Cosmopolitan Cities Against Nationalist Hinterlands: The Group-Based Foundations of the Urban-Rural Divide*

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Abstract

Several recent studies have documented a return of the urban-rural divide in political behavior. Building on a long tradition of group-based thinking in political science, one explanation of this divide conceptualizes place as a marker of group membership. However, the precise mechanisms linking place-based groups to politics remain unclear to date. In response to this, this paper highlights the importance of perceptions of group alignments along the urban-rural divide, suggesting that urban and rural residents view each other as fundamentally antagonistic social groups. Analyzing data from a pre-registered conjoint experiment with 9,000 respondents in nine European countries reveals that rural individuals are generally seen as Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working-class, less educated, and older, while urbanites are perceived as Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper-middle-class, university-educated, and younger. These perceptions, in turn, contribute to affective polarization between urbanites and ruralites. Similar to affective polarization between partisans, these antagonisms could eventually undermine people's ability to compromise and thereby threaten the stability of democratic political systems altogether.

Keywords: urban-rural divide; place-based identity; affective polarization; cleavage politics

Word count: 7,799 (excl. abstract, references and appendix)

*Corresponding Email: sven.hegewald@eup.gess.ethz.ch. For their helpful comments on earlier iterations of this paper, I would like to thank Kai Arzheimer, Leo Azzollini, Eri Bertsou, Ruth Dassonneville, Catherine de Vries, Matthias Enggist, Tina Freyburg, Lukas Haffert, Silja Häusermann, Liesbet Hooghe, Twan Huijsmans, Marc Jacob, Samuel Johnston, Korinna Lindemann, Philipp Lutz, Gary Marks, Lawrence McKay, Mohamed Nasr, Daniel Oesch, Bilyana Petrova, Dominik Schraff, Ronja Sczepanski, Frank Schimmelfennig, Massimo Troncone, Markus Wagner, Delia Zollinger, and Alina Zumbrunn. I am also grateful for feedback from audiences at APSA, CES, EPSA, MPSA, the European University Institute, Goethe University Frankfurt, the Universities of Konstanz, Lausanne, and Mainz, as well as Sciences Po Paris. This research was supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF Ambizione Grant: Nº 186002).

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Introduction

After decades of absence, several recent studies have documented a return of the urban-rural divide. In the United States, voters for the Republican party typically live in rural areas, while Democrats are more likely to live in cities (e.g., Gimpel et al., 2020; Rodden, 2019; Scala and Johnson, 2017; Taylor et al., 2024). Likewise, recent comparative evidence also documents growing differences in voting behavior between cities and the countryside in Europe (Huijsmans and Rodden, 2024). Besides this, urbanites are often found to hold much more cosmopolitan policy positions than ruralites (e.g., Huijsmans et al., 2021; Jennings and Stoker, 2016; Maxwell, 2019, 2020), and tend exhibit higher levels of trust in political institutions, satisfaction with democracy, and political efficacy (e.g., del Horno et al., 2023; Hegewald, 2024; Lago, 2022; McKay et al., 2021; Mitsch et al., 2021; Stein et al., 2021; Zumbrunn, 2024b).

Drawing on a long tradition of group-based thinking in political science (e.g., Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967), a growing body of literature has started to explain these urban-rural divisions by conceptualizing place as a marker of group membership. Within this literature, some studies focus on the political effects of place-based identities, specifically on support for radical right and new left parties (e.g., Bornschier et al., 2021; Fitzgerald, 2018; Zollinger, 2024b). Other works, in particular in American politics, highlight the importance of place-based resentment as an explanation for the urban-rural divide (e.g., Cramer, 2016; Huijsmans, 2023a; Jacobs and Munis, 2023; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2022; Munis, 2022). Lastly, a third set of studies documents a pronounced degree of affective polarization between urbanites and ruralites, arguing that antagonisms between both groups structure political behavior (e.g., Hegewald and Schraff, 2024; Lyons and Utych, 2023; Zumbrunn, 2024a).

However, the precise mechanisms that connect place as a marker of group membership with politics remain opaque in many of these studies. Although existing works have generated important insights by applying group-based thinking to the urban-rural divide, they often leave the connections between group membership and politics implicit as well as untested. Thus, to better understand the group-based foundations of political divisions between cities and the countryside, it is necessary to spell out and empirically test these mechanisms explicitly.

This study represents a first step in this direction. A central mechanism connecting group membership and politics relates to individuals' perceptions of group alignments. To a large degree, partisanship can be characterized as reflecting people's judgments of where they think they belong in politics as members of specific groups (e.g., Achen and Bartels, 2016; Green et al., 2004; Kane et al., 2021; Miller et al., 1991). Departing from this, I argue that the perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites play a crucial role in connecting place as a marker of group membership to political behavior. I suggest that urban and rural residents are viewed as occupying specific positions in the political area, which should inform their judgments of where they belong politically as urbanites or ruralites.

Relying on data from a pre-registered conjoint experiment fielded among 9,000 respondents in nine European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Spain), I provide evidence in favor of this argument. Urbanites and ruralites view each other not only as living in different places but as fundamentally antagonistic social groups that oppose one another on a multitude of politically charged dimensions. Typical ruralites are seen as Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, lower educated, and older, whereas typical urbanites are viewed as Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated, and younger. I also illustrate that these group alignments are consequential for affective polarization between urban and rural residents. While urbanites are more likely to exhibit warmer feelings toward typically urban individuals, ruralites are less likely to do so. Conversely, when ruralites evaluate typically rural individuals, they, on average, hold warmer feelings toward these people than urban residents.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. I first review the literature on group-based approaches to the urban-rural divide. After this, I theorize how perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites are rooted in different overlaps of the urban-rural divide with other cleavages in European politics. In turn, these group alignments, I propose, should underpin affective polarization between urban and rural residents. I then present the experimental set-up of the conjoint, my analytical approach and my results. I conclude by summarizing my central findings and the study's main limitations.

Place as a Marker of Group Membership: Group-Based Approaches to the Urban-Rural Divide

Group-based approaches have a long tradition in political science (for overviews, see Hutchings and Jefferson, 2017; Kane et al., 2021; Natchez, 1985). People's membership of social groups was already at the heart of the pioneering Columbia (Berelson et al., 1954; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944) and Michigan models (Campbell et al., 1960; see also, Lewis-Beck et al., 2008) of voting behavior. Social groups also play a central role in cleavage theory, where party competition is considered to reflect structural antagonisms that emerged during critical junctures in history (Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). More recently, numerous influential accounts have advanced a group-based conceptualization of partisanship that views people's political choices as fundamentally rooted in the groups to which they belong (e.g., Achen and Bartels, 2016; Green et al., 2004; Huddy et al., 2015; Kane et al., 2021).

Much of the group-based thinking in political science builds on research in social psychology, particularly social identity theory (for an overview, see Brewer, 2019). From this perspective, a "social identity" denotes "that *part* of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p.255, emphasis in original). In this sense, a social identity is shaped by three interrelated processes (e.g., Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel, 1981; Tajfel and Turner, 1979). The first is social categorization, where individuals classify themselves and their surrounding world into in-groups and out-groups. The second is social identification, which relates to individuals incorporating their group membership into their concept of self. The third process then involves a social comparison, where individuals evaluate their in-group more positively than their out-group.

Drawing on these ideas, a burgeoning literature attempts to understand the urban-rural divide by conceiving place as a marker of group membership. While the number of different approaches populating this literature proliferates, at least three can be distinguished. In line with early works in environmental psychology (e.g., Proshansky, 1978; Proshansky et al., 1983), a first strand of studies focuses on the political effects of place-based identities, viewing the places where people live as "imbued with personal, social, and cultural meanings" (Cuba and

Hummon, 1993, p.112). For example, research by Fitzgerald (2018) suggests that strong attachments to local communities can help to explain the political geography of radical right support. People who feel deeply connected to their locality, she shows, are more likely to vote for radical right parties. Similarly, drawing on cleavage theory, Bornschier et al. (2021) and Zollinger (2024b) document a strong correlation between place-based identity and vote choice. Relying on data from Switzerland, they find that individuals who feel close to urban people exhibit more support for new left parties, such as the Greens, while individuals with strong attachments to rural people tend to show higher levels of support for the radical right Swiss People's Party.

Originating from the pathbreaking ethnographic work by Cramer (2016), a second body of research focuses on place-based resentment. Place-based resentment denotes a pronounced attachment to place, which intersects with a perception that the place where one lives is shortchanged of its fair share of resources, representation in politics, and respect (Huijsmans, 2023a,b; Munis, 2022). In particular, studies in American politics underline the importance of place-based resentment as an explanation for the urban-rural divide. Lunz Trujillo and Crowley (2022) find that rural residents who perceive their as place underrepresented and disrespected are especially adamant supporters of Donald Trump. Related to this, Jacobs and Munis (2023) show that place-based resentment strongly predicted support for the Republican party in recent elections. Tentative evidence further suggests that ruralites, with strong feelings of place-based resentment, are more likely to approve of violence against the government (Munis et al., 2023). Likewise, outside of the United States, first research shows that place-based resentment also plays a significant role in European politics. For instance, in the case of the Netherlands, Huijsmans (2023a) finds that place-based resentment mediates the effect of people's place of residence on their attitudes toward populism and immigration.

Lastly, a third set of studies takes inspiration from works on affective partisan polarization (e.g., Iyengar et al., 2012, 2019). Akin to affective polarization between supporters of different political parties, Lyons and Utych (2023) document a pronounced tendency of urban and rural residents to discriminate against their place-based out-group when asked to distribute government resources or decide whom to hire among a set of hypothetical job applicants. Hegewald

and Schraff (2024) further extend this line of thinking by advancing the concept of place-based affective polarization, which they define as "an individual's propensity to like people from their own place more than people from a respective geographic out-group" (p.9). Similar to Zumbrunn (2024a) in Switzerland, they document the existence of substantial place-based affective polarization along the urban-rural divide in nine European countries. Besides this, they also show that high levels of place-based affective polarization increase support for the new left among urbanites while it fosters voting for the radical right among ruralites.

However, how exactly place as a marker of group membership underpins people's political behavior is still unclear. Although studies on place-based identity, resentment, and affective polarization have generated important insights by applying group-based thinking to the urban-rural divide, the underlying mechanisms tend to remain elusive. Existing works often shy away from explicitly spelling out the precise connections between group membership and politics, let alone testing the empirical implications of these mechanisms. Thus, in order to fully grasp the group-based foundations of the urban-rural divide, we need to develop a better understanding of how place as a marker of group membership influences how people think about politics.

