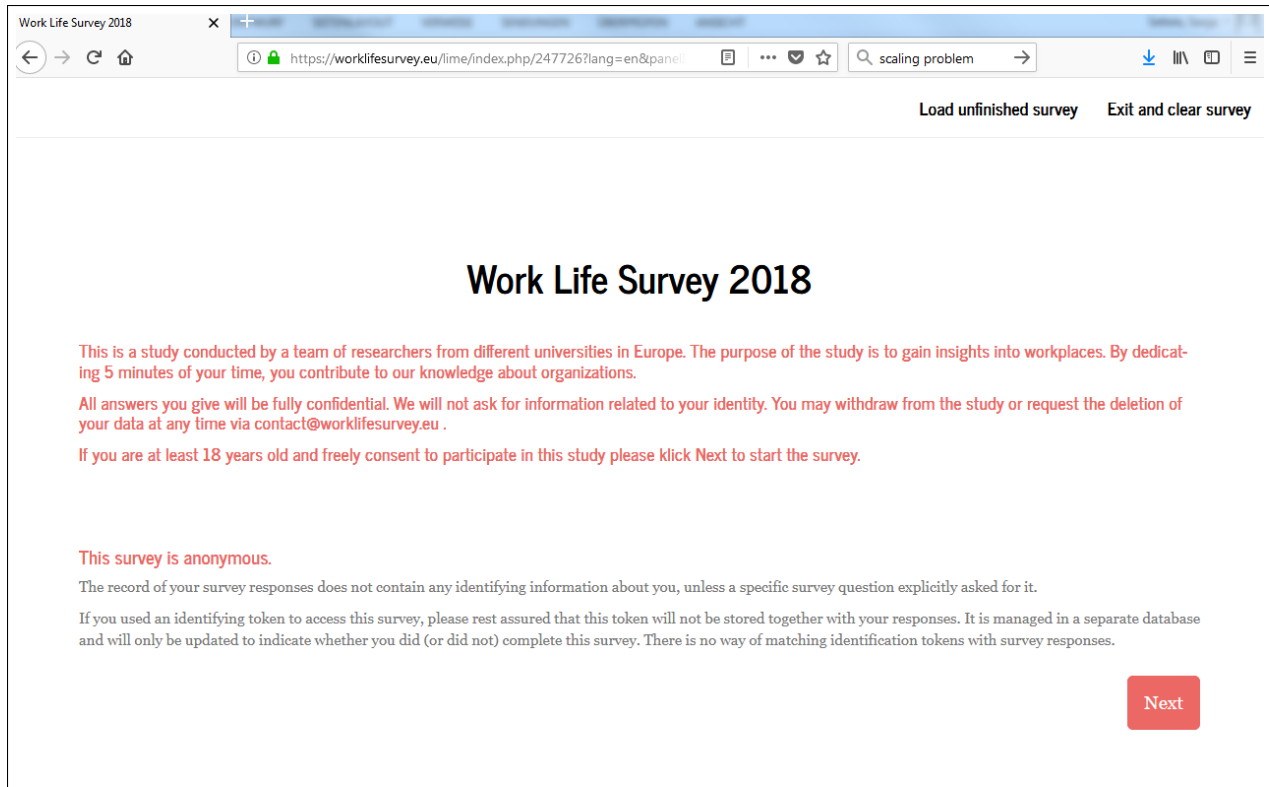


Figure A.3: Welcome page of follow-up survey

Resume later Exit and clear survey

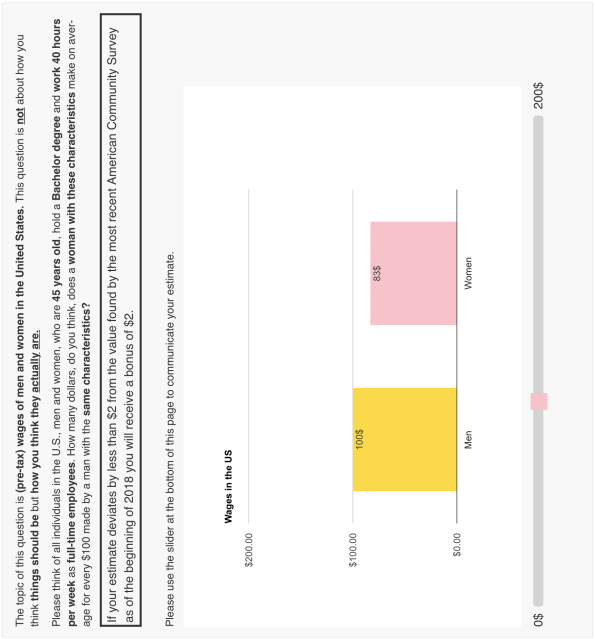
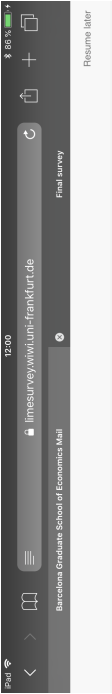
\*Now think of American workplaces at a more general level.

Do you think **wage differences** between the following groups are a **problem** in the **United States today**? Please answer the question on a scale from "Not at all a problem" to "A very serious problem".

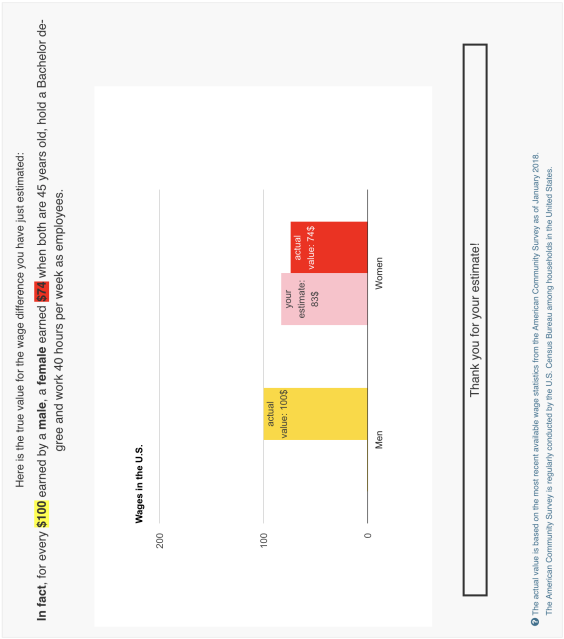
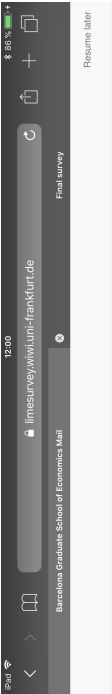
	Not at all a problem	Hardly a problem	Somewhat a problem	A problem	A substantial problem	A very substantial problem
High-skilled and low-skilled employees	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Men and women	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Men and women who are high-skilled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Men and women who are low-skilled	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Next

Figure A.4: Matrix question in follow-up survey



Next



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 ( $T^{74}$ ).



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

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

Sign Now

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS OF OUR PRIVACY POLICY.

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

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

Sign Now

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE TERMS OF OUR PRIVACY POLICY.

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	42.06	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 $\leq$ \$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).

Table B.2: Main survey: Integrity of randomization

	Main survey									
	(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)
Female	0.52	0.52	0.53	0.52	0.51	0.51	0.53	0.574	0.561	0.463
Democrat	0.44	0.44	0.46	0.45	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.431	0.625	0.394
Republican	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.36	0.414	0.698	0.846
Independent	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.858	0.943	0.419
Other pol. orientation	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.619	0.832	0.132
Prior belief	83.36	83.38	83.30	83.34	83.43	83.25	83.51	0.918	0.915	0.704
Northeast	0.18	0.18	0.17	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.731	0.689	0.776
Midwest	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.20	0.22	0.20	0.22	0.948	0.295	0.275
South	0.37	0.37	0.38	0.38	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.649	0.694	0.486
West	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.23	0.884	0.844	0.610
Age 18-24	0.12	0.11	0.14	0.11	0.11	0.13	0.11	0.012	0.710	0.068
Age 25-34	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.734	0.883	0.810
Age 35-44	0.21	0.22	0.19	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.22	0.058	0.766	0.405
Age 45-54	0.21	0.20	0.22	0.21	0.20	0.20	0.21	0.420	0.538	0.606
Age 55-65	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.23	0.606	0.862	0.738
Has children	0.53	0.54	0.51	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.53	0.123	0.594	0.779
Log household income	10.90	10.91	10.88	10.89	10.93	10.90	10.90	0.323	0.118	0.884
Associate degree or more	0.61	0.61	0.60	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.601	0.940	0.995
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	0.160
Unemployed	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.850	0.282	0.933
Student	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.04	0.561	0.026	0.353
Out of labor force	0.19	0.19	0.17	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.19	0.352	0.994	0.756
Observations	4065	3031	1034	1531	1500	2294	1771			

*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 wage gap 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.



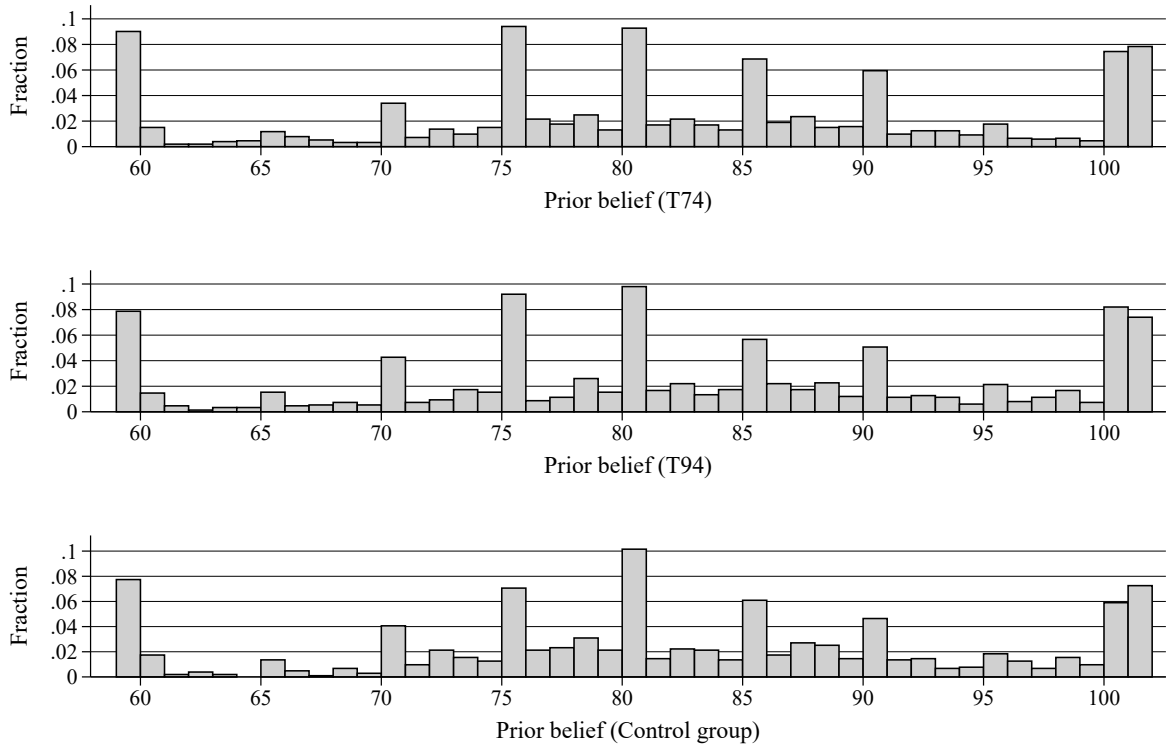


Figure A.7: Sample balance in terms of prior belief distributions

*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 82.0, 82.4 and 82.1 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 0.91.

## C Additional correlational evidence

### C.1 People's beliefs about the gender wage gap

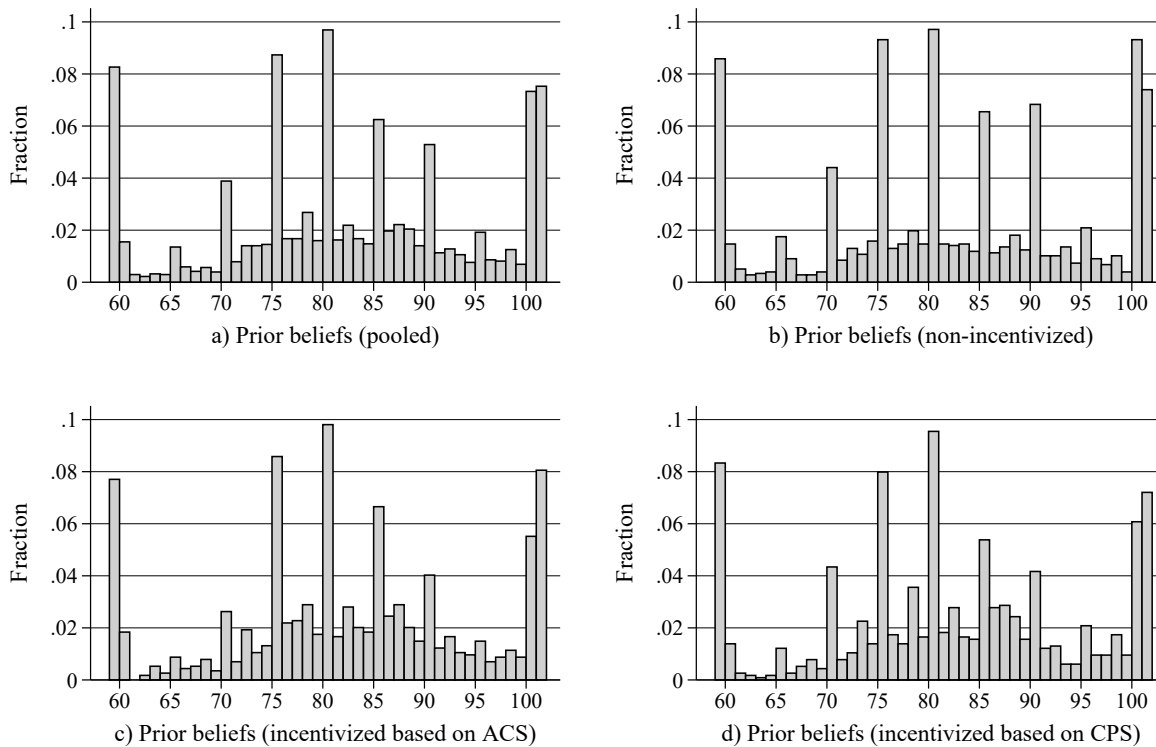


Figure A.8: Distribution of prior beliefs about women's relative wages

*Notes:* Data base: Both waves. Panel A: All observations (N=4,065), Panel B: non-incentivized priors (N=1,771), Panel C: priors incentivized based on ACS (N=1,142), Panel D: priors incentivized based on CPS (N=1,152). All graphs show the distribution of respondents' prior beliefs about the baseline wage statistic referring to 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 median belief corresponds to 81 in all four panels. The mean belief is 83.5 in panel a, 83.6 in Panel b, 83.7 in Panel c and 83.0 in Panel d. For better readability, beliefs in all figures are winsorized at 59 and 101.

Table C.1: Gender and partisan differences in beliefs about the gender wage gap compared to other politically relevant beliefs

Authors, year	Belief	Fem - male difference	Left - right difference	Left-right measure	Source of results
This paper	Women's wages as percentage of men's when both are 45 years old, hold a Bachelor's degree and work 40 hours per week on average	-.21 st.dev.	-.21 st.dev	Left (Right): Democrat (Republican ) or Independent leaning Democrat (Republican)	Specification and sample restriction in Table 2, Column 3, N=2294
Alesina et al. (2018b)	Likelihood of remaining in bottom quintile of income distribution as adult when born into bottom quintile	insignif.	.24 st.dev	Left (Right): views on economic issues liberal (conservative) or very liberal (conservative)	Data_Experiment_Waves_BC.dta (available from replication files) US control group, N=1,730
	Likelihood of moving to the top or second quintile of income distribution as adult when born into bottom quintile	insignif.	-.14 st.dev.		
Haaland and Roth (2021)	Number of times resumes with black-sounding names had to be sent out in a correspondence study to receive one callback for a job interview	insignif.	.49 st.dev.	Left (Right): Non-Republican (Republican)	Figure 2 and information on standard deviation in beliefs provided by the authors

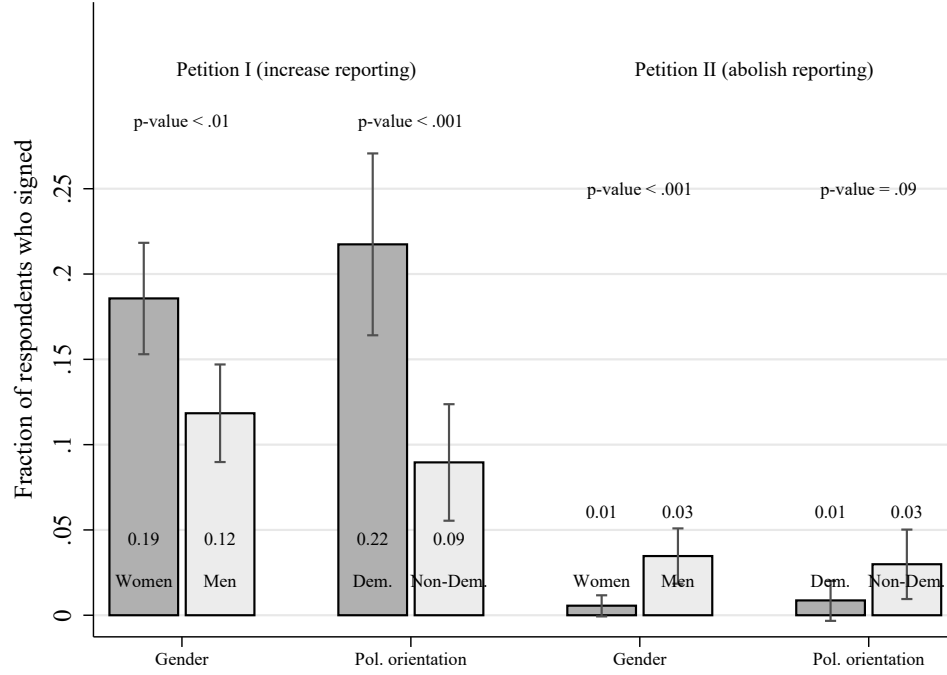
*Notes:* This table reports estimated gender and partisan differences in quantitative beliefs in politically relevant domains. All reported magnitudes are significant at least at the five percent level.

## C.2 Correlates of behavioral measures of policy demand

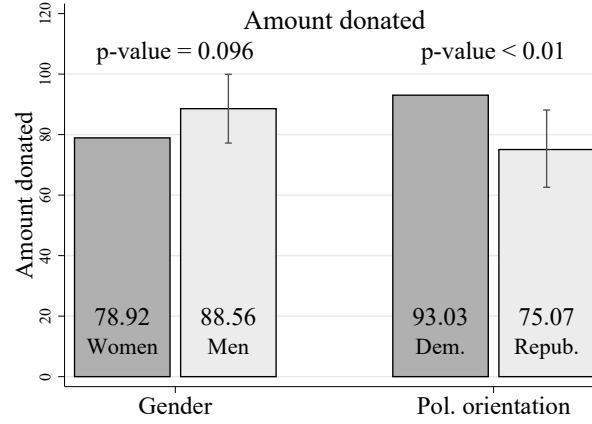
Table C.2: Correlates of behavioral proxies of demand for government intervention

	Intention to sign Petition I	Intention to sign Petition II	Amount donated to supportive NGO	Facebook Like
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<b>Panel A: Gender and political orientation</b>				
Democrat	0.297*** (0.036)	-0.118*** (0.023)	21.375*** (6.788)	0.008 (0.029)
Female	0.046 (0.032)	-0.068*** (0.019)	-11.384* (5.990)	-0.007 (0.026)
<b>Panel B: Prior belief about wage gap</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.145*** (0.032)	0.087*** (0.022)	-2.337 (6.045)	-0.042 (0.027)
<b>Panel C: Prior, gender, pol. orientation</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.103*** (0.032)	0.072*** (0.021)	-0.778 (6.058)	-0.041 (0.028)
Democrat	0.284*** (0.036)	-0.109*** (0.023)	21.275*** (6.815)	0.002 (0.030)
Female	0.036 (0.032)	-0.061*** (0.019)	-11.464* (5.996)	-0.011 (0.026)
<b>Panel D: Full set of controls</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.111*** (0.033)	0.077*** (0.021)	-1.159 (6.097)	-0.034 (0.029)
Democrat	0.280*** (0.037)	-0.099*** (0.023)	22.567*** (6.998)	0.020 (0.030)
Female	0.042 (0.033)	-0.062*** (0.019)	-9.393 (6.248)	-0.017 (0.027)
Mean outcome (control group)	0.52	0.10	82.02	0.13
Observations	921	921	921	702

*Notes:* Data base: Pure control group, restricted to observations with prior beliefs between the 5th and the 95th percentile of the distribution. In Column 4 the sample is also 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%.



