

April 2026 amendments

This amendment relates to an extension survey.

- 1.** Dates of the 2026 survey added
- 2.** Abstract updated to include a mention of the extension survey and language is edited
- 3.** Subsection about the new 2026 follow-up survey added under each section

Title of the Project

Redistributive Preferences and Their Determinants

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Status

In development

Start date

1st survey: 22.10.2024

2nd Survey: 20.4.2026

End date

1st survey: 22.11.2024

2nd survey: 11.5.2026 or when target number of respondents has been reached.

Sponsors and Partners

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Abstract

This paper examines individuals' redistributive preferences and the motivations underlying them. While the effects of information on perceptions of inequality are well established, less is known about how such perceptions translate into preferences for redistributive policies. In addition, relatively little is known about the extent to which policymakers' preferences align with those of citizens, and whether policymakers accurately perceive citizens' preferences, particularly when policy choices involve trade-offs. To address these questions, we implement two surveys. The first, conducted in November 2024, focuses on redistributive preferences, their underlying motivations and how information shapes them. This survey includes two conjoint experiments and two information treatments. The first conjoint elicits preferences over redistributive policies, such as income tax rates and unemployment benefits, while the second examines preferences over motivational factors, including fairness, luck versus effort, and the perceived societal consequences of inequality. The first treatment exploits the timing of Finland's Tax Day, when individual tax records are publicly released and widely discussed in the media. The Tax Day is also a combined treatment

with the US presidential elections occurring one day before the Tax Day. The second treatment randomly assigns respondents to view an informational video on tax collection, public finance, and the potential downsides of poorly designed tax policies. The second survey, conducted in April 2026, examines differences between citizens' and policymakers' preferences. We employ a shorter survey without the information treatments and expand the sample to include both politicians and bureaucrats alongside citizens. The design allows us to compare stated preferences inferred from direct questions and stated preferences inferred from conjoint survey experiment across these three groups, and to assess the extent to which policymakers' preferences and perceptions reflect those of citizens.

1. Primary Outcomes

1.1 2024 Survey

The study has four primary research questions or outcomes of interest:

1. What kind of redistributive preferences individuals have?
2. What motivations drive redistributive preferences?
3. How information provision about how public sector operates shifts the individuals' redistributive preferences and the motivations underlying these preferences?
4. How real-life increase in the salience of income inequality and salience of social stability affects the preferences for redistribution and the motivations for those preferences?

Following these research questions, first two outcomes of interests are (1) choices over a public policy package that contains redistributive elements and (2) choices over the motivational factors made by the individual in the survey. These choices are measured with two conjoint surveys in which respondents choose between two sets of attributes (either a policy package or a candidate in election where the candidate holds certain views about redistribution and income inequality). In the first conjoint, we elicit preferences over seven redistributive policy attributes which each can obtain three different possible value realizations. Respondents' repeated answers reveal how they, as a group, value these different attributes and their values in their decision making relative to the other attributes and their values. In the second conjoint, the choice is measured with five attributes, which are motivational statements about the consequences of redistribution, fairness and trust. The second conjoint is built around following hypotheses which mirror to the five motivational attributes:

We hypothesize that preferences for redistribution depend on whether or not individuals perceive that

1. income inequality is fair or not (fairness)
2. Luck matters more than effort in success (luck vs. effort)
3. That redistribution decreases incentives to contribute to society (efficiency)
4. They can trust that political system works for their benefit (trust)
5. inequality increases instability or more equality increases stability (instability)

The third outcome of interest is (3) the effect of our information treatments on redistributive choice and motivational factor choice. We are interested in (a) how informational video about how public sector operates affects redistributive choice and motivational factor choice, (b) how the Finnish Tax Day (7.11.2024), when information about the incomes of top income earners from tax records is revealed, affects redistributive choice and motivational factor choice and; (c) how the combination of both

treatments affects redistributive choice and motivational factor choice. We take into account that US Presidential elections take place just shortly before the Tax Day, which is both a confounding factor for the Tax Day and a potential additional treatment that may affect some responses. While the US presidential election does not shock knowledge about redistribution in Finland or its salience, it may affect other responses such as which party to support or questions related to trust and whether income differences reduce societal stability and increase crime.