The Urban-Rural Divide in Our Minds: Perceived Group Alignments of Urbanites and Ruralites

A central mechanism linking group membership to political behavior relates to people's perceptions of group alignments (for an overview, see Kane et al., 2021). Feeling close to a particular group and connecting it with a specific political party or candidate bolsters individuals' likelihood of voting for that politician or party (Miller and Wlezien, 1993; Miller et al., 1991; Wlezien and Miller, 1997). According to Green et al. (2004), when deciding which party to support, voters conjure up typical images of supporters of each party and square them with their own group memberships. Voters then choose the party whose typical supporters they perceive as most closely resembling themselves. In this sense, "partisanship" is often argued to boil down to "a reflection of judgments about where 'people like me' belong" (Achen and Bartels, 2016, p.266).

There is a good amount of evidence in favor of this view. In particular, American voters

seem to have a very clear picture in mind when thinking of the groups that constitute Democrats and Republicans. Although this picture tends to generally overestimate the actual composition of the groups that make up each party (Ahler and Sood, 2018), voters often perceive Republicans as rich, white, evangelical conservatives, while Democrats are viewed as liberal members of the working class, who are more likely to be black, and less likely to be religious (e.g., Busby et al., 2021; Claassen et al., 2021; Rothschild et al., 2019). Connected to this, research from the United Kingdom shows that voters can make fairly accurate guesses of whether a person has supported Brexit based on sociodemographic characteristics alone (Titelman and Lauderdale, 2023). Combined with a strong sentiment toward the social groups constituting a given political coalition, knowledge of these alignments can then considerably strengthen partisanship (Kane et al., 2021).

In light of this, the perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites could play a similar role in linking place as a marker of group membership to political behavior. If urban and rural residents are associated with particular political positions, this could represent a central channel that connects place with politics. Put differently, if urbanites and ruralites are viewed as occupying a specific location in the political arena, this should inform people's judgments of where they belong politically as urbanites or ruralites. Against this backdrop, I propose that urban and rural residents view each other not only as living in different places but as fundamentally antagonistic social groups that oppose one another on a multitude of political dimensions in European politics.

These perceptions of group alignment are deeply rooted in the overlap of the urban-rural divide with other cleavages apparent in the changing contours of Europe's political landscape (for overviews, see Dassonneville, 2022; Ford and Jennings, 2020). One of the most fundamental divisions in contemporary European politics concerns an intensifying conflict over transnationalism (for an overview, see Marks et al., 2021). This divide essentially relates to "the defense of national political, social and economic ways of life against external actors who penetrate the state by migrating, exchanging goods or exerting rule" (Hooghe and Marks, 2018, p.110). It thus describes a deeply-seated division where one side favors open, multicultural societies, while the other embraces an agenda of nationalist retraction (e.g., Dassonneville et al., 2024;

Hooghe and Marks, 2018; Hooghe et al., 2002; 2024). Although the transnational cleavage comes with many alternative labels, including "integration-demarcation" (Kriesi et al., 2006), "cosmopolitan-communitarian" (Teney et al., 2013), "cosmopolitan-parochial" (De Vries, 2018), or "universalist-particularist" (Häusermann and Kriesi, 2015), two of the most central policy issues connected to this divide concern European integration and immigration. In this respect, the transnational cleavage overlaps with the urban-rural divide insofar as urbanites tend to hold more cosmopolitan political orientations, while ruralites are typically more Eurosceptic and opposed to immigration (e.g., Huijsmans et al., 2021; Kenny and Luca, 2021; Maxwell, 2019).

Moreover, class could be another important political division in this regard. Notwithstanding the debate on the extent to which class voting is still as relevant as it was decades ago (e.g., Ares, 2022; Best, 2011; Clark et al., 1993; Elff, 2007; Evans, 2000; Oesch and Rennwald, 2018), urban areas are now often home to a new group of creative professionals (e.g., Rodden, 2019). Cities, Florida (2003) proposes, particularly attract individuals working in tech, the sciences, or entertainment, who choose to live in places that are characterized by "*technology*, *talent*, and *tolerance*" (p.10, emphasis in original). Similarly, Iversen and Soskice (2019) argue that the emergence of the knowledge economy has triggered a concentration of wealth and high-skilled jobs in urban areas. Both of these arguments, therefore, suggest a critical intersection between the urban-rural divide and class. While a new upper-middle class lives in cities, an increasingly impoverished working class is left behind in the countryside.

Closely related to this is the overlap between the urban-rural divide and an educational cleavage in European politics (e.g., Stubager, 2008, 2009 2010; see also Ford and Jennings, 2020). Individuals with lower levels of education have been repeatedly shown to be less cosmopolitan in their political positions than individuals with higher levels of education (e.g., Hakhverdian et al., 2013; Kunst et al., 2020; Langsæther and Stubager, 2019; Stubager, 2013). Taking into account the clustering of high-skilled jobs that increasingly attract well-educated professionals to large cities (e.g., Florida, 2002, 2003; Iversen and Soskice, 2019), this educational divide also overlaps with the urban-rural cleavage.

Lastly, some studies suggest that age is gradually becoming a more important explanation for voting behavior. However, existing evidence for the emergence of an age-based divide tends

to be mixed. While some research finds stark differences in vote choice between younger and older voters (e.g., Orriols and Cordero, 2016; Sloam et al., 2018), other studies do not (e.g., Wagner and Kritzinger, 2012). Furthermore, although there is some evidence that younger voters are more cosmopolitan in their policy positions than older voters, these differences have remained rather constant over the last decades (e.g., Lancaster, 2022; Lauterbach and De Vries, 2020; Rekker, 2018; O'Grady, 2023). Nevertheless, there is first evidence of an interaction between the urban-rural and an age-based divide. At least in Germany, political divisions between cities and the countryside seem to be much more pronounced among younger voters than among older voters (Haffert and Mitteregger, 2023). Furthermore, considering that younger people tend to relocate to cities for work or studying (e.g., Iversen and Soskice, 2019; Storper, 2018), an age-based political division would also intersect with the urban-rural divide.

Overall, I expect that these overlaps profoundly influence the perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites. First studies already point in this direction. Relying on comparative data from France, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Switzerland, Bornschier et al. (2022) find that voters perceive urbanites and ruralites to differ with regard to class, level of education, leisure activities, and values (see also Zollinger, 2024b). They also document that urban residents are often viewed as new left voters, while ruralites tend to be regarded as either voting for radical or mainstream right parties. Using open-ended survey questions, Zollinger (2024a) further shows that radical-right voters in Switzerland frequently describe their political in-groups as rural and out-groups as urban. Finally, Sczepanski (2024) finds that Austrians and Italians perceive rural individuals as more likely to support leaving the European Union, whereas urbanites are viewed as likely voters in favor of remaining. All of this leads me to formulate the following two hypotheses regarding individuals' perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites:

H_{1a} Respondents are more likely to perceive Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, non-university educated and older individuals as typically rural.

H_{1b} Respondents are more likely to perceive Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated and younger individuals as typically urban.

"Us" and "Them" Along the Urban-Rural Divide: Perceived Group Alignments and Place-Based Affective Polarization

Departing from the premise that urban and rural residents perceive one another in terms of strongly aligned social groups, these alignments should also have the potential to heighten a sense of place-based affective polarization (Hegewald and Schraff, 2024; Lyons and Utych, 2023; Zumbrunn, 2024a). The idea that group alignments intensify social conflict already dates back to the notion of "cross-cutting cleavages" as important stabilizers of democratic political systems (e.g., Berelson et al., 1954; Dahl, 1981; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Lipset, 1960). Here, voters simultaneously belong to groups at opposing ends of different cleavages, exerting cross-pressures to potentially support multiple parties (Dassonneville, 2022). Conversely, the absence of these cross-pressures is believed "to isolate *naturally* individuals or groups with the same political outlook from contact with those who hold different views" (Lipset, 1960, p.87, emphasis in original). This isolation, in turn, is then argued to deepen social conflict by pushing voters to support more extremist political candidates at the ballot box.

Research in social psychology further underlines this mechanism. Individuals with cross-cutting group attachments are usually more tolerant toward others, while aligned group memberships tend to promote negative sentiments and bias (e.g., Brewer, 1999; Brewer and Pierce, 2005). The reason for this is that overlapping group memberships are presumed to increase the perceived distinctiveness of groups, thereby reducing the common ground that unites rather than divides them (Roccas and Brewer, 2002). Thus, when individuals are neatly sorted into homogeneous social camps, the perceived distance between these camps increases, intensifying conflict between them.

In the United States, this dynamic has been identified as a major driver of affective polarization between Democrats and Republicans. According to (Mason 2015; 2016; 2018), the increasing alignment of partisanship with other salient social identities, such as ideology, race or religion, breeds a strong sense of mutual animosity between supporters of both parties. This finding is further echoed in the work by Levendusky (2018), who shows that reminding Americans of their shared American identity reduces partisan hostility. Moving beyond the American case, there is also empirical evidence that group alignments drive affective polarization be-

tween partisans in other regions of the world. For instance, in a comparative study using data from 40 different countries, Harteveld (2021) demonstrates that partisans with aligned group memberships are more affectively polarized, not only in the United States but also in a much broader universe of cases.

Building on these insights, I propose that perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites underpin place-based affective polarization along the urban-rural divide. As with partisan animosities, place-based affective polarization should intensify when group memberships are in alignment. In other words, when confronted with a typically rural person, ruralites should like this person more than urbanites. Conversely, when urbanites are confronted with a typically urban person, they should like this person more than rural residents. Based on these propositions, I formulate the following two hypotheses considering ruralites' and urbanites' sentiments directed at typically urban and typically rural individuals:

H_{2a} Rural respondents tend to like typically rural individuals more than urban respondents.

H_{2b} Urban respondents tend to like typically urban individuals more than rural respondents.

Data and Methods

To test my hypotheses, I conducted a pre-registered conjoint experiment fielded in nine European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Spain).[1] Data were collected via online access panels administered by the survey company Bilendi. Fieldwork took place between February and March 2023. Respondents were sampled according to nationally representative quotas of age, gender, education, and NUTS-2 region. The target sample size was 1,000 respondents per country, which amounts to a final sample of about 9,000 respondents.[2]

[1] For the pre-analysis plan, see the project's OSF page: https://osf.io/ft5n6/. H_{1a} and H_{1b} were pre-registered as separate hypotheses for each attribute. For the sake of simplicity, I have opted to coalesce these hypotheses into two. H_{2a} and H_{2b} were not pre-registered.

[2] In order to determine the optimal sample size, I conducted an a priori power analysis for conjoint experiments as proposed by Schuessler and Freitag (2020) using the R package `cjpowR`. Figures A.1 and A.2 in the Appendix display the statistical power for different effect sizes and effective sample sizes for the pooled and country-level samples.

