

THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF ANGER ABOUT THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

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ABSTRACT

Gabriele Magni: The Political Effects of Anger about the Economic Crisis
(Under the direction of Liesbet Hooghe)

Anger plays a central role in politics. Previous studies have underlined its mobilization effect, but have not explored variation across individuals nor the impact of anger on political preferences. Since anger has been a widespread negative response to the recent financial and economic crisis, this study explores the impact of anger about the crisis with the 2005-2010 British election panel study. Contrary to previous findings, this article shows that anger has had a demobilizing effect on a large share of the population with low political efficacy. Among these citizens, anger has led to decreased political interest and conventional participation. At the same time, anger about the economic crisis has fueled support for populist and anti-political establishment parties. These findings help explain why some citizens are distancing from traditional political engagement and raise a worrying flag about the emergence of anti-systemic political forces.

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THE POLITICAL EFFECTS OF ANGER ABOUT THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

The recent economic and financial crisis has caused a deterioration in the economic conditions of many residents. Both in Europe and the US, millions of citizens have lost their jobs, undergone severe pay cuts and lost their homes because of inability to pay mortgages. The crisis threatens their way of life, and many have not stood by passively. The pictures of people taking to the street to voice their discontent have become familiar images, spanning from the Occupy Wall Street Movement in New York City to the protests in the City of London, from the workers' marches in Rome and Madrid to the heated rallies in Greece.¹ These citizens come from different backgrounds and have different goals, but they often share a similar emotional reaction to the crisis: anger.² How does anger affect citizens' attitudes and participation in politics?

The answer to this question is not readily apparent. On the one hand, anger may lead citizens to distance themselves and turn away from politics. The abysmal voter turnout registered in many European countries in recent elections seems to point in this direction. On the other hand, anger about the current state of affairs may push citizens to mobilize in order

¹ For instance, see: "Anger and Fear Over the Financial Crisis Fuel May Day Protests Across Europe" (New York Times, 2 May 2009); "Spain at core of day of unrest; Workers across Europe express their anger over austerity and bailouts" (The International Herald Tribune, 30 September 2010); "Clashes erupt in Athens during anti-austerity strike" (The International Herald Tribune, 27 September 2012); "Protesters hit the City of London" (The Telegraph, 17 October 2011), "From Edinburgh to Paris to Kiev, Europe is revolting" (Sydney Morning Herald, 28 March 2009).

² A poll conducted by USA Today/Gallup in late September 2008 found that a majority of Americans (53%) were angry about the financial crisis, while fewer Americans (41%) felt afraid. Three years later, in October 2011, 60% of respondents in a survey of the Chicago Booth/Kellogg School Financial Trust Index reported that they were angry or very angry about the economic condition. That was the highest level of anger registered by the Index since the beginning of the financial crisis. For the report, see: <http://www.financialtrustindex.org/resultswave12.htm>.

to bring change to the disliked system. The emergence of successful new political actors and forms of organization from below such as the Indignados in Spain, the Five Star Movement in Italy and Occupy Wall Street in the US seems to support this alternative outcome.

The analysis of the impact of widespread anger on individuals' attitudes and participation in politics addresses a central issue of the democratic life: citizens' engagement in the decision-making process. This analysis becomes even more urgent if one considers that widespread anger about economic hardship has provoked serious challenges to political systems in the past. In the 1930s, people's despair and wrath following the Great Depression favored the collapse of democracy in several European countries. Today, radical, populist and anti-political establishment (APE) parties have increased their consensus in many Western countries, including Greece, France, Italy and the UK.

In order to examine the political effects of anger, I resort to the British Election Study (BES 2005-2010). BES is a nine-wave panel survey data that contains key variables related to political participation before and during the crisis. The panel character of the dataset allows one to address endogeneity problems that often affect survey data dealing with emotions. Furthermore, 2010 is a good time to test the effect of anger about the financial and economic crisis because at that time the impact of the crisis had become fully apparent throughout Europe.

This study shows how anger about the economic crisis has had a demobilizing effect on a large share of the population with low political efficacy. Anger discouraged information seeking among citizens who felt inefficacious about public affairs and led them to lose interest in politics. As a consequence of this diminished interest, angry citizens with low efficacy also displayed lower electoral participation. So, contrary to what other studies have found, anger has not induced mobilization in traditional forms of political participation. At the same time, anger about the economic crisis has fueled support for populist and anti-

establishment political forces. Anti-mainstream actors appeal to angry people's distaste for compromise and satisfy their risk-seeking attitudes by promising substantial changes to the status quo. When angry people go to the polls, they are more likely to support radical candidates. When they do not vote, they still express positive opinions about radical forces, thereby constituting a pool of potential future supporters and influencing the positions of mainstream parties.

This paper offers several novel contributions to the literature on emotions and political participation. First, it challenges previous studies maintaining that anger generates a mobilization effect, thereby suggesting that the effects of anger are context-specific. Second, by evaluating the interaction between anger and efficacy, this paper shows that the political effects of anger vary across individuals depending on personal characteristics and resources. Finally, by linking anger to political preferences, this study advances previous work by exploring which political actors benefit from the diffusion of anger.

The remainder of this paper proceeds as follows. First, it summarizes previous contributions from the literature on the effects of emotions on behavior and political participation. Second, it outlines the study's original theoretical contributions about the political effects of anger. Third, it introduces the context and the data used to test the hypotheses. Fourth, it presents and discusses the models and the analysis performed. In the end, it offers some conclusions and indicates promising paths for future research.

EMOTIONS, BEHAVIOR AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Individual political participation can vary significantly over time. The same citizen may decide to cast a ballot at one election and to abstain from voting in the following one or to participate in a cycle of protests and to not join later rallies. The literature on political participation has for a long time emphasized the importance of demographic characteristics

and structural factors³ but these stable characteristics do not help us understand variation over time in individual-level responses. To explicate these fluctuations we need to examine short-term motivations, and in this, emotions play an important role (Valentino et al. 2011).

Anger, specifically, plays such a central role in politics that “one can define [it] as the essential political emotion” (Lyman, 1981: 61). This is because – as social psychology has shown – anger is usually linked to competition (e.g. Mackie et al. 2000, Cottrell and Neuberg 2005, Cuddy et al. 2007) and politics often involves competition over resources. As the literature on social movements has explained, anger matters socially and politically because it facilitates mobilization and sustains conflict (Jasper 2011; see also Holmes 2004).

The political science literature exploring the effects of emotions on people’s behavior has initially distinguished between positive and negative emotions. The Affective Intelligence Theory (AIT) maintains that positive emotions such as enthusiasm activate the dispositional system: they emerge when goals are being met and reinforce traditional patterns of behavior. Negative emotions, instead, emerge as a result of a threat from the environment. They activate the surveillance system and stimulate new information seeking, since traditional habits have proved ill-suited to deal with the threat (Marcus et al. 2000).

More recently, scholars have explored the specific effects of different negative emotions. MacKuen et al. (2010) maintain that aversion, which includes feelings of anger and disgust, has a negative effect on information seeking and desire to learn: “With aversion, one habituated practice is avoidance – rejecting distasteful news much in the way that one spits out a bite of a rotten apple” (442). This is because aversion – similarly to positive emotions – activates the disposition rather than the surveillance system, which in turn leads people to rely on traditional habits. As a consequence of depressed exposure to novel information and

³ For instance, the basic resource model (BRM) of participation proposed by Wolfinger and Rosenstone (1980) includes age, education, income and other demographics. The civic voluntarism model by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) includes indicators of political engagement and mobilization in addition to the variables offered by the BRM. For a concise but very clear summary on the point see Valentino et al. (2011).

biased information-seeking, aversion leads to a reduced willingness to compromise (MacKuen et al. 2010).

Consistently with the propositions by MacKuen and his coauthors, an experimental study on the effects of emotions on political information seeking and learning has found that only anxiety increases the quality and quantity of information seeking, thereby favoring learning. To the contrary, anger depresses search for novel information (Valentino et al. 2008). These results confirm previous findings illustrating how anxiety boosts careful information seeking, while anger leads people to rely on cognitive heuristics (Tiedens & Linton 2001). On the other hand, however, recent work has shown that anger increases information seeking significantly more than anxiety. This is especially the case when additional information is perceived as useful for retribution (Ryan 2012). As my theoretical section below explains, these seemingly contradictory findings can be understood by exploring the mediation of individual characteristics on the effects of anger.

Moving from a different perspective, cognitive appraisal theories of emotions in psychology maintain that the emergence of alternative emotions is influenced by the assessment of the situation and the relation between the individual and the environment. Different types of negative emotions emerge in different contexts: anger develops when individuals can identify the cause of a threat with enough certainty, while anxiety derives from incertitude about the origin of the threat (Lerner and Keltner 2001).

Additionally, anger is more likely to arise when people feel in control of the situation and confident about their ability to eliminate the cause of their distress (Lazarus 1991 and Frijda 1986, cited in Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones 2004). More recent experimental studies, however, suggest that coping is not a necessary mechanism for anger to arise. Indeed, even people who feel powerless and unable to eliminate the source of distress can experience anger

(Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones 2004, Harmon-Jones, Sigelman, Bohlig, and Harmon-Jones 2003).⁴

Cognitive appraisal theories of emotions also suggest that individuals take alternative patterns of actions in order to cope with the negative emotions arisen from the situation (Lazarus 1991, Frijda 1986, Folkman et al. 1986). In particular, anger stimulates problem-focused coping. Since angry individuals do not accept the negative situation as inevitable, they attack the threatening source to eliminate it, given that they are more optimistic about the possibility of removing the source of their anger (Lazarus 1991, Smith et al. 2008).⁵ Moreover, anger enhances risk-seeking behavior, as the sense of control and certainty leads angry people to make optimistic risk assessments (Lerner and Keltner 2000, 2001).