This third outcome of interest question is motivated by following hypotheses:

1. The informational video about the role of taxes and public spending affects beliefs about the role of taxes in redistribution and tackling income inequality and could then affect preferences or motivations for redistribution.
2. The informational video about the role of taxes and public spending provides new information about the role of taxes in providing social security and public goods and could then affect preferences or motivations for redistribution.
3. The Finnish Tax Day increases income transparency and salience of income inequality, and informs respondents about others and one's own relative position in income distribution.
4. The Finnish Tax Day shifts individuals' beliefs about the fairness and efficiency of the Finnish tax system and could then affect preferences or motivations for redistribution.
5. The Finnish Tax Day increases information about tax planning.
6. The Finnish Tax Day increases information about the earning at the top of the income distribution and could then affect preferences or motivations for redistribution.

1.2 2026 Survey

Primary research questions of our 2026 survey are similar to our 2024 questions, excluding the outcomes related to the two information experiments, which are not included this time. However, the new focus is on the three groups and the differences between these groups:

1. What redistributive stated preferences are inferred from the conjoint choices of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
2. What stated motivational preferences are inferred from the conjoint choices of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
3. How do redistributive stated preferences and stated motivational preferences inferred from conjoint choices differ across citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?

Following these research questions, the outcomes of interests are (1) choices over a public policy package that contains redistributive elements and (2) choices over the motivational factors made by the respondents in the survey. The choices are measured with two conjoint surveys as detailed above in the case of 2024 survey.

We hypothesize that these groups have differing redistributive preferences and motivations to redistribute but we do not have specific hypotheses about the direction of these differences.

2. Secondary outcomes

2.1 2024 Survey

Secondary outcomes we study are how what following:

1. What kind of stated redistributive policy preferences individuals have?
2. What kind of stated motivations individuals have to redistribute?
3. How much people know about some current redistributive policies?
4. What kind of stated beliefs individuals have about the state of society, their own future, who can be trusted and what consequences inequality has.

Secondary outcomes are measured as normal independent questions in the survey.

2.2 2026 Survey

The secondary outcomes of 2026 survey are also similar to our 2024 outcomes, excluding the outcomes related to information experiments, but elicit the differences between three groups:

1. What stated redistributive policy preferences are inferred from the direct survey question responses of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
2. What stated motivations for redistribution are inferred from the direct survey question responses of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
3. How much do citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians know about selected redistributive policies?
4. What stated beliefs about the state of society, their own future and economic standing, institutions, and the consequences of inequality are inferred from the direct survey question responses of citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
5. How do stated redistributive preferences, motivations, knowledge, beliefs, and background characteristics inferred from direct survey questions differ across citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians?
6. How do stated redistributive preferences and motivations inferred from the conjoint choices differ from those inferred from the direct survey questions?

Secondary outcomes are measured as normal independent questions in the survey.

3. Experimental design

3.1 2024 Survey

Our study contains a set of regular survey questions, two conjoint survey experiments, one information provision video experiment implemented within the survey and one real-life shock in the form of the Finnish Tax Day (and US Presidential elections). The respondents are drawn from our survey partners (Taloustutkimus) respondent panel which is nationally representative on the level of age, gender, region (NUTS 2). The language of the survey is Finnish.

The survey proceeds in the following manner.

Respondents are divided into two groups by our real-life information treatment, the Finnish tax-day. We achieve this by half of the respondents being surveyed before the Tax Day and the other half after the Tax Day. The first survey window is between 22.10.2024 and 5.11.2024. The Tax Day takes place on 7.11.2024. The second survey window takes place between, 8.11.2024 and 22.11.2024. The US Presidential elections take place on 5.11.2024, but likely the results will be discussed in the Finnish media on 6.11.2024, that is, one day before the Tax Day.

The second treatment assignment is conducted at the start of the survey. Half of the people in both groups (before and after the Tax Day) are randomly assigned to watch an informational video of the role of taxes and public spending in redistributing income.