Table 1: Overview of attributes and levels in conjoint experiment.

Attributes	**Levels**
Euroscepticism	Believes that *country denominator*'s membership of the European Union is a good thing
	Believes that *country denominator*'s membership of the European Union is a bad thing
Immigration attitudes	Believes that immigrants make *country denomination* a better place to live
	Believes that immigrants make *country denomination* a worse place to live
Class	Identifies as upper middle class
	Identifies as working class
Education	Holds a university degree
	Does not hold a university degree
Age	Is 25 years old
	Is 65 years old

Conjoint experiments prompt respondents to choose between or rate different profiles that randomly vary between a number of different attributes (Hainmueller et al., 2015). In contrast to other types of survey experiments, this set-up thus makes possible to "estimate the causal effects of many treatment components simultaneously" (Hainmueller et al., 2014, p.2). Commonly, in political science, conjoint experiments are used to understand multidimensional policy preferences or choices between different political candidates (for an overview, see Bansak et al., 2021). However, more recently, several studies have started using these research designs to tap how individuals perceive the opinions and demographic composition of different social groups (e.g., Bor et al., 2023; Carlson and Hill, 2022; Goggin et al., 2020; Myers et al., 2024; Titelman and Lauderdale, 2023).

Usually, these studies present respondents with fictitious persons, asking them to indicate if they think the person shown belongs to one social group or another. Building on this approach, I employed a single-profile conjoint experiment, where respondents were shown a set of fictitious person profiles, randomly varying across five attributes as presented in Table 1. All profiles were drawn independently from a uniform distribution. After reading an introduction explaining the conjoint task, respondents were shown four different profiles as displayed in Figure A.3 in the Appendix.[3] The order of the attributes listed was randomized by the respondent

[3]The introduction to the conjoint read as follows: "On the next four screens, you will be shown profiles of hypothetical individuals. After reviewing each profile, you will be asked to indicate whether you think this person

and then held constant across all four profiles. For each profile, respondents were then asked to answer three survey items. The first item measures respondents' perceptions of urban-rural typicality, asking respondents to indicate if they think that the person shown "typically lives in an urban area" or "typically lives in a rural area".[4] The second item asked respondents how sure they were about their choice of urban or rural typicality.[5] The third item then tapped how much respondents liked each profile by means of a feeling thermometer.[6]

To test H_{1a} and H_{1b}, I rely on the urban-rural typicality item as my dependent variable, calculating the Average Marginal Component Effects (AMCEs) for each attribute level, pooling the sample at the respondent level. I follow the standard approach outlined by Hainmueller et al. (2014), calculating the AMCEs by estimating ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions with clustered standard errors at the respondent level. Country fixed effects are included whenever the pooled sample of all nine countries is used. The urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "typically lives in a rural area". All attributes are coded 0–1, with "Europhile" (= 0) and "Eurosceptic" (= 1), "pro-immigrant" (= 0) and "anti-immigrant" (= 1), "upper middle class" (= 0) and "working class" (= 1), "university educated" (= 0) and "not university educated" (= 1), "younger age group" (= 0) and "older age group" (= 1). A positive AMCE then denotes that a change from, for example, "Europhile" (= 0) to "Eurosceptic" (= 1) increases the probability of a choice that the shown person typically lives in a rural area versus an urban area. This would, for instance, count as evidence in favor of H_{1a}. Furthermore, in this case, the AMCEs are symmetric, which means that a positive AMCE also provides evidence for H_{1b}.[7]

typically lives in an urban area or typically lives in a rural area. We will also ask you about your feelings toward this person."

[4]The full question read as follows: "Looking at the description of the person above, do you think that this person typically lives in an urban area or typically lives in a rural area?"

[5]This question read as follows: "You have indicated that the person shown above *typically lives in an urban area/typically lives in a rural area*. How sure are you about this choice?" The answer categories were "very sure", "somewhat sure", "somewhat unsure", and "very unsure".

[6]Here, I used the following question, as often employed in studies on affective partisan polarization (e.g., Iyengar et al., 2012, 2019): "Looking again at the description of the person above, we now want you to rate this person on a so-called 'feeling thermometer'. Scores between 50 and 100 mean that you have positive and warm feelings toward this person. Scores between 0 and 50 mean you feel cold and negative about this person. A score of 50 means you feel neither warm nor cold about this person. Looking at this person, how do you feel?"

[7]To account for the possibility that some profiles might be more difficult to categorize as typically rural or typically urban, following Goggin et al. (2020), I create an alternative outcome variable, where I weigh respondents' answers on the urban-rural typicality variable with their answers on the uncertainty of choice variable. As shown in Figure A.4 in the Appendix, respondents tend to be fairly certain about their choices. Furthermore, my

Table 2: Examples for coding of typically urban and typically rural profiles.

	Profile 1	**Profile 2**
Euroscepticism	Europhile	Eurosceptic
Immigration attitudes	Pro-immigrant	Anti-immigrant
Class	Upper middle class	Working class
Education	University educated	Non-university educated
Age	25 years old	65 years old
Urban-rural typicality of profile	0 = most typically urban profile	1 = most typically rural profile

I test H_{2a} and H_{2b} by relying on respondents' ratings on the feeling thermometers as another dependent variable. I regress these thermometer ratings on an interaction between a variable scoring the urban-rural typicality of each profile and respondents' urban-rural self-classifications. Respondents' self-classifications are based on a pre-treatment question asking respondents whether they think they live in a "very rural", "rather rural", "rather urban" or "very urban" place.[8] Respondents are coded as "rural" when they have indicated that they live in a "very rural" or "rather rural" place and "urban" when they have indicated otherwise. I classify the urban-rural typicality of each profile on a continuous measure that ranges from 0 = "most typically urban profile" to 1 = "most typically rural profile". For each typically urban attribute shown in a profile, the profile receives a zero. By contrast, for each typically rural attribute, a profile receives the estimated AMCE for that attribute. The sum of these scores is then rescaled to range from 0 to 1. Table 2 further illustrates this procedure by means of two examples. The first profile shows a person who is Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated, and 25 years old. Since I expect that each of these attributes is perceived as typically urban, all of them receive a 0, and the profile is scored as 0 = "most typically urban profile". Conversely, the second profile shows a person who is Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, not university educated, and 65 years old. This profile receives the estimated AMCEs for each of these attributes, and after rescaling, it is classified as 1 = "most typically rural profile".[9] I estimate the interaction between respondents' urban-rural residence and the

substantive findings remain the same when using the weighted variable as an alternative outcome (see Table A.1 and Figure A.5 in the Appendix).

[8] I thereby follow recent advice by Nemerever and Rogers (2021) to rely on respondents' self-classifications when measuring concepts relating to place as a social identity.

[9] Since the urban-rural typicality variable used in the main analysis is based on the AMCEs estimated from the pooled sample, as a robustness check, I rely on an alternative variable that is based on the AMCEs from the country-level samples instead. For a replication of my results, see Figure A.6 and Tables A.2, A.3, and A.4 in the

urban-rural typicality variable by using a simple binning estimator with country fixed effects (Hainmueller et al., 2019). I control for respondents' income, level of education, age, support for European integration, and position on immigration.[10] Standard errors are again clustered at the respondent level. Evidence in favor H_{2a} would be if rural respondents, on average, exhibit warmer feelings toward typically rural profiles than urban respondents. By contrast, if urban respondents, on average, exhibit warmer feelings toward typically urban profiles than rural respondents, this would count as evidence in favour of H_{2b}.

Results

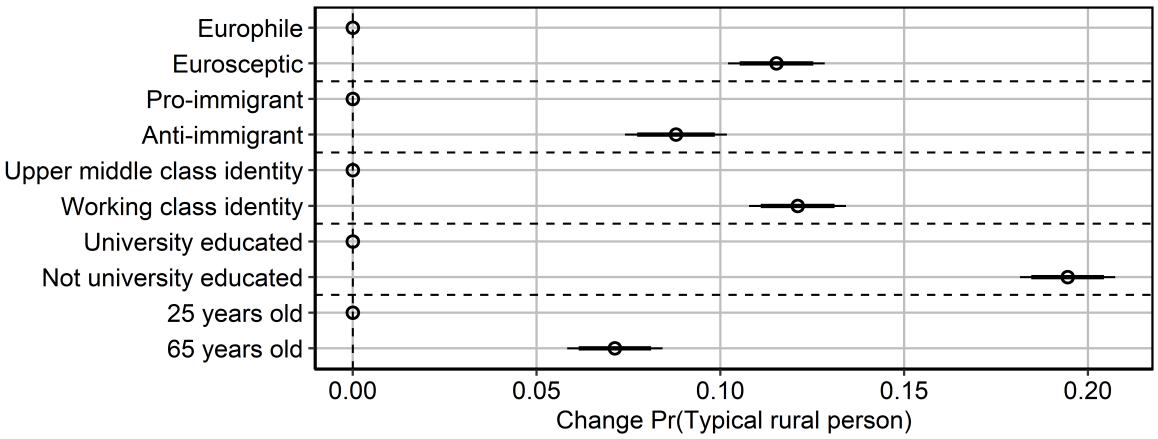
Figure 1 displays the AMCEs for all profile attributes on respondents' perceptions of urban-rural typicality. Each AMCE corresponds to the marginal effect of each attribute level on the probability that a respondent categorises the person shown as typically rural relative to the base level of the attribute. AMCEs are shown with 95% and 99% confidence intervals, represented by the thick and thin lines, respectively. The base levels for each attribute are displayed without error bars. Full model results can be found in Table A.1 in the Appendix. The results reveal that Eurosceptic (β=0.12, 95% CI [0.11, 0.13], $p < 0.001$), anti-immigrant (β=0.09, 95% CI [0.08, 0.10], $p < 0.001$), working class (β=0.12, 95% CI [0.11, 0.13], $p < 0.001$), not university educated (β=0.19, 95% CI [0.18, 0.20], $p < 0.001$), and older (β=0.07, 95% CI [0.06, 0.08], $p < 0.001$) profiles are on average more likely to be viewed as typically rural. Since these effects are symmetric, the mirror image is also true, with Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated, and younger profiles on average having a higher probability of being classified as typically urban.

Of the five attributes included in the conjoint, education is the most influential for structuring perceptions of group alignment along the urban-rural divide. While the second strongest attribute levels, Euroscepticism and working-class identity, increase the probability of rural typicality by about 12%, a profile showing a hypothetical individual with no university education makes respondents 19% more likely to categorize this person as typically rural. Older age, by contrast, is least associated with rurality, increasing respondents' probability of categorizing a

Appendix. My substantive findings remain the same.