Providing support to these propositions, recent studies in political science have shown that anger stimulates mobilization more than anxiety and enthusiasm (Valentino et al. 2011). These findings have also been confirmed in a study on the role of emotions in election campaigns, which showed that anger produces a positive impact on political engagement by increasing factors that are positively related to participation (Weber 2013). Furthermore, a study on the opinions about the Iraq War found that anger increased the support for the war because of risk underestimation (Huddy et al. 2007).

ANGER AND THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

As the section above detailed, the implications of anger on learning and behavior are complex. Previous literature has generally assumed that anger produces similar effects on all citizens, regardless of individual characteristics. Specifically, previous studies have shown that anger usually discourages search for new information, but can favor information seeking

⁴ As it will become apparent below, this seems to be the case in Europe during the crisis, when the frustration derived from the inability to remove the actors blamed for the crisis arguably fueled even deeper anger.

⁵ See Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones (2004) for a summary on this point.

when new information is perceived as useful for retribution. Anger also encourages problem-focused coping, with the goal to remove the source of one's distress, and promotes risk-seeking behavior by favoring risk underestimation. Moving from these implications, below I develop a theory on the effects of anger on political interest, participation and preferences that takes into account individual characteristics.

Interest and Participation in Politics

Anger about the crisis has the potential to increase political interest and participation, but only as far as citizens believe they can punish and remove the source of their distress. This is likely the case for people who feel empowered, i.e. who believe they have the resources to influence politics. For this reason, the effect of anger on political interest and participation hinges on the feeling of efficacy. When citizens believe that they have the power to bring change, anger sparks the motivation to take action. Therefore, among the citizens who believe they have an influence over politics and public affairs, anger stimulates the search for new information that may be useful to punish the actors considered responsible for their distress. The increased interest and the problem-focused coping stimulated by anger will in turn lead angry citizens with high levels of efficacy to get engaged in the political game in order to change what they dislike. In this case, we should therefore expect increased electoral participation aiming to punish the political actors held responsible for the crisis.

On the other hand, when citizens perceive themselves as powerless,⁶ anger leads to decreased interest and consequently decreased participation in politics. Considering that aversion depresses new information search, I hypothesize that people with a low level of political efficacy who feel angry about the crisis look for less political information and pay less attention to politics. In other words, anger about the economic crisis should cause people

⁶ Indeed, as I reported above, recent studies have confirmed that anger can co-exist with a sense of powerlessness. See Berkowitz and Harmon-Jones (2004) for more information on this point.

who feel inefficacious to lose interest in politics. As a consequence of this decreased interest in politics, anger should also produce a demobilizing effect. Given that anger decreases interest in politics and lower interest is traditionally associated with lower participation, I expect anger to lower traditional participation in the political arena. Angry citizens who have lost interest in politics, do not feel represented in the political system and do not believe they can bring change just decide to turn away from traditional political engagement.⁷

Support for anti-political establishment parties

Previous studies mainly focused on the American political context and did not explore which political actors are more likely to benefit from citizens' anger. I hypothesize that anger due to the crisis helps the growth of populist and anti-establishment parties. Some examples of the latter development in Europe include the National Front in France, Golden Dawn in Greece, the Five Star Movement in Italy, the Party for Freedom (PVV) in the Netherlands and the UKIP in the UK. What is the link between anger and support for anti-establishment parties?

The main link is risk-seeking. As outlined above, previous work on emotions has maintained that anger reduces the willingness to compromise and promotes risk-seeking behavior. In this framework, not only do angry people make more risky choices, but they are also enlivened by a desire for retribution (Druckman and McDermott 2008). Indeed, as anger arises as a consequence of blame attribution, angry people likely want to punish the actors held responsible for their distress.

⁷ The problem of low efficacy may be accentuated in single-member plurality electoral systems if the entire traditional political establishment is discredited. Indeed, in electoral systems such as the British one, smaller, non-traditional parties have little chance to gain representation. As a consequence, citizens may be reluctant to enter a political process in which their preferred choice does not stand a chance of electoral success. It would be interesting to compare the effect of anger across political systems and analyze whether anger has had a different effect on participation in plurality systems more encouraging of the rise of non-traditional actors.

Given that anger stimulates risk-seeking behavior, desire for punishment and refusal to compromise, I expect anger about the crisis to increase support for anti-political establishment (APE) parties. Political parties are classified as APE if they meet the following criteria: they raise challenges to the status quo both in terms of major policy issues and political system issues; perceive themselves as a challenge to all the parties that form the political establishment; and maintain that there exists a fundamental divide between the people and the political establishment as a whole, with no difference between the government and the opposition (Abedi and Lundberg 2009).

APE parties exhibit the necessary requirements to meet the demands coming from angry citizens. On the one hand, anti-establishment parties represent a risky choice because they challenge the status quo, propose dramatic changes with unpredictable outcomes and are often new actors who have little familiarity with government responsibility. On the other hand, APE parties show uncompromising stances and very little desire to collaborate with traditional political actors, who are depicted as part of a despised establishment. With these positions, they promise to bring change and satisfy the desire against compromise expressed by angry citizens. For these reasons, I expect anger about the crisis to fuel support for anti-political establishment parties.

Hypotheses

Based on the discussion above, this study is going to test the following hypotheses:

H1: Anger leads to a decreased interest in politics for citizens with low efficacy and an increased interest for citizens with high efficacy.

H2: Anger leads to a decrease in electoral participation for citizens with low efficacy and an increase in electoral participation for citizens with high efficacy.

H3: Anger leads to an increase in support for anti-political establishment parties.

THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS IN THE UK

The recent economic crisis offers a good opportunity to explore the impact of anger on citizens' attitudes towards politics. Indeed, the economic crisis has represented a threat and caused a deterioration in the economic conditions of many citizens. As a result, people have experienced negative emotions such as fear and anger (Wagner 2013).⁸ Europe offers a good opportunity to explore the political implications of anger because the crisis has produced deep social distress on the continent. Furthermore, the political landscape in Europe presents populist and anti-establishment parties in several countries, as mentioned before.

In order to test the hypotheses above, I use the 2005-2010 British Election Study (BES). 2010 is a good time to test the effect of anger about the financial and economic crisis because at that time the impact of the crisis had become fully apparent throughout Europe. Indeed, 2009 was the *annus horribilis* for most European economies, with severe negative growth, increasing deficit and quickly growing unemployment rate. By the following year, citizens were fully aware of the size and the personal negative consequences of the economic turmoil. As a result, by 2010, the economic crisis came to dominate the electoral campaigns across Europe.

The UK also offers a hard test for my theory. The economic recession and the resulting widespread discontent were central issues in the political life of the country (Curtice and Fisher 2011), but the crisis and the related anger were arguably not as deep as they were in most southern European countries. Therefore, if the predicted political effects of anger

⁸ Wagner (2013) has shown that angry and fearful reactions to the economic crisis in the UK varied depending on blame attribution. More specifically, anger has emerged among those citizens who blamed accountable political actors, such as the national government and to a lesser extent the European Union, for the crisis. This point is important because it allows us to explore the effect of anger about the crisis that is related to political actors in order to evaluate the effect on citizens' interest in politics, participation in the political arena and party choice.

emerge in the British context, those same effects are likely to be amplified in the European countries where anger ran deeper.

Furthermore, as for support for APE parties, the UK adopts a single-member plurality system in national elections. As stated by Duverger's Law, this type of electoral system traditionally favors the two biggest parties, while third or protest parties are penalized by the wasted vote problem.⁹ If the prediction linking anger to support for anti-mainstream parties is confirmed despite the unfavorable electoral system, we can be more confident about the possibility for the findings to travel to political contexts in which proportional representation (PR) systems facilitate the electoral success of APE parties.¹⁰

In the British context, one party offers a telling example of APE parties: the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP). The UKIP proposes a populist, anti-politician message that expresses dissatisfaction towards all the mainstream parties and aims to recruit protest voters by branding itself as the "real opposition." Furthermore, it advocates a major policy change, i.e. the withdrawal of the UK from the European Union, and raises major challenges to the political system by calling for the repeal of the Human Rights Act and the dismantling of regional assemblies (Ford, Goodwin and Cutts 2012, Abedi and Lundberg 2009).¹¹

⁹ One may argue that citizens could be more prone to vote for an APE party in a single-member plurality system as a means of protest because of the very low chances for such a party to actually gain power and the consequent low risk involved. However, this claim is not very convincing when applied to angry people. First, as explained above, angry people usually display a copying-focused behavior to eliminate the source of their distress. They act to change what they do not like, rather than just expressing discontent. As a result, angry people seem more likely to vote for an APE party in contexts where they think that party has a real chance to succeed and bring change. Second, in PR systems there is more risk involved, as the APE party could actually gain power. This should not discourage angry people to express their preference for such a party, given that anger usually induces risk-seeking behavior.

¹⁰ Indeed, different elections in the UK show how the electoral system influences the electoral results of APE parties, with PR systems favoring their success. For instance, in national elections conducted with a plurality system, the UKIP – the best example of APE party, as described below – won 2.3% of the total votes in the 2005 and 3.1% of the vote in 2010. In both cases, the UKIP failed to win any parliamentary seats. To the contrary, in the elections for the European Parliament, which are conducted under a PR system, the UKIP won 16.1% of the votes in 2004 and 16.5% in 2010.