(a) Panel A: Propensity to sign a petition



(b) Panel B: Donations made to an NGO

Figure A.9: Behavioral outcomes (pure control group)

*Notes:* (a): Data base: Control group, count data on the number of actual signatures of real online petitions. Evidence by gender was elicited in Wave A and B, evidence by political orientation in Wave A only. 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 95% confidence intervals around the estimated fractions. Democrats include self-identified Democrats as well as Independents leaning Democrat. Non-Democrats refers to all remaining respondents. P-values refer to two-sided petition-specific proportion tests. (b): Data base: Control group, both waves. The graph shows 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 intervals calculated from a regression of the amount donated on a dummy for male or for Republican, using robust standard errors. Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat.

## 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)
<b>Panel A: Avg. Treatment Effect</b>						
$T^{74}$	-13.0*** (1.4)	-11.4*** (1.1)	-13.7*** (1.1)	-11.9*** (1.5)	-15.4*** (1.3)	-12.9*** (0.6)
Observations	676	670	657	523	496	3022
<b>Panel B: Het by Gender</b>						
$T^{74}$	-13.0*** (1.9)	-9.7*** (1.7)	-14.3*** (1.7)	-9.9*** (2.1)	-14.6*** (2.3)	-12.1*** (0.9)
$T^{74} * \text{Female}$	-0.1 (2.8)	-3.4 (2.3)	1.1 (2.5)	-4.0 (2.9)	-1.6 (2.9)	-1.6 (1.2)
p-value [ $T^{74} + T^{74} \times \text{Female}$ ]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Female	-1.7 (1.9)	-0.3 (1.5)	-0.1 (1.6)	0.6 (2.0)	-3.4* (1.9)	-0.8 (0.8)
Observations	676	670	657	523	496	3022
<b>Panel C: Het by pol. attitude</b>						
$T^{74}$	-14.2*** (2.4)	-10.8*** (1.8)	-17.5*** (1.8)	-9.6*** (2.1)	-15.8*** (2.7)	-13.8*** (1.0)
$T^{74} * \text{Democrat}$	3.1 (3.2)	0.5 (2.6)	6.0** (2.4)	-5.1 (3.1)	0.1 (3.4)	1.6 (1.3)
p-value [ $T^{74} + T^{74} \times \text{Democrat}$ ]	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Democrat	-1.7 (2.1)	0.3 (1.7)	-1.9 (1.5)	2.1 (2.5)	-1.1 (2.4)	-0.7 (0.9)
$T^{74} * \text{Independent}$	-1.5 (4.3)	-4.6 (3.1)	8.6** (3.6)	0.9 (4.0)	1.1 (3.8)	1.3 (1.6)
p-value [ $T^{74} + T^{74} \times \text{Independent}$ ]	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.014	0.000	0.000
Independent	1.8 (3.2)	2.5 (2.4)	-3.6** (1.8)	0.3 (2.6)	-0.3 (2.7)	-0.3 (1.1)
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, one of which each respondent was randomly assigned to estimate. 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 (elicited in wave A only) i) age 25 (wave A only), iii) working in the same occupation group (wave A only), iv) parent (wave B only) and v) working in the same job for the same employer (wave B only). 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 Panels A and B: Democrat (including Independents leaning Democrat) and Independent. Additional controls in Panels A and C: gender. 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, “other” political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

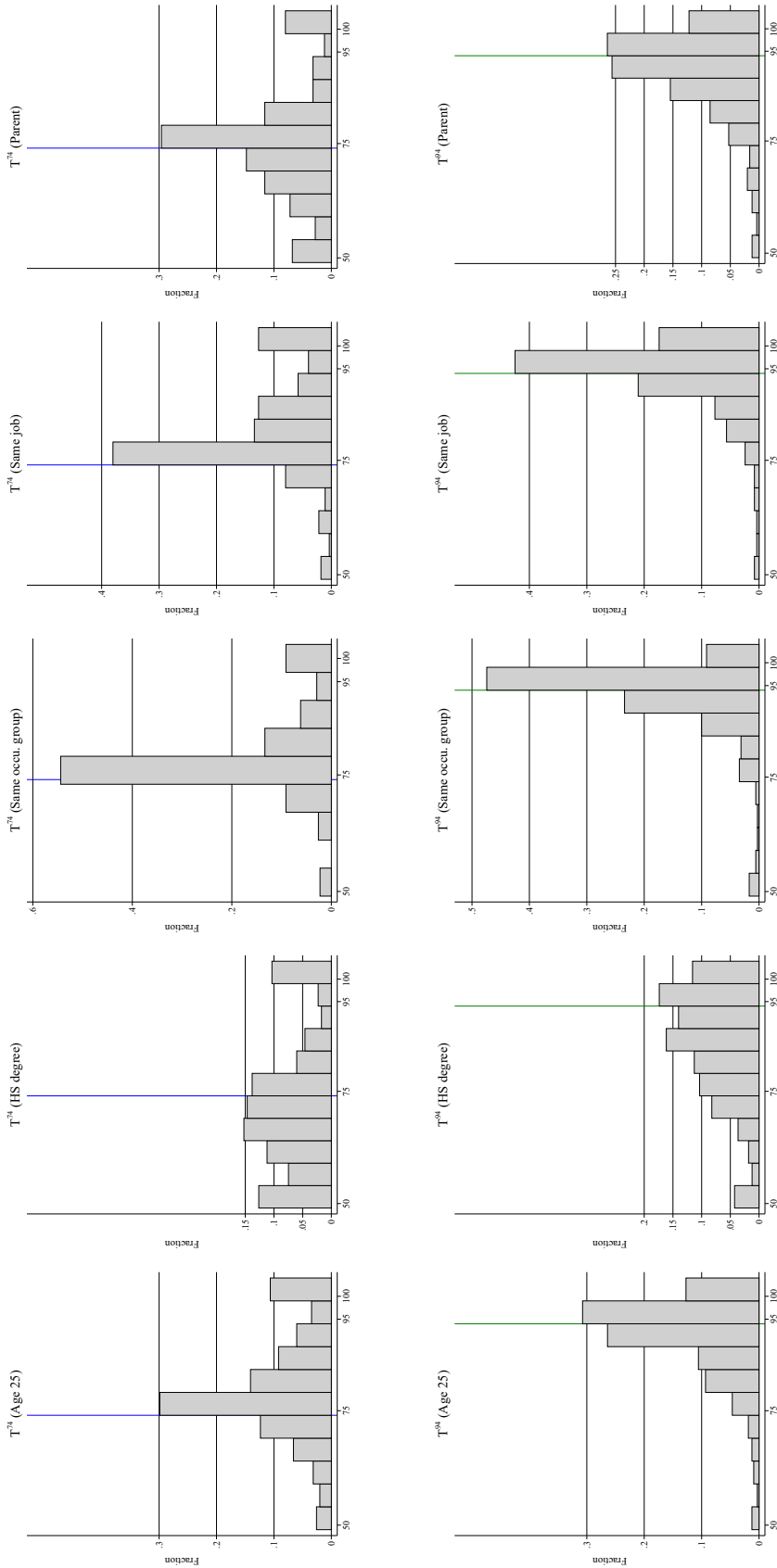


Figure A.10: Distribution of posterior beliefs in both treatment groups

*Notes:* Data base: Both treatment groups, Wave A and B, except for nine observations for which posterior beliefs were not recorded due to a bug in the survey. The figure shows the distribution of posterior beliefs in  $T^{74}$  (upper panel) and in  $T^{94}$  (lower panel). The vertical lines in the top and the bottom panel mark the treatment values of 74 and 94, respectively. Each respondent was randomly asked about her posterior belief about one out of five posterior wage statistics. The five subfigures in the upper as well as the lower panel show the beliefs of respondents assigned to these five groups. The leftmost subfigure in both panels shows the distribution of posterior beliefs about females' relative wages compared to males' when both are 25 years old, hold a Bachelor's degree and work on average 40 hours per week (Wave A only,  $N=673$ , incentivized). The second subfigure from the left refers to corresponding beliefs about the group of 45-year-olds with a high school degree working 40 hours per week (Wave A,  $N=678$ , incentivized). The subfigure in the middle refers to beliefs about 45-year-old men and women with a Bachelor's degree who work in the same broad occupation group (using the occupation classification of the Bureau of Labor Statistics) for an average of 40 hours per week (Wave A,  $N=661$ , incentivized). The second subfigure from the right refers to beliefs about 45-year-olds with a Bachelor's degree working 40 hours per week in the same job for the same employer (Wave B,  $N=523$ , not incentivized). The rightmost subfigure in each panel refers to females' relative wages in the group of 45-year-olds with a Bachelor's degree who work 40 hours per week and have at least one child living in the same household with them (Wave B,  $N=496$ , incentivized). Relative wages refer to women's average wage for every \$100 made by a man who is comparable along the described dimensions. Beliefs originally range between 0 and 200 by experimental design and are winsorized at 49 and 101 for better readability.



## D.2 Treatment effect on behavior

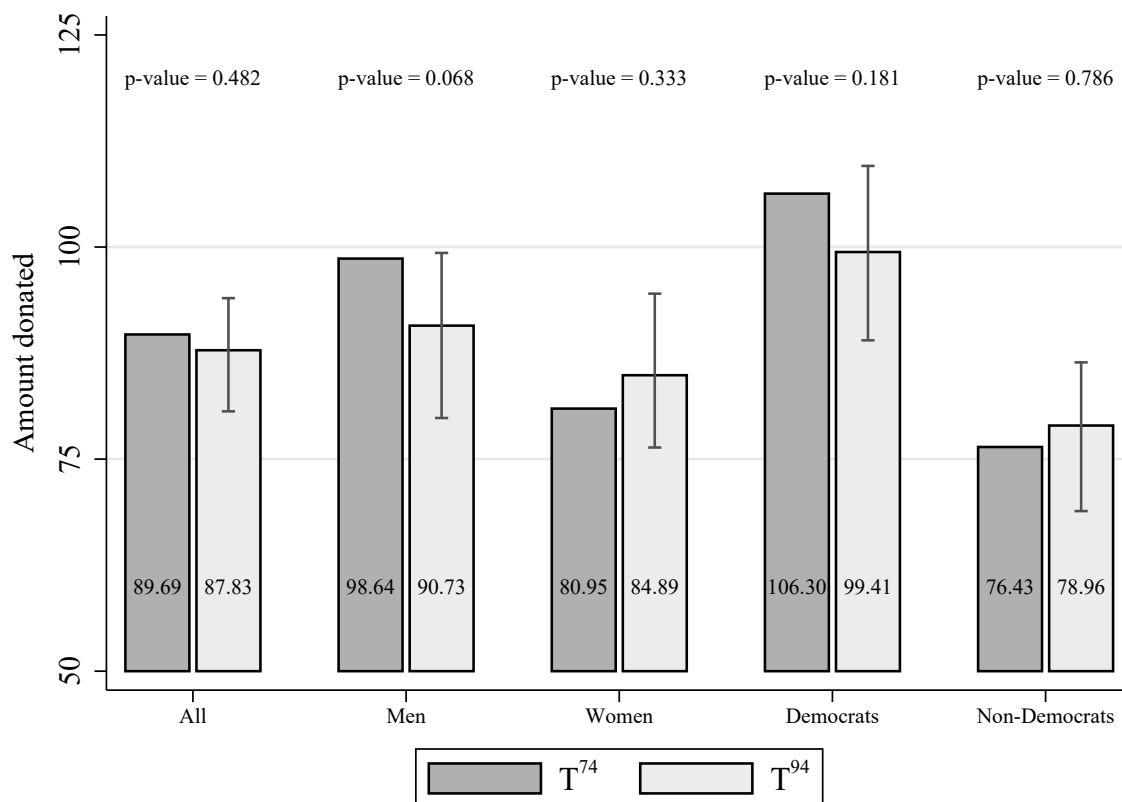
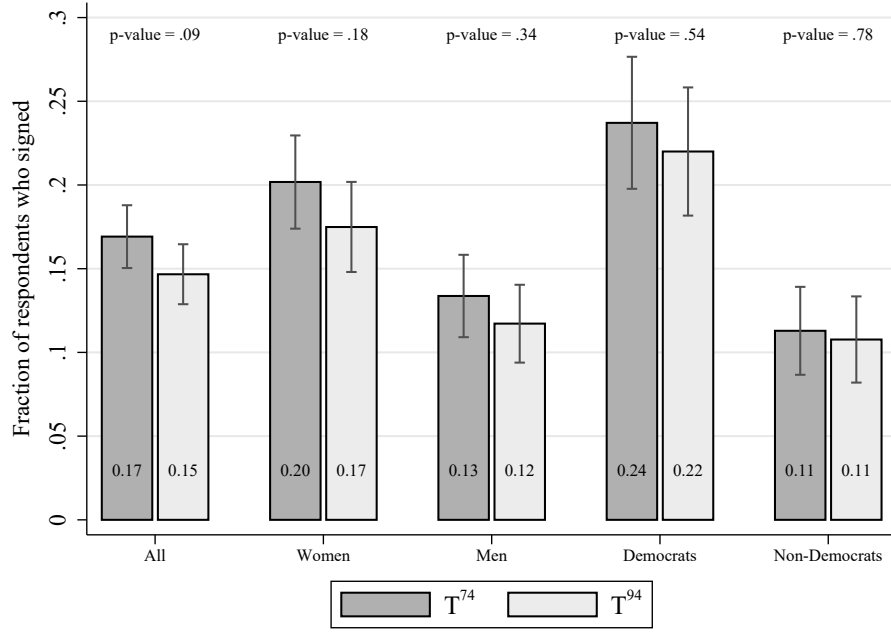
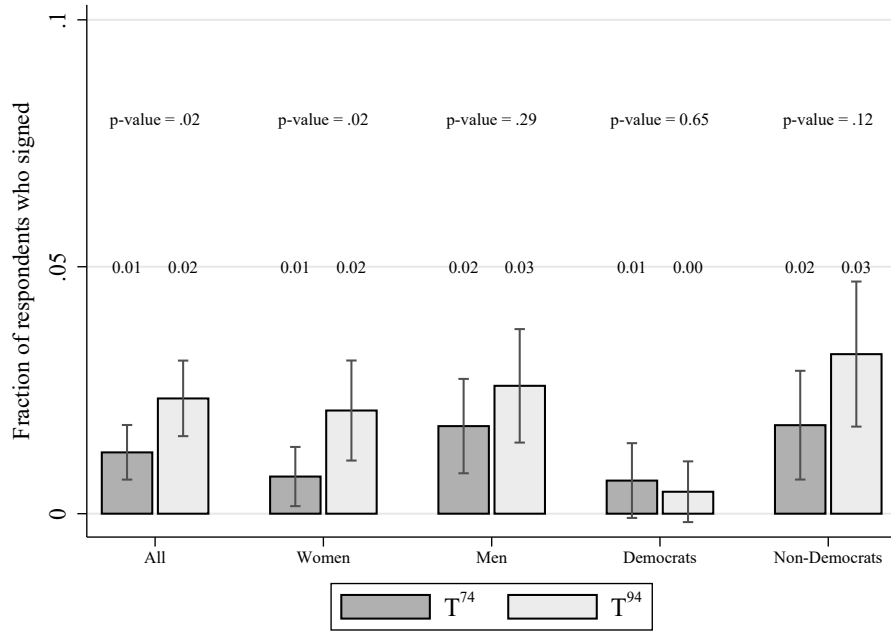


Figure A.11: Donation Decision

*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.12: 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.

### D.3 Magnitude of the main treatment effect

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 gender wage gap 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 5, 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:

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

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

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 5, 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) wage gap 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 wage gap among 30-year-olds will have spillover effects on beliefs about the wage gap 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.<sup>3</sup>

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 wage gap between these groups. Based on the pure control group and on the four measures of the wage gap 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.2, Panel A). The treatment effect on the same four beliefs amounts to \$13.36 (Panel B) on average.

Table D.3 illustrates the actual back-of-the-envelope calculation based on the two mea-

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<sup>3</sup>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.2: Correlates of beliefs and treatment effect on beliefs about the wage gap

	Outcome: (Incentivized) beliefs about the size of the wage gap				
	(1) Age 25	(2) HS degree	(3) Same occu.	(4) Parent	(5) Average
<b>Panel A: Correlations</b>					
Female	-0.97 (3.53)	-0.20 (4.71)	-5.13* (2.75)	-0.90 (2.73)	-1.80
Democrat	-5.02 (3.61)	-5.89 (5.39)	-3.11 (3.36)	-4.02 (3.14)	-4.50
Observations	164	149	181	269	763
<b>Panel B: Treatment effect</b>					
T <sup>74</sup>	-11.39*** (1.15)	-12.99*** (1.40)	-13.70*** (1.15)	-15.38*** (1.34)	-13.36
Observations	670	676	657	496	2,499

*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%.

asures of specific policy demand for which the estimated treatment effect is significant, namely demand for affirmative action programs 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 wage gap 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

Table D.3: 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 wage gap	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	<b>0.06</b>
Gender difference in policy demand (control group)	0.176	0.338	0.26
Predicted causal effect of gender difference in prior belief about the wage gap	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	<b>0.07</b>

*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 gender wage gap. 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.

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 plays an even smaller role in explaining differences in policy demand across the political spectrum and between genders.

## D.4 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.4 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.5 shows that there is no systematic selection into the follow-up survey based on the initial treatment effect in the main survey.