[10]For descriptive statistics and operationalisations of these variables, see Tables A.5 and A.6 in the Appendix.

Figure 1: AMCEs of profile attributes.



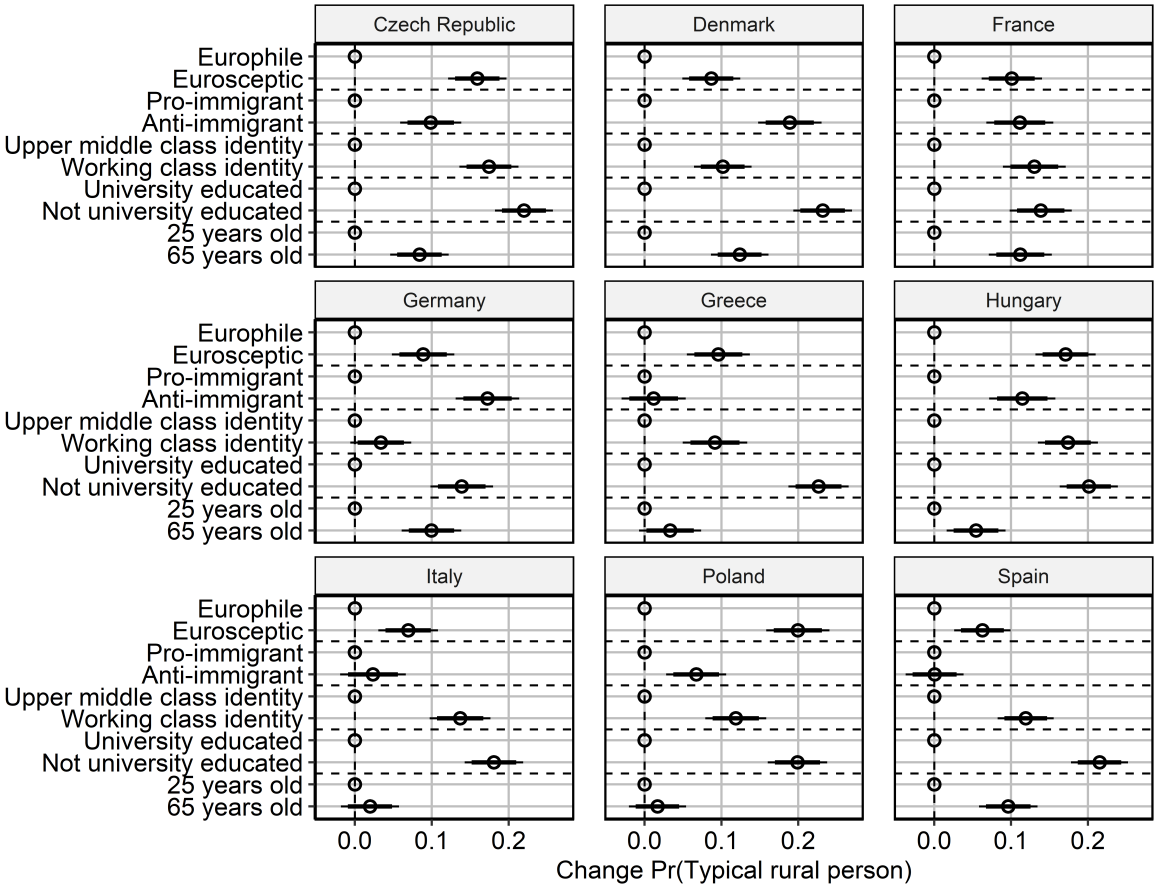
Note: OLS estimates regressing the urban-rural typicality variable on profile attributes. Country fixed effects are included. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. The urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "Typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "Typically lives in a rural area". Thick and thin lines are 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Base levels for each attribute in the conjoint have no error bars. For full model results see Table A.1 in the Appendix.

profile as typically rural by only 7%. Lastly, respondents seem to associate rural group membership slightly more with Eurosceptic individuals than with people holding anti-immigrant views, with the former increasing the probability of a profile's categorization as typically rural by 12% and the latter only by 9%.

Figure 2 shows the AMCEs of the profile attributes per country. Full model results can be found in Table A.7 in the Appendix. Overall, the general direction of all effects is remarkably consistent across different country contexts. Respondents in almost all countries are more likely to categorize Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, not university educated, and older profiles as typically rural. Notable exceptions to this pattern are the AMCEs for anti-immigration attitudes in Greece (β=0.01, 95% CI [-0.02, 0.04], $p > 0.1$), Italy (β=0.02, 95% CI [-0.01, 0.06], $p > 0.1$) and Spain (β=0.00, 95% CI [-0.03, 0.03], $p > 0.1$), which do not reach conventional levels of statistical significance. Furthermore, the AMCEs for older age in Poland (β=0.02, 95% CI [-0.01, 0.05], $p > 0.1$) and Italy (β=0.02, 95% CI [-0.01, 0.05], $p > 0.1$) are also not statistically significant.

Following Leeper et al. (2020), Figure 3 displays the marginal means (MMs) of each profile attribute for the full sample (upper panel) and conditional on respondents' urban-rural self-classifications (lower panel). The MMs are estimated based on OLS regressions with country

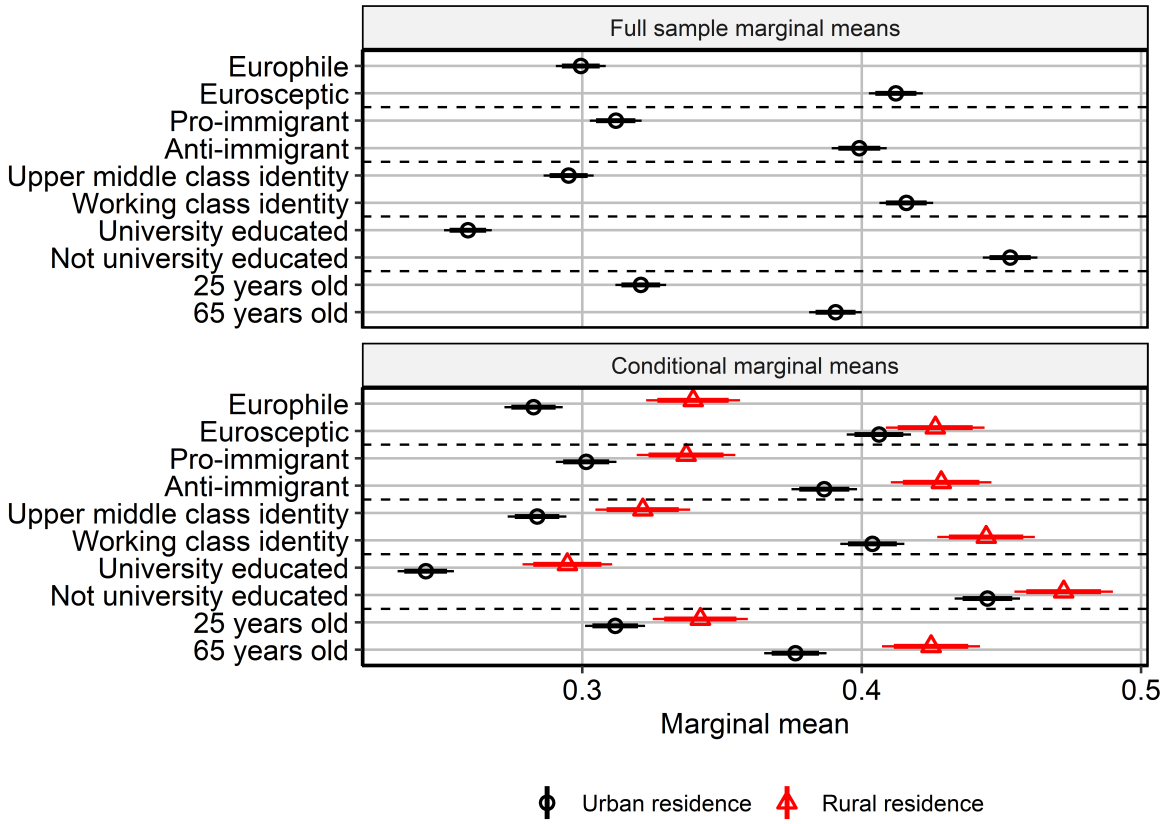
Figure 2: AMCEs of profile attributes per country.



Note: OLS estimates regressing the urban-rural typicality variable on profile attributes for each country-level sample. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. The urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "Typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "Typically lives in a rural area". Thick and thin lines are 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Base levels for each attribute in the conjoint have no error bars. For full model results see Table A.7 in the Appendix.

fixed effects and clustered standard errors at the respondent level. Each MM denotes the share of profiles classified as typically rural when a given attribute level is included in the profile. For example, looking at the full-sample MMs in the upper panel, the MM for Europhile (*MM*=0.30, 95% CI [0.29, 0.31]) shows that 30% of the profiles with this attribute level are classified as typically rural. By contrast, the MM for Eurosceptic (*MM*=0.41, 95% CI [0.40, 0.42]) indicates that 41% of Eurosceptic profiles are viewed as typically living in a rural area. In this sense, the full-sample MMs replicate the findings from the AMCEs above, illustrating that Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, not university educated, and older profiles are, on average, more often classified as typically rural. Besides this, the conditional MMs in the lower panel also reveal that perceptions of group alignment along the urban-rural divide tend to be symmetric

Figure 3: Marginal means of profile attributes.