¹¹ It is certainly true that the UKIP has an ideological bent towards the right and as a result offers a more attractive opportunity for protest voting among the conservative electorate. However, this point does not weaken

Moreover, the BES data set offers several advantages because it contains panel data. Nine waves of surveys were conducted in the UK between the 2005 and the 2010 elections. Unlike cross-sectional survey data, panel data raise fewer concerns about causal direction and endogeneity between emotions and political interest, engagement and decision-making.¹² Since a question on feelings about the economic crisis was asked in the 2010 pre-campaign wave (wave 7), I can observe how anger influenced interest and participation afterwards both during the campaign (wave 8) and at the election, as measured by the post-election wave (wave 9).

Finally, survey data from the British elections nicely complement the existing literature on the political effects of anger. So far many studies have been conducted in experimental settings¹³ and in the context of American politics. This study with the 2005-2010 BES data set will offer increased external validity, as it analyzes data from elections in the real world, in which anger was naturally experienced and not artificially induced. Furthermore, this study will explore the role of emotions in a different geographical context, Europe, and in the presence of a serious threat like the economic crisis.

ANALYSIS

A preliminary analysis of the BES dataset reveals how anger has been the dominant emotive reaction to the crisis. Anger about the economic conditions of the country has increased substantially among British citizens since the beginning of the crisis. This increase

my theory. To the contrary, my theory is strengthened if I can prove that angry voters are more likely in general to support the UKIP regardless of their party identification. Indeed, if this is the case, the effect of anger on party choice is so strong that is detected even after controlling for party ID.

¹² Indeed, this is a concern raised by some authors about cross-sectional data: “Do emotions produce information seeking or do those who seek information experience strong emotions as a result?” (Valentino et al. 2008, 252). As I explained above, I can reduce these concerns with the use of panel data.

¹³ For an exception, see Valentino et al. (2011), who conjugate experimental and observational data from U.S. elections.

is evident in the answers provided by respondents to the following question before and during the crisis: “Which, if any, of the following words describe your feelings about the country’s general economic situation?” As the histograms below show, in 2005, i.e. before the crisis unfolded, only 13% of the respondents in the BES dataset expressed anger about the general economic situation. Five years later, in the middle of the financial crisis, the percentage of respondents expressing anger had increased to almost 50% of the sample.

Furthermore, among the negative emotions possibly related to the crisis, anger has emerged as a reaction more common than fear. First, about half of the 2010 sample expressed anger about the financial crisis, while less than one third of the respondents reported fear. Second, anger among respondents has spread substantially more than fear. While respondents who reported fear about the general economic conditions have increased from 17 to 32.5% from 2005 to 2010 (+15.5 percentage points), respondents describing anger have increased from 13 to 46% (+33 percentage points). Given the widespread diffusion of anger during the crisis, understanding its implications on political attitudes is important.

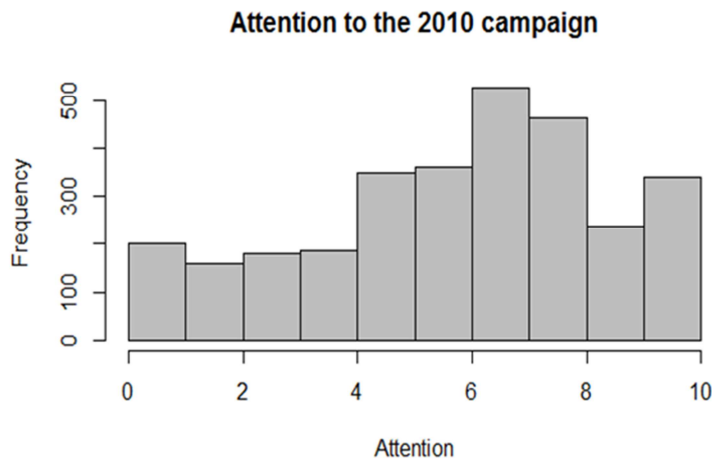
FIGURE 1 Anger about the economic situation



Interest in Politics

To measure the effect of anger about the economic crisis on interest in politics, I observe how anger influenced citizens' attention towards the 2010 UK electoral race. My

FIGURE2 Attention to the 2010 campaign



dependent variable measures on a scale from 0 to 10 how much attention citizens have paid to the 2010 political campaign.¹⁴ As the histogram shows, the values of the variable are spread across its entire range and not concentrated at the extremes.

For this reason, I estimate an OLS model rather than an ordered categorical model.¹⁵

The main independent variable is anger, which is a dummy obtained from a question asked in the 2010 pre-campaign wave: “Which, if any of the following words describe your feelings about how you have been personally affected by the current financial crisis?” Anger equals 1 for respondents who chose “Angry” and 0 for everyone else. Anger enters the

¹⁴ The question, which was asked during the 2010 campaign (wave 8), is the following: “Using a 0 to 10 scale where 0 means no attention and 10 means a great deal of attention, how much attention have you paid to the general election campaign thus far?” Two reasons account for why I chose attention to the 2010 election campaign as the dependent variable, rather than more general measures of interest in or attention to politics. First, this is a more specific question that should better capture respondents’ attitudes at the time in which it is asked. Instead, a question about general interest in politics may induce respondents to give an average answer about their interest over time. By choosing the more specific option, I can better capture the specific effect of anger in the context of the crisis. Second, this study is exploring the implication of anger on traditional, i.e. electoral, participation. A question about the 2010 election campaign best captures this concept. Indeed, an angry citizen may preserve a general interest in politics even when she is turned away from traditional participation.

¹⁵ In order to verify the robustness of my findings, I also ran an ordered logit model with the same dependent variable and the same independent variables. This model produced very similar results and can be found in the appendix.

equation also in interaction with efficacy, a variable that measures individuals' confidence about their ability to influence politics and public affairs.¹⁶ Consequently, the anger coefficient corresponds to the effect of anger on individuals with efficacy equal to 0, for whom the interaction term is eliminated. As explained by the theory above, I expect the anger coefficient to be negative: anger should depress political interest in citizens with low efficacy. Instead, I expect the coefficient of the interaction term between anger and efficacy to be positive, as anger is expected to increase political interest when perceived efficacy increases.

In order to isolate the impact of anger, several control variables are introduced. I control for people's general interest and general attention to politics,¹⁷ given that these two factors likely influence how much attention individuals paid specifically to the 2010 campaign.¹⁸ Two more political indicators are plugged into the basic model: strength of party identification and having being contacted by parties during the campaign. Strong partisans and citizens who interact with candidates during the campaign are more likely to pay greater attention to campaigns. Other control variables include gender, race, income, age, and education.

¹⁶ Efficacy is a categorical variable that can assume values ranging from 0 to 10. It was operationalized from the following survey question: "On a scale from 0 to 10, where 10 means a great deal of influence and 0 means no influence, how much influence do you have on politics and public affairs?"

¹⁷ This is the question measuring general interest in politics: "Let's talk for a few minutes about politics in general. How much interest do you generally have in what is going on in politics?" The following is the question measuring general attention to politics: "On a scale of 0 to 10, how much attention do you generally pay to politics?"

¹⁸ This is, admittedly, a hard test for my hypothesis since general interest in politics is presumably strongly correlated to the interest displayed in the 2010 election campaign. General interest in politics is a relevant control because it captures habitual engagement in politics. Since this study considers emotions, which play an important role in short-term motivations, it is important to control for the individual background in terms of political interest, against which emotions may explain variation in interest and participation over time. However, out of concern of very high correlation between general interest in politics and the dependent variable attention to the campaign, I also run a model without general interest as a control, which can be found in the appendix. As shown in the appendix, the effect of anger is still statistically significant and very similar in terms of size to the results of the main models. However, the R^2 of the model without general interest decreases considerably. This indicates that general interest explains a significant part of the variation in the dependent variable and excluding general interest as a control may lead to omitted variable problems. For this reason general interest in politics is maintained as a control in the main models presented in the paper.

Four other models are presented in the table to test the robustness of the effect of anger on attention to politics to alternative specifications. Model 2 presents a dummy equal to 1 for people who blamed the government for the economic crisis. This is a way to make sure that anger is not just a proxy for blame attribution, given that anger often emerged among citizens who held the government responsible for the crisis (Wagner 2013). Model 3 introduces a dummy for people who expressed fear about the crisis in order to isolate the effect of anger within the more general category of negative emotions. Model 4 includes age-squared to account for the possibly non-linear effect of age on political interest.¹⁹ Thanks to the panel character of the data, model 5 controls for the degree of attention paid to the election campaign in 2005, i.e. before the development of the crisis and the diffusion of anger.

¹⁹ Indeed, previous studies have generally found that middle-aged individuals pay usually greater attention to politics than both younger and older people.