Table D.4: 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 <sup>74</sup>	-0.031 (0.059)	-0.042 (0.056)	0.042 (0.057)
Female	0.199*** (0.062)	-0.050 (0.058)	0.066 (0.059)
Democrat	0.411*** (0.067)	-0.333*** (0.063)	0.597*** (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.5: Follow-up survey: No role for attrition

	Posterior belief about fem.rel.wage (percent)	Gender differences in wages are a problem	Women's wages are fair	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
<b>Panel A: Main results</b>						
T <sup>74</sup>	-12.955*** (0.594)	0.422*** (0.035)	-0.304*** (0.034)	0.243*** (0.035)	0.112*** (0.034)	0.115*** (0.035)
Female	-1.623*** (0.615)	0.297*** (0.036)	-0.342*** (0.035)	0.309*** (0.036)	0.179*** (0.035)	0.237*** (0.036)
Democrat	0.048 (0.705)	0.656*** (0.040)	-0.435*** (0.041)	0.803*** (0.041)	0.669*** (0.040)	0.618*** (0.040)
Observations	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031	3031
<b>Panel B: Main results (follow-up sample)</b>						
T <sup>74</sup>	-13.044*** (1.085)	0.418*** (0.059)	-0.352*** (0.058)	0.236*** (0.059)	0.157*** (0.059)	0.098 (0.060)
Female	-1.934* (1.107)	0.222*** (0.060)	-0.210*** (0.061)	0.277*** (0.059)	0.174*** (0.059)	0.243*** (0.061)
Democrat	0.447 (1.239)	0.707*** (0.066)	-0.481*** (0.067)	0.819*** (0.066)	0.741*** (0.068)	0.626*** (0.068)
Observations	1102	1105	1105	1105	1105	1105
<b>Panel C: Follow-up results</b>						
T <sup>74</sup>	-10.668*** (1.177)	0.186*** (0.057)	-0.110** (0.055)	0.183*** (0.057)	0.009 (0.078)	0.096 (0.079)
Female	-2.292* (1.248)	0.272*** (0.060)	-0.121** (0.058)	0.174*** (0.058)	0.150* (0.080)	0.197** (0.083)
Democrat	0.554 (1.319)	0.547*** (0.065)	-0.430*** (0.065)	0.686*** (0.063)	0.583*** (0.091)	0.642*** (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 reports 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 posterior beliefs in a few cases. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

## D.5 Compliant subpopulation

Table D.6: First stage, reduced form and 2SLS: Heterogeneity by interest in topic

	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Policy Demand Index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<b>Panel A: First Stage/Reduced Form</b>				
$T^{74}$	-13.928*** (0.632)	0.645*** (0.042)	0.492*** (0.042)	0.070** (0.028)
$T^{74} \times \text{read}$	4.167** (1.756)	-0.187** (0.090)	-0.249*** (0.089)	-0.039 (0.068)
p-value [ $T^{74} + T^{74} \times \text{read}$ ]	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.625
Observations	2788	2796	2796	2796
	Policy Demand Index			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	
<b>Panel B: 2SLS</b>				
$\widehat{\text{Perception}}$	-0.005** (0.002)	0.108*** (0.042)	0.142*** (0.053)	
$\widehat{\text{Perception}} \times \text{read}$	0.002 (0.007)	-0.042 (0.138)	-0.017 (0.251)	
p-value [ $\widehat{\text{Perception}} + \widehat{\text{Perception}} \times \text{read}$ ]	0.642	0.618	0.613	
Perception measure	Posterior belief about wage gap	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 gender wage gap 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 wage gap 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.6 Alternative specifications

In this section I consider several alternative specifications to further explore the updating of respondents' beliefs and policy demand in the two treatment arms compared to the pure control group, which has not received any information. The alternative specifications allow me i) to study the role of prior beliefs in the response of policy demand to information and ii) to study potential differences between the effects of the two signals on respondents' beliefs and attitudes. In addition, these exercises serve as robustness checks of my main findings to using alternative sources of variation.

### D.6.1 The role of prior beliefs

I start with the following specification, which allows me to shed light on the role of prior beliefs in driving the effect of the two treatments:

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

where  $(74 \leq \text{Prior} \leq 94)$ ,  $(\text{Prior} < 74)$  and  $(\text{Prior} > 94)$  are dummies indicating the range into which respondent  $i$ 's prior belief falls.

Table D.7, Column 1 documents that in all three prior belief brackets respondents adjust their beliefs about females' relative wages in the expected directions in response to either of the treatments, and the effect sizes increase with the distance of the treatment signal from the prior belief bracket. In other words, respondents exposed to the same information converge in terms of their beliefs about the wage gap. The results are more nuanced for general perceptions related to the wage gap: Respondents with "moderate" beliefs between 74 and 94, who make up roughly 60 percent of the sample, react significantly and in the expected direction in response to either treatment (Columns 2-4). Those with more "extreme" prior beliefs below 74 and above 94, however, react significantly only to signals that imply a very large information shock, i.e. the signal implied by  $T^{74}$  for those with very high prior beliefs and the signal implied by  $T^{94}$  for those with very low prior beliefs about women's relative wages.

Table D.8 reports corresponding results for policy demand. As expected, individuals with moderate beliefs between 74 and 94 significantly decrease their demand for statutory affirmative action programs (Column 2) and for equal pay legislation (Column 3) in response to  $T^{94}$ . There is no significant reaction in response to  $T^{74}$  for the same group, even though the coefficient estimates go into the expected direction.

One potential explanation for why the treatment effect on policy demand of T94 compared to the control group is more pronounced than the effect of T74 compared to the control group lies in the differential composition of the compliant subpopulations for the two treatments.

For instance, the compliant subpopulation for  $T^{74}$  consists of individuals with relatively high prior beliefs about females' relative wages, among which Republicans are over-represented (Section 3). At the same time, Republicans' policy demand is inelastic to their beliefs about the gender wage gap (Section 5). Conversely, in the case of  $T^{94}$  the "first stage" updating of beliefs in response of the treatment is likely driven by individuals with relatively low beliefs about females' relative wages to start with. In this group, Democrats are over-represented, whose policy demand is more elastic to beliefs (Section 5).

In Section D.6.2 below, I use a specification that explicitly accounts for the size of the information shock received by each respondent. It sheds light on whether  $T^{94}$  per se has a stronger effect on policy demand than  $T^{74}$  or whether respondents react similarly to an information shock of a given size, regardless of whether the source of this shock is information about a high or a small gender wage gap.

Regardless of the more pronounced reaction to  $T^{94}$  compared to  $T^{74}$  in Table D.8, I find that the *difference* between the two treatment effects is highly significant for respondents' demand for affirmative action and equal pay legislation, and for the summary index (Column 7), confirming robustness of my main estimated treatment effect for the group with moderate prior beliefs.

Next, I focus on respondents with "extreme" beliefs below 74 for whom we would, ex ante, expect a decrease in policy demand in response to both information treatments. Empirically, there is no significant decrease in the demand for affirmative action, nor for equal pay legislation (Columns 2 and 3). Similarly, for those with extremely optimistic beliefs above 94 we do not observe the expected increase in demand for specific policies. One plausible reason for the muted treatment response of respondents with extreme prior beliefs about the wage gap is that beliefs are linked to other characteristics that determine how individuals react to information. The patterns I document are consistent with a world in which those with extreme beliefs to start with are at the same time "dogmatic" about their policy views.

Table D.7: Treatment effect on beliefs about the wage gap 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)
$T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$	-6.831*** (0.664)	0.299*** (0.044)	0.180*** (0.044)	0.101** (0.047)	0.194*** (0.040)
$T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$	7.677*** (0.656)	-0.421*** (0.050)	-0.314*** (0.050)	-0.193*** (0.052)	-0.306*** (0.046)
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$ ]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
$T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$	4.598*** (1.728)	0.056 (0.067)	0.028 (0.063)	0.006 (0.066)	0.030 (0.057)
$T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$	16.382*** (1.799)	-0.336*** (0.071)	-0.279*** (0.067)	-0.180*** (0.070)	-0.260*** (0.062)
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
$T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$	-10.604*** (2.367)	0.344*** (0.109)	0.347*** (0.104)	0.131 (0.106)	0.256*** (0.097)
$T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$	-0.610 (2.015)	-0.068 (0.107)	0.075 (0.105)	-0.002 (0.103)	-0.014 (0.096)
p-value [ $T^{74} (\text{prior} > 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.00
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.24	0.02
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.12	0.70	0.14	0.79	0.56
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.31	0.04
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.00	0.32	0.67	0.88	0.55
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.01
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.15	0.03
Control group mean ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ )	83.00 605	0.05 607	0.10 607	0.03 607	0.05 607
Control group mean ( $\text{prior} < 74$ )	67.57 225	0.40 226	0.36 226	0.31 226	0.35 226
Control group mean ( $\text{prior} > 94$ )	103.45 200	-0.62 201	-0.73 201	-0.47 201	-0.58 201
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. ( $\text{prior} < 74$ ) ( $\text{prior} > 94$ ) is a dummy that takes value one if the respondent's prior belief is below 74 (above 94), and zero otherwise. ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ ) takes the value one for all remaining respondents. Additional controls: ( $\text{prior} < 74$ ), ( $\text{prior} > 94$ ), ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ ), 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%.

Table D.8: 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)
$T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$	0.047 (0.050)	-0.009 (0.048)	0.050 (0.048)	-0.062 (0.067)	0.066 (0.072)	-0.070 (0.050)	0.002 (0.034)
$T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$	-0.038 (0.051)	-0.109** (0.050)	-0.112** (0.048)	-0.088 (0.067)	-0.068 (0.081)	-0.083* (0.050)	-0.078** (0.035)
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94)$ ]	0.07	0.02	0.00	0.64	0.09	0.76	0.01
$T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$	0.085 (0.080)	0.069 (0.080)	0.117 (0.086)	-0.190* (0.103)	-0.012 (0.125)	-0.025 (0.079)	0.027 (0.056)
$T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$	0.081 (0.080)	-0.080 (0.080)	0.019 (0.086)	-0.232** (0.104)	0.059 (0.119)	-0.000 (0.079)	-0.010 (0.055)
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.95	0.03	0.18	0.64	0.57	0.74	0.48
$T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$	0.044 (0.099)	0.115 (0.100)	-0.003 (0.100)	0.026 (0.138)	0.048 (0.155)	-0.062 (0.100)	0.018 (0.073)
$T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$	0.013 (0.096)	0.024 (0.098)	0.032 (0.097)	0.234* (0.135)	-0.035 (0.140)	-0.035 (0.098)	0.033 (0.071)
p-value [ $T^{74} (\text{prior} > 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.72	0.29	0.69	0.05	0.59	0.75	0.81
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.68	0.39	0.49	0.29	0.59	0.62	0.70
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.98	0.26	0.63	0.56	0.92	0.95	0.84
p-value [ $T^{74} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{74} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.74	0.72	0.36	0.20	0.76	0.77	0.92
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74)$ ]	0.20	0.76	0.18	0.23	0.38	0.37	0.29
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.64	0.22	0.18	0.03	0.84	0.66	0.15
p-value [ $T^{94} \times (\text{prior} < 74) = T^{94} \times (\text{prior} > 94)$ ]	0.58	0.41	0.92	0.01	0.61	0.78	0.63
Control group mean ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ )	-0.04 607	0.03 607	0.08 607	0.05 299	0.10 308	0.02 607	0.03 607
Control group mean ( $\text{prior} < 74$ )	0.23 226	0.22 226	0.06 226	0.23 111	0.05 115	0.12 226	0.15 226
Control group mean ( $\text{prior} > 94$ )	-0.15 201	-0.34 201	-0.35 201	-0.46 88	-0.38 113	-0.24 201	-0.29 201
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. ( $\text{prior} < 74$ ) ( $\text{prior} > 94$ ) is a dummy that takes value one if the respondent's prior belief is below 74 (above 94), and zero otherwise. ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ ) takes the value one for all remaining respondents. Additional controls: ( $\text{prior} < 74$ ), ( $\text{prior} > 94$ ), ( $74 \leq \text{prior} \leq 94$ ), 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.6.2 Information shocks and policy demand

**Specification** Next, I estimate the following alternative specification which examines how changes in beliefs and policy demand depend on the information shock an individual receives:

$$Y_i = \beta_0(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior})_i + \beta_1 \text{Prior}_i + \Theta^T X_i + u_i$$

Pooling both treatment groups and the pure control group, this specification combines the variation generated by the two treatments into one single, continuous variable denoted (Signal – Prior), which captures the “information shock” a respondent receives. It is defined as (74 – prior) for respondents assigned to T<sup>74</sup>, as (94 – prior) for those assigned to T<sup>94</sup>, and as 0 for those assigned to the pure control group, which does not receive any information. Since the information shock negatively depends on prior beliefs, which are not randomly assigned, I control for the respondent’s prior. The vector  $X_i$  includes the same set of control variables I include throughout the paper. The main coefficient of interest,  $\beta_0$ , is expected to be positive when the outcome,  $Y_i$ , corresponds to posterior beliefs about women’s relative wages and negative for all other outcomes such as policy demand.<sup>4</sup>

**Robustness of main results** Tables D.9 and D.10 report the results for perceptions of the gender wage gap and for policy demand, respectively. Table D.9, Panel A, Column 1 indicates a learning rate of 60 percent, i.e. for each unit of deviation between prior belief and signal, respondents update by .6 units, on average, towards the provided signal. There are similar effects on general perceptions related to the gender wage gap (Columns 2-4 of Table D.9). Moreover, the information shock has significant effects on the respondents’ demand for affirmative action and equal pay legislation (Columns 2 and 3 of Table D.10), in line with my baseline results reported in Section 4.2 of the paper.

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<sup>4</sup>Due to the sensitivity of the linear specification to outliers, I focus on respondents with prior beliefs between the 5th and 95th percentile of the distribution, as I do throughout the correlational regressions reported in the paper. When I instead keep the full sample, the estimated effects become smaller and more noisily measured, in line with the finding that those with extreme prior beliefs react less to information (Table D.8). The results are not sensitive to the exact cutoffs I choose to define outliers.

Table D.9: Treatment effect on beliefs about the wage gap and related perceptions

	Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage (percent)	Gender differences in wages are large	Gender differences in wages are a problem	Gov. should promote gender wage equality	Index (2)-(4)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<b>Panel A: Baseline Specification</b>					
(Signal – Prior)	0.595*** (0.026)	-0.028*** (0.002)	-0.021*** (0.002)	-0.012*** (0.002)	-0.020*** (0.001)
Prior	17.998*** (0.688)	-0.989*** (0.045)	-0.851*** (0.042)	-0.603*** (0.042)	-0.802*** (0.039)
Observations	3596	3607	3607	3607	3607
<b>Panel B: Interaction with <math>T^{74}</math> and <math>T^{94}</math></b>					
(Signal – Prior) x $T^{74}$ (a)	0.597*** (0.040)	-0.030*** (0.003)	-0.023*** (0.003)	-0.013*** (0.003)	-0.021*** (0.002)
(Signal – Prior) x $T^{94}$ (b)	0.594*** (0.034)	-0.026*** (0.002)	-0.020*** (0.002)	-0.011*** (0.002)	-0.018*** (0.002)
p-value [(a) – (b) = 0]	0.955	0.154	0.356	0.628	0.295
Prior	18.003*** (0.681)	-0.995*** (0.045)	-0.855*** (0.043)	-0.605*** (0.043)	-0.806*** (0.040)
Observations	3596	3607	3607	3607	3607
<b>Panel C: Interact. with pos./neg. Signal</b>					
(Signal – Prior) x $1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0)$ (a)	0.629*** (0.037)	-0.029*** (0.002)	-0.024*** (0.002)	-0.013*** (0.002)	-0.022*** (0.002)
(Signal – Prior) x $1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0)$ (b)	0.551*** (0.045)	-0.026*** (0.003)	-0.018*** (0.003)	-0.010*** (0.003)	-0.017*** (0.003)
p-value [(a) – (b) = 0]	0.220	0.323	0.099	0.304	0.217
Prior	17.982*** (0.687)	-0.988*** (0.045)	-0.850*** (0.043)	-0.603*** (0.042)	-0.802*** (0.039)
Observations	3596	3607	3607	3607	3607

*Notes:* Data base: Full sample except five percent outliers in terms of prior beliefs at the top and bottom of the distribution respectively, both waves. The outcome in Column 1 is the raw 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. The dependent variables 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, following Anderson (2008).  $T^{74}$  ( $T^{94}$ ) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. (Signal - Prior) is defined as (74 - prior) for those respondents assigned to  $T^{74}$ , as (94 - prior) for those assigned to  $T^{94}$ , and as 0 for those assigned to the pure control group which does not receive any information. Prior corresponds to the respondent's prior belief about women's relative wages in percent of men's wages.  $1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0)$  is a dummy that takes the value one whenever the information signal exceeds the respondent's prior and zero otherwise. Conversely,  $1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0)$  is a dummy that takes the value one whenever the respondent's prior is higher than the information signal. 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, Democrat (including Independents leaning Democrat), Independent and "other" political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%. 31

Table D.10: 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)
<b>Panel A: Baseline Specification</b>							
(Signal – Prior)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.000 (0.002)	-0.002** (0.001)
Prior	-0.248*** (0.042)	-0.319*** (0.042)	-0.269*** (0.043)	-0.225*** (0.055)	-0.224*** (0.065)	-0.198*** (0.042)	-0.245*** (0.030)
Observations	3607	3607	3607	2223	1384	3607	3607
<b>Panel B: Interaction with <math>T^{74}</math> and <math>T^{94}</math></b>							
(Signal – Prior) x $T^{74}$ (a)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	-0.005** (0.002)	0.000 (0.003)	-0.004 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.003 (0.002)
(Signal – Prior) x $T^{94}$ (b)	0.000 (0.002)	-0.004** (0.002)	-0.005*** (0.002)	-0.002 (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)	0.000 (0.002)	-0.002 (0.001)
p-value [(a) – (b) = 0]	0.531	0.864	0.974	0.578	0.942	0.785	0.858
Prior	-0.251*** (0.042)	-0.320*** (0.042)	-0.269*** (0.043)	-0.221*** (0.056)	-0.223*** (0.066)	-0.199*** (0.043)	-0.246*** (0.031)
Observations	3607	3607	3607	2223	1384	3607	3607
<b>Panel C: Interact. with pos./neg. Signal</b>							
(Signal – Prior) x $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0)$ (a)	0.001 (0.002)	-0.004* (0.002)	-0.007*** (0.002)	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.008** (0.004)	-0.001 (0.002)	-0.003** (0.002)
(Signal – Prior) x $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0)$ (b)	-0.003 (0.003)	-0.006** (0.003)	-0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.001 (0.005)	0.001 (0.003)	-0.001 (0.002)
p-value [(a) – (b) = 0]	0.301	0.551	0.335	0.114	0.111	0.662	0.519
Prior	-0.249*** (0.042)	-0.319*** (0.042)	-0.269*** (0.043)	-0.222*** (0.055)	-0.224*** (0.066)	-0.197*** (0.042)	-0.245*** (0.030)
Observations	3607	3607	3607	2223	1384	3607	3607

*Notes:* Data base: Full sample except five percent outliers in terms of prior beliefs at the top and bottom of the distribution respectively, both waves. Column 4 is based on wave A only, column 5 is based on wave B only because the underlying survey items were elicited in only one of the waves, respectively. 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, following Anderson (2008).  $T^{74}$  ( $T^{94}$ ) is a dummy that takes on value one for those who received the high wage gap (low wage gap) treatment. (Signal - Prior) is defined as (74 - prior) for those respondents assigned to  $T^{74}$ , as (94 - prior) for those assigned to  $T^{94}$ , and as 0 for those assigned to the pure control group which does not receive any information. Prior corresponds to the respondent's prior belief about women's relative wages in percent of men's wages.  $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0)$  is a dummy that takes the value one whenever the information signal exceeds the respondent's prior and zero otherwise. Conversely,  $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0)$  is a dummy that takes the value one whenever the respondent's prior is higher than the information signal. 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, Democrat (including Independents leaning Democrat), Independent and "other" political orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

**Symmetry of treatment responses to  $T^{74}$  and to  $T^{94}$**  Next, I examine whether, conditional on the size of the information shock, its effects differ between the high wage gap signal,  $T^{74}$ , and the low wage gap signal,  $T^{94}$ . In Panel B of Tables D.9 and D.10 I estimate the following specification:

$$Y_i = \beta_0(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior})_i T_i^{74} + \beta_1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior})_i T_i^{94} + \beta_2 \text{Prior} + \Theta^T X_i + u_i$$

I find that learning about the size of the gender wage gap from an information shock of a given size (Table D.9, Panel B, Column 1) and updating of general perceptions (Columns 2-4) are similar for respondents who received the  $T^{74}$  signal and those who received the  $T^{94}$  signal. Also, the effects on the demand for affirmative action and equal pay legislation do not differ between the two treatments (Table D.10, Panel B, Columns 2-3). Finally, the effect on the summary index for policy demand is similarly large for both treatments (Column 7), although more noisily measured.

**Symmetry of treatment response to positive and negative information shocks** Finally, I examine whether there is an asymmetric response to positive and negative information shocks. I estimate the following specification:

$$Y_i = \beta_0(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior})_i \mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0) + \beta_1(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior})_i \mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0) + \beta_2 \text{Prior} + \Theta^T X_i + u_i$$

where  $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} > 0)$  and  $\mathbf{1}(\text{Signal} - \text{Prior} < 0)$  are indicators for positive and negative information shocks, respectively.