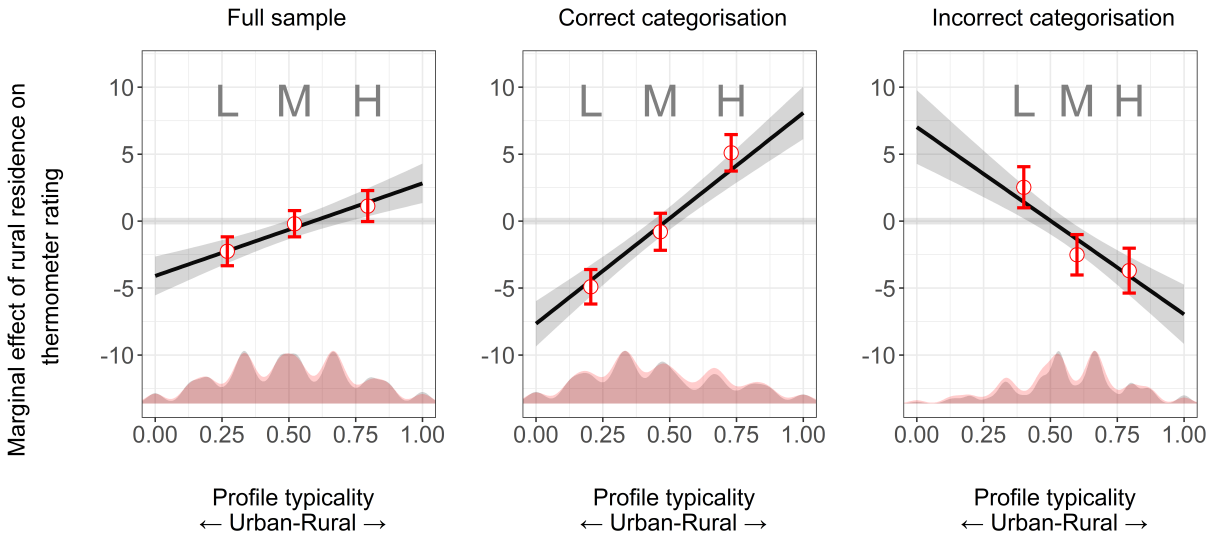
Note: Estimates are based on OLS regressions with country fixed effects implemented using the R package `cregg` (Leeper et al., 2020). Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. The urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "Typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "Typically lives in a rural area". Thick and thin lines are 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively.

across urban and rural residents. While there are some differences between sub-groups, both urban and rural respondents are more likely to view the same profiles as typically rural.[11]

Figure 4 plots the marginal effect, represented by the linear fit, of self-classified rural residence on the thermometer rating conditional on the urban-rural typicality of profiles. The binning estimator, with the labels L, M, H, splits the moderating variable into terciles, allowing a test of the linearity assumption of the interaction effect (Hainmueller et al., 2019). Full model results for the linear fit can be found in Tables A.8, A.9, and A.10 in the Appendix. Each panel displays the marginal effects of rural residence for different samples. While the left panel utilizes the full sample, the panels in the middle and on the right are conditional on whether respondents' categorization of the profile in question matched the typicality of the profile. The

[11]For the estimated differences in MMs between self-classified urban and rural residents, see Figure A.7 in the Appendix.

Figure 4: Marginal effect of self-classified rural residence on thermometer rating, conditional on urban-rural typicality of profile.



Note: Binning estimator with country fixed effects implemented using the R package `interflex` (Hainmueller et al., 2019). 95% confidence intervals displayed. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. Models control for income, level of education, age, support for European integration, and position on immigration. For full model results of the linear fit, see Tables A.8, A.9, and A.10 in the Appendix.

panel in the middle is restricted to observations where respondents have categorized the profile "correctly". This is the case, for example, when respondents were presented with a typically rural profile and have also categorized it as such. The right panel, in turn, is restricted to observations, where respondents have categorized a profile "incorrectly". In contrast to a correct categorization, an incorrect categorization applies to cases where respondents, for instance, were shown a typically rural profile but have misclassified this profile as typically urban. To this end, I dichotomise the profile typicality variable by splitting it at the median. All profiles below or at the median are regarded as typically urban profiles. All profiles above the median are typically rural. Thus, if a respondent's categorization matches the typicality of the profile, this observation falls into the correct categorization sample. The opposite is the case when there is no match.

For the full sample (left panel in Figure 4), all binning estimators sit neatly on the linear fit, indicating that the linearity assumption tends to hold. The marginal effect of rural residence on the thermometer rating increases as profiles become more typically rural. On average, as indicated by the binning estimator in the lowest tercile (β=-2.25, 95% CI [-3.33, -1.17]), rural

respondents rate typically urban profiles 2.25 degrees colder than urban respondents. Again, since these interactions are symmetric, the opposite is also true, with urban respondents rating typically urban profiles 2.25 degrees warmer than rural respondents (see Figure A.8 in the Appendix). Although the binning estimator in the highest tercile (β=1.13, 95% CI [-0.03, 2.28]) narrowly misses statistical significance, the marginal effect still turns positive for a sizable chunk of the data on the side of typically rural profiles. Rural respondents tend to exhibit warmer feelings toward typically rural profiles than do urban respondents, who feel significantly colder about them.

These differences between urban and rural respondents seem to depend on whether urbanites and ruralites also perceive typically urban and rural profiles as such. Looking at the panel in the middle of Figure 4, the binning estimators are again indicating that the linearity assumption holds. They also reveal that differences between urban and rural respondents are larger when profiles are classified correctly. Looking at the binning estimator in the lowest tercile (β=-4.90, 95% CI [-6.19, -3.61]), when rural residents correctly classify typically urban profiles, they feel on average 4.90 degrees colder toward these profiles than urban respondents. The same applies to urban respondents correctly classifying typical rural profiles. As shown by the binning estimator in the highest tercile (β=-5.10, 95% CI [-6.46, -3.74]) in Figure A.8 in the Appendix, urbanites, compared to ruralites, feel about 5.10 degrees colder to profiles they correctly identify as typically rural.

Crucially, these patterns appear to be reversed when respondents misclassify profiles. Although the binning estimators in the right panel of Figure 4 give some reason to believe that the linearity assumption of the interaction effect is violated, the marginal effect of rural residence on the thermometer rating decreases as profiles become more typically rural. When rural respondents perceive typically urban profiles as typically rural, they tend to exhibit warmer feelings toward these profiles than urban respondents, as indicated by the binning estimator in the lowest tercile (β=2.53, 95% CI [0.99, 4.06]). The same holds for urban respondents who perceive typically rural profiles as typically urban. As indicated by the binning estimator in the highest tercile (β=3.70, 95% CI [2.02, 5.37]) in Figure A.8 in the Appendix, urbanites, compared to ruralites, feel about 3.70 degrees warmer to profiles they misclassify as typically

urban. In this regard, rural respondents tend to like typically rural individuals only more than urban respondents when they also identify typically rural individuals as such. Conversely, urban residents only like typical urbanites more than rural respondents when they classify typical urban profiles as urban.

Overall, my findings provide evidence supporting my hypotheses. In line with H_{1a} and H_{1b}, urbanites and ruralites are viewed in terms of strongly aligned social groups. Typical ruralites are seen as Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, lower educated, and older, whereas typical urbanites are viewed as Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated, and younger. In turn, these perceptions of group alignments have important consequences for place-based affective polarization as stipulated in H_{2a} and H_{2b}. While urbanites are more likely to exhibit warmer feelings toward typically urban individuals, ruralites are less likely to do so. Conversely, when ruralites evaluate typically rural individuals, they, on average, hold warmer feelings toward these people than urban residents.

Conclusion

Recently, the urban-rural divide has reasserted itself as a relevant cleavage in Europe's political landscape. Various studies have documented pronounced differences in political attitudes and voting behavior between urban and rural residents in many European countries (e.g., Huijsmans et al., 2021; Huijsmans and Rodden, 2024; Maxwell, 2019; Mitsch et al., 2021). In response to this, a growing body of literature explains this division by drawing on a long tradition of group-based approaches in political science (e.g., Bartolini and Mair, 1990; Berelson et al., 1954; Campbell et al., 1960; Lazarsfeld et al., 1944; Lipset and Rokkan, 1967). Studies working in this tradition suggest that place has become a relevant maker of group membership, giving rise to a conflict between cities and the countryside. Some works in this literature focus on place-based identity (e.g., Bornschier et al., 2021; Fitzgerald, 2018; Zollinger, 2024b), while others look at place-based resentment (e.g., Cramer, 2016; Huijsmans, 2023a,b; Jacobs and Munis, 2023; Lunz Trujillo and Crowley, 2022; Munis, 2022) or affective polarization (e.g., Hegewald and Schraff, 2024; Lyons and Utych, 2023; Zumbrunn, 2024a).

However, despite the important insights generated by these studies, the precise mecha-

nisms that connect place as a marker of group membership with politics have remained largely opaque. Building on research highlighting the centrality of group alignments in linking group membership to political behavior, in this study, I have turned to the perceived group alignments of urbanites and ruralites as a potential mechanism (e.g., Achen and Bartels, 2016; Green et al., 2004; Kane et al., 2021; Miller et al., 1991). I have suggested that urban and rural individuals are viewed as occupying specific positions in the political arena, which should inform people's judgments of where they belong politically as urbanites or ruralites.

Relying on data from a pre-registered conjoint experiment fielded in nine European countries (Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and Spain) among 9,000 respondents, I have presented evidence supporting this argument. Urban and rural residents do not only perceive each other as people from different places but as social groups that are opposed to one another on a number of different cleavages. Typical ruralites are perceived as Eurosceptic, anti-immigrant, working class, lower educated, and older, while typical urbanites are seen as Europhile, pro-immigrant, upper middle class, university educated, and younger. I have further shown that these group alignments carry consequences for place-based affective polarization. On the one hand, urbanites are more likely to exhibit warmer feelings toward typically urban individuals, while ruralites are less likely to do so. On the other hand, when ruralites evaluate typically rural individuals, they, on average, hold warmer feelings toward these people than urban residents.

Although this study represents an important step toward a better understanding of the urban-rural divide and its group-based foundations, it does not come without limitations. First, when measuring perceptions of group alignments with the help of conjoint experiments, it is ultimately up to the researcher to define some important dimensions a priori. In this regard, it is likely that the conjoint experiment used in this paper does not capture all relevant cleavages in European politics. For instance, another interesting cleavage to include could relate to religion, which, despite debates over its decline, still seems to structure voting behavior in a number of European countries (e.g., Duncan, 2015; Marcinkiewicz and Dassonneville, 2022; Raymond, 2011; Tilley, 2014). Second, this paper focuses on group alignments of urban and rural residents, leaving out people from suburban areas as another potentially relevant social group.

This might present a fruitful area for future studies interested in group alignments along the urban-rural divide.

Overall, the tendency of urban and rural residents to view each other as divided on a number of different fault lines could be a cause for concern. Similar to sustained levels of affective partisan polarization, affective divisions along the urban-rural divide could ultimately undermine people's ability to compromise, putting the viability of democratic political systems in jeopardy altogether (e.g., Hetherington and Rudolph, 2015; Kingzette et al., 2021). Therefore, the group-based foundations of the urban-rural divide uncovered in this study may also have broader implications for democracy at large.