TABLE 1 Attention to the 2010 election campaign

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
(Intercept)	-0.67 (0.46)	-0.67 (0.46)	-0.72 (0.46)	0.56 (0.81)	-0.57 (0.44)
anger	-0.29* (0.14)	-0.30* (0.14)	-0.32* (0.14)	-0.28* (0.14)	-0.28* (0.13)
interest	1.06*** (0.08)	1.06*** (0.08)	1.06*** (0.08)	1.06*** (0.08)	0.87*** (0.08)
att.pol	0.37*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)	0.30*** (0.03)
education	0.02 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	0.03 (0.04)	0.02 (0.04)	0.03 (0.03)
income	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
age	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.05 (0.03)	0.00 (0.00)
male	-0.24* (0.10)	-0.23* (0.10)	-0.23* (0.10)	-0.24* (0.10)	-0.25** (0.10)
white	0.59 (0.33)	0.59 (0.33)	0.60 (0.33)	0.59 (0.33)	0.52 (0.32)
efficacy	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
pid.strength	0.12 (0.07)	0.12 (0.07)	0.12 (0.07)	0.11 (0.07)	0.11 (0.07)
contact	0.10 (0.14)	0.10 (0.14)	0.10 (0.14)	0.11 (0.14)	0.05 (0.14)
anger:efficacy	0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)	0.06 (0.04)
blame.gov		0.02 (0.10)			
afraid			0.10 (0.11)		
age.2				0.00 (0.00)	
attention.2005					0.22*** (0.02)
R ²	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.53
Adj. R ²	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.53
Num. obs.	1334	1334	1334	1334	1330

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

Table 1: Attention to 2010 Election Campaign

The table above shows that the anger coefficient goes in the expected negative direction and remains statistically significant at the .05 level across the five specifications. In

other words, angry people with low efficacy paid less attention to politics during the 2010 campaign. Since anger is a dummy variable, on average angry people with low efficacy paid about 0.3 points less attention (on a scale from 0 to 10) to the 2010 election campaign than non-angry people. This may seem a relatively small difference, but it is useful to notice that other statistically significant variables produced a similar impact on the dependent variable, once we control for all the independent variables plugged into the model. For instance, a one-unit increase in general attention to politics produced on average an increase of less than 0.4 points in the attention paid to the 2010 election campaign.

FIGURE 3 Marginal effect of anger on interest given efficacy

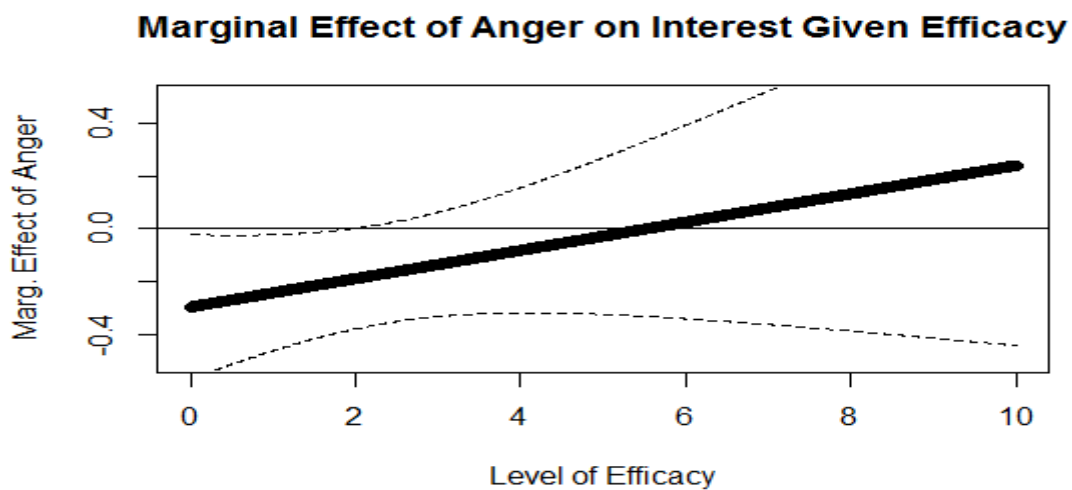
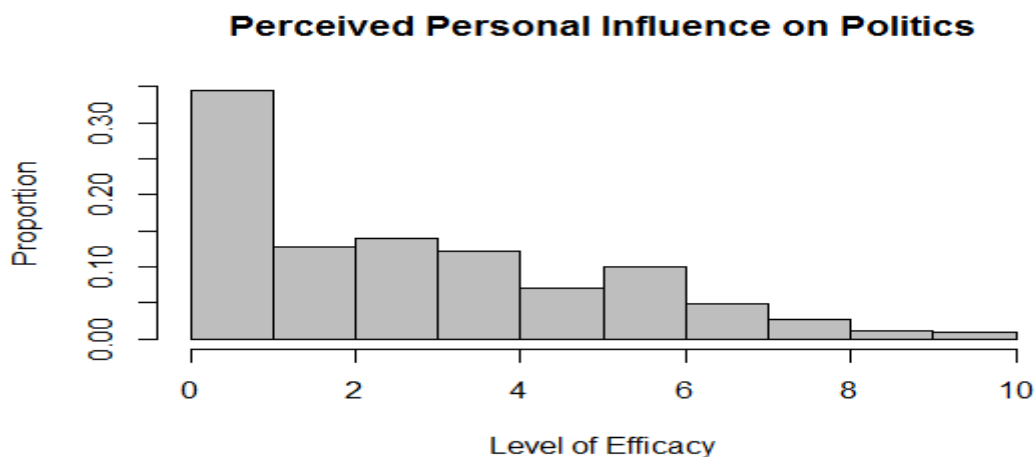
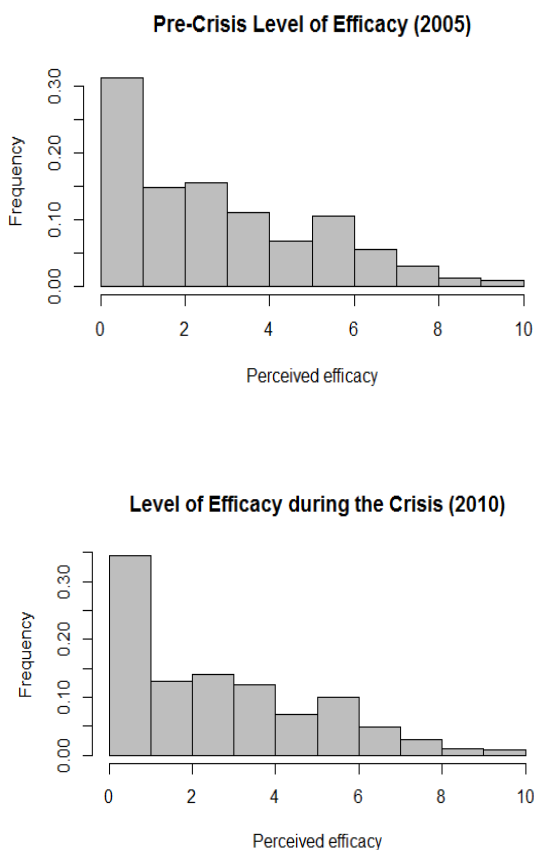


FIGURE 4 Perceived personal influence on politics



Furthermore, the coefficient of the interaction term between anger and efficacy goes in the expected positive direction, thereby indicating that anger favors a greater interest in politics as efficacy increases. However, as the plot of the marginal effect of anger on interest given efficacy shows, the anger coefficient is significant only for low levels of efficacy (i.e. efficacy equal to 0 or 1). Even if limited to the lower levels of efficacy, this finding should not be underestimated. Indeed, as the histogram above shows, almost 50% of the sample reported one of the two lowest levels of efficacy, which means that anger had a depressing effect on attention paid to the campaign for about half of the population.

FIGURE 5 Crisis and levels of efficacy



At first glance, these results may raise

questions about potential endogeneity problems. The data shows that the vast majority of respondents in the survey feels inefficacious: is this a factor that shapes response to the crisis by mediating the effect of anger – as my hypothesis maintains – or is low efficacy a byproduct of the crisis? The panel nature of the BES dataset allows one to discard the latter hypothesis. A comparison of perceived efficacy in the population before and during the crisis shows that the distribution of efficacy has not changed substantially between 2005 and 2010 (displayed in the graphs). Specifically, the

proportions of respondents reporting levels of efficacy equal to 0 and 1 were .31 and .15 respectively in 2005 and .34 and .13 in 2010. Hence the proportion of respondents feeling very inefficacious (i.e. classifying themselves in one of the two lowest levels) is very similar

in 2005 (.46) and 2010 (.47). This indicates that possible changes that may have happened at the individual level were not unidirectional. As a whole, the economic crisis does not seem to have decreased the level of efficacy within the general population. Consequently, rather than being a by-product of the crisis, (in)efficacy appears to be a factor mediating the response to the crisis.²⁰

The analysis presented so far partially confirms my first hypothesis: anger leads to a decrease in attention paid to politics among citizens with low efficacy, but its impact on interest is not statistically significant for citizens with higher efficacy. Given that a very high proportion of citizens does not believe to have influence over politics, anger about the crisis has led to a decreased interest in elections for a large sector of the society.

Political Participation

After exploring attention to politics during the crisis, I consider the effect of anger on political participation, which is operationalized as the act of voting or not voting at the 2010 election. To do this, I run a logit model in which the two categories of the dependent variable are voted and not voted.²¹ The main independent variable is still anger, which is plugged into the model also in interaction with efficacy. As stated above, I expect anger to depress participation in politics as a consequence of decreased interest for citizens with low efficacy.

²⁰ Another way to deal with the issue of potential endogeneity could be to interact the level of efficacy expressed in 2005 with anger about the economic crisis, since this earlier measure of efficacy could not be affected by the crisis that unfolded later on. However, I rejected this alternative because it would yield even deeper problems. Indeed, in order to test my hypotheses and capture the effect of the interaction between anger and efficacy, I need to evaluate these two factors at the same point in time. As I warned above, changes in perceived efficacy at the individual level may have happened. Consider the scenario in which one citizen displayed a low level of efficacy in 2005 and became then more confident about her means to influence politics in 2010 after being promoting to a higher job position. If this citizen is angry about the financial crisis and I interact this expressed anger with her level of efficacy in 2005, I would measure the wrong effect. Instead of measuring her interaction effectively displayed in 2010 (anger with high efficacy) I would measure the interaction between anger and low efficacy, whose effects are predicted to be opposite by my hypotheses.