The updating of beliefs and general perceptions is quantitatively similar for positive and negative information shocks (Table D.9, Panel C, Columns 1-4). There is no clear pattern for policy demand, as reported in Table D.10, Panel C: Changes in the demand for affirmative action are driven by respondents who received a negative shock (Column 2), whereas changes in the demand for stricter equal pay legislation (Column 4) as well as the overall effect on the summary index (Column 7) are driven by those who received positive shocks, but the estimated differences between the groups are noisily measured. In addition, positive shocks decrease the demand for a public website on which gender-related wage statistics of large companies are published, while negative shocks have no effect (Column 6).



## D.7 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.

First, 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 gender wage gap, ii) self-reported demand for specific policies and iii) beliefs about the prevalence of external factors that may be seen as drivers of the wage gap. 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 conservative method of **family-wise error rate (FWER)** control. Its idea is to fix the probability of *any* Type I error similar to a simple Bonferroni correction but with higher statistical power due to the following differences: First, an algorithm – the free step-down resampling methodology (Westfall and Young, 1993) – computes the exact probability of rejecting any true null hypothesis whereas a Bonferroni correction delivers an upper bound. Second, when a hypothesis is rejected, the algorithm removes it from the family being tested, increasing the power of the remaining tests. Third, it takes into account the dependence between outcomes. For instance, when all outcomes are perfectly correlated, the FWER-adjusted p-values and regular p-values will be identical. In general, FWER-adjusted p-values can be interpreted similar to standard p-values except that they reflect 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.11 illustrates, the overall treatment effect is robust to FWER-adjustment.

Second, for the larger sets of more disaggregated outcomes, I control for the **false discovery rate (FDR)** or the *proportion* of rejections within the relevant family of outcomes that are “false discoveries”, i.e. Type I errors (Benjamini et al., 2006). The method delivers sharpened q-values, which can be interpreted similar to regular p-values. They reflect the proportion of Type I errors as a share of all rejections of null hypotheses within the family that has to be allowed, such that the respective null hypothesis can still be rejected. Compared to FWER-control, this method allows a small number of Type I errors in exchange for more statistical 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 5 and 8 in the main paper.

Table D.11: Robustness of main treatment effect to FWER control

	Outcome: Summary Index over...		
	(1) General Perceptions	(2) Spec. Policy Demand	(3) Perceived Imp. Reasons
T <sup>74</sup>	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*** (0.000)	0.203*** (0.000)	0.251*** (0.000)
Democrat	0.665*** (0.000)	0.594*** (0.000)	0.442*** (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 and unspecific policy demand (Column 1), ii) self-reported demand for specific policies (Column 2) and iii) the perceived prevalence of impersonal reasons that potentially drive the gender wage gap (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 The role of self-interest

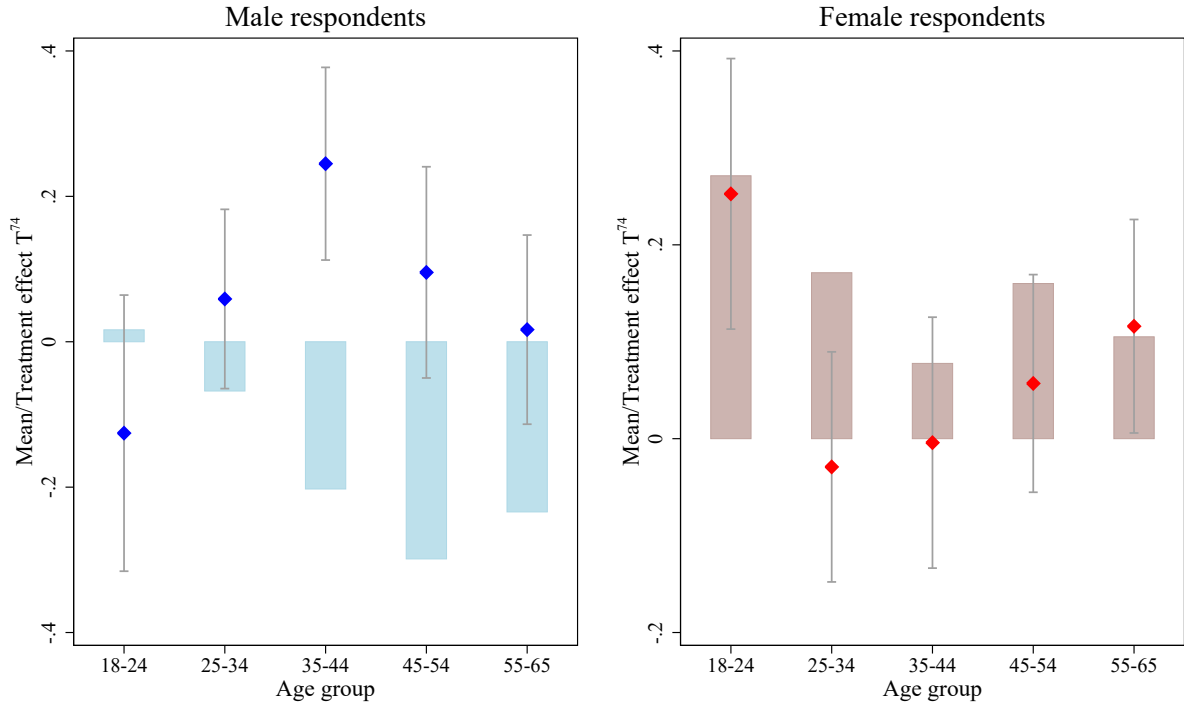


Figure A.13: Heterogeneity by gender x age

*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.

## E.2 The role of other beliefs and preferences

Beliefs about the size of the gender wage gap 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.1, I compare the role of beliefs about the size of the wage gap 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 (Column 1). In a correlational exercise,

people’s quantitative beliefs about the size of the wage gap account for a mere 2% of the political and 7% 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 policies 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 brings the partisan difference in policy demand down to two thirds and the gender difference to around 60 to 75% 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 wage gap 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 of almost 0.3 standard deviations in policy demand (Column 6). Maybe surprisingly, this effect is independent of beliefs about the wage gap. The unaccounted partisan gap and the gender gap in policy demand shrink to around 65% of their original values when I account for this measure in addition to prior beliefs about the wage gap.

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 wage gap lead to an increase in the  $R^2$  of only 1% 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 wage gap in shaping people’s

Table E.1: Importance of other beliefs and preferences

	Policy Demand (Index)						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Democrat	0.614*** (0.071)	0.599*** (0.071)	0.414*** (0.071)	0.393*** (0.073)	0.522*** (0.072)	0.401*** (0.068)	0.305*** (0.070)
Female	0.311*** (0.061)	0.290*** (0.063)	0.233*** (0.058)	0.185*** (0.058)	0.244*** (0.061)	0.207*** (0.060)	0.174*** (0.056)
Prior belief (z-scored)		-0.152** (0.068)	-0.154** (0.064)	-0.156** (0.063)	-0.150** (0.068)	-0.080 (0.063)	-0.114* (0.059)
High costs			-0.249*** (0.038)				-0.118*** (0.045)
High costs x prior			0.095 (0.069)				0.085 (0.102)
Adverse effects men				-0.271*** (0.038)			-0.124** (0.049)
Adv. effects x prior				0.075 (0.071)			-0.044 (0.108)
Traditional gender role attitudes					-0.147*** (0.036)		0.002 (0.038)
Traditional GRA x prior					0.126* (0.064)		0.097 (0.074)
No role for government						-0.287*** (0.033)	-0.175*** (0.036)
No role for gov. x prior						0.018 (0.063)	-0.075 (0.079)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.21	0.22	0.33	0.33	0.27	0.34	0.40
Observations	478	478	478	478	478	478	478

*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 1 for the underlying survey items). 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 z-scored summary index of 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 z-scored 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%.

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 (Fernández, 2011).

## F Additional results on beliefs and their origins

Table F.1: Incentivized vs. unincentivized beliefs about the wage gap

	Outcome variable: Prior belief about gender wage gap					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Incentive	-0.375 (0.689)	1.614* (0.908)	-0.469 (1.006)	1.798 (1.302)	1.631* (0.912)	1.811 (1.305)
Incentive x male		-3.992*** (1.358)		-4.738** (2.002)	-3.885*** (1.365)	-4.492** (2.000)
Incentive x Republican			0.438 (1.547)	-0.705 (2.016)		-0.823 (2.029)
Inc. x male x Republican				2.664 (3.083)		2.570 (3.100)
Male	6.025*** (0.675)	8.268*** (1.027)	6.025*** (0.675)	8.214*** (1.511)	8.692*** (1.086)	9.070*** (1.624)
Republican	4.485*** (0.792)	4.480*** (0.791)	4.233*** (1.178)	5.205*** (1.450)	4.472*** (0.791)	4.704*** (1.557)
Male x Republican				-2.105 (2.305)		-2.283 (2.521)
Constant	66.784*** (5.383)	65.619*** (5.397)	66.890*** (5.420)	66.034*** (5.488)	65.954*** (5.414)	66.300*** (5.520)
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). "Incentive" is a dummy that takes value one whenever the prior belief was incentivized with a \$2 accuracy incentive. Additional control variables in all columns 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 omitted group, Democrats, include Independents leaning Democrat. Columns 3, 4 and 6 also control for "Incentive x Independent" and "Incentive x other political orientation". Columns 4 and 6 in addition control for "Male x Independent", "Male x other pol. orientation", "Incentive x male x Indep." and "Incentive x male x other pol. orientation." 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, with a dummy for Republican, Independent, other pol. orientation, the interaction of male x Republican, of male x Independent and of male x other pol orientation. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

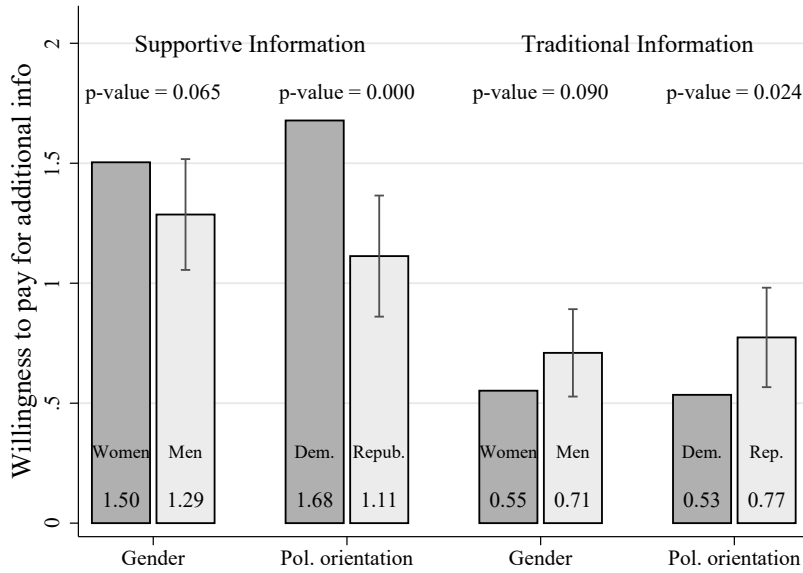


Figure A.14: Willingness to pay for additional information.

*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).



## 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.15 illustrate how outliers lead to considerable attenuation, given the sensitivity of OLS to outliers.
- **Heterogeneity by political orientation:** I 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 reported in Table G.11.

## G.2 Main results unweighted

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

	Post. belief about fem. rel. wage (0-200)	Post. belief about fem. rel. wage (z-scored)	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Perception Index ((2)-(4))
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
T <sup>74</sup>	-13.009*** (0.590)	-0.662*** (0.030)	0.598*** (0.035) [0.001]	0.421*** (0.035) [0.001]	0.244*** (0.035) [0.001]	0.417*** (0.032)
Sharpened q-value						
Female	-1.608*** (0.619)	-0.082*** (0.032)	0.232*** (0.036)	0.296*** (0.036)	0.306*** (0.036)	0.275*** (0.033)
Democrat	-0.008 (0.701)	-0.000 (0.036)	0.523*** (0.040)	0.653*** (0.040)	0.795*** (0.040)	0.661*** (0.037)
Observations	3022	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031

Notes: This Table shows the same specification as Table 5, 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 transp. within companies	Introduce reporting website	Increase subsidies to child care	Policy demand index
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
T <sup>74</sup>	0.055 (0.035)	0.116*** (0.034)	0.122*** (0.035)	-0.015 (0.042)	0.114* (0.061)	0.012 (0.035)	0.062** (0.025)
Sharpened q-value	[0.131]	[0.002]	[0.002]	[0.322]	[0.085]	[0.322]	
Female	0.255*** (0.036)	0.180*** (0.035)	0.236*** (0.036)	0.197*** (0.044)	0.307*** (0.062)	0.110*** (0.036)	0.203*** (0.026)
Democrat	0.557*** (0.041)	0.662*** (0.039)	0.619*** (0.040)	0.565*** (0.048)	0.584*** (0.072)	0.583*** (0.040)	0.592*** (0.029)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031

Notes: This Table shows the same specification as Table 5, 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 gender wage gap (by wave)

	Gender diff. in wages are large	Gender diff. in wages are a problem	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Perception Index ((1)-(1))
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
<b>Panel A: Both waves</b>				
$T^{74}$	0.597*** (0.036)	0.422*** (0.035)	0.243*** (0.035)	0.417*** (0.032)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.525*** (0.041)	0.656*** (0.040)	0.803*** (0.041)	0.665*** (0.037)
Female	0.235*** (0.036)	0.297*** (0.036)	0.309*** (0.036)	0.277*** (0.033)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	3031
<b>Panel B: Wave A</b>				
$T^{74}$	0.585*** (0.043)	0.383*** (0.043)	0.228*** (0.043)	0.399*** (0.039)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.506*** (0.049)	0.660*** (0.049)	0.814*** (0.050)	0.663*** (0.045)
Female	0.213*** (0.044)	0.316*** (0.044)	0.319*** (0.044)	0.276*** (0.040)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012
<b>Panel C: Wave B</b>				
$T^{74}$	0.628*** (0.064)	0.504*** (0.061)	0.280*** (0.063)	0.460*** (0.057)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.001]	
Democrat	0.540*** (0.073)	0.630*** (0.070)	0.754*** (0.070)	0.646*** (0.064)
Female	0.280*** (0.064)	0.266*** (0.062)	0.299*** (0.063)	0.286*** (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. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

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)
<b>Panel A: Both waves</b>							
$T^{74}$	0.056 (0.036)	0.112*** (0.034)	0.115*** (0.035)	-0.015 (0.042)	0.098 (0.063)	0.003 (0.035)	0.056** (0.025)
Sharpened q-value	[0.133]	[0.003]	[0.003]	[0.413]	[0.085]	[0.455]	
Female	0.254*** (0.037)	0.179*** (0.035)	0.237*** (0.036)	0.197*** (0.044)	0.310*** (0.063)	0.112*** (0.036)	0.203*** (0.026)
Democrat	0.559*** (0.041)	0.669*** (0.040)	0.618*** (0.040)	0.565*** (0.048)	0.596*** (0.074)	0.578*** (0.040)	0.594*** (0.029)
Observations	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031
<b>Panel B: Wave A</b>							
$T^{74}$	0.044 (0.043)	0.129*** (0.041)	0.098** (0.042)	-0.015 (0.042)		0.011 (0.042)	0.046 (0.030)
Sharpened q-value	[0.440]	[0.008]	[0.038]	[0.926]		[0.926]	
Female	0.251*** (0.045)	0.169*** (0.043)	0.224*** (0.043)	0.197*** (0.044)		0.120*** (0.045)	0.193*** (0.031)
Democrat	0.556*** (0.049)	0.678*** (0.047)	0.644*** (0.048)	0.565*** (0.048)		0.580*** (0.048)	0.597*** (0.035)
Observations	2012	2012	2012	2012		2012	2012
<b>Panel C: Wave B</b>							
$T^{74}$	0.076 (0.064)	0.071 (0.062)	0.156** (0.064)		0.098 (0.063)	-0.018 (0.061)	0.075 (0.046)
Sharpened q-value	[0.327]	[0.327]	[0.080]		[0.315]	[0.445]	
Female	0.266*** (0.065)	0.221*** (0.062)	0.285*** (0.065)		0.310*** (0.063)	0.098 (0.064)	0.235*** (0.046)
Democrat	0.554*** (0.074)	0.640*** (0.074)	0.557*** (0.073)		0.596*** (0.074)	0.580*** (0.073)	0.581*** (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. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

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

	Posterior belief about fem.rel.wage (percent)	Gender differences in wages are a problem	Gender diff. in wages are a problem among high-skilled	Gender diff. in wages are a problem among low-skilled	Women's wages are fair	Government should mitigate gender wage gap	Anti- discrimination policy	Supportive policy	Statutory affirmative action	Stricter equal pay legislation
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
<b>Panel A: Wave A</b>										
T <sup>74</sup>	-10.121*** (1.851)	0.196** (0.085)	0.144* (0.086)	0.210** (0.089)	-0.132 (0.082)	0.282*** (0.082)	0.114 (0.089)	0.241*** (0.085)		
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.022]	[0.048]	[0.022]	[0.048]	[0.002]	[0.081]	[0.009]		
Female	-0.956 (1.972)	0.180** (0.091)	0.075 (0.090)	0.063 (0.096)	0.109 (0.086)	0.191** (0.085)	0.240*** (0.090)	0.178** (0.088)		
Democrat	2.125 (2.102)	0.551*** (0.091)	0.482*** (0.096)	0.456*** (0.097)	-0.392*** (0.092)	0.693*** (0.092)	0.640*** (0.096)	0.753*** (0.095)		
Observations	494	499	499	499	499	499	499	499		
<b>Panel B: Wave B</b>										
T <sup>74</sup>	-11.195*** (1.520)	0.184** (0.079)	0.116 (0.080)	0.107 (0.078)	-0.091 (0.074)	0.096 (0.078)	0.073 (0.076)	0.075 (0.077)	0.009 (0.078)	0.096 (0.079)
Sharpened q-value	[0.001]	[0.098]	[0.346]	[0.346]	[0.346]	[0.346]	[0.429]	[0.429]	[0.474]	[0.346]
Female	-3.294** (1.576)	0.337*** (0.081)	0.284*** (0.083)	0.311*** (0.081)	-0.294*** (0.077)	0.184** (0.080)	0.229*** (0.078)	0.205*** (0.079)	0.150* (0.080)	0.197** (0.083)
Democrat	-0.511 (1.695)	0.550*** (0.093)	0.526*** (0.093)	0.361*** (0.093)	-0.466*** (0.091)	0.698*** (0.089)	0.728*** (0.085)	0.618*** (0.087)	0.583*** (0.091)	0.642*** (0.091)
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<sup>74</sup> 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. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

	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 ( $T^{74} \leq T^{94}$ )
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 ( $T^{74} \leq T^{94}$ )
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 ( $T^{74} \leq T^{94}$ )” 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 wage gap (including outliers)

	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)
<b>Panel A</b>				
Democrat	0.563*** (0.069)	0.655*** (0.069)	0.754*** (0.069)	0.660*** (0.062)
Female	0.192*** (0.061)	0.263*** (0.060)	0.186*** (0.059)	0.202*** (0.054)
<b>Panel B</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.165*** (0.043)	-0.184*** (0.042)	-0.119*** (0.036)	-0.149*** (0.038)
<b>Panel C</b>				
Prior (z-scored)	-0.135*** (0.041)	-0.147*** (0.040)	-0.081** (0.035)	-0.115*** (0.036)
Democrat	0.538*** (0.070)	0.627*** (0.069)	0.739*** (0.069)	0.638*** (0.062)
Female	0.171*** (0.060)	0.240*** (0.059)	0.173*** (0.059)	0.185*** (0.053)
Observations	1034	1034	1034	1034

*Notes:* Table notes to Table 3 apply with one exception: The sample is based on all control group observations, including outliers below the 5th and above the 95th percentile of the distribution (following the pre-analysis plan).