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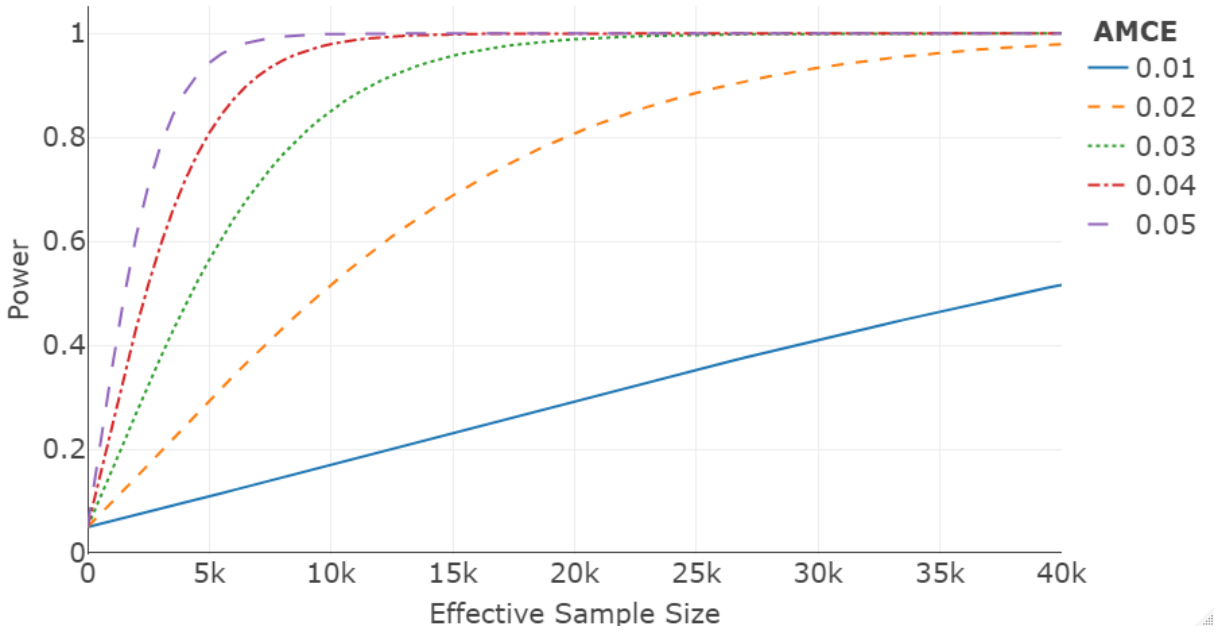
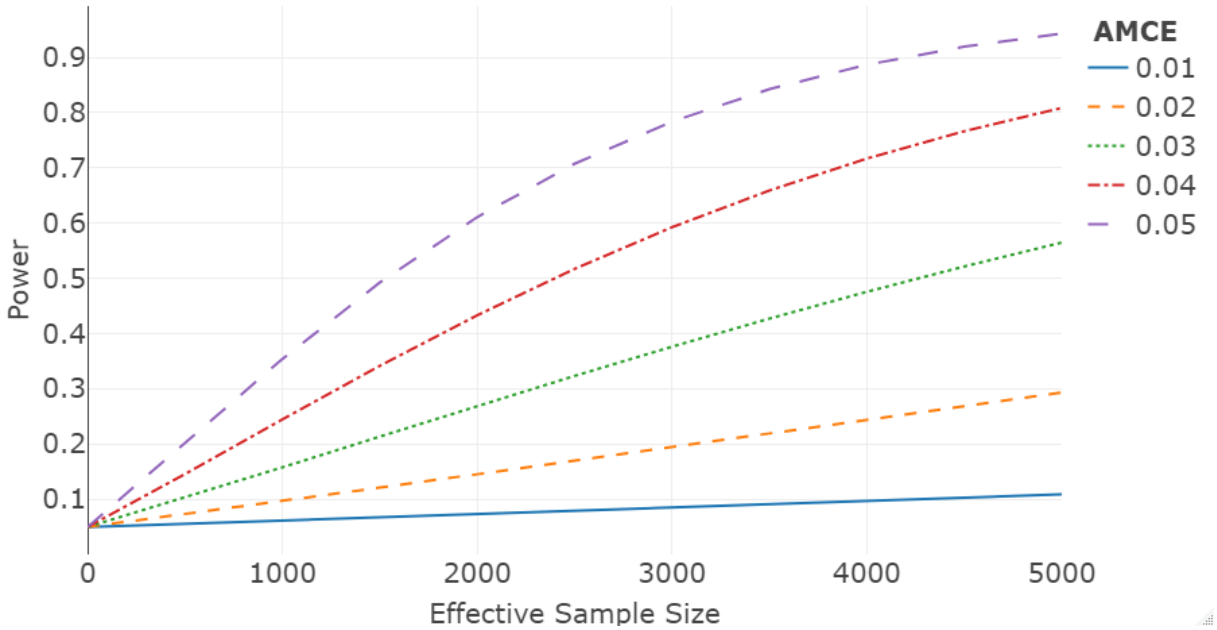
Appendix

Figure A.1: Statistical power for different AMCEs and effective sample sizes (pooled sample).



Note: Power analysis conducted using the R package `cjpowR` (Schuessler and Freitag, 2020). The effective sample size is defined as *ESS=N*J*T*, where N is the number of respondents, J the number of profiles per task, and T the number of tasks (Schuessler and Freitag, 2020, p.5). For the pooled sample analysis, where 9,000 respondents assess four single profiles consecutively, this yields an ESS $= 9,000 * 1 * 4 = 36,000$, leaving the conjoint well powered (≥ 0.80) to detect AMCEs ≥ 0.02.

Figure A.2: Statistical power for different AMCEs and effective sample sizes (country-level samples).



Note: Power analysis conducted using the R package `cjpowR` (Schuessler and Freitag, 2020). The effective sample size is defined as *ESS=N*J*T*, where N is the number of respondents, J the number of profiles per task, and T the number of tasks (Schuessler and Freitag, 2020, p.5). For the country-level analysis, there is an ESS $= 1,000 * 1 * 4 = 4,000$, leaving the conjoint well powered (≥ 0.80) to detect AMCEs ≥ 0.05.

Figure A.3: Example interface conjoint task (German version).

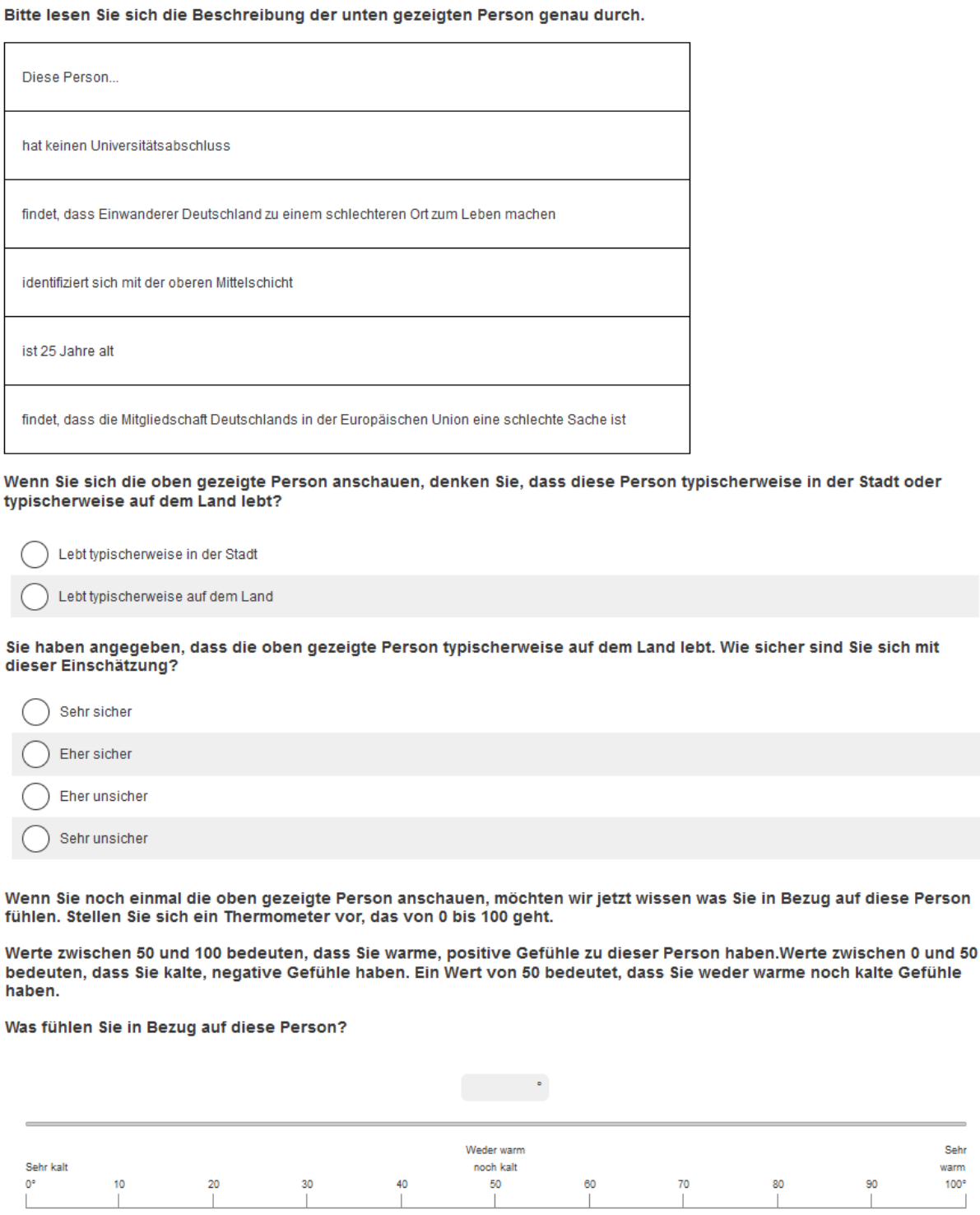


Table A.1: OLS regression results: AMCEs of profile attributes on urban-rural typicality.

	Unweighted (1)	Weighted (2)
Eurosceptic	0.115***	0.087***
	(0.005)	(0.004)
Anti-immigrant	0.088***	0.064***
	(0.005)	(0.004)
Working-class identity	0.121***	0.092***
	(0.005)	(0.004)
Not university educated	0.194***	0.146***
	(0.005)	(0.004)
65 years old	0.071***	0.054***
	(0.005)	(0.004)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	36,500	36,500
R2	0.087	0.099
R2 Adj.	0.087	0.098

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure A.4: Distribution of uncertainty of choice variable.