²¹ I used the following question from the 2010 post-election wave: “Talking to people about the General Election on May 6th, we have found that a lot of people didn’t manage to vote. How about you – did you manage to vote in the General Election?”

To the contrary, anger should work as a mobilizing factor for citizens who feel confident about their ability to influence and bring change to the political system.

The control variables introduced in the model come from the Civic Voluntarism Model of participation proposed by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) and follow the operationalization adopted by Valentino and co-authors (2011). The control variables can be grouped in four main sets capturing resources, political interest, social involvement and mobilization, which should all positively influence political participation. Resources include education, income, efficacy, age and age squared. Political engagement includes general interest in politics and strength of partisan identification. Social involvement is captured by union membership and home ownership, which represent two indicators of social ties. Mobilization is operationalized through a dummy variable equal to 1 for people who were contacted by political parties during the campaign and 0 for individuals who were not. Demographic controls for gender and race are also added to the model.

Given the panel character of the data, two additional variables capturing previous political participation are included. `Vote.2005` is a dummy variable equal to 1 if the respondent voted at the 2005 UK national election and `vote.2009` is a dummy variable equal to 1 for those who voted at the 2009 election for the European Parliament. Since both of these elections were conducted before the crisis fully unfolded, these two independent variables allow me to control for previous patterns of electoral participation and to analyze how anger about the financial crisis has modified citizens' political engagement.

TABLE 2 Vote at the 2010 election

	Voted
(Intercept)	2.94 (3.03)
anger	-0.77 ⁺ (0.46)
efficacy	-0.12 (0.12)
vote.2005	0.90* (0.41)
vote.2009	1.82*** (0.36)
education	-0.15 (0.13)
income	0.07 (0.06)
age	-0.14 (0.11)
age.2	0.00 (0.00)
pid.strength	0.85** (0.32)
interest	0.20 (0.19)
home	0.15 (0.42)
union	0.25 (0.49)
contact	1.07 (0.76)
male	-0.44 (0.36)
white	0.71 (0.76)
anger:efficacy	0.25 (0.18)
AIC	319.29
BIC	403.31
Log Likelihood	-142.64
Deviance	285.29
Num. obs.	1035

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

Table 2: Vote at the 2010 Election

As the table above shows, the anger coefficient is negative and statistically significant at the .1 level for the lowest level of efficacy. This indicates that anger has decreased electoral participation for people who believe they do not have any influence on politics and public affairs. The divide-by-four rule suggests that the effect of anger is substantial in terms of size: among citizens who feel inefficacious, anger produced a decrease of almost 20 percentage points in their probability of voting. This is the specific effect of the interaction between anger and low efficacy, and not simply of the feeling of being non influential in politics, since the efficacy coefficient is not statistically significant for people who did not express anger.

As observed in the previous model about interest, the coefficient of the interaction term between anger and efficacy goes in the expected positive direction but the effect of anger is statistically significant only when efficacy is equal to zero.²² Even if limited to the lowest level of efficacy, this finding should not be underestimated, since almost 40% of the respondents reported zero as their perceived efficacy.²³ Therefore, my second hypothesis is partially confirmed: anger has led to a decrease in voter turnout among citizens with low efficacy, but its impact on electoral participation is not statistically significant for citizens with higher efficacy.²⁴

²² This indicates that anger favors a greater political participation as efficacy increases but the effect is not statistically significant. This point is illustrated by the plot of the marginal effect of anger on vote given efficacy in the appendix.

²³ I also ran an alternative model in which efficacy is a dummy variable equal to 0 for people with a very low level of efficacy (0 or 1), who constitute about half of the entire sample, and equal to 1 for all the other reported values of efficacy. This model produced similar results. The anger coefficient emerged as negative and statistically significant at the .05 level for people with low efficacy (dummy equal to 0) and positive but not statistically significant for people with high efficacy (dummy equal to 1, p-value equal to .40). However, in this alternative model, the impact of anger is slightly bigger, since the coefficient is -.96 as compared to -.77 in the model reported above. This alternative model can be found in the appendix at the end of the paper.

²⁴ Other coefficients that emerged as statistically significant are strength of party identification and vote at previous elections. As expected, these factors positively influenced electoral participation: citizens who strongly identified with a political party and who displayed a pattern of habitual voting were more likely to vote at the 2010 election.

Taken together, the results of the models above on the effects of anger on political interest and participation tell a different story from what previous studies have usually narrated. Indeed, previous literature and conventional wisdom have maintained that anger has a powerful mobilization effect. This study, instead, shows that anger about the crisis has had a powerful demobilizing effect for the half of population who feels inefficacious. At best, anger had no significant effect on participation for citizens with higher levels of efficacy.

Support for anti-Political Establishment Parties

Anger depressed electoral participation among citizens with low efficacy but how did it influence party choice among those who voted at the 2010 election? In order to explore this question, I run a multinomial logit model in which the left-out category of the dependent variable corresponds to vote for the UKIP. Therefore, each comparison of the coefficients is between vote for the UKIP and vote for the party specified in the table. In every model, voting for UKIP is equal to 0 so that a negative coefficient will indicate an increase in the probability of voting for the UKIP. Anger is the main independent variable. The control variables include party identification, general interest in politics and a series of resource and demographic controls. Indeed, APE parties have traditionally gained more support among men, less educated people, young voters and less wealthy citizens. I also include two indicators of social integration – union membership and home ownership – as APE parties have often scored better among people at the margins of society (see Evans 2005).²⁵

As expected and shown in the table below, party identification strongly predicts party choice at the election in all the three models. More interestingly, anger is statistically significant at the .01 level in the models comparing UKIP and Labour and UKIP and Liberal-Democrats. In both cases, the anger coefficient is negative: as anger increases, the probability

²⁵ Adding the dummy variable “vote for the UKIP in the 2005 election” (equal to 1 for the citizens who voted for the UKIP and 0 for everyone else) as a control variable yields very similar results for the coefficient of anger. The model with this additional control can be found in the appendix.

for citizens to vote for the UKIP rather than the two other parties increases. In other words, during the 2010 election, all else equal, angry people were more likely to choose the UKIP over the Labour and the Liberal Democratic parties.

TABLE 3 Party choice at the 2010 election

Table 3: Party Choice at the 2010 Election

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Labour (1)	Conservative (2)	Lib-Dem (3)
anger	-0.856*** (0.288)	0.057 (0.268)	-0.751*** (0.283)
education	0.057 (0.101)	-0.039 (0.092)	0.211** (0.099)
income	0.087* (0.049)	0.126*** (0.045)	0.061 (0.048)
age	-0.011 (0.014)	-0.002 (0.013)	-0.019 (0.013)
efficacy	0.164** (0.075)	0.077 (0.070)	0.129* (0.074)
interest	0.064 (0.155)	0.047 (0.141)	-0.064 (0.150)
union	0.504 (0.380)	0.189 (0.363)	0.384 (0.378)
home	-0.041 (0.358)	0.189 (0.331)	0.305 (0.356)
male	-0.191 (0.292)	-0.172 (0.268)	0.103 (0.288)
white	0.384 (0.751)	0.500 (0.739)	1.478* (0.807)
ukip.2010	-3.249*** (0.659)	-1.682*** (0.354)	-3.828*** (0.654)
labour.2010	2.471*** (0.380)	-0.324 (0.402)	0.708* (0.381)
conservative.2010	-1.268** (0.500)	2.097*** (0.361)	-0.880** (0.417)
liberal.2010	0.388 (0.844)	0.651 (0.793)	2.996*** (0.754)
Constant	0.278 (1.159)	-0.127 (1.113)	-0.030 (1.181)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	2,266.143	2,266.143	2,266.143

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Instead, anger does not seem to have had a significant impact on the choice of the UKIP over the Conservative Party. This finding may be explained by taking into account the British electoral system and the ideology of these two parties. Single-member plurality electoral systems tend to favor bigger parties over smaller ones that stand little chance to win the plurality within districts. Furthermore, despite the fact that the UKIP brands itself as the real opposition against all traditional parties, the Conservative and the UKIP party do share some common positions. They both occupy the right side of the political spectrum and have adopted a critical tone, even if in different terms, over the British membership in the EU (Abedi and Lundberg 2009). The two parties also have closer positions on issues like immigration, when we compared them to the Labour or the Liberal-Democratic Party.²⁶ As a consequence, some angry citizens may elect the UKIP as their preferred option but then strategically vote for the closest alternative that stands more chances of electoral success. In other words, anger may have induced some citizens to vote for the Conservative Party given the little chances for the UKIP to win the district seat.²⁷

For this reason, looking only at the electoral results may be a partial way to evaluate the level of support of anti-mainstream political forces within society. It is useful to look at the potential support for APE parties beyond the electoral data. Indeed, a favorable view towards radical parties, and specifically the UKIP, may influence politics in several ways. First, positive attitudes towards a party represent a pool of potential votes, which may translate into actual votes at a future point in time. Second, a growing public support for APE actors may convince mainstream parties to adopt some of the positions of populist parties in

²⁶ Recently, the Conservative Party has proposed a very restrictive reform of the immigration policy. See for instance: “The Tories are becoming the ‘nasty party’ on immigration” (The Guardian, 10 June 2012) and “The Tories’ barmiest policy” (The Economist, 20 October 2012).