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

	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)
<b>Panel A</b>							
Democrat	0.675*** (0.068)	0.726*** (0.069)	0.654*** (0.069)	0.658*** (0.097)	0.545*** (0.096)	0.625*** (0.070)	0.650*** (0.049)
Female	0.238*** (0.060)	0.166*** (0.059)	0.307*** (0.060)	0.413*** (0.084)	0.384*** (0.084)	0.234*** (0.060)	0.276*** (0.042)
<b>Panel B</b>							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.056 (0.037)	-0.096** (0.039)	-0.056 (0.040)	-0.186*** (0.047)	-0.091 (0.055)	-0.051 (0.037)	-0.078*** (0.030)
<b>Panel C</b>							
Prior (z-scored)	-0.018 (0.035)	-0.060 (0.037)	-0.017 (0.039)	-0.134*** (0.046)	-0.062 (0.055)	-0.016 (0.035)	-0.040 (0.028)
Democrat	0.671*** (0.069)	0.715*** (0.069)	0.651*** (0.069)	0.616*** (0.097)	0.542*** (0.096)	0.622*** (0.070)	0.643*** (0.049)
Female	0.235*** (0.060)	0.157*** (0.059)	0.304*** (0.060)	0.392*** (0.083)	0.375*** (0.084)	0.232*** (0.060)	0.270*** (0.042)
Observations	1034	1034	1034	498	536	1034	1034

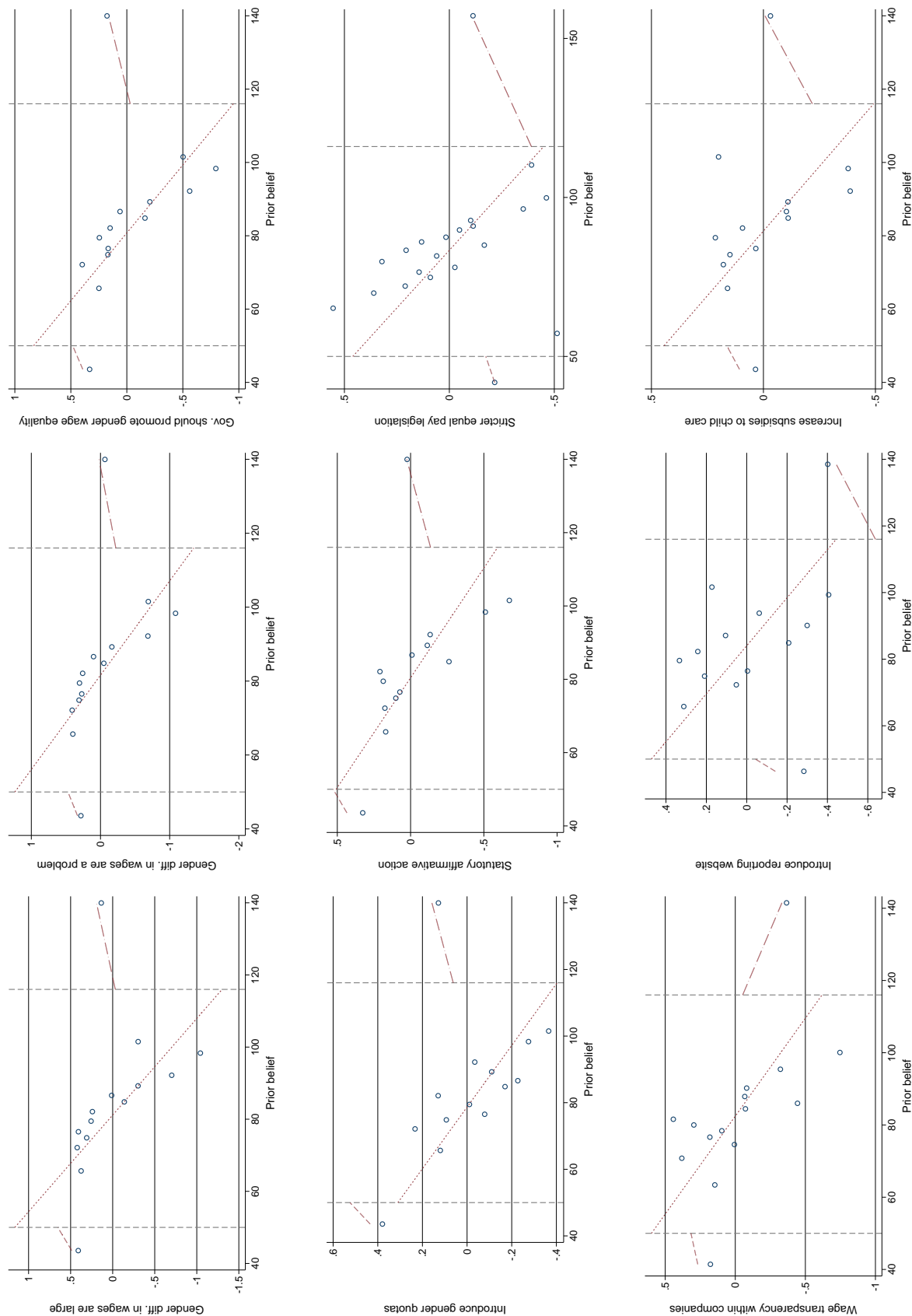
*Notes:* Table notes to Table 4 apply with one exception: The sample is based on all control group observations, including outliers below the 5th and above the 95th percentile of the distribution (following the pre-analysis plan).



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
<b>Panel A: Priors only</b>								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.182*** (0.051)	-0.087* (0.048)	-0.010 (0.049)	-0.093** (0.040)	0.144*** (0.053)	0.144*** (0.052)	0.148*** (0.050)	0.146*** (0.046)
Observations	498	498	498	498	498	498	498	498
<b>Panel B: Prior, gender, pol. orient.</b>								
Prior (z-scored)	-0.129*** (0.048)	-0.050 (0.045)	0.003 (0.049)	-0.059 (0.037)	0.108** (0.053)	0.102* (0.055)	0.108** (0.052)	0.106** (0.048)
Female	0.195** (0.083)	0.275*** (0.087)	0.099 (0.089)	0.185*** (0.060)	-0.482*** (0.086)	-0.471*** (0.086)	-0.403*** (0.085)	-0.447*** (0.071)
Democrat	0.709*** (0.097)	0.413*** (0.098)	0.149 (0.101)	0.423*** (0.070)	-0.232** (0.099)	-0.339*** (0.102)	-0.375*** (0.099)	-0.319*** (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 as well as the variable prior 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). Democrats include Independents leaning Democrat. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.



**Figure A.15: Non-linearity in correlation between beliefs about the gender wage gap and outcomes**

*Notes:* Data base: Control group, both waves. The graph shows bin scatter plots on the correlation between prior beliefs about females' relative wages and the main outcome variables of interest. The dependent variables in the top row are people's perception of whether the gender wage gap 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. See Table 1 for the exact survey items. Each scatter plot contains a linear fit which allows for a discontinuity at the 5th and the 95th percentile of the prior belief distribution.

## G.5 Heterogeneity by political orientation as pre-specified

Table G.11: Heterogeneity in the treatment effect by Democrat vs. Non-Democrat

	First Stage		Policy Demand						
	(1) Posterior belief about fem. rel. wage	(2) Perception index	(3) Introduce gender quotas	(4) Statutory affirmative action	(5) Stricter equal pay legislation	(6) Wage transp. within companies	(7) Introduce reporting website	(8) Increase subsidies to child care	(9) Policy demand index
T <sup>74</sup>	-13.467*** (0.791)	0.431*** (0.049)	0.058 (0.049)	0.104** (0.048)	0.032 (0.047)	0.005 (0.059)	0.092 (0.090)	-0.020 (0.048)	0.036 (0.036)
T <sup>74</sup> x Democrat	1.165 (1.208)	-0.031 (0.062)	-0.005 (0.071)	0.020 (0.068)	0.189*** (0.070)	-0.043 (0.084)	0.014 (0.124)	0.052 (0.068)	0.045 (0.049)
p-value [T <sup>74</sup> + T <sup>74</sup> x Democrat]	0.000	0.000	0.303	0.010	0.000	0.519	0.213	0.516	0.017
Democrat	-0.542 (0.869)	0.681*** (0.051)	0.562*** (0.054)	0.659*** (0.052)	0.523*** (0.052)	0.586*** (0.063)	0.589*** (0.101)	0.552*** (0.053)	0.571*** (0.038)
Observations	3022	3031	3031	3031	3031	2012	1019	3031	3031

*Notes:* Data base: Treatment groups, both waves. All regressions apply the specification outlined in Section 5, with the dimension of heterogeneity corresponding to Democrat (including Independents leaning Democrat), i.e. the omitted group is Non-Democrats. The outcome in Column 1 is the respondent's posterior belief about females' relative wages, pooling across five different wage statistics (see notes of Table 5 for details). Z-scored outcomes in columns 2-8 are based on the respondent's support of the specific policies (see Table 1 for the exact items). The outcome in Column 2 is the summary index over people's perceptions related to the wage gap, corresponding to the outcome in Table 5, Panel A, Column 6. Column 9 uses a summary index over Columns 2-8. Both indices follow the method described in Anderson (2008). Additional controls: gender, 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. Robust standard errors are in parenthesis. Significant at \*10%, \*\*5%, \*\*\*1%.

## H Survey Instrument

### Overview

This project was pre-registered in the AEA RCT Registry under “AEARCTR-0003252”, see <http://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/3252>. The data was collected in two waves. Wave A was conducted between August 31st and October 9th, 2018 and Wave B between 21st of November 2018 and 2nd of January, 2019. Each wave consisted of a main survey (duration 15 minutes) and a follow-up survey (duration 5 minutes).

Section H.1 describes the main survey of Wave A, Section H.2 the follow-up survey of Wave A, Section H.3 the main survey of Wave B and Section H.4 the follow-up survey of Wave B. Wave A and Wave B were very similar. Changes in Wave B as compared to Wave A are flagged in Sections H.3 and H.4 below.

## H.1 Main Experiment (Wave A)

### H.1.1 Welcome Page, including consent

Dear participant!

This study is conducted by researchers from Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany.

In this survey we will ask questions on your views regarding public policy issues. The most important factor for the success of our research is that **you answer honestly**. No matter what your political views are, by completing this survey, you are contributing to our knowledge as a society. Anytime you don't know an answer, just give your best guess.

Participation in this study typically takes **15 minutes** and is **strictly anonymous**. Close **attention** is **required** for your responses to count. In this survey you will have several opportunities to **receive a bonus** in addition to your fix payoff!

Note: This study has received ethics approval from the Institutional Review Board of Goethe University, Frankfurt. Your participation in this study is purely voluntary. Your name will never be recorded and you will never be identified. If you have any questions about this study or if you want to have your responses deleted, you may contact us at [economicsresearch@gmail.com](mailto:economicsresearch@gmail.com).

You must be U.S. resident of at least 18 years of age in order to participate in this survey.

- Yes, I would like to take part in this study, and confirm that I am a U.S. resident and am 18 or older.
- No, I would not like to participate.

### H.1.2 Screening Questions

In which region do you currently reside?

- Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, PA)
- Midwest (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)
- South (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV, AL, KY, MS, TN, AR, LA, OK, TX)
- West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY, AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-65
- Older than 65

Which of these describes you more accurately?

- Male
- Female

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee
- Self-employed or business owner

- Unemployed or looking for work
- Student
- Retired
- Out of the labor force, i.e. not working and not looking for work (homemaker,...)

What was your **household's income from all sources**, before taxes and subsidies, in 2017 in US-Dollars?

By household we mean yourself and any family living with you but not renters and roommates.

- Less than 15,000\$
- Between 15,000\$ and 25,000\$
- Between 25,000\$ and 50,000\$
- Between 50,000\$ and 75,000\$
- Between 75,000\$ and 100,000\$
- Between 100,000\$ and 150,000\$
- Between 150,000\$ and 200,000\$
- More than 200,000\$

In politics today, do you consider yourself a **Republican**, a **Democrat**, or an **Independent**?

- Republican
- Independent, leaning Republican
- Independent

- Independent, leaning Democrat
- Democrat
- Other: *[request to enter political orientation manually]*

### H.1.3 Attention screener

This question is about the following problem. In questionnaires like ours, sometimes there are participants who do not carefully read the questions and just quickly click through the survey. This means that there are a lot of random answers which compromise the results of research studies. To show that you read our questions carefully, please choose both “Very strongly interested” and “Not interested at all” as your answer in the next question.

**How interested are you in politics?**

- Very strongly interested
- Interested
- A little bit interested
- Almost not interested
- Not interested at all

### H.1.4 Belief elicitation

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 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?**

*[The following sentence is only shown to those individuals whose beliefs are incentivized. Name of survey is “American Community Survey” in case of  $T^{74}$  and “Current Population Survey” in case of  $T^{94}$ .]*

If your estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the value found by the most recent *<name of 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.

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men’s wages are represented by a yellow bar that is fixed to the value \$100. Women’s wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that responds to a slider at the bottom of the page. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

### H.1.5 Notification

*[Individuals in both treatment groups see the following message:]*

On the next screen we would like to provide you with the objective value of the described wage difference based on **survey data collected by the United States Census Bureau.**

We would like you to carefully review this information as you will not be able to go back.

Press ”Next” to continue.

### H.1.6 Information treatment

*[This page is shown to individuals in any of the two treatment groups. Value corresponds to “\$74” in case of  $T^{74}$  and to “\$94” in case of  $T^{94}$ . Name of survey corresponds to “American Community Survey” in case of  $T^{74}$  and to “Current Population Survey” in*



*case of  $T^{94}$ .]*

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

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

*[There is a bar chart with three bars: One yellow bar set to a value of \$100, one pink bar representing the respondent's previously made estimate and one red bar representing either \$74 or \$94, depending on the treatment group.]*

*In case their previously made estimate deviates by more than \$2 from the objective value in their treatment group or in case the estimate was not incentivized previously, respondents see the following message below the graph:*

Thank you for your estimate!

*Alternatively, in case their estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the objective value and the guess was incentivized, respondents see the following below the graph:*

Congratulations! Your estimate is close to the value reported by the  $\langle name\ of\ survey \rangle$ . You will receive a bonus of \$2.

The actual value is based on the most recent available wage statistics from the  $\langle name\ of\ survey \rangle$  as of January 2018. The  $\langle name\ of\ survey \rangle$  is regularly conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau among households in the United States.

### H.1.7 Reminder

*[Individuals in the pure control group see the following:]*

You just stated that you believe a 45-year-old full-time working **female** employee who holds a Bachelor degree and works 40 hours per week earns  $\$ \langle guess\ made\ previously \rangle$  for every **\$100** earned by a comparable **male individual**.

At the end of this survey we will let you know about the objective value based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and you will find out whether you won the \$2 bonus.

*[The following is again shown to all individuals:]*

On the following pages we will ask you questions on your **personal opinions**. There are **no right or wrong answers**. We are just interested in your subjective views.

Press "Next" in order to continue.

#### H.1.8 General perceptions and unspecific policy demand

How do you feel about the following statements where 1 means you **fully disagree** and 10 means you **fully agree**?

Gender differences in wages are **large** in the United States.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

Gender differences in wages are a **problem** in the United States.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

The government should do more to **promote wage equality** between men and women.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

#### H.1.9 Perceived fairness of women's wages

Which of the following best describes your opinion on the **fairness of wages** received by **women** in the U.S.?

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair
- More than fair
- Much more than fair

### H.1.10 Specific self-reported policy demand

What is your **opinion** on the following labor market policies? When making your choice, please think of all potential **costs** and **benefits**.

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

Currently, federal law requires that men and women **get equal pay** for work that is comparable in terms of **skill, effort, responsibility** and **working conditions** in the same establishment. In case of suspected discrimination employees may file a lawsuit against their employers. If they win the case, then they are to be compensated by their employers.

Should the government give **more freedom in wage setting** to companies by making legislation **less strict** or would you like to see **stricter enforcement of the existing legislation**?

- A lot less strict
- Somewhat less strict
- Keep status quo
- Somewhat stricter
- A lot stricter

Large public contractors are legally required to have so-called "**Affirmative Action Plans**", i.e. they have to **support women** and minorities at all levels of the hierarchy through measures such as training programs and outreach efforts.

Do you think the government should **strengthen or soften** this **requirement** in terms of strictness and the set of companies that have to comply?

- Soften a lot
- Soften somewhat

- Neither strengthen nor soften
- Strengthen somewhat
- Strengthen a lot

**Wage transparency** within firms provides a basis for wage negotiations and may discipline companies by making discriminatory wages visible. Currently, wage transparency is **not legally required**. However, **employees are protected** by law from retaliation through employers in case they share information on their wages.

Would you like the government to enforce **more or less wage transparency**?

- A lot less
- Somewhat less
- Keep current level
- Somewhat more
- A lot more

Many countries currently have **gender quotas** in place in order to increase the representation of women in leading positions.

Are you **in favor or against** the introduction of similar **statutory gender quotas** in the United States?

- Strongly against
- Somewhat against
- Neither in favor nor against
- Somewhat in favor

- Strongly in favor

**Child day care** may enable mothers as well as fathers to work full-time if they want to.

Should the government increase or decrease the **amount of public resources** spent on making **child care available and affordable**?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase strongly

#### H.1.11 Intention to sign a petition

**Reporting requirements** for companies may facilitate the detection of gender-based wage discrimination. Currently, **companies with at least 100 employees** have to file **yearly reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**, including information on **number of employees they employ** by gender and job category but **not on wages**.

You now have the opportunity to sign a **real petition** on the **White House Petition Website**. If enough people sign the petition, the White House will consider it and post an official response. Consider the following **two petitions** and decide whether you would like to sign one of them:

##### Petition I: Increase reporting requirements

This petition suggests that **employers with at least 100 employees** have to include

information on **average wages** and hours worked **by gender and position** in their annual reports to the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**. Such information **helps detecting discriminatory pay** while keeping employee information **confidential**.

### Petition II: Abolish reporting requirements

This petition suggests that the **obligatory annual reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** should be **abolished** for private employers in order to **reduce bureaucracy**.

**Would you like to sign one of the petitions?**

- I want to sign Petition I (Increase requirements).
- I want to sign Petition II (Abolish requirements).
- I do not want to sign any of the petitions.

#### **H.1.12 Link to petition**

*[This page is only shown to individuals who expressed their intention to sign one of the petitions. <Petition name> corresponds to “Petition I” or “Petition II”, depending on the previous choice. Correspondingly, <description> corresponds to “Increase reporting requirements” or “Abolish reporting requirements”.]*

In order to sing **<petition name>** (<Petition description>), click on the following link:

Link **<petition name>**

The petition will open in a new tab. After signing do not forget to come back and finish the survey.

In order to continue the survey press “Next”.

### H.1.13 External Content: Petition

*[The following content appears in a new tab opening an external website, the White House Petition Website, in case the respondent clicks on the link on the previous survey page. (For a screenshot see Figure A.6.)]*

*[If the respondent previously chose Petition I:]*

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.

*[If the respondent previously chose Petition II:]*

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.

*[The remainder of the page is identical for both Petition I and Petition II:]*

ECONOMY & JOBS

Sign This Petition

*[Text entry fields (mandatory):]*

First Name\*

Last Name\*

Email Address\*

*[Checkbox:]*

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

*[Button:]*

Sign Now

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE [TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#).

#### H.1.14 Donation decision

By taking this survey, you are automatically enrolled in a **lottery to win \$300**. In a few days you will know whether you won the \$300.

You now get to decide how much of the \$300 you want to **donate** to the **American Association of University Women** and how much to **keep** in case you win the lottery.

**The American Association of University Women** (AAUW) is an NGO that advocates public policy in order to advance **equity of women and men in the labor market**. Moreover, it **supports girls’ and women’s education financially and**



**intellectually** and provides **case support** to women facing **discrimination at the workplace**.

For every Dollar you donate to AAUW, **we donate another \$0.5** in addition. If you are the winner of the lottery, you will be notified and will **receive your payoff via the survey platform**, so no further action is required on your part. You will also receive a **proof of the donation** made to AAUW. (This proof will be sent by the survey platform provider, so we will never know your identity.)