Before the video, all respondents answer basic demographic questions.

Demographics:

- 1) Gender [Male, Female, Other]
- 2) Birth year [open response field]
- 3) What is the postal code of your area? [open response field]

Then those who are randomly allocated to the video treatment proceed to video which cannot be skipped. The video is a whiteboard animation, which explains in simple manner how taxes are collected each year, why taxes are collected and what they are used for, and what benefits and costs are associated with tax collection.

Those without video treatment move straight into background questions that include demographic questions and questions about political preferences, values, knowledge of redistributive policies, trust, views about the world and one's own life, and habits concerning media consumption. The questions are as follows (translated from Finnish):

Demographics:

- 1) Gender [Male, Female, Other]
- 2) Birth year [open response field]
- 3) What is the postal code of your area? [open response field]

Values, knowledge and habits]

- 1) Societal values can be described using different dimensions. How would you place yourself on the following dimensions?
 - a) 1 = Left 2 3 4 5 = Right
 - b) 1 = Value liberal 2 3 4 5 = Value conservative
 - c) 1 = Emphasizes environmental values 2 3 4 5 = Does not emphasize environmental values
- 2) Which party would you vote for if the parliamentary elections were held now [List of parties in Finland]
- 3) To what extent do you believe people like you can influence the actions of the government in the Finnish political system?"? (Scale very much 1-5 not at all)
- 4) Which of the following degrees have your parents, or one of your parents, completed? Please mark the highest level of education from the options below (List of degrees recognised in Finland)
- 5) Overall, how satisfied are you with your life at present? (scale 1 very unhappy -10 very happy)
- 6) How fair do you think your level of disposable income is, considering your earned income, capital income, their taxation, and the benefits you receive? (scale 1=very unfair-10=very fair)
- 7) People hold different positions in Finnish society based on income. In which income decile do you place yourself in terms of disposable income within Finnish society? (1= lowest – 10=highest)
- 8) How do you see the current state of Finnish society (1 = Very negative - 10 = Very positive)
- 9) How do you view the future of the Finnish economy over the next 10 years? (1 = Extremely - 10 = Extremely positive)
- 10) How economically equal do you think Finns are in terms of financial wellbeing at present? (1 = Very equal - 4 = Very unequal, 5 = I don't know)

- 11) To what extent do the following statements reflect the situation in Finland, in your opinion?
 - a) Do you think that a better life can usually be achieved through hard work or does success depend more on luck? (Hard work ... luck)
 - b) Large income differences are (Unjust ... Just)
 - c) Increasing income redistribution through taxation and transfers would... (Increase employment and economic growth ... Have no effect on employment or economic growth ... Decrease employment and economic growth)
 - d) The functioning of the political system for the benefit of citizens (Cannot be trusted ... Can be trusted)
 - e) Large income differences... decrease societal stability and increase crime ... have no effect on societal stability and crime ... increase societal stability and decrease crime

- 12) Do you think people can be trusted, or is it better to be cautious about others? (1 = It is better to be cautious - 10 = Most people can be trusted)
- 13) How much do you personally trust the following entities or groups? 1 means you do not trust at all, and 10 means you trust very strongly.
 - a) the judicial system b) The police c) Politicians d) The media f) Researchers g) Healthcare h) Kinsfolk i) Citizens of another country j) citizens of your country
- 14) How often do you use the following media for news? 1 = Never - 10 = All the time
 - a) Television b) Radio c) Online newspapers d) Printed newspapers e) Facebook f) Twitter g) Instagram h) TikTok i) Jodel j) Discussion forums k) Messaging apps (e.g., Whatsapp/Facebook Messenger)
- 15) How often do you generally discuss politics and societal issues: (1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Often, 5 = Daily)
 - a) With close ones?
 - b) With colleagues or fellow students?
 - c) With other acquaintances?
 - d) With strangers?"
- 16) What is the current highest income tax rate in the state taxation in Finland? [Slider 0-100%]
- 17) What is the current average amount of the basic unemployment allowance per month? [Open response field]
- 18) Think of the tax rate as a percentage of all earned and capital income that a person pays in taxes. (For example, if you earn 30,000 euros in income and capital gains and pay a total of 3,000 euros in income taxes, your tax rate is 10%.) Please use the slider to indicate what percentage of their income you think the top 10% of earners in Finland should pay in taxes. ["In my opinion the top 10% of earners should pay []% of their income in taxes.]
- 19) What percentage of all disposable income received by Finns went to the top 10% of earners in 2023? [Slider 0-100%]
- 20) A transfer payment means that the government redistributes income among citizens using taxes and benefits, compared to a situation without taxation or benefits. Should there be more transfer payments in Finland? [Strongly disagree 1 - 5 Strongly agree]
- 21) Do you agree with the statement: "People should take advantage of the opportunities provided by the tax system to minimize their tax burden." [Strongly disagree 1- 5 Strongly agree]