²⁷ Recent electoral data from the UK clearly shows that the electoral system can make a big difference in the electoral results of anti-mainstream parties. This is the case of the UKIP, which obtained 2.3% and 3.1% of the vote at the last two national elections held with a plurality electoral system, while was able to gain more than 16% of the vote at the last two elections for the European Parliament, which are conducted under a PR system.

order to retain voters. Therefore, support for APE parties may lead to changes within the political system even outside the electoral channel.

To explore whether anger has increased support for APE parties, I run an OLS model²⁸ in which the dependent variable measures people's opinions about the UKIP on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means strongly dislike and 10 strongly like.²⁹ The main independent variable measures anger about the economic crisis and controls include demographic and resource variables, since anti-mainstream parties have traditionally had a greater appeal among people with fewer resources.

In addition to the basic one, five models test the robustness of the effect of anger on support for UKIP with alternative specifications. Model 2 includes two variables measuring political engagement: strength of party identification and general interest in politics. Model 3 presents two indicators measuring the importance of social ties and integration, i.e. home ownership and union membership. Model 4 controls for an alternative negative emotion: fear. Model 5 takes into account blame attribution. Finally, model 6 includes party ID, since citizens who identify as supporters of the UKIP will likely have a favorable opinion of the UKIP, while citizens who identify as supporters of a left-leaning party like the Labour Party will presumably have a negative opinion of the UKIP.³⁰

²⁸ Given that the values of the dependent variables are not well distributed across its entire range, all of the models were also run as ordered logit models with the same dependent and independent variables. The anger coefficient presents the same positive sign and is statistically significant at the same level. See the appendix.

²⁹ This is the question asked in the survey: "On a scale that runs from 0 to 10, where 0 means strongly dislike and 10 means strongly like, how do you feel about the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP)?"

³⁰ The last model including party identification produces a substantively higher R-squared.

TABLE 4 Support for UKIP

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
(Intercept)	4.07*** (0.63)	4.48*** (0.70)	4.15*** (0.63)	4.04*** (0.63)	3.97*** (0.62)	4.15*** (0.56)
anger	1.10*** (0.14)	1.10*** (0.15)	1.09*** (0.14)	1.03*** (0.15)	0.88*** (0.15)	0.51*** (0.13)
education	-0.31*** (0.05)	-0.33*** (0.05)	-0.31*** (0.05)	-0.31*** (0.05)	-0.32*** (0.05)	-0.26*** (0.05)
income	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04* (0.02)
age	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
efficacy	-0.11*** (0.03)	-0.10** (0.04)	-0.10** (0.03)	-0.10** (0.03)	-0.09** (0.03)	-0.04 (0.03)
male	-0.12 (0.15)	-0.08 (0.16)	-0.11 (0.15)	-0.10 (0.15)	-0.12 (0.15)	-0.11 (0.13)
white	-0.13 (0.47)	-0.34 (0.50)	-0.16 (0.46)	-0.15 (0.46)	-0.13 (0.46)	0.24 (0.42)
pid.strength		-0.21 (0.11)				
interest		0.08 (0.09)				
home			0.17 (0.20)			
union			-0.49** (0.18)	-0.47** (0.18)	-0.42* (0.18)	-0.26 (0.16)
afraid				0.25 (0.16)		
blame.gov					0.83*** (0.15)	0.34* (0.14)
labour.2010						-0.90*** (0.18)
conservative.2010						0.80*** (0.18)
liberal.2010						-1.27*** (0.23)
ukip.2010						4.62*** (0.31)
R ²	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.28
Adj. R ²	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.11	0.28
Num. obs.	1604	1484	1604	1604	1604	1604

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

Table 4: Support for UKIP

As the table above shows, anger has a positive and statistically significant at the .001 level effect on the degree of support for the UKIP across the alternative model specifications. Angry people have a more favorable opinion about the UKIP, since angry citizens see the UKIP as a possibility of change within the political system.³¹ On a scale from 0 to 10, anger leads on average to an increase in support for the UKIP comprised between 0.5 and 1.1 points, controlling for the effect of the other independent variables in the model.

Party identification (model 6) is also statistically significant at the .001 level for all the four parties considered. As expected, citizens who identify as supporters of the UKIP have a more positive opinion of the UKIP, while supporters of the Labour and the Liberal-Democratic Party have a more negative opinion. Interestingly enough, identification with the Conservative Party is correlated with a more positive view of the UKIP, a finding that confirms the relative proximity of the electorates of these two parties as compared to supporters of other parties. Analogously, a model shown in the appendix³² measuring the support for the Conservative party based on the same like/dislike question found that identification with the UKIP is positively correlated with support for the Conservative Party. This finding strengthens the point above that some supporters of the UKIP may have strategically chosen to vote for the Conservative Party at the 2010 election.

In order to address potential endogeneity concerns, the same models presented above are also run with an additional control measuring people's opinions about the UKIP on a scale from 0 to 10 in 2005. In these new models, anger explains the change in opinions about the UKIP before and during the crisis. As the table below shows, anger caused an increase in support for the UKIP even when we control for pre-crisis levels of support.

³¹ Analysis on the perception of the UKIP as an opportunity of change is shown in the appendix.

³² When measuring the support for the Conservative party, I obtained very similar results with an OLS and an ordered logit model. The OLS model is shown in the appendix.

TABLE 5 Support for UKIP with additional controls

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
(Intercept)	1.57** (0.50)	1.49** (0.55)	1.62** (0.50)	1.63** (0.50)	1.59** (0.50)	1.96*** (0.48)
anger	0.44*** (0.11)	0.38** (0.12)	0.43*** (0.11)	0.42*** (0.12)	0.33** (0.12)	0.21+ (0.11)
education	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.14** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)	-0.15*** (0.04)	-0.14*** (0.04)
income	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
age	0.02** (0.00)	0.02** (0.01)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01** (0.00)	0.01+ (0.00)
efficacy	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.09** (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.08** (0.03)	-0.06* (0.03)
male	0.07 (0.12)	0.07 (0.12)	0.07 (0.12)	0.07 (0.12)	0.07 (0.12)	0.04 (0.11)
white	-0.20 (0.37)	-0.19 (0.39)	-0.22 (0.37)	-0.22 (0.37)	-0.21 (0.37)	-0.03 (0.35)
UKIP05	0.73*** (0.02)	0.75*** (0.02)	0.73*** (0.02)	0.73*** (0.02)	0.72*** (0.02)	0.62*** (0.02)
pid.strength		-0.20* (0.09)				
interest		0.12 (0.07)				
home			0.24 (0.16)			
union			-0.37** (0.14)	-0.35* (0.14)	-0.32* (0.14)	-0.25+ (0.13)
afraid				0.04 (0.13)		
blame.gov					0.42*** (0.12)	0.22+ (0.12)
labour.2010						-0.32* (0.15)
conservative.2010						0.58*** (0.15)
liberal.2010						-0.51** (0.20)
ukip.2010						2.56*** (0.27)
R ²	0.49	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.54
Adj. R ²	0.49	0.50	0.49	0.49	0.50	0.54
Num. obs.	1499	1398	1499	1499	1499	1499

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

Table 5: Support for UKIP

CONCLUSIONS

As this paper has shown, anger about the economic crisis has produced substantial political effects. Among citizens with low efficacy, anger has led to a decrease in political interest and conventional participation. This finding sheds new light on the link between anger and involvement in politics by qualifying previous results in the literature. Indeed, the literature on emotions and political participation has consistently reported a mobilizing effect of anger. This study, instead, tells a different story. Anger has a depressing effect on political participation among citizens whose perceived influence on public affairs is very low. This result should not be underestimated, as many people currently express a very low level of efficacy.

How can we reconcile this finding with previous ones? One reason that may explain this apparent contradiction resides in the peculiar nature of the anger examined in this paper. This project has explored the implications of anger about the economic and financial crisis. In other words, anger was not induced by leaders or candidates against specific targets or groups to mobilize support; instead, it emerged as a consequence of broader events. In any case, this study suggests that the same emotion can yield different effects depending on the context in which it arises. In order to better understand the political implications of context-specific emotions, future studies should observe how the effects of emotions and specifically anger vary across different political opportunity structures.

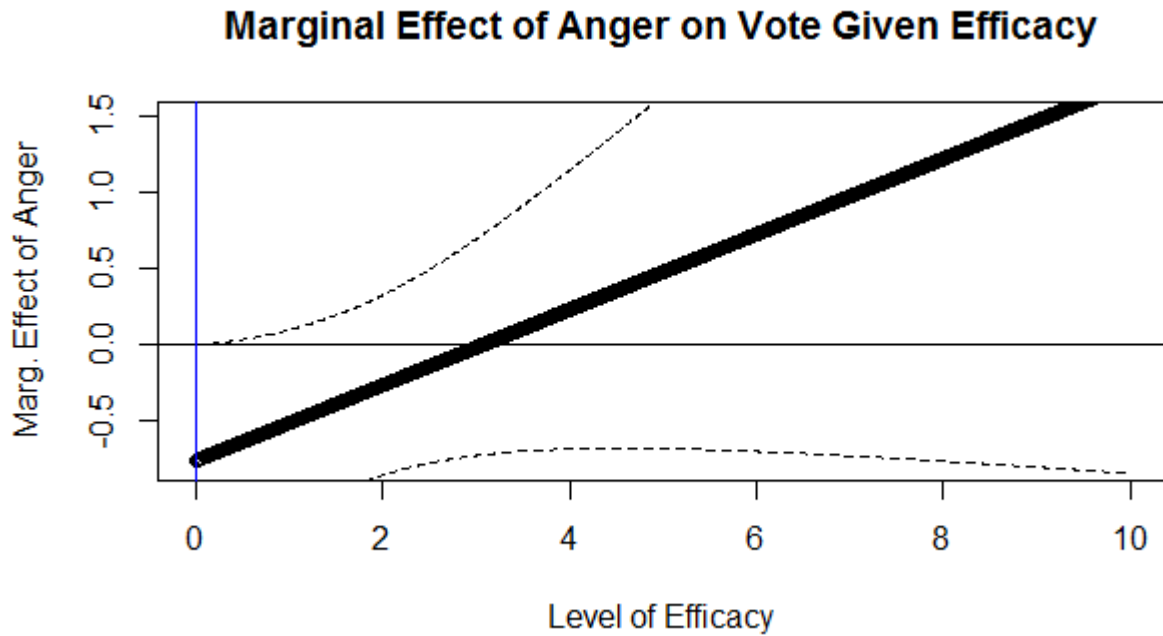
Besides negatively affecting political engagement, anger about the crisis has also increased support for anti-establishment political parties. The support that the UKIP enjoys among angry citizens is mainly due to its unwillingness to compromise and collaborate with other political parties and to its promise to bring substantial changes to the status quo. The actual and potential increased support for radical forces raises worrying flags for the working of democratic political systems. Future studies should examine how long-lasting the anger-

induced effects are likely to be. Will citizens angry about the crisis withdraw their support for populist forces once the crisis is solved? Or are these citizens developing political preferences and ties that will be carried on in the future? New waves of the BES dataset or experimental methods including panel data may offer important insights.