Please let us know how much you would like to **donate to AAUW** by filling in your **preferred donation amount** in the following field. (Please note, your answer must be a **whole number** between 0 and 300.):

- Entry field (only integers between 0 and 300 accepted).

*[As soon as an answer is entered in the entry field above, the following message appears with <donation amount> corresponing to the amount chosen, <payoff amount> corresponding to 300 - donation amount and <total donation> corresponding to the donation amount:]*

You decided to **donate \$<donation amount>** to AAUW and to have the remaining **\$<payoff amount>** added to your payoff. Together with our subsidy the **total amount donated** will be **\$<total donation>** in case you win the lottery.

You can still adjust your donation decision above. Click "next" in order to confirm your decision and continue.

#### H.1.15 Facebook like

Do you want to **"like"** the **American Association of University Women (AAUW)** on **Facebook**? Click below to do so!

(Please note: By clicking, Facebook will link you to your profile (if you have one) and will likely draw data such as your IP-address.)

*[There is a button that says “Give Facebook LIKE to AAUW!”. As soon as the respondent clicks on it, the rest of the page is loaded:]*

Please click on the “like” symbol in the box below to complete your facebook like:

*[There is an actual facebook plug-in that allows to give a facebook like.]*

#### **H.1.16 Perceived factors contributing to gender differences in wages**

Now we would like to learn **to what extent you agree** with the **following statements**:

*[The order of the following items is randomized.]*

- i. Men are inherently more talented for highly demanding tasks such as strategic decision-making, working under pressure and leading others.
  - ii. Women are facing discrimination in the labor market.
  - iii. Women and men are inherently interested in different fields of work, for instance women on average may be more interested in “social” work and men in “technical” work.
  - iv. Men are inherently more ambitious in their careers than women.
  - v. Men have been encouraged more than women to pursue ambitious careers, especially in fields such as mathematics, science and engineering.
  - vi. It is more difficult for women than for men to combine work and family responsibilities in today’s society. This leads to less steep careers of women.
- Completely disagree
  - Disagree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Agree

- Completely agree

### H.1.17 Introduction to information acquisition

On the following page you have the opportunity to choose between **receiving additional information** relevant for the debate on gender differences in wages or **increasing your payoff** under **six different scenarios**.

Please note that there are **actual stakes involved**: For every 5th participant in this study, we are going to **implement** one of the six decisions later in the survey. In case you are selected, you get a notification and you will receive either the information (3-minute read) or the additional payoff.

Each of the six scenarios is **equally likely to get implemented**, so we advise you to consider each of them carefully.

### H.1.18 Endogenous information acquisition

*[The order of the “progressive” and the “traditional” institution is randomized.]*

We offer additional information either from

- Institution A: An institution favoring government intervention to support women’s progress in the labor market or from
- Institution B: An institution favoring a traditional role for women as caregivers for the family and arguing against related government intervention.

Both institutions offer **arguments in support of their view** in the form of a 3-minute read. The purpose of the text is to inform the general public and to **convince the reader of the institutions’s view**. Please let us know under the following six scenarios whether you want to **receive additional insights within this survey** from either of the two institutions or whether you want to **increase your payoff** instead. Remember that each of the scenarios is equally likely to get implemented.

**Scenario 1:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.01?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)
- Receive \$0.01 and no info

**Scenario 2:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.3?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)
- Receive \$0.3 and no info

**Scenario 3:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.5?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)
- Receive \$0.5 and no info

**Scenario 4:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.01?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.01 and no info

**Scenario 5:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.3?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.3 and no info

**Scenario 6:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.5?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.5 and no info

#### H.1.19 Extrapolation to related belief about gender difference in wages

*[The following belief is randomized, i.e. only one of the following three is shown to each respondent.]*

*[Version A: Different age group:]*

This question asks about a different age group than the one before:

Please think of all individuals in the U.S., men and women, who are **25 years old**, work **40 hours per week** as full-time employees and hold a **Bachelor degree**. How much, do you think, does a woman with these characteristics make on average for every \$100 made by a man with the **same characteristics**?

*[Version B: Different education group:]*

This question asks about a different education group than the one before:

Please think of all individuals in the U.S., men and women, who are **45 years old**, work **40 hours per week** as full-time employees and hold a **high school degree**, but did **not** go to college? How much, do you think, does a woman with these characteristics make on average for every \$100 made by a man with the **same characteristics**?

*[Version C: Controlling for occupation group:]*

This question asks about a slightly different statistic than the one before:

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics distinguishes between 22 **broad occupation groups**.

**Within each of these occupation groups**, we have compared 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 both work in the **same occupation group**?

*[In the following sentence, which is shown to everybody, <name of survey> again corresponds to “American Community Survey” for  $T^{74}$  and half of the control group and to “Current Population Survey” for  $T^{94}$  and the other half of the control group.]*

If your estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the value found by the most recent <name of survey> as of the beginning of 2018 you will receive a bonus of \$1.

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

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men’s wages are represented by a yellow bar that is fixed to the value \$100. Women’s wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that responds to a slider. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

#### H.1.20 Related world views

*[This page is shown only to individuals in the control group.]*

To what extent do you **agree or disagree** with the following two **statements**?

- i. A husband’s job is to earn money, a wife’s job is to look after the home and family.
- ii. When women advance in the labor market, some men are pushed out or lose.
  - Strongly disagree
  - Disagree

- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

#### H.1.21 Work-related questions, education, ethnicity

Where do you see yourself in **10 years from now**?

- 10 years from now I will be working full-time.
- 10 years from now I will be working part-time.
- 10 years from now I will not be working for money (retirement, student, home-maker,...)

Which of the following best describes your **expectations** for the **coming 10 years**?  
My **wage** is going to...

- ...decrease considerably over the next 10 years.
- ...decrease a little over the next 10 years.
- ...neither increase nor decrease over the next 10 years.
- ...increase a little over the next 10 years.
- ...increase considerably over the next 10 years.

Which of the following best describes your opinion on the **fairness** of your **own personal wage** in your current job (or in your previous job, in case you are currently not working)?

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair

- More than fair
- Much more than fair
- I have never worked for a wage

What category best describes your **highest level of education**?

- Eighth grade or less
- Some high school
- High school degree/GED
- Some college
- 2-year College degree/Associate degree
- 4-year College degree/Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree
- Professional degree (JD,MD,MBA)

How would you describe your race?

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian American
- Other [**Text entry requested**]

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?



- Yes
- No

### H.1.22 Industry, occupation, income, working hours

In which of the following industries do you work or did you last work in your main job?

- Construction
- Nondurable manufacturing (food, textiles, apparel, paper products, printing and publishing, chemicals, plastic products, ...)
- Durable manufacturing (lumber and wood products, furniture, metal industries, machinery and computing equipment, motor vehicles, aircraft, medical instruments, ...)
- Finance, insurance, real estate
- Health, education and social services (Hospitals, schools, universities, child day care, nursing and personal care,... )
- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade (grocery stores, eating and drinking places, department stores, motor vehicle dealers,...)
- Business and repair services (computer and data processing services, advertising, services to dwellings and other buildings, personnel supply services, automotive repair and related services,...)
- Professional services (legal services, engineering/architectural services, management/public relations services, accounting/auditing/bookkeeping services, research/development/technical services, religious organizations,...)
- Public administration

- Personal services (hotels and motels, private households, beauty shops, laundry, cleaning, and garment services,...)
- Transportation and communication (trucking service, postal service, radio and television broadcasting, telephone communications, electric light and power, sanitary services,...)
- Other [*Text entry required.*]

Please give a more detailed description of your current industry or last industry, in case you are currently not working, using your own words. (Examples: restaurant, hospital, automotive repair, retail bakery, manufacturing of chemicals, postal service, banking, insurance, legal services,...)

- [*free text entry*]

Please describe your current occupation/job description. (Examples: photographer, dental assistant, firefighter, cook, painting worker, financial analyst, Š). In case you are currently not working, refer to your last job please

- [*free text entry*]

[*The following question is only shown to employed individuals.*]

How many employees are currently employed at the company you are working for?

- Fewer than 10 employees
- Between 10 and 100 employees
- Between 100 and 500 employees
- More than 500 employees

What is your **own personal current yearly labor income in US Dollars**, before taxes, deductions and subsidies?

- *[free text entry (only numbers)]*

What is your **current yearly household labor income** in US Dollars, before taxes, deductions and subsidies?

By household we mean yourself and any family living with you but not renters and roommates.

- *[free text entry (only numbers)]*

How many hours do you usually work for pay per week?

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 56-60
- more than 60 hours per week

### H.1.23 Control group information

*[This screen is only shown to individuals in the control group and correspond to the “information treatment” described above.]*

#### **H.1.24 Demographic and background questions**

Which of the following best describes your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other: *[Text entry required.]*

How many children do you have?

- i. Number of boys
- ii. Number of girls

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

What is the zip code of your current residence?

- *[Text entry field (only 5-digit numbers)]*

What is your year of birth?

- 1951
- 1952
- .
- .
- 1999
- 2000

Are your facebook "likes" visible or private?

- They are visible (standard settings).
- I have restricted visibility.
- I do not have a facebook account.

#### H.1.25 Perception of survey, trust in official statistics

Do you feel this survey was biased?

- Yes, left-wing bias.
- Yes, right-wing bias.
- No, it did not feel biased.

*[Shown to subjects in the treatment groups:]*

Did you find the statistic about gender differences in wages we provided you with **relevant** for the discussion about related policies?

- Absolutely irrelevant

- Somewhat irrelevant.
- Somewhat relevant.
- Highly relevant.

*[Shown to subjects in the treatment groups:]*

In the past three weeks, have you read in newspapers, magazines or online about gender differences in wages?

- Yes.
- No.
- I am not sure.

*[Shown to subjects in the control group:]*

Did you find the **statistic about gender differences in wages** we provided you with trustworthy?

- Untrustworthy.
- Somewhat untrustworthy.
- Somewhat trustworthy.
- Trustworthy.

*[Shown to subjects in the control group:]* How much do you generally **trust survey data** published by the **U.S. Census Bureau**?

- I do not trust them at all.
- I do not fully trust them.
- I trust them somewhat.

- I largely trust them.
- I fully trust them.
- I don't know.

Is there anything you would like to add?

*[Free text entry.]*

### H.1.26 Final screen

*[Shown to every fifth respondent: <relevant scenario> corresponds to one of the six information acquisition scenarios the respondent was facing before. <decision> corresponds to the respondent's decision in this specific scenario.]*

Every 5th participant is chosen for the implementation of his/her decision to acquire additional information or to increase one's payoff. Congratulations, you were chosen!

The following decision was randomly chosen for implementation for you:

*<relevant scenario>*

Your choice was: *<decision>*

*[In case the respondent previously chose the payoff in the respective scenario she receives the following message, with <amount> corresponding to the relevant amount.]*

*<amount>* will be added to your payoff.

*[In case the respondent chose to receive information in the respective scenario she receives the following message, where <Link to more information> is a link that leads to a website with additional information.]*

Here is a link to the information you have chosen (The link will open in a new tab. Do not forget to come back and click submit in order to submit your survey responses.):*<Link to more information>*

*[All respondents again see the following message.]*

Thank you for participating in this survey. We will shortly calculate your final payoff including the participation fee and any bonus for correct guesses made before. All additional payments will be made in the same way as your regular survey pay.

Moreover, the winner of the lottery will be determined as soon as all responses are in and will be contacted by the survey platform.

#### **H.1.27 External Content: 3-minute read**

*[The following content appears in a new tab opening an external website in case the respondent clicks on the link on the previous survey page.]*

*[If the respondent previously chose to see the 3-minute read from the progressive institution in favor of women in the labor market and related government intervention, the following content appeared:]<sup>a</sup>*

### **The Business Case for Childcare**

Almost one in 10 of the world's population, 679 million, are children younger than five years old. To thrive and develop, these children and their older siblings need care. Yet in many parts of the world, childcare remains scarce. Globally, just over half of the children under age five benefit from a preschool program. Formal childcare is often outside the reach of low and middle-income employees. For those who can afford it, available options are often limited and poorly aligned with full-time working hours. Access to care is particularly lacking for children younger than three.

For employers, the lack of good quality and affordable childcare for their employees can translate into higher turnover and absenteeism, lower productivity, and difficulty recruiting skilled employees. This is because the unavailability or unaffordability of care affects the choices that parents make regarding the type of work that they do, whether they stay at home, or how they combine work with care. For families, gaps in access to quality care can mean less paid working time and lower household incomes.

Because women are more likely than men to bear childcare responsibilities, lack of childcare is a major barrier to women's full and equal participation in paid work. According



to the International Labour Organization, globally, women's labor force participation rate is just over 49 percent, nearly 27 percentage points lower than the rate for men. A McKinsey Global Institute study estimated that closing gender gaps in economic participation would increase global gross domestic product (GDP) by 26 percent by 2025, adding \$12 trillion. Evidence from the Caribbean, Latin America, and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries suggests that access to subsidized childcare can have a significant positive impact on women's employment rates and the number of hours that women work.

Policymakers internationally are recognizing the importance of access to childcare for both economic and gender equality. To date, 192 nations have signed the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, which include the target, "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education." In countries such as Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, India, Japan, Jordan, and Turkey, statutes require employers to provide or support childcare. Even when not driven by regulatory compliance, many employers are providing childcare supports as part of their general compensation strategy to achieve better business outcomes. Yet there is a lot more that can be done through partnerships and collaboration between the public and private sectors and civil society organizations. For the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group and the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries, improving access to childcare goes hand in hand with fostering workplace gender diversity and helping parents enter and advance in the workforce while enabling companies to strengthen their bottom line. IFC's focus on removing barriers, such as lack of childcare, to women's (and men's) access to more and better jobs is embedded in the World Bank Group's Gender Strategy and IFC's vision focused on creating markets, particularly in fragile, conflict-affected, and low-income countries. In countries where employer supported childcare is mandatory, IFC is working with its clients to substantiate the business case and to help them go beyond compliance and implement childcare strategies best suited to their business needs, thus resulting in better

business results.

*[If the respondent previously chose to see the 3-minute read from the institution described as more conservative and in favor of a traditional role for women outside the labor market the following content appeared:]<sup>b</sup>*

## The Real Pay Gap

Apr 10th, 2014 3 min read

COMMENTARY BY Stephen Moore @StephenMoore

The Equal Pay Act, sponsored by Senator Barbara Mikulski (D., Md.), is a laughably bad idea — almost a parody of liberal interventionism in the market. Under the law, there is federal funding for girls’ negotiation training and grant awards for reducing gender discrimination. It bestows on disgruntled employees yet more grounds on which to sue their employers for alleged discrimination — when, in most cases, the malcontents are just sub-par employees. But that’s not even the major flaw of this latest Democratic measure against gender discrimination. The crisis in America today isn’t about women’s wages; it’s about men’s wages. Men are still the chief breadwinners in most families, and their wages are not moving much at all. If we look at Census Bureau data, we find that while men’s wages have risen by about 6 percent in real terms since 1980, women’s wages have risen by about 60 percent. Any gap in pay — real or imagined — is rapidly shrinking.

President Obama uses the figure of 77 cents earned by a woman for every dollar earned by a man. But that is a comparison of all women with all men (and even Mr. Obama’s own economists say a woman earns 81 cents for every dollar earned by her male counterpart). In fact, a 2009 Labor Department study found that, when we control for work experience and education, the gap is only about 5 percent. And when we account for the fact that men are more likely to be injured or suffer an accident on the job, and do riskier work and often more unpleasant jobs than women, the gap virtually disappears. My friend Mark Perry, an economist who runs the Carpe Diem blog at the American Enterprise Institute, has documented all this.

Furthermore, the latest surveys of college graduates find virtually no pay discrepancy between men and women, so for this generation the 77-cents mantra is as outdated as bell-bottom jeans.

The real wage crisis has to do with men. The latest education statistics show that women are about 53 percent of college enrollees and almost 60 percent of those pursuing advanced degrees. Pay rises with educational attainment. There is almost no gender gap for the latest generation entering the workforce; if the current educational trends continue, it is quite possible that women will start having higher earnings than men, and this will be especially true of women who do not have children.

What are the implications of a society in which women earn more than men? We don't really know, but it could be disruptive to family stability. If men aren't the breadwinners, will women regard them as economically expendable? We saw what happened to family structure in low-income and black households when a welfare check took the place of a father's paycheck. Divorce rates go up when men lose their jobs.

The problem here is especially acute with respect to black families. Black women have been on a 30-year trend of outpacing black men in terms of education and thus earnings. Men are becoming financially expendable. It is also true that the decline in men's wages is necessitating women to work to supplement family income. Sometimes this is by the woman's choice, but in this rough economy it is less a matter of free will than of economic necessity.

Gender gaps in pay are also a distraction from the other real financial problem, which is declining pay for almost all groups. Between 2009 and 2012, every racial group and both genders have done worse. Actually, women's paychecks have fallen slightly more than men's in this phony recovery — and that is despite the fact that one of Mr. Obama's first acts as president was to sign the Lilly Ledbetter paycheck-equality act. So much for the government's being able to equalize incomes through edict.

Since more and more families have two earners — the husband and the wife — women are hardly going to cheer if the gender gap falls only because their husbands are earning less. But that is the way Mr. Obama has pursued equality — by devising policies that

make us all a little poorer.

Income, race, and gender inequality have been clever distractions for the president. The gap that matters most he chooses to ignore: the gap between what middle-class people should be earning and what they are in fact taking home. Wages are falling for nearly everyone, Mr. President: for men, women, blacks, whites, the poor, and the middle class.

The \$1,800 decline in middle-class incomes since the recovery began is the issue that matters to most Americans, and this is what Republicans should be shouting from the rooftops.

- *Stephen Moore is chief economist at the Heritage Foundation.*

Originally appeared in the National Review

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<sup>a</sup>[The article was provided by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR). Since the IWPR restructured its website after January 2019, the article is no longer available under the original link.]

<sup>b</sup>[See <https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/commentary/the-real-pay-gap>.]

## H.2 Follow-up Survey (Wave A)

### H.2.1 Welcome Page, including consent

#### Work Life Survey 2018

This is a study conducted by a team of researchers from different universities in Europe. The purpose of the study is to gain insights into workplaces. By dedicating 5 minutes of your time, you contribute to our knowledge about organizations.

All answers you give will be fully confidential. We will not ask for information related to your identity. You may withdraw from the study or request the deletion of your data at any time via [contact@worklifesurvey.eu](mailto:contact@worklifesurvey.eu).

If you are at least 18 years old and freely consent to participate in this study please click Next to start the survey.

This survey is anonymous.

The record of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about

you, unless a specific survey question explicitly asked for it.

If you used an identifying token to access this survey, please rest assured that this token will not be stored together with your responses. It is managed in a separate database and will only be updated to indicate whether you did (or did not) complete this survey. There is no way of matching identification tokens with survey responses.

### H.2.2 Demographic Questions (obfuscation)

Please let us know your age.

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-54
- 55-70

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your current employment status?

- I am working as an employee.
- I am running my own business.
- I am currently not working.

### H.2.3 Job satisfaction (obfuscation)

*[This page deviates slightly for self-employed and non-working individuals]*

You indicated that you are currently working as an employee. We would like to learn

more about your job satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 7.

i) How attractive is your current employer?

ii) How attractive is your current job ?

- 1 (not attractive)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (very attractive)

#### H.2.4 Questions on job referrals (obfuscation)

*[This page deviates slightly for self-employed and non-working individuals]*

Think of your current main job. Assume your employer has an open job in your department. One of your relatives or friends would probably match the requirements of the job.

On a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely): Would you...

i) ...try to refer your relative/friend to your employer?

ii) ...receive a reward from your employer for a successful referral?