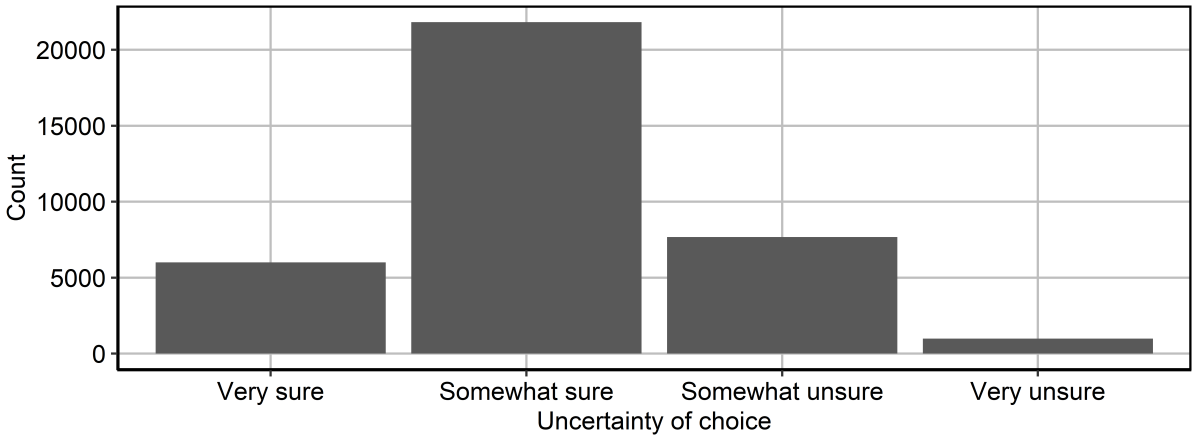
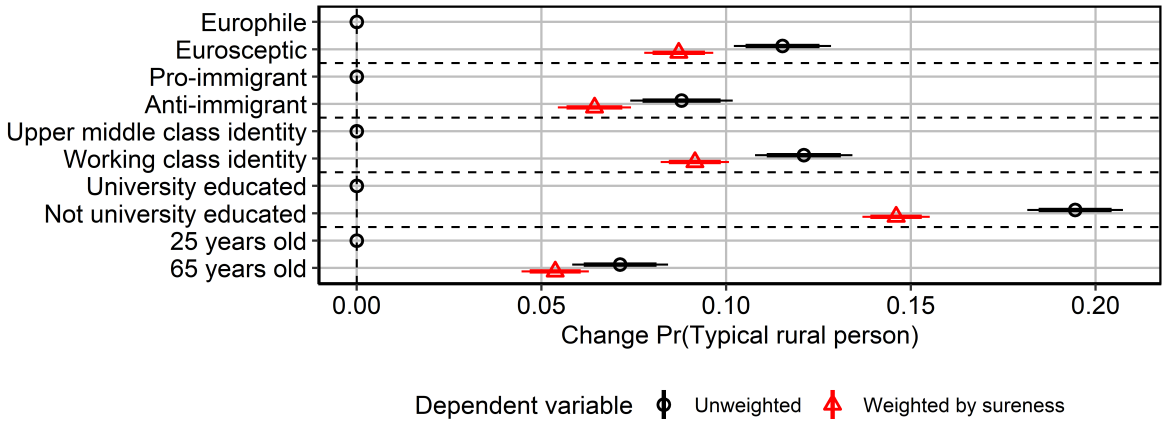
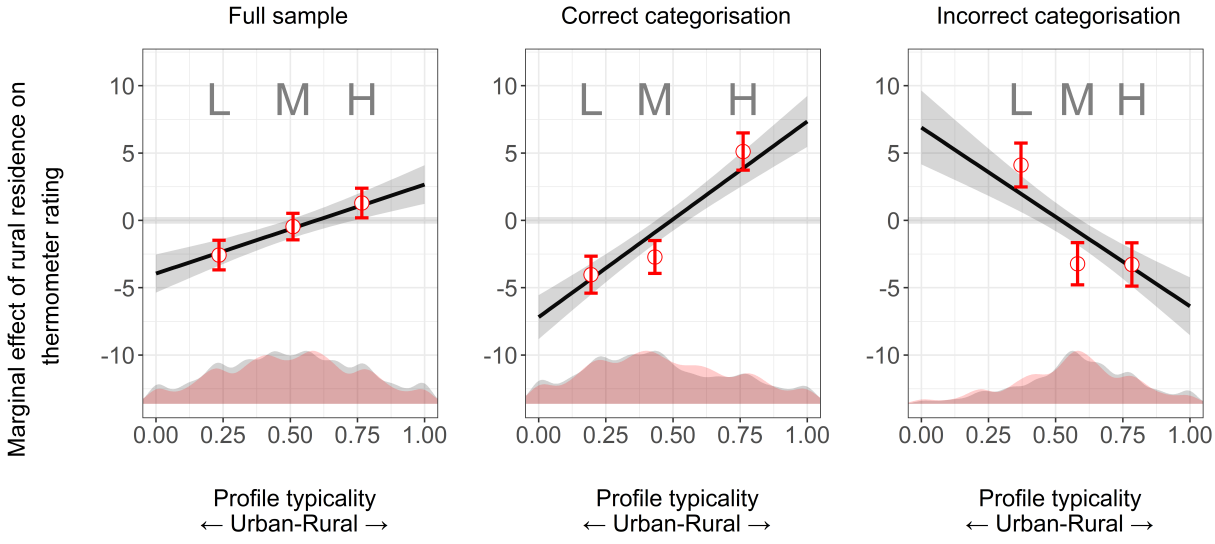


Figure A.5: AMCEs of profile attributes on urban-rural typicality (unweighted vs. weighted).



Note: OLS estimates regressing the unweighted urban-rural typicality variable or weighted urban-rural typicality variable on profile attributes. Country fixed effects are included. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. Following Goggin et al. (2020), the unweighted urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "Typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "Typically lives in a rural area". The weighted urban-rural typicality variable is coded as 1 for a response of "Typically lives in a rural area" with "very sure", while a "very sure" response of "Typically lives in an urban area" is coded as 0. All of the other remaining combinations are scored equidistant on the 0–1 interval. Thick and thin lines are 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. Base levels for each attribute in the conjoint have no error bars. For full model results, see Table A.1 in the Appendix.

Figure A.6: Marginal effect of self-classified rural residence on thermometer rating, conditional on urban-rural typicality of profile (based on country-level AMCEs).



Note: Binning estimator with country fixed effects implemented using the R package `interflex` (Hainmueller et al., 2019). 95% confidence intervals displayed. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. Models control for income, level of education, age, support for European integration, and position on immigration. For full model results of the linear fit, see Tables A.2, A.3, and A.4 in the Appendix.

Table A.2: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (based on country-level AMCEs; full sample).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−9.443***	−10.340***	−10.341***
	(0.590)	(0.661)	(0.660)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	−3.370***	−4.077***	−3.948***
	(0.635)	(0.729)	(0.723)
Income (Deciles)		−0.140*	−0.140*
		(0.057)	(0.058)
Education (b.=low)		−0.759*	−0.797*
		(0.369)	(0.370)
Age (Std.)		0.275+	0.321*
		(0.163)	(0.163)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			1.561**
			(0.551)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			2.679***
			(0.545)
Immigration attitudes			0.476*
			(0.199)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	5.657***	6.673***	6.611***
	(1.103)	(1.263)	(1.261)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	36,500	29,676	29,676
R2	0.013	0.016	0.018
R2 Adj.	0.013	0.015	0.017

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.3: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (based on country-level AMCEs; correct categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−13.291***	−14.293***	−14.345***
	(0.723)	(0.806)	(0.807)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	−6.624***	−7.485***	−7.185***
	(0.735)	(0.844)	(0.832)
Income (Deciles)		−0.124+	−0.143*
		(0.066)	(0.066)
Education (b.=low)		−0.408	−0.559
		(0.424)	(0.426)
Age (Std.)		0.473*	0.534**
		(0.190)	(0.190)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			3.087***
			(0.651)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			3.537***
			(0.643)
Immigration attitudes			0.666**
			(0.231)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	13.010***	14.649***	14.530***
	(1.382)	(1.581)	(1.580)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	22,951	18,695	18,695
R2	0.025	0.028	0.033
R2 Adj.	0.024	0.027	0.032

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.4: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (based on country-level AMCEs; incorrect categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	0.405	−0.164	−0.271
	(1.130)	(1.253)	(1.250)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	7.083***	6.959***	6.894***
	(1.219)	(1.395)	(1.398)
Income (Deciles)		−0.172*	−0.139+
		(0.083)	(0.083)
Education (b.=low)		−1.242*	−1.079*
		(0.529)	(0.532)
Age (Std.)		−0.172	−0.119
		(0.237)	(0.237)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			−0.764
			(0.781)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			1.409+
			(0.760)
Immigration attitudes			0.121
			(0.285)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	−12.857***	−13.264***	−13.272***
	(1.983)	(2.264)	(2.268)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	13,549	10,981	10,981
R2	0.008	0.011	0.013
R2 Adj.	0.008	0.009	0.011

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.5: Summary statistics of covariates.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Income (Deciles)	7,419	5.50	2.87	1	10
Education	9,125	0.30	0.46	0	1
Age	9,125	48.51	15.89	18	93
Age (Std.)	9,125	0.00	1.00	−1.92	2.80
EU support	9,125	1.39	0.73	0	2
Immigration attitudes	9,125	4.51	2.65	0	10
Immigration attitudes (Std.)	9,125	0.00	1.00	−1.70	2.07

Table A.6: Details on measurement of covariates.

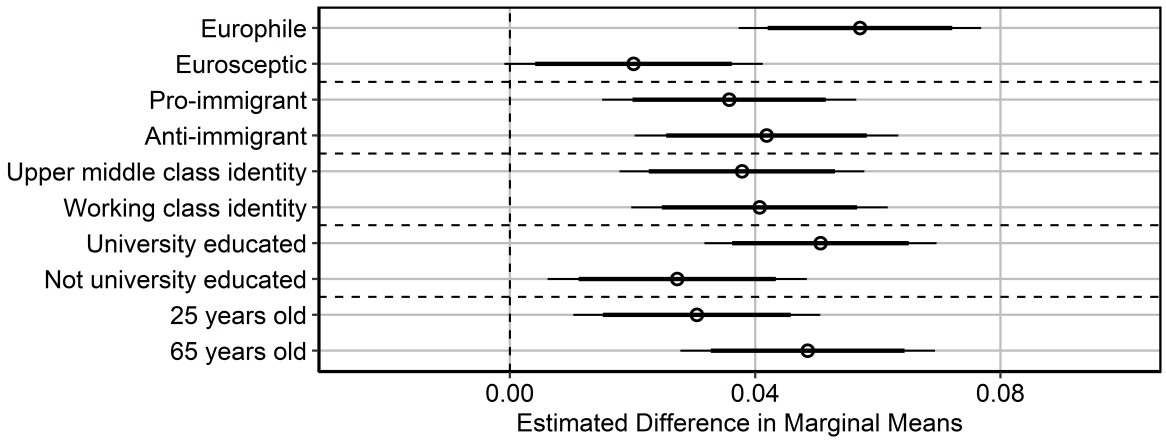
Variable	Description
Income (Deciles)	Monthly net income of respondent's household in local currency. Measured in deciles for each country. In case of a tie respondents were randomly assigned to either the lower or the higher bin.
Education	"Have you completed a degree of higher education at a university or a similar institution (e.g., a Bachelor's, Master's, or PhD degree)?" Answer categories 0 ("No") = Low, 1 ("Yes") = High.
Age (Std.)	Self-reported age in years. Standardised.
EU support	"Generally speaking, do you think that *country denominator*'s membership of the European Union is...?" Answer categories 0 ("A bad thing"), 1 ("Neither a good thing nor a bad thing"), 2 ("A good thing").
Immigration attitudes	"Do immigrants make *country denominator* a better or worse place to live?" Answer categories range from 0 ("A worse place") to 10 ("A better place").