Considering that anger likely stimulates different effects in different political contexts, it would also be useful in the future to expand the study to other countries. This paper has explored the impact of anger about the financial crisis in the UK but the economic turmoil was not just a British event. Other countries in Europe have been more harshly affected by the crisis and we may expect anger to run deeper in those contexts. Therefore, it would be interesting to explore the impact of anger on participation and party choice in countries like Italy, Spain, or Greece. Additionally, it would be interesting to inquire whether the anger-induced support for radical parties is amplified within PR electoral systems, in which anti-mainstream parties can more easily win parliamentary representation. Obtaining a broader picture of the political effects of anger about the crisis seems an endeavor worth pursuing in times of still very high economic and political uncertainty.

APPENDIX

Plot of marginal effect of anger on vote given the level of efficacy.



The plot shows the marginal effect of anger on vote given the level of efficacy. Specifically, it shows how the marginal effect of anger on vote is negative for low levels of efficacy and positive for higher levels of efficacy. As explained in the paper, the effect of anger is statistically significant at the .1 level only when efficacy is equal to 0, while is not significant for all the other levels of efficacy.

Attention to the 2010 campaign – OLS model without general interest in politics as a control

	Model 1
(Intercept)	0.48 (0.48)
anger	-0.28 ⁺ (0.15)
att.pol	0.68 ^{***} (0.03)
education	0.08 [*] (0.04)
income	0.02 (0.02)
age	0.00 (0.00)
male	-0.21 [*] (0.11)
white	0.69 (0.35)
efficacy	0.00 (0.03)
pid.strength	0.26 ^{***} (0.07)
contact	0.10 (0.15)
anger:efficacy	0.06 (0.05)
R ²	0.44
Adj. R ²	0.43
Num. obs.	1334

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

Table 1: Attention to 2010 Election Campaign

The table shows the effect of anger on attention paid to the 2010 UK election campaign without general interest in politics as a control variable. The anger coefficient is still statistically significant (at the .1 level) and negatively correlated to the level of attention paid to the 2010 election campaign. The size of the coefficient is very similar to the size in the models displayed in the paper. In this model, however, the value of R^2 is smaller, which indicates that general interest in politics explains a substantial part of the variation of the dependent variable. Omitting general interest as a control variable, therefore, may lead to omitted variable problems and bias in the estimates of the other independent variables.

Attention to the 2010 campaign – Ordered logit models (models 1, 2, 3)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	attention to campaign		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
anger	-0.269* (0.144)	-0.275* (0.146)	-0.285* (0.147)
interest	1.083*** (0.089)	1.081*** (0.089)	1.085*** (0.089)
att.pol	0.418*** (0.038)	0.419*** (0.038)	0.417*** (0.038)
education	0.018 (0.036)	0.018 (0.036)	0.019 (0.036)
income	0.006 (0.015)	0.006 (0.015)	0.007 (0.015)
age	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)
male	-0.214** (0.103)	-0.214** (0.103)	-0.211** (0.103)
white	0.503 (0.328)	0.503 (0.328)	0.509 (0.328)
efficacy	-0.020 (0.033)	-0.020 (0.033)	-0.021 (0.033)
pid.strength	0.146** (0.074)	0.147** (0.074)	0.145* (0.074)
contact	0.102 (0.144)	0.101 (0.144)	0.102 (0.144)
blame.gov		0.029 (0.103)	
afraid			0.061 (0.113)

anger:efficacy	0.063 (0.045)	0.062 (0.045)	0.064 (0.045)
0 1	1.656*** (0.509)	1.661*** (0.510)	1.690*** (0.513)
1 2	2.764*** (0.485)	2.769*** (0.485)	2.797*** (0.488)
2 3	3.867*** (0.478)	3.871*** (0.478)	3.899*** (0.481)
3 4	4.655*** (0.477)	4.659*** (0.478)	4.686*** (0.481)
4 5	5.377*** (0.479)	5.381*** (0.479)	5.408*** (0.483)
5 6	6.308*** (0.486)	6.312*** (0.486)	6.339*** (0.489)
6 7	7.187*** (0.495)	7.192*** (0.495)	7.219*** (0.498)
7 8	8.378*** (0.507)	8.383*** (0.507)	8.409*** (0.510)
8 9	9.550*** (0.519)	9.555*** (0.519)	9.581*** (0.522)
9 10	10.515*** (0.528)	10.520*** (0.529)	10.547*** (0.531)
Observations	1,334	1,334	1,334
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

The table shows the effect of anger on attention paid to the 2010 UK election campaign. Given that the values of the dependent variable are not are not well distributed across its entire range, the models presented in the paper are now run as ordered logit models with the same dependent and independent variables. As the tables below show, the anger coefficient is still statistically significant and negatively correlated to the level of attention paid to the 2010 election campaign. These alternative models confirm the finding in the paper that anger about the crisis has led to a decreased attention to politics among citizens with low efficacy.

Attention to the 2010 campaign – Ordered logit models (models 4, 5)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	attention to campaign	
	(4)	(5)
anger	-0.248*** (0.019)	-0.241* (0.145)
interest	1.085*** (0.085)	0.910*** (0.091)
attention.2005		0.252*** (0.027)
att.pol	0.419*** (0.038)	0.351*** (0.039)
education	0.015 (0.033)	0.025 (0.036)
income	0.009 (0.015)	-0.0001 (0.015)
age	-0.073	-0.001 (0.004)
age.2	0.001	
male	-0.226** (0.102)	-0.256** (0.103)
white	0.495*** (0.017)	0.504 (0.331)
efficacy	-0.021 (0.027)	-0.036 (0.033)
pid.strength	0.135* (0.073)	0.117 (0.074)
contact	0.114*** (0.006)	0.043 (0.144)

anger:efficacy	0.060** (0.029)	0.070 (0.045)
0 1	-0.157*** (0.016)	1.693*** (0.517)
1 2	0.955*** (0.053)	2.839*** (0.490)
2 3	2.062*** (0.170)	3.997*** (0.483)
3 4	2.852*** (0.183)	4.805*** (0.482)
4 5	3.575*** (0.191)	5.547*** (0.484)
5 6	4.509*** (0.199)	6.525*** (0.491)
6 7	5.391*** (0.208)	7.449*** (0.501)
7 8	6.586*** (0.222)	8.698*** (0.514)
8 9	7.761*** (0.236)	9.924*** (0.527)
9 10	8.731*** (0.249)	10.928*** (0.537)

Observations	1,334	1,330
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Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Vote at the 2010 election with efficacy as a dummy variable – logit model.

	Voted
(Intercept)	3.08 (3.05)
anger	-0.96* (0.48)
efficacy.dummy	-0.68 (0.52)
vote.2005	0.91* (0.41)
vote.2009	1.80*** (0.36)
education	-0.16 (0.13)
income	0.07 (0.06)
age	-0.14 (0.11)
age.2	0.00 (0.00)
pid.strength	0.86** (0.32)
interest	0.21 (0.19)
home	0.18 (0.42)
union	0.27 (0.49)
contact	1.04 (0.76)
male	-0.45 (0.36)
white	0.76 (0.77)
anger:efficacy.dummy	1.42 (0.73)
AIC	317.19
BIC	401.20
Log Likelihood	-141.59
Deviance	283.19
Num. obs.	1035

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

Table 4: Vote at the 2010 election

The table shows the effect of anger on participation at the 2010 election, when efficacy is a dummy variable equal to 0 for respondents who reported a level of efficacy equal to 0 or 1 and equal to 1 for all the other reported values of efficacy (2 to 10). As the table shows, the anger coefficient is still negatively correlated to electoral participation, is now significant at the .05 level and its size is slightly bigger. By resorting to the divide-by-four rule, we can see that anger produced a decrease of about 24 percentage points in the probability of voting at the 2010 election for people believing that they do not have influence over politics and public affairs (i.e. level of efficacy equal to 0 or 1). Once again, it is important to remark that this is the specific effect of the interaction between anger and low efficacy – and not of low efficacy in general – given that the efficacy.dummy coefficient is not statistically significant for people who did not express anger. The coefficient of anger for people with higher efficacy ($-.96 + 1.42 = .46$) goes in the expected positive direction, but is not statistically significant (p-value = 0.4).