- 1 (very unlikely)
- 2
- 3

- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (very likely)

### H.2.5 Hypothetical choice scenario on job referrals (obfuscation)

Suppose your employer is willing to pay a bonus tantamount to one week's salary to you if you refer someone and they get hired. You have a friend who is looking for work. You think it would take about 60 minutes to do the referral paperwork, and there is a 50% chance that your friend will receive an offer.

Would you refer your friend?

- Yes
- No

### H.2.6 Perception of wage differences as a problem

Now think of American workplaces at a more general level.

Do you think **wage differences** between the following groups are a **problem** in the **United States today**? Please answer the question on a scale from “**Not at all a problem**” to “**A very substantial problem**”.

- i) High-skilled and low-skilled employees
- ii) Men and women
- iii) Men and women who are high-skilled
- ii) Men and women who are low-skilled

- Not at all a problem
- Hardly a problem
- Somewhat a problem
- A problem
- A substantial problem
- A very substantial problem

### H.2.7 Perceived fairness of wages

How fair do you generally find the wages received by the following groups?

i) Low-skilled workers

ii) Women

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair
- More than fair
- Much more than fair

### H.2.8 Demand of for government intervention (general)

Do you think the government should increase or decrease efforts to **support women** in the labor market?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease considerably



- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase considerably
- Increase strongly

Do you think the government should increase or decrease efforts to **support low-skilled workers** in the labor market?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease considerably
- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase considerably
- Increase strongly

### H.2.9 Demand of for more specific government intervention to support women

Do you think the government should increase or decrease the level of anti-discrimination policies for women?

- Decrease a lot
- Decrease somewhat
- Keep current level

- Increase somewhat
- Increase a lot

Do you think the government should increase or decrease policy efforts to compensate disadvantages women may have in the labor market due to family responsibilities?

- Decrease a lot
- Decrease somewhat
- Keep current level
- Increase somewhat
- Increase a lot

#### H.2.10 Belief elicitation

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 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 guess corresponds to the objective value based on recent data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, you will receive a bonus of \$0.2.

Please use the slider right below this text to communicate your best guess.

(Scroll down a little in case the interactive graph below the slider is not fully displayed.)

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men's wages are represented by a yellow bar that is*

*fixed to the value \$100. Women's wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that responds to a slider at the bottom of the page. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

### **H.2.11 Additional information acquisition**

Since the last time you took a survey on gender differences in wages, have you read in newspapers, magazines or online about the topic?

- Yes.
- No.
- I am not sure.
- I have never taken a survey on this topic before.

Since the last time you took a survey on gender differences in wages, have you had any conversations about the topic?

- Yes.
- No.
- I am not sure.
- I have never taken a survey on this topic before.

## H.3 Main Experiment (Wave B)

### H.3.1 Welcome Page, including consent (minor change)

Dear participant!

This study is conducted by researchers from Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany. Participants will be asked to answer a few questions on their opinions, as well as a set of demographic questions.

The most important factor for the success of our research is that **you answer honestly**. No matter what your political views are, by completing this survey, you are contributing to our knowledge as a society. Anytime you don't know an answer, just give your best guess.

Participation in this study typically takes **15 minutes** and is **strictly anonymous**. You may participate in the survey **once**. Close **attention** is **required** for your responses to count. In this survey you will have several opportunities to **receive a bonus** in addition to your fixed payoff!

Note: This study has received ethics approval from the Institutional Review Board of Goethe University, Frankfurt. Your participation in this study is purely voluntary. Your name will never be recorded and you will never be identified. If you have any questions about this study or if you want to have your responses deleted, you may contact us at econresearch.frankfurt@gmail.com.

You must be U.S. resident of at least 18 years of age in order to participate in this survey.

- Yes, I would like to take part in this study, and confirm that I am a U.S. resident and am 18 or older.
- No, I would not like to participate.

### H.3.2 Screening Questions (changed: dropped political orientation)

In which region do you currently reside?

- Northeast (CT, ME, MA, NH, RI, VT, NJ, NY, PA)
- Midwest (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI, IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)
- South (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV, AL, KY, MS, TN, AR, LA, OK, TX)
- West (AZ, CO, ID, NM, MT, UT, NV, WY, AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)

What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-65
- older than 65

Which of these describes you more accurately?

- Male
- Female

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?

- Full-time employee
- Part-time employee
- Self-employed or business owner

- Unemployed or looking for work
- Student
- Retired
- Out of the labor force, i.e. not working and not looking for work (homemaker,...)

What was your **household's income from all sources**, before taxes and subsidies, in 2017 in US-Dollars?

By household we mean yourself and any family living with you but not renters and roommates.

- Less than 15,000\$
- Between 15,000\$ and 25,000\$
- Between 25,000\$ and 50,000\$
- Between 50,000\$ and 75,000\$
- Between 75,000\$ and 100,000\$
- Between 100,000\$ and 150,000\$
- Between 150,000\$ and 200,000\$
- More than 200,000\$

### H.3.3 Attention screener (no change)

This question is about the following problem. In questionnaires like ours, sometimes there are participants who do not carefully read the questions and just quickly click through the survey. This means that there are a lot of random answers which compromise the results of research studies. To show that you read our questions carefully, please choose both “Very strongly interested” and “Not interested at all” as your answer in the next

question.

### How interested are you in politics?

- Very strongly interested
- Interested
- A little bit interested
- Almost not interested
- Not interested at all

#### H.3.4 Belief elicitation (no change)

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 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**?

*[The following sentence is only shown to those individuals whose beliefs are incentivized. Name of survey is “American Community Survey” in case of  $T^{74}$  and “Current Population Survey” in case of  $T^{94}$ .]*

If your estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the value found by the most recent *<name of 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.

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men’s wages are represented by a yellow bar that is fixed to the value \$100. Women’s wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that*

*responds to a slider at the bottom of the page. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

### H.3.5 Notification (no change)

*[Individuals in both treatment groups see the following message:]*

On the next screen we would like to provide you with the objective value of the described wage difference based on **survey data collected by the United States Census Bureau.**

We would like you to carefully review this information as you will not be able to go back.

Press "Next" to continue.

### H.3.6 Information treatment (no change)

*[This page is shown to individuals in any of the two treatment groups. Value corresponds to "\$74" in case of  $T^{74}$  and to "\$94" in case of  $T^{94}$ . Name of survey corresponds to "American Community Survey" in case of  $T^{74}$  and to "Current Population Survey" in case of  $T^{94}$ .]*

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

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

*[There is a bar chart with three bars: One yellow bar set to a value of \$100, one pink bar representing the respondent's previously made estimate and one red bar representing either \$74 or \$94, depending on the treatment group.]*

*[In case their previously made estimate deviates by more than \$2 from the objective value in their treatment group or in case the estimate was not incentivized previously, respondents see the following message below the graph:]*



Thank you for your estimate!

*[Alternatively, in case their estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the objective value and the guess was incentivized, respondents see the following below the graph:]*

Congratulations! Your estimate is close to the value reported by the <name of survey>. You will receive a bonus of \$2.

The actual value is based on the most recent available wage statistics from the <name of survey> as of January 2018. The <name of survey> is regularly conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau among households in the United States.

### H.3.7 Reminder (no major change)

*[Individuals in the pure control group see the following:]*

You just stated that you believe a 45-year-old full-time working **female** employee who holds a Bachelor degree and works 40 hours per week earns \$<guess made previously> for every \$100 earned by a comparable **male individual**.

*[Individuals in the pure control group who are in the incentivized condition see the following sentence:]*

At the end of this survey we will let you know about the objective value based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau and you will find out whether you won the \$2 bonus.

*[Individuals in the pure control group who are in the unincentivized condition see the following sentence:]*

At the end of this survey we will let you know about the objective value based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

*[The following is again shown to all individuals:]*

On the following pages we will ask you questions on your **personal opinions**. There are **no right or wrong answers**. We are just interested in your subjective views.

Press "Next" in order to continue.

### H.3.8 General perceptions and unspecific policy demand (no change)

How do you feel about the following statements where 1 means you **fully disagree** and 10 means you **fully agree**?

Gender differences in wages are **large** in the United States.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

Gender differences in wages are a **problem** in the United States.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

The government should do more to **promote wage equality** between men and women.

- Answer on a scale from 1 to 10

### H.3.9 Perceived fairness of women's wages (no change)

Which of the following best describes your opinion on the **fairness of wages** received by **women** in the U.S.?

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair
- More than fair
- Much more than fair

### H.3.10 Specific self-reported policy demand (changed: transparency policy)

What is your **opinion** on the following labor market policies? When making your choice, please think of all potential **costs** and **benefits**.

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

Currently, federal law requires that men and women **get equal pay** for work that is comparable in terms of **skill, effort, responsibility** and **working conditions** in the same establishment. In case of suspected discrimination employees may file a lawsuit against their employers. If they win the case, then they are to be compensated by their employers.

Should the government give **more freedom in wage setting** to companies by making equal pay legislation **less strict** or would you like to see **stricter enforcement of the existing legislation**?

- A lot less strict
- Somewhat less strict
- Keep status quo
- Somewhat stricter
- A lot stricter

Large public contractors are legally required to have so-called **"Affirmative Action Plans"**, i.e. they have to **support women** and minorities at all levels of the hierarchy through measures such as training programs and outreach efforts.

Do you think the government should **strengthen or soften** this **requirement** in terms of strictness and the set of companies that have to comply?

- Soften a lot
- Soften somewhat
- Neither strengthen nor soften
- Strengthen somewhat
- Strengthen a lot

**Wage transparency** within firms provides a basis for wage negotiations and may discipline companies by making discriminatory wages visible. Currently, wage transparency is **not legally required**. However, **employees are protected** by law from retaliation through employers in case they share information on their wages.

Would you like the government to enforce **more or less wage transparency**?

- A lot less
- Somewhat less
- Keep current level
- Somewhat more
- A lot more

Many countries currently have **gender quotas** in place in order to increase the representation of women in leading positions.

Are you **in favor or against** the introduction of similar **statutory gender quotas** in the United States?

- Strongly against
- Somewhat against
- Neither in favor nor against
- Somewhat in favor
- Strongly in favor

**Child day care** may enable mothers as well as fathers to work full-time if they want to.

Should the government increase or decrease the **amount of public resources** spent on making **child care available and affordable**?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase strongly

*[Newly added item:<sup>a</sup>]*

In the **U.K.** large companies have to report their **gender pay gap** and the information is made **publicly available on a website**.

Are you **in favor or against** the introduction of a **similar website** in the **U.S.**?

- Strongly against
- Somewhat against
- Neither in favor nor against
- Somewhat in favor
- Strongly in favor

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<sup>a</sup>Dropped instead: Statutory wage transparency within firms.

### H.3.11 Intention to sign a petition (unchanged)

**Reporting requirements** for companies may facilitate the detection of gender-based wage discrimination. Currently, **companies with at least 100 employees** have to file **yearly reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**, including information on **number of employees they employ** by gender and job category but

**not on wages.**

You now have the opportunity to sign a **real petition** on the **White House Petition Website**. If enough people sign the petition, the White House will consider it and post an official response. Consider the following **two petitions** and decide whether you would like to sign one of them:

#### **Petition I: Increase reporting requirements**

This petition suggests that **employers with at least 100 employees** have to include information on **average wages** and hours worked **by gender and position** in their annual reports to the **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**. Such information **helps detecting discriminatory pay** while keeping employee information **confidential**.

#### **Petition II: Abolish reporting requirements**

This petition suggests that the **obligatory annual reports to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)** should be **abolished** for private employers in order to **reduce bureaucracy**.

**Would you like to sign one of the petitions?**

- I want to sign Petition I (Increase requirements).
- I want to sign Petition II (Abolish requirements).
- I do not want to sign any of the petitions.

### **H.3.12 Link to petition (unchanged)**

*[This page is only shown to individuals who expressed their intention to sign one of the petitions. <Petition name> corresponds to “Petition I” or “Petition II”, depending on*

*the previous choice. Correspondingly, <description> corresponds to “Increase reporting requirements” or “Abolish reporting requirements”.]*

In order to sign <petition name> (<Petition description>), click on the following link:

Link <petition name>

The petition will open in a new tab. After signing do not forget to come back and finish the survey.

In order to continue the survey press “Next”.

### H.3.13 External Content: Petition (unchanged)

*[The following content appears in a new tab opening an external website, the White House Petition Website, in case the respondent clicks on the link on the previous survey page. (For a screenshot see Figure A.6.)]*

*[If the respondent previously chose Petition I:]*

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 November 19, 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.

*[If the respondent previously chose Petition II:]*

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 November 19, 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.

*[The remainder of the page is identical for both Petition I and Petition II:]*

ECONOMY & JOBS

Sign This Petition

*[Text entry fields (mandatory):]*

**First Name\***

**Last Name\***

**Email Address\***

*[Checkbox:]*

☐

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

*[Button:]*

**Sign Now**

BY SIGNING THIS PETITION YOU AGREE TO THE [TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#).



### H.3.14 Donation decision (no major change)

By taking this survey, you are automatically enrolled in a **lottery to win \$300**. In a few days you will know whether you won the \$300.

You now get to decide how much of the \$300 you want to **donate** to the **American Association of University Women** and how much to **keep** in case you win the lottery.

**The American Association of University Women (AAUW)** is an NGO that advocates public policy in order to advance **equity of women and men in the labor market**. Moreover, it **supports girls' and women's education financially and intellectually** and provides **case support** to women facing **discrimination at the workplace**.

For every Dollar you donate to AAUW, **we donate another \$0.5** in addition. If you are the winner of the lottery, you will be notified and will **receive your payoff via the survey platform in panel points**, so no further action is required on your part. You will also receive a **proof of the donation** made to AAUW. (This proof will be sent by the survey platform provider, so we will never know your identity.)

Please let us know how much you would like to **donate to AAUW** by filling in your **preferred donation amount** in the following field. (Please note, your answer must be a **whole number** between 0 and 300.):

- Entry field (only integers between 0 and 300 accepted).

*[As soon as an answer is entered in the entry field above, the following message appears with <donation amount> corresponing to the amount chosen, <payoff amount> corresponding to 300 - donation amount and <total donation> corresponding to the donation amount:]*

You decided to **donate \$<donation amount>** to AAUW and to have the remaining **\$<payoff amount> added to your payoff**. Together with our subsidy the **total amount donated** will be **\$<total donation>** in case you win the lottery.

You can still adjust your donation decision above. Click "next" in order to confirm your decision and continue.

### H.3.15 Facebook like (unchanged)

Do you want to “like” the **American Association of University Women (AAUW)** on **Facebook**? Click below to do so!

(Please note: By clicking, Facebook will link you to your profile (if you have one) and will likely draw data such as your IP-address.)

*[There is a button that says “Give Facebook LIKE to AAUW!”. As soon as the respondent clicks on it, the rest of the page is loaded:]*

Please click on the “like” symbol in the box below to complete your facebook like:

*[There is an actual facebook plug-in that allows to give a facebook like.]*

*[Dropped: Perceived factors contributing to gender differences in wages]*

### H.3.16 Introduction to information acquisition (only visibility changed)

*[In contrast to the main wave, this screen is no longer visible to the pure control group but only to those subjects in one of the two treatment groups.]*

On the following page you have the opportunity to choose between **receiving additional information** relevant for the debate on gender differences in wages or **increasing your payoff** under **six different scenarios**.

Please note that there are **actual stakes involved**: For every 5th participant in this study, we are going to **implement** one of the six decisions later in the survey. In case you are selected, you get a notification and you will receive either the information (3-minute read) or the additional payoff.

Each of the six scenarios is **equally likely to get implemented**, so we advise you to consider each of them carefully.

### H.3.17 Endogenous information acquisition (only visibility changed)

*[In contrast to the main wave, this screen is no longer visible to the pure control group but only to those subjects in one of the two treatment groups.]*

*[The order of the “progressive” and the “traditional” institution is randomized.]*

We offer additional information either from

- Institution A: An **institution favoring government intervention to support women’s progress in the labor market** or from
- Institution B: An **institution favoring a traditional role for women as caregivers for the family and arguing against related government intervention.**

Both institutions offer **arguments in support of their view** in the form of a 3-minute read. The purpose of the text is to inform the general public and to **convince the reader of the institution’s view**. Please let us know under the following six scenarios whether you want to **receive additional insights within this survey** from either of the two institutions or whether you want to **increase your payoff** instead. Remember that each of the scenarios is equally likely to get implemented.

**Scenario 1:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.01?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)
- Receive \$0.01 and no info

**Scenario 2:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.3?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)

- Receive \$0.3 and no info

**Scenario 3:** Would you like to receive information from institution A or \$0.5?

- Info from institution A (favoring public policy to support women in the labor market)
- Receive \$0.5 and no info

**Scenario 4:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.01?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.01 and no info

**Scenario 5:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.3?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.3 and no info

**Scenario 6:** Would you like to receive information from institution B or \$0.5?

- Info from institution B (favoring no government intervention and a traditional role for women)
- Receive \$0.5 and no info

### **H.3.18 Perceived effectiveness of government intervention and trust in the government (newly added))**

We would like you to think about the **effectiveness** of **government intervention** aimed at supporting women in the labor market. **How effective**, do you think, are the following types of policies in increasing **women's wages**?

*[The order of the following items is randomized.]*

- i. Policies that help to detect and prevent discrimination, such as equal pay legislation, reporting requirements for companies and wage transparency.
  - ii. Policies that actively support women's progress in the labor market, such as statutory training and outreach programs targeted at women.
  - iii. Policies that help women combine work and family responsibilities, such as public subsidies to child care.
- Strongly counterproductive
  - Somewhat counterproductive
  - Neither effective nor counterproductive
  - Somewhat effective
  - Highly effective

This is a question about the government. It does not refer to **Democrats or Republicans** in particular, but just to the **government in general**. To what extent do you agree with the following statement?

Generally, the **government's** willingness to **do what is right** can be **trusted**.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree

- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

### H.3.19 Extrapolation to related belief about gender differences in wages (changed)

*[The following belief is randomized, i.e. only one of the following two is shown to each respondent.]*

*[Version A: Presence of at least one child in the household:]*

This question asks about a different statistic than the one before:

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

*[Version B: Same job in same company:]*

This question asks about a different statistic than the one before:

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 much, do you think, does a woman with these characteristics make on average for every \$100 made by a man with the **same characteristics** if both **work for the same company, doing the same job**?

*[In the following sentence, which is shown to those respondents in Version A, <name of survey> again corresponds to “American Community Survey” for  $T^{74}$  and half of the control group and to “Current Population Survey” for  $T^{94}$  and the other half of the control group.]*

If your estimate deviates by less than \$2 from the value found by the most recent <name

of survey> as of the beginning of 2018 you will receive a bonus of \$1.

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

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men's wages are represented by a yellow bar that is fixed to the value \$100. Women's wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that responds to a slider. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

### H.3.20 Perceived costs of government intervention (newly added)

To what extent do you **agree or disagree** with the following statements about **(potential) costs of policies designed to support women** in the labor market?

Policies to reduce gender differences in earnings...

*[The order of the following items is randomized.]*

- i. ...impose administrative costs by creating additional **bureaucracy** and thereby **harm the economy**.
  - ii. ...lead to **distortions** such as **not having the most qualified persons** in important positions and thereby **harm the economy**.
  - iii. ...lead to additional **government expenditures** and thereby unduly **increase the tax burden**.
- Strongly disagree
  - Somewhat disagree
  - Neither agree nor disagree
  - Somewhat agree
  - Strongly agree

### H.3.21 Related world views (extended)

*[The following items are shown only to individuals in the pure control group.]*

To what extent do you **agree or disagree** with the following two **statements**?

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

- i. A husband's job is to earn money, a wife's job is to look after the home and family.
- ii. When women advance in the labor market, some men are pushed out or lose.
- iii. Everyone can make it in this country, men as well as women, if they work hard enough.
- iv. Gender equality is so important that the government should take active steps wherever it can to support women in the labor market even if this is costly.
- v. 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.
- vi. Fighting discrimination against women by measures such as gender quotas is wrong because it creates discrimination against men.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

### H.3.22 Work-related questions, education, ethnicity (visibility changed)

*[Treatment groups only:]*

Where do you see yourself in **10 years from now**?