Table A.7: OLS regression results: AMCEs of profile attributes on urban-rural typicality (per country).

	Czech Republic (1)	Denmark (2)	France (3)	Germany (4)	Greece (5)	Hungary (6)	Italy (7)	Poland (8)	Spain (9)
Eurosceptic	0.159***	0.087***	0.101***	0.089***	0.096***	0.171***	0.069***	0.199***	0.063***
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.014)
Anti-immigrant	0.099***	0.189***	0.111***	0.172***	0.012	0.115***	0.023	0.067***	0.001
	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.017)	(0.017)	(0.015)	(0.015)
Working-class identity	0.174***	0.102***	0.130***	0.034*	0.092***	0.174***	0.137***	0.119***	0.119***
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)
Not university educated	0.220***	0.232***	0.139***	0.139***	0.226***	0.201***	0.181***	0.199***	0.215***
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)
65 years old	0.084***	0.124***	0.112***	0.100***	0.033*	0.054***	0.020	0.017	0.096***
	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.016)	(0.015)	(0.015)	(0.014)	(0.015)
Num.Obs.	4,048	4,044	4,060	4,060	4,056	4,060	4,056	4,060	4,056
R2	0.136	0.137	0.073	0.073	0.075	0.120	0.061	0.107	0.088
R2 Adj.	0.135	0.136	0.072	0.071	0.074	0.119	0.060	0.106	0.087

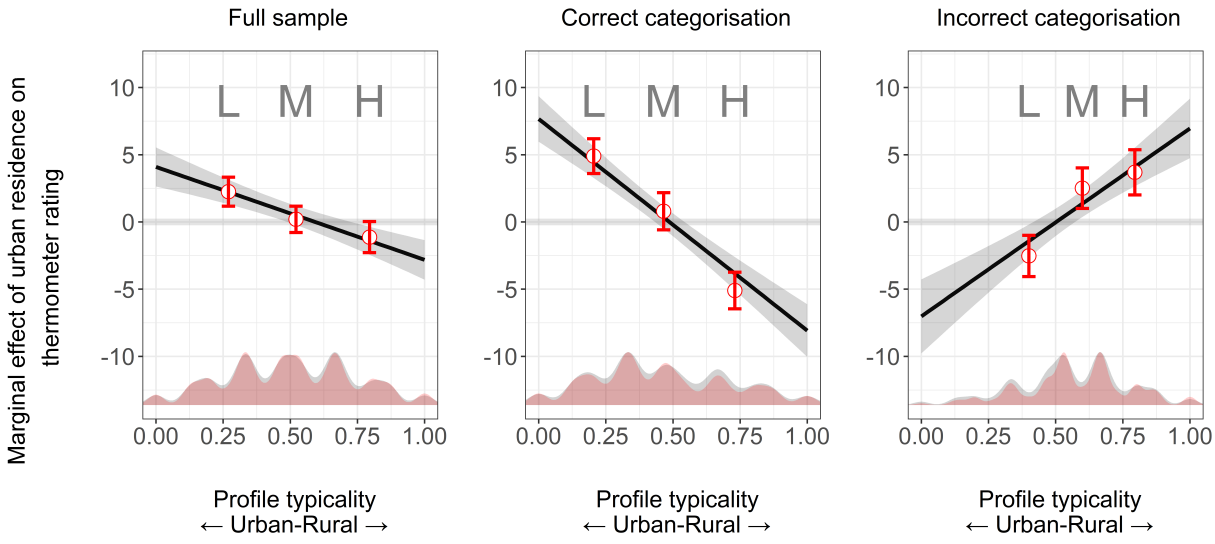
+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Figure A.7: Differences in marginal means of profile attributes between self-classified urban and rural residents.



Note: Estimates are based on OLS regressions with country fixed effects implemented using the R package `cregg` (Leeper et al., 2020). Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. The urban-rural typicality variable is coded 0 = "Typically lives in an urban area" and 1 = "Typically lives in a rural area". Thick and thin lines are 95% and 99% confidence intervals, respectively. The dashed red line indicates the grand mean across all profiles.

Figure A.8: Marginal effect of self-classified urban residence on thermometer rating, conditional on urban-rural typicality of profile.



Note: Binning estimator with country fixed effects implemented using the R package `interflex` (Hainmueller et al., 2019). 95% confidence intervals displayed. Standard errors are clustered at the respondent level. Models control for income, level of education, age, support for European integration, and position on immigration. For full model results of the linear fit, see Tables A.11, A.12, and A.13 in the Appendix.

Table A.8: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of rural residence; full sample).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−11.165***	−11.940***	−11.939***
	(0.637)	(0.714)	(0.713)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	−3.642***	−4.208***	−4.092***
	(0.650)	(0.745)	(0.738)
Income (Deciles)		−0.140*	−0.141*
		(0.057)	(0.058)
Education (b.=low)		−0.754*	−0.793*
		(0.368)	(0.369)
Age (Std.)		0.278+	0.324*
		(0.163)	(0.162)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			1.573**
			(0.551)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			2.681***
			(0.545)
Immigration attitudes			0.471*
			(0.199)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	6.213***	6.949***	6.912***
	(1.143)	(1.302)	(1.299)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	36,500	29,676	29,676
R2	0.016	0.018	0.020
R2 Adj.	0.015	0.017	0.019

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.9: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of rural residence; correct categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−15.367***	−16.211***	−16.248***
	(0.785)	(0.874)	(0.874)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	−7.125***	−7.934***	−7.660***
	(0.761)	(0.875)	(0.862)
Income (Deciles)		−0.133*	−0.151*
		(0.066)	(0.066)
Education (b.=low)		−0.494	−0.626
		(0.422)	(0.423)
Age (Std.)		0.531**	0.581**
		(0.191)	(0.191)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			2.691***
			(0.640)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			3.156***
			(0.635)
Immigration attitudes			0.645**
			(0.231)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	14.468***	15.860***	15.741***
	(1.452)	(1.655)	(1.652)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	22,525	18,352	18,352
R2	0.027	0.030	0.034
R2 Adj.	0.026	0.029	0.033

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.10: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of rural residence; incorrect categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−1.281	−1.296	−1.389
	(1.231)	(1.364)	(1.360)
Rural residence (b.=urban residence)	6.810***	7.126***	7.022***
	(1.233)	(1.403)	(1.404)
Income (Deciles)		−0.153+	−0.127
		(0.081)	(0.082)
Education (b.=low)		−1.054*	−0.920+
		(0.523)	(0.526)
Age (Std.)		−0.239	−0.184
		(0.232)	(0.232)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			−0.102
			(0.768)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			1.964**
			(0.754)
Immigration attitudes			0.191
			(0.281)
Profile typicality X Rural residence	−13.097***	−14.073***	−13.981***
	(2.052)	(2.325)	(2.328)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	13,975	11,324	11,324
R2	0.011	0.013	0.015
R2 Adj.	0.010	0.011	0.013

+ $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Table A.11: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of urban residence; full sample).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	–4.952***	–4.991***	–5.027***
	(0.950)	(1.090)	(1.087)
Urban residence (b.=rural residence)	3.642***	4.208***	4.092***
	(0.650)	(0.745)	(0.738)
Income (Deciles)		–0.140*	–0.141*
		(0.057)	(0.058)
Education (b.=low)		–0.754*	–0.793*
		(0.368)	(0.369)
Age (Std.)		0.278+	0.324*
		(0.163)	(0.162)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			1.573**
			(0.551)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			2.681***
			(0.545)
Immigration attitudes			0.471*
			(0.199)
Profile typicality X Urban residence	–6.213***	–6.949***	–6.912***
	(1.143)	(1.302)	(1.299)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	36,500	29,676	29,676
R2	0.016	0.018	0.020
R2 Adj.	0.015	0.017	0.019

Table A.12: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of urban residence; correct categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−0.899	−0.351	−0.507
	(1.222)	(1.406)	(1.401)
Urban residence (b.=rural residence)	7.125***	7.934***	7.660***
	(0.761)	(0.875)	(0.862)
Income (Deciles)		−0.133*	−0.151*
		(0.066)	(0.066)
Education (b.=low)		−0.494	−0.626
		(0.422)	(0.423)
Age (Std.)		0.531**	0.581**
		(0.191)	(0.191)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			2.691***
			(0.640)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			3.156***
			(0.635)
Immigration attitudes			0.645**
			(0.231)
Profile typicality X Urban residence	−14.468***	−15.860***	−15.741***
	(1.452)	(1.655)	(1.652)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	22,525	18,352	18,352
R2	0.027	0.030	0.034
R2 Adj.	0.026	0.029	0.033

Table A.13: OLS regression results: thermometer rating on self-classified urban-rural residence, conditional on profile typicality (marginal effect of urban residence; incorrect categorisation).

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Profile typicality	−14.378***	−15.369***	−15.370***
	(1.644)	(1.893)	(1.897)
Urban residence (b.=rural residence)	−6.810***	−7.126***	−7.022***
	(1.233)	(1.403)	(1.404)
Income (Deciles)		−0.153+	−0.127
		(0.081)	(0.082)
Education (b.=low)		−1.054*	−0.920+
		(0.523)	(0.526)
Age (Std.)		−0.239	−0.184
		(0.232)	(0.232)
EU membership good (b.=bad)			−0.102
			(0.768)
EU membership neither good nor bad (b.=bad)			1.964**
			(0.754)
Immigration attitudes			0.191
			(0.281)
Profile typicality X Urban residence	13.097***	14.073***	13.981***
	(2.052)	(2.325)	(2.328)
Country fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Num.Obs.	13,975	11,324	11,324
R2	0.011	0.013	0.015
R2 Adj.	0.010	0.011	0.013