On top of these questions, our survey partner's panel includes the following information of the respondents:

- 1) Highest completed education (List of degrees recognized in Finland)
- 2) Occupational status [Entrepreneur, leadership position, other senior official / expert, official/clerk, employee, farmer, student, pensioner, stay at home mother/father, unemployed]
- 3) Household composition [on person, couple with no children, other only adult household, household with children under 18]
- 4) Ages of children living at home [0-2, 3-6, 7-12, 13-15, 16-17, no children under 18]

- 5) Size of your household
- 6) The combined gross income of your household, from which taxes have not been deducted? [under 10.000 euros/year, 10.000 - 20.000 euros/y, 20.001 - 30.000 euros/y, 30.001 - 40.000 euros/y , 40.001 - 50.000 euros/y, 50.001 - 60.000 euros/y, 60.001 - 70.000 euros/y 70.001 - 80.000 euro/y 80.001 - 90.000 euros/y, over 90.000 euros/y, I prefer not to say]

In the last part of the survey, we run two conjoint survey experiments.

In the first conjoint, the respondents are presented with two cards, A and B, which both present policy packages that hypothetical parties in the next parliamentary elections are proposing in their party manifestos. Both cards include seven statements (attributes) regarding taxes and redistributive policies. The respondents are asked to choose which party, A or B they would rather vote. The respondents make the choice between the candidates six times. Each attribute category contains value realisations that are associated with a specific redistributive policy. The seven policies are: 1) income taxes; 2) unemployment benefit; 3) public health care; 4) national debt; 5) capital income tax; 6) progressivity of the income tax at the top end; 7) fuel taxes.

List below displays the attributes and their levels in the first conjoint. Each attribute has three levels. The value of each attribute is randomised for each card and the order of the attributes is randomised once for each respondent but is the same on both cards and remains the same for the same respondent across the cards.

Income taxation:

- Increase income tax evenly by 1 percentage point across all income groups
- Keep the current level of income taxation
- Decrease income tax evenly by 1 percentage points across all income groups

Unemployment benefits:

- Make unemployment benefits more generous by increasing the basic daily allowance by 200 euros per month
- Keep the current level of unemployment benefits
- Tighten unemployment benefits by reducing the basic daily allowance by 200 euros per month

Public healthcare funding:

- Increase public healthcare funding by 1 billion euros per year
- Keep the current level of public healthcare funding
- Cut public healthcare funding by 1 billion euros per year

National debt:

- Be willing to take on an additional 1 billion euros of national debt per year
- Not seek to change the current level of national debt
- Aim to reduce national debt by 1 billion euros per year

Capital gains tax:

- Increase capital gains tax by 2 percentage points

- Keep the current level of capital gains tax
- Decrease capital gains tax by 2 percentage points

Tax progression:

- Increase tax progression by raising the top income tax rate by 3%
- Keep the current level of tax progression
- Reduce tax progression by lowering the top income tax rate by 3%

Fuel tax:

- Increase the fuel tax by 5 cents per liter
- Keep the current level of fuel tax
- Decrease the fuel tax by 5 cents per liter

The second conjoint tests the motivation hypotheses detailed in the previous section, that is, what kind of views people have about reasons and consequences of income inequality and redistribution. In the conjoint, the respondents are presented with the personal opinions of two politicians A and B and are asked which of these individual politicians would they rather vote for in the next parliamentary elections. The opinions concern the possible effects and externalities of redistributive policies and taxation. The conjoint has five attributes which are: 1) fairness; 2) luck vs. effort; 3) efficiency; 4) trust in politicians and; 5) inequality's effect on stability.