- 10 years from now I will be working full-time.
- 10 years from now I will be working part-time.
- 10 years from now I will not be working for money (retirement, student, homemaker,...)

*[Treatment groups only:]*

Which of the following best describes your **expectations** for the **coming 10 years**?  
My **wage** is going to...

- ...decrease considerably over the next 10 years.
- ...decrease a little over the next 10 years.
- ...neither increase nor decrease over the next 10 years.
- ...increase a little over the next 10 years.
- ...increase considerably over the next 10 years.

*[Treatment groups only:]*

Which of the following best describes your opinion on the **fairness** of your **own personal wage** in your current job (or in your previous job, in case you are currently not working)?

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair
- More than fair
- Much more than fair
- I have never worked for a wage

What category best describes your **highest level of education**?

- Eighth grade or less
- Some high school
- High school degree/GED
- Some college
- 2-year College degree/Associate degree
- 4-year College degree/Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctoral degree
- Professional degree (JD,MD,MBA)

How would you describe your race?

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- Asian American
- Other [**Text entry requested**]

Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No

### H.3.23 Politics (newly added)

In politics today, do you consider yourself a **Republican**, a **Democrat**, or an **Independent**?

- Republican
- Independent, leaning Republican
- Independent
- Independent, leaning Democrat
- Democrat
- Other (*Please specify.*)

*[Control group only:]*

How important are the following topics when it comes to your personal voting decisions?

*[The order of the following items is randomized.]*

- i. Climate change
  - ii. Gender equality in labor markets
  - iii. Health care
  - iv. Immigration
- Not important at all
  - Hardly important
  - A little bit important
  - Important

- Very important

*[All respondents:] Which candidate did you vote for in the 2016 presidential election?*

- Donald Trump.
- Hilary Clinton.
- I did not vote.
- I voted but prefer not to tell.
- Other (*Please specify.*)

#### **H.3.24 Control group information (unchanged)**

*[This screen is only shown to individuals in the control group and corresponds to the “information treatment” described above for the treatment groups.]*

#### **H.3.25 Industry, occupation, income, working hours (unchanged)**

In which of the following industries do you work or did you last work in your main job?

- Construction
- Nondurable manufacturing (food, textiles, apparel, paper products, printing and publishing, chemicals, plastic products, ...)
- Durable manufacturing (lumber and wood products, furniture, metal industries, machinery and computing equipment, motor vehicles, aircraft, medical instruments, ...)
- Finance, insurance, real estate
- Health, education and social services (Hospitals, schools, universities, child day care, nursing and personal care,... )

- Wholesale trade
- Retail trade (grocery stores, eating and drinking places, department stores, motor vehicle dealers,...)
- Business and repair services (computer and data processing services, advertising, services to dwellings and other buildings, personnel supply services, automotive repair and related services,...)
- Professional services (legal services, engineering/architectural services, management/public relations services, accounting/auditing/bookkeeping services, research/development/technical services, religious organizations,...)
- Public administration
- Personal services (hotels and motels, private households, beauty shops, laundry, cleaning, and garment services,...)
- Transportation and communication (trucking service, postal service, radio and television broadcasting, telephone communications, electric light and power, sanitary services,...)
- Other [*Text entry required.*]

Please give a more detailed description of your current industry or last industry, in case you are currently not working, using your own words. (Examples: restaurant, hospital, automotive repair, retail bakery, manufacturing of chemicals, postal service, banking, insurance, legal services,...)

- [*free text entry*]

Please describe your current occupation/job description. (Examples: photographer, dental assistant, firefighter, cook, painting worker, financial analyst, Š). In case you are currently not working, refer to your last job please.

- *[free text entry]*

*[The following question is only shown to employed individuals.]*

How many employees are currently employed at the company you are working for?

- Fewer than 10 employees
- Between 10 and 100 employees
- Between 100 and 500 employees
- More than 500 employees

What is your **own personal current yearly labor income in US Dollars**, before taxes, deductions and subsidies?

- *[free text entry (only numbers)]*

What is your **current yearly household labor income** in US Dollars, before taxes, deductions and subsidies?

By household we mean yourself and any family living with you but not renters and roommates.

- *[free text entry (only numbers)]*

How many hours do you usually work for pay per week?

- 0
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-25
- 26-30

- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 56-60
- more than 60 hours per week

### H.3.26 Demographic and background questions (unchanged)

Which of the following best describes your marital status?

- Single
- Married
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other: *[Text entry required.]*

How many children do you have?

- Number of boys
- Number of girls

- 0
- 1
- 2

- 3
- 4
- 5 or more

What is the zip code of your current residence?

- *[Text entry field (only 5-digit numbers)]*

What is your year of birth?

- 1951
- 1952
- .
- .
- 1999
- 2000

Are your facebook "likes" visible or private?

- They are visible (standard settings).
- I have restricted visibility.
- I do not have a facebook account.

*[Shown to subjects in the treatment groups:]*

In the past three weeks, have you read in newspapers, in magazines or online about gender differences in wages?

- Yes.



- No.
- I am not sure.

Is there anything you would like to add?

*[Free text entry.]*

*[Dropped: Perceived trustworthiness of information, trust in survey data collected by the census, perceived relevance of information, perceived political bias of survey]*

### **H.3.27 Final screen (visibility changed, minor changes)**

*[Shown to every fifth respondent in the treatment groups: <relevant scenario> corresponds to one of the six information acquisition scenarios the respondent was facing before. <decision> corresponds to the respondent's decision in this specific scenario.]*

Every 5th participant is chosen for the implementation of his/her decision to acquire additional information or to increase one's payoff. Congratulations, you were chosen!

The following decision was randomly chosen for implementation for you:

*<relevant scenario>*

Your choice was: *<decision>*

*[In case the respondent previously chose the payoff in the respective scenario she receives the following message, with <amount> corresponding to the relevant amount.]*

*<amount>* will be added to your payoff.

*[In case the respondent chose to receive information in the respective scenario she receives the following message, where <Link to more information> is a link that leads to a website with additional information.]*

Here is a link to the information you have chosen (The link will open in a new tab. Do not forget to come back and click submit in order to submit your survey responses.):*<Link to more information>*

*[All respondents again see the following message.]*

Thank you for participating in this survey. We will shortly calculate your final payoff including the participation fee and any bonus, if applicable. Moreover, the winner of the lottery will be determined as soon as all responses are in and will be contacted by the survey platform.

All additional payments will be made in the same way as your regular survey pay.

### H.3.28 External Content: 3-minute read (unchanged)

*[The following content appears in a new tab opening an external website in case the respondent clicks on the link on the previous survey page.]*

*[If the respondent previously chose to see the 3-minute read from the progressive institution in favor of women in the labor market and related government intervention, the following content appeared:]<sup>a</sup>*

## The Business Case for Childcare

Almost one in 10 of the world's population, 679 million, are children younger than five years old. To thrive and develop, these children and their older siblings need care. Yet in many parts of the world, childcare remains scarce. Globally, just over half of the children under age five benefit from a preschool program. Formal childcare is often outside the reach of low and middle-income employees. For those who can afford it, available options are often limited and poorly aligned with full-time working hours. Access to care is particularly lacking for children younger than three.

For employers, the lack of good quality and affordable childcare for their employees can translate into higher turnover and absenteeism, lower productivity, and difficulty recruiting skilled employees. This is because the unavailability or unaffordability of care affects the choices that parents make regarding the type of work that they do, whether they stay at home, or how they combine work with care. For families, gaps in access to quality care can mean less paid working time and lower household incomes.

Because women are more likely than men to bear childcare responsibilities, lack of childcare is a major barrier to women's full and equal participation in paid work. According

to the International Labour Organization, globally, women's labor force participation rate is just over 49 percent, nearly 27 percentage points lower than the rate for men. A McKinsey Global Institute study estimated that closing gender gaps in economic participation would increase global gross domestic product (GDP) by 26 percent by 2025, adding \$12 trillion. Evidence from the Caribbean, Latin America, and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries suggests that access to subsidized childcare can have a significant positive impact on women's employment rates and the number of hours that women work.

Policymakers internationally are recognizing the importance of access to childcare for both economic and gender equality. To date, 192 nations have signed the Global Goals for Sustainable Development, which include the target, "By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and preprimary education so that they are ready for primary education." In countries such as Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, India, Japan, Jordan, and Turkey, statutes require employers to provide or support childcare. Even when not driven by regulatory compliance, many employers are providing childcare supports as part of their general compensation strategy to achieve better business outcomes. Yet there is a lot more that can be done through partnerships and collaboration between the public and private sectors and civil society organizations. For the International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group and the largest global development institution focused exclusively on the private sector in developing countries, improving access to childcare goes hand in hand with fostering workplace gender diversity and helping parents enter and advance in the workforce while enabling companies to strengthen their bottom line. IFC's focus on removing barriers, such as lack of childcare, to women's (and men's) access to more and better jobs is embedded in the World Bank Group's Gender Strategy and IFC's vision focused on creating markets, particularly in fragile, conflict-affected, and low-income countries. In countries where employer supported childcare is mandatory, IFC is working with its clients to substantiate the business case and to help them go beyond compliance and implement childcare strategies best suited to their business needs, thus resulting in better

business results.

*[If the respondent previously chose to see the 3-minute read from the institution described as more conservative and in favor of a traditional role for women outside the labor market the following content appeared:]<sup>b</sup>*

## The Real Pay Gap

Apr 10th, 2014 3 min read

COMMENTARY BY Stephen Moore @StephenMoore

The Equal Pay Act, sponsored by Senator Barbara Mikulski (D., Md.), is a laughably bad idea — almost a parody of liberal interventionism in the market. Under the law, there is federal funding for girls’ negotiation training and grant awards for reducing gender discrimination. It bestows on disgruntled employees yet more grounds on which to sue their employers for alleged discrimination — when, in most cases, the malcontents are just sub-par employees. But that’s not even the major flaw of this latest Democratic measure against gender discrimination. The crisis in America today isn’t about women’s wages; it’s about men’s wages. Men are still the chief breadwinners in most families, and their wages are not moving much at all. If we look at Census Bureau data, we find that while men’s wages have risen by about 6 percent in real terms since 1980, women’s wages have risen by about 60 percent. Any gap in pay — real or imagined — is rapidly shrinking.

President Obama uses the figure of 77 cents earned by a woman for every dollar earned by a man. But that is a comparison of all women with all men (and even Mr. Obama’s own economists say a woman earns 81 cents for every dollar earned by her male counterpart). In fact, a 2009 Labor Department study found that, when we control for work experience and education, the gap is only about 5 percent. And when we account for the fact that men are more likely to be injured or suffer an accident on the job, and do riskier work and often more unpleasant jobs than women, the gap virtually disappears. My friend Mark Perry, an economist who runs the Carpe Diem blog at the American Enterprise Institute, has documented all this.

Furthermore, the latest surveys of college graduates find virtually no pay discrepancy between men and women, so for this generation the 77-cents mantra is as outdated as bell-bottom jeans.

The real wage crisis has to do with men. The latest education statistics show that women are about 53 percent of college enrollees and almost 60 percent of those pursuing advanced degrees. Pay rises with educational attainment. There is almost no gender gap for the latest generation entering the workforce; if the current educational trends continue, it is quite possible that women will start having higher earnings than men, and this will be especially true of women who do not have children.

What are the implications of a society in which women earn more than men? We don't really know, but it could be disruptive to family stability. If men aren't the breadwinners, will women regard them as economically expendable? We saw what happened to family structure in low-income and black households when a welfare check took the place of a father's paycheck. Divorce rates go up when men lose their jobs.

The problem here is especially acute with respect to black families. Black women have been on a 30-year trend of outpacing black men in terms of education and thus earnings. Men are becoming financially expendable. It is also true that the decline in men's wages is necessitating women to work to supplement family income. Sometimes this is by the woman's choice, but in this rough economy it is less a matter of free will than of economic necessity.

Gender gaps in pay are also a distraction from the other real financial problem, which is declining pay for almost all groups. Between 2009 and 2012, every racial group and both genders have done worse. Actually, women's paychecks have fallen slightly more than men's in this phony recovery — and that is despite the fact that one of Mr. Obama's first acts as president was to sign the Lilly Ledbetter paycheck-equality act. So much for the government's being able to equalize incomes through edict.

Since more and more families have two earners — the husband and the wife — women are hardly going to cheer if the gender gap falls only because their husbands are earning less. But that is the way Mr. Obama has pursued equality — by devising policies that

make us all a little poorer.

Income, race, and gender inequality have been clever distractions for the president. The gap that matters most he chooses to ignore: the gap between what middle-class people should be earning and what they are in fact taking home. Wages are falling for nearly everyone, Mr. President: for men, women, blacks, whites, the poor, and the middle class.

The \$1,800 decline in middle-class incomes since the recovery began is the issue that matters to most Americans, and this is what Republicans should be shouting from the rooftops.

- *Stephen Moore is chief economist at the Heritage Foundation.*

Originally appeared in the National Review

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<sup>a</sup>[The article was provided by the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR). Since the IWPR restructured its website after January 2019, the article is no longer available under the original link.]

<sup>b</sup>[See <https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/commentary/the-real-pay-gap>.]

## H.4 Follow-up Survey (Wave B)

### H.4.1 Welcome Page, including consent (no major change)

#### Work Life Survey 2018

This is a study conducted by a team of researchers from different universities in Europe and North America. The purpose of the study is to gain insights into workplaces. By dedicating 5 minutes of your time, you contribute to our knowledge about organizations.

All answers you give will be fully confidential. We will not ask for information related to your identity. You may withdraw from the study or request the deletion of your data at any time via [contact@worklifesurvey.eu](mailto:contact@worklifesurvey.eu).

If you are at least 18 years old and freely consent to participate in this study please click Next to start the survey.

This survey is anonymous.

The record of your survey responses does not contain any identifying information about

you, unless a specific survey question explicitly asked for it.

If you used an identifying token to access this survey, please rest assured that this token will not be stored together with your responses. It is managed in a separate database and will only be updated to indicate whether you did (or did not) complete this survey. There is no way of matching identification tokens with survey responses.

#### **H.4.2 Demographic Questions (obfuscation)**

Please let us know your age.

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-54
- 55-70
- Older than 70

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

What is your current employment status?

- I am working as an employee.
- I am running my own business.
- I am currently not working.

#### **H.4.3 Hypothetical scenario on job referrals (obfuscation, unchanged)**

An employee is working at a firm where an **employee referral program** is introduced. Under the program, employees are asked to refer their friends for jobs, and they are paid a **bonus** if their friend is hired. In addition, under the referral program, the firm will provide **special consideration** in the hiring process to referred candidates. Do you think the firm having the employee referral program would make the employee feel more respected?

- It is very unlikely to make the worker feel more respected.
- It is unlikely to make the worker feel more respected.
- It is somewhat unlikely to make the worker feel more respected.
- It is uncertain whether it will make the worker feel more respected.
- It is somewhat likely to make the worker feel more respected.
- It is likely to make the worker feel more respected.
- It is very likely to make the worker feel more respected.

#### H.4.4 Job satisfaction (obfuscation, unchanged)

*[The following is shown to employed individuals. The screen is different for self-employed and non-working individuals.]*

You indicated that you are currently working as an employee. We would like to learn more about your job satisfaction on a scale from 1 to 7.

- i) How attractive is your current employer?
- ii) How attractive is your current job?
  - 1 (not attractive)
  - 2



- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (very attractive)

*[Only shown for those who selected “I am working as an employee” before:]*

How many employees are currently employed at your workplace (i.e. the plant, store or restaurant at which you are working)?

- Fewer than 100 employees
- Between 100 and 500 employees
- More than 500 employees

#### **H.4.5 Questions on job referrals (obfuscation, unchanged)**

*[The following is shown to employed individuals. The screen is different for self-employed and non-working individuals.]*

Think of your current main job. Assume your employer has an open job in your department. One of your relatives or friends would probably match the requirements of the job.

On a scale from 1 (very unlikely) to 7 (very likely): Would you...

- i) ...try to refer your relative/friend to your employer?
  - ii) ...receive a reward from your employer for a successful referral?
- 1 (very unlikely)
  - 2

- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7 (very likely)

#### H.4.6 Hypothetical choice scenario on job referrals (obfuscation, unchanged)

*[The following is shown to employed individuals. The screen is slightly different for self-employed and non-working individuals.]*

Suppose your employer is willing to pay a bonus tantamount to one week's salary to you if you refer someone and they get hired. You have a friend who is looking for work. You think it would take about 60 minutes to do the referral paperwork, and there is a 50% chance that your friend will receive an offer.

Would you refer your friend?

- Yes
- No

#### H.4.7 Perception of wage differences as a problem (no major change)

Now think of American workplaces at a more general level.

Do you think **wage differences** between the following groups are a **problem** in the **United States today**? Please answer the question on a scale from “**Not at all a problem**” to “**A very substantial problem**”.

*[In the following, the order of items iii) and iv) is randomized.]*

- High-skilled and low-skilled employees

- ii) Men and women
- iii) Men and women who are high-skilled
- iv) Men and women who are low-skilled

- Not at all a problem
- Hardly a problem
- Somewhat a problem
- A problem
- A substantial problem
- A very substantial problem

#### **H.4.8 Perceived fairness of wages (unchanged)**

How fair do you generally find the wages received by the following groups?

- i) Low-skilled workers
- ii) Women

- Much less than fair
- Less than fair
- Fair
- More than fair
- Much more than fair

#### **H.4.9 Demand of for unspecific government intervention (no major changes)**

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

Do you think the government should increase or decrease efforts to **support women** in the labor market?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease considerably
- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase considerably
- Increase strongly

Do you think the government should increase or decrease efforts to **support low-skilled workers** in the labor market?

- Decrease strongly
- Decrease considerably
- Decrease somewhat
- Neither increase nor decrease
- Increase somewhat
- Increase considerably
- Increase strongly

#### H.4.10 Demand for more specific government intervention to support women (no major changes)

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

Do you think the government should increase or decrease the level policies designed to reduce discrimination against women?

- Decrease a lot
- Decrease somewhat
- Keep current level
- Increase somewhat
- Increase a lot

Do you think the government should increase or decrease policy efforts to compensate disadvantages women may have in the labor market due to family responsibilities?

- Decrease a lot
- Decrease somewhat
- Keep current level
- Increase somewhat
- Increase a lot

#### H.4.11 Demand for specific government intervention to support women (newly added)

*[The order of the following items is randomized:]*

Do you think the government should **strengthen or soften** requirements for companies to have **"Affirmative Action Plans"** in place, i.e. plans to support women and

minorities through measures such as training programs and outreach efforts?

- Soften a lot
- Soften somewhat
- Neither strengthen nor soften
- Strengthen somewhat
- Strengthen a lot

Should the government give **more freedom in wage setting** to companies by making equal pay legislation **less strict** or would you like to see a **stricter enforcement of the existing legislation**?

- A lot less strict
- Somewhat less strict
- Keep status quo
- Somewhat stricter
- A lot stricter

#### H.4.12 Posterior belief elicitation (no major change)

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 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's 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 guess corresponds to the objective value based on recent data provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, you will receive a bonus of \$0.5.

Please use the slider right below this text to communicate your best guess.

(Scroll down a little in case the interactive graph below the slider is not fully displayed.)

*[There is a bar chart with two bars. Men's wages are represented by a yellow bar that is fixed to the value \$100. Women's wages are represented by an interactive pink bar that responds to a slider at the bottom of the page. The slider ranges from \$0 to \$200 and the pink bar takes on values between \$0 and \$200 accordingly.]*

#### **H.4.13 Additional information acquisition (unchanged)**

Since the last time you took a survey on gender differences in wages, have you read in newspapers, in magazines or online about the topic?

- Yes.
- No.
- I am not sure.
- I have never taken a survey on this topic before.

Since the last time you took a survey on gender differences in wages, have you had any conversations about the topic?

- Yes.
- No.
- I am not sure.
- I have never taken a survey on this topic before.

## References for the Appendix

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