Party choice at the 2010 election – with vote for the UKIP in 2005 as a control variable.

Table 5: Party Choice at the 2010 Election

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	Labour (1)	Conservative (2)	Lib-Dem (3)
anger	-1.137*** (0.359)	-0.204 (0.333)	-1.129*** (0.354)
education	0.014 (0.122)	-0.099 (0.111)	0.127 (0.120)
income	0.122** (0.060)	0.172*** (0.054)	0.073 (0.058)
age	-0.013 (0.017)	-0.002 (0.015)	-0.025 (0.016)
efficacy	0.107 (0.088)	0.023 (0.083)	0.092 (0.087)
interest	-0.148 (0.192)	-0.060 (0.176)	-0.170 (0.187)
union	0.575 (0.453)	-0.075 (0.433)	0.310 (0.451)
home	-0.077 (0.447)	0.036 (0.406)	0.509 (0.447)
male	0.071 (0.359)	-0.101 (0.330)	0.418 (0.355)
white	1.331 (1.044)	0.491 (0.939)	2.033* (1.111)
ukip.2010	-2.998*** (0.818)	-1.276*** (0.431)	-3.672*** (0.817)
labour.2010	2.612*** (0.479)	-0.127 (0.498)	0.815* (0.478)
conservative.2010	-1.027* (0.597)	2.348*** (0.446)	-0.796 (0.510)
liberal.2010	0.856 (1.200)	1.371 (1.114)	3.671*** (1.093)
vote.ukip05	-2.345*** (0.766)	-1.492*** (0.422)	-2.777*** (0.715)
Constant	0.470 (1.658)	0.696 (1.533)	0.523 (1.678)
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1,696.848	1,696.848	1,696.848

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

The table focuses on party choice at the 2010 election, with the additional control vote for the UKIP in 2005. This is a dummy variable equal to 1 for citizens who voted for the UKIP at the 2005 election and 0 for everyone else. Having voted for the UKIP in 2005 decreases the probability of voting for one of the three major parties in 2010. More interestingly, the anger coefficient is still negative and statistically significant at the .01 level for the Labor and the Liberal-Democratic party. Therefore, as anger increases, the probability for citizens to vote for the UKIP rather than the two other parties increases. Furthermore, in this model, the coefficient of anger for the Conservative party goes in the expected negative direction (i.e. angry citizens are more likely to vote for the UKIP over the Conservative party) but is not statistically significant.

Like / Dislike for the UKIP – Ordered logit models (models 1, 2 and 3).

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	UKIP		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
anger	0.669*** (0.090)	0.664*** (0.093)	0.661*** (0.090)
education	-0.199*** (0.032)	-0.207*** (0.034)	-0.203*** (0.033)
income	-0.017 (0.013)	-0.022 (0.014)	-0.015 (0.014)
age	0.004 (0.004)	0.004 (0.004)	0.002 (0.004)
efficacy	-0.066*** (0.020)	-0.052** (0.022)	-0.060*** (0.021)
male	-0.088 (0.091)	-0.060 (0.095)	-0.087 (0.091)
white	-0.067 (0.280)	-0.186 (0.296)	-0.094 (0.281)
pid.strength		-0.176** (0.069)	
interest		0.013 (0.056)	
home			0.118 (0.123)
union			-0.326*** (0.111)
0 1	-1.790*** (0.386)	-2.140*** (0.420)	-1.862*** (0.388)
1 2	-1.260*** (0.384)	-1.604*** (0.418)	-1.328*** (0.386)
2 3	-0.806**	-1.154***	-0.871**

	(0.383)	(0.416)	(0.385)
3 4	-0.401 (0.382)	-0.758* (0.416)	-0.465 (0.384)
4 5	-0.076 (0.382)	-0.438 (0.415)	-0.140 (0.384)
5 6	0.558 (0.383)	0.175 (0.416)	0.494 (0.385)
6 7	1.048*** (0.384)	0.653 (0.417)	0.985** (0.386)
7 8	1.616*** (0.387)	1.192*** (0.420)	1.554*** (0.389)
8 9	2.293*** (0.393)	1.865*** (0.425)	2.231*** (0.395)
9 10	2.993*** (0.404)	2.566*** (0.436)	2.931*** (0.406)
Observations	1,604	1,484	1,604
<i>Note:</i>	*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

The table shows the effect of anger on support for the UKIP. The dependent variable measures on a scale from 0 to 10 how much respondents like the UKIP. Given that the values of the dependent variables are not well distributed across its entire range, all of the models presented in the paper are now run as ordered logit models with the same dependent and independent variables. As the tables show, the anger coefficient is still statistically significant at the .001 level and positively correlated to support for the UKIP. These alternative models confirm the finding in the paper that anger about the crisis has led to a greater support for the UKIP.

Like / Dislike for the UKIP – Ordered logit models (models 4, 5 and 6).

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>		
	UKIP		
	(4)	(5)	(6)
anger	0.620*** (0.093)	0.533*** (0.093)	0.307*** (0.094)
education	-0.198*** (0.032)	-0.210*** (0.033)	-0.192*** (0.033)
income	-0.010 (0.014)	-0.017 (0.014)	-0.025* (0.014)
age	0.003 (0.004)	0.003 (0.004)	-0.001 (0.004)
efficacy	-0.060*** (0.021)	-0.055*** (0.021)	-0.023 (0.021)
male	-0.077 (0.091)	-0.096 (0.091)	-0.081 (0.092)
white	-0.074 (0.282)	-0.071 (0.281)	0.131 (0.286)
union	-0.317*** (0.110)	-0.282** (0.110)	-0.216* (0.112)
afraid	0.177* (0.101)		
blame.gov		0.527*** (0.093)	0.246** (0.097)
labour.2010			-0.631*** (0.126)
conservative.2010			0.510*** (0.124)
liberal.2010			-0.935*** (0.167)
ukip.2010			3.400***

			(0.245)
0 1	-1.780*** (0.391)	-1.778*** (0.388)	-2.072*** (0.396)
1 2	-1.245*** (0.389)	-1.236*** (0.386)	-1.494*** (0.394)
2 3	-0.789** (0.388)	-0.772** (0.384)	-0.990** (0.392)
3 4	-0.382 (0.387)	-0.360 (0.384)	-0.536 (0.391)
4 5	-0.056 (0.387)	-0.032 (0.384)	-0.171 (0.391)
5 6	0.580 (0.388)	0.610 (0.385)	0.556 (0.392)
6 7	1.071*** (0.390)	1.106*** (0.386)	1.138*** (0.394)
7 8	1.641*** (0.393)	1.679*** (0.389)	1.834*** (0.399)
8 9	2.318*** (0.398)	2.360*** (0.395)	2.711*** (0.409)
9 10	3.018*** (0.409)	3.062*** (0.406)	3.607*** (0.425)

Observations	1,604	1,604	1,604
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Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

UKIP as a prospect of change – logit model.

	Model 1
(Intercept)	-3.87*** (0.94)
anger	0.74*** (0.17)
education	-0.12* (0.06)
income	0.02 (0.03)
age	0.01 (0.01)
efficacy	-0.07 (0.04)
interest	0.05 (0.09)
union	-0.06 (0.21)
home	-0.32 (0.21)
male	0.18 (0.17)
white	1.17 (0.79)
ukip.2010	2.43*** (0.29)
labour.2010	-0.24 (0.22)
conservative.2010	-0.32 (0.22)
liberal.2010	-0.64 (0.34)
AIC	1157.30
BIC	1239.18
Log Likelihood	-563.65
Deviance	1127.30
Num. obs.	1735

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

Table 8: UKIP as a prospect of change

The model above is a logit model in which the dependent variable was obtained from the following question: “Which of the following parties do you think offers a realistic prospect of change in British politics?” (2010 post-campaign wave). The dependent variable UKIP.change is a dummy equal to 1 for respondents who answered UKIP and 0 for anyone

else. Therefore, positive coefficients of the independent variables indicate a positive correlation between the independent variable and the consideration of the UKIP as a possibility of change. As the table shows, the coefficient of anger is positive and statistically significant at the .001 level. By resorting to the divide-by-four rule, we can see that anger produced an increase of about 18.5 percentage points in the probability of indicating the UKIP as a realistic prospect of change.

Support for Conservative Party – OLS model.

	Model 1
(Intercept)	3.04*** (0.45)
anger	0.36** (0.11)
blame.gov	0.54*** (0.11)
education	-0.12** (0.04)
income	0.01 (0.02)
age	0.01 (0.00)
efficacy	0.07** (0.02)
union	-0.18 (0.13)
male	-0.10 (0.11)
white	0.30 (0.33)
labour.2010	-1.43*** (0.15)
conservative.2010	3.69*** (0.15)
liberal.2010	-0.42* (0.19)
ukip.2010	0.55* (0.26)
R ²	0.52
Adj. R ²	0.51
Num. obs.	1705

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

Table 9: Support for Conservative Party

The model above is an OLS model in which the dependent variable measures the support for the Conservative Party on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 indicates strong dislike and 10 strong like. As the table shows, identification with the UKIP (ukip.2010) is statistically significant at the .05 level and positively correlated to support for the Conservative Party. To the contrary, identification with the Labour or the Liberal Democratic Party are negatively correlated with support for the Conservative Party. This finding supports the point that the electorates of the UKIP and the Conservative Party are closer to each other than to voters of other parties. Consequently, this strengthens the point made in the paper that some supporters of the UKIP

may have strategically chosen to vote for the Conservative Party at the 2010 election. Very similar results are obtained with an ordered logit model including the same variables.

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