List below displays the attributes and their levels in the second conjoint. Each attribute has either two or three levels. The value of each attribute is randomised for each card and the order of the attributes is randomised once for each respondent but is the same on both cards and remains the same for the same respondent across the cards.

Large income differences:

- Large income differences are unfair
- Large income differences are fair

Causes of large income differences:

- Large income differences are the result of good luck experienced by high earners
- Large income differences are the result of the hard work of high earners

Income redistribution and economic impact:

- Income redistribution would increase employment and boost economic growth
- Income redistribution does not have an impact on employment or economic growth
- Income redistribution would decrease employment and diminish economic growth

Trust in politicians:

- Politicians can be trusted to foster the common good of the citizens
- Politicians cannot be trusted to foster the common good of the citizens

Income inequality and societal stability:

- Large income differences reduce societal stability and increase crime
- Large income differences do not affect societal stability or crime
- Large income differences increase societal stability and reduce crime

Table 1. Conjoint I (Translation from Finnish)		
<p><i>Next, we will show you 6 card pairs one at the time. Each pair of cards contains the manifestos of two imaginary parties (party A and Party B). Please choose which party you would rather vote in the next parliamentary elections.</i></p>		
Increase income tax evenly by 1 percentage points across all income groups	Keep the current level of income taxation	Decrease income tax evenly by 1 percentage points across all income groups
Increasing the basic daily allowance of unemployment benefit by 200 euros per month	Keep the current level of unemployment benefits	Reduce the basic daily allowance of unemployment benefit by 200 euros per month
Increase public healthcare funding by 1 billion euros per year	Keep the current level of public healthcare funding	Cut public healthcare funding by 1 billion euros per year
Willing to take on an additional 1 billion euros of national debt per year	Keep the current level of government debt taking	Aim to reduce government debt by 1 billion euros per year
Increase capital income tax by 2 percentage points	Keep the current level of capital income tax	Decrease capital income tax by 2 percentage points
Increase tax progression by raising the top income tax rate by 3%	Keep the current level of tax progression	Reduce tax progression by lowering the top income tax rate by 3%
Increase the fuel tax by 5 cents per liter	Keep the current level of fuel tax	Decrease the fuel tax by 5 cents per liter

Table 2. Conjoint II (translations from Finnish).

Politicians decide on the collection and use of public sector funds. Taxation and income transfers affect the disposable income of citizens. Income redistribution means that the state uses taxes and subsidies to reduce income differences between citizens. Politicians also decide on the funding of public services, such as education and healthcare.

Next, we will show you 6 pairs of cards, one pair at a time. Each card pair presents the views of two fictional politicians on income differences and redistribution. For each pair, choose the candidate you would prefer to vote for in the next parliamentary elections.

When politicians decide on the size of the public budget, I would prefer to vote for a candidate who believes that...

Large income differences are unfair		Large income differences are fair
Large income differences are the result of good luck experienced by high earners.		Large income differences are the result of the hard work of high earners.
Income redistribution would increase employment and boost economic growth	Income redistribution does not have an impact on employment or economic growth	Income redistribution would decrease employment and diminish economic growth
Politicians can be trusted to foster the common good of the citizens		Politicians cannot be trusted to foster the common good of the citizens
Large income differences reduce societal stability and increase crime	Large income differences do not affect societal stability or crime	Large income differences increase societal stability and reduce crime

3.2 2026 Survey

The April–June 2026 wave uses a shorter survey and omits the information treatment included in the November 2024 survey, while expanding the study to include two additional respondent groups: politicians and bureaucrats. The survey is conducted in cooperation with the University of Helsinki Societal Barometers (HSB), a research infrastructure consisting of online panels of citizens, politicians, and bureaucrats. The panel tracks the same participants over an extended period, gathering data on their values, opinions, and experiences of Finnish society. The panel contains a rich set of background characteristics.

The 2026 study contains a more concise set of questions and some of the questions have been tailored to fit a shorter format. The survey can be taken in Finnish or in Swedish.

The questions are as follows (translated from Finnish):

- 1) How well do you think the following statements describe democracy in Finland today? (Not at all, Only a little, To some extent, To a large extent, Completely)
 - a. All adult citizens have equal civil and political rights
 - b. The government does not exceed the limits set by the constitution
 - c. The government does not interfere with the work of judges or the media
 - d. Elections are held, votes are counted, and winners are declared without fraud
 - e. Large financial donations made during election campaigns do not influence political decisions
 - f. Universities, companies, and professional organizations are free to make their own decisions without political pressure from the government
 - g. Foreign actors do not influence elections
 - h. Public officials do not use their position for personal gain
 - i. Elected politicians strive to find compromises with politicians from other parties
 - j. Candidates or parties that lose elections publicly accept their defeat
- 2) Which of the following degrees has one or both of your parents completed? Please indicate the highest level of education from the options below.
 - i) Upper secondary school diploma (matriculation examination)
 - ii) Vocational qualification
 - iii) University of applied sciences degree
 - iv) University degree
 - v) None of the above
 - vi) Don't know
 - vii) Prefer not to say
- 3) People hold different positions in Finnish society based on income. In which income decile do you place yourself in terms of disposable income within Finnish society? (1= lowest – 10=highest)
- 4) How economically equal do you think Finns are in terms of financial wellbeing at present? (1 = Very equal - 4 = Very unequal, 5 = I don't know)
- 5) To what extent do the following statements reflect the situation in Finland, in your opinion?
 - a) Do you think that a better life can usually be achieved through hard work or does success depend more on luck? (Hard work ... luck)
 - b) Large income differences are (Unjust ... Just)
 - c) Increasing income redistribution through taxation and transfers would... (Increase employment and economic growth ... Have no effect on employment or economic growth ... Decrease employment and economic growth)
 - d) The functioning of the political system for the benefit of citizens (Cannot be trusted ... Can be trusted)
 - e) Large income differences... decrease societal stability and increase crime ... have no effect on societal stability and crime ... increase societal stability and decrease crime
- 6) How much do you personally trust the following entities or groups? 1 means you do not trust at all, and 10 means you trust very strongly.
 - a) The judicial system
 - b) The police
 - c) Politicians
 - d) The media
- 7) What is the current highest income tax rate in the state taxation in Finland? [Slider 0-100%]

- 8) What is the current average amount of the basic unemployment allowance per month? [Open response field]
- 9) A transfer payment means that the government redistributes income among citizens using taxes and benefits, compared to a situation without taxation or benefits. Should there be more transfer payments in Finland? [Strongly disagree 1 - 5 Strongly agree]

The content of the conjoints is the same as in 2024 survey but the display was slightly modified for better readability. This is illustrated in the tables below.

Table 3. Conjoint I 2026 version (Translation from Finnish)			
<i>Next, we will show you 6 card pairs one at the time. Each pair of cards contains the manifestos of two imaginary parties (party A and Party B). Please choose which party you would rather vote in the next parliamentary elections.</i>			
Income tax	Increase by 1 percentage points across all income groups	Keep the current level	Decrease by 1 percentage points across all income groups
Basic daily allowance of unemployment benefit	Increasing by 200 euros per month	Keep the current level	Reduce by 200 euros per month
Public healthcare funding	Increase by 1 billion euros per year	Keep the current level of funding	Cut by 1 billion euros per year
National debt	Willing to take on an additional 1 billion euros per year	Keep the current level of debt taking	Aim to reduce by 1 billion euros per year
Capital income tax	Increase by 2 percentage points	Keep the current level	Decrease by 2 percentage points
Tax progression	Increase the top income tax rate by 3%	Keep the current level	Lower the top income tax rate by 3%
Fuel tax	Increase by 5 cents per liter	Keep the current level	Decrease by 5 cents per liter

Table 4. Conjoint II 2026 version (translations from Finnish).

Politicians decide on the collection and use of public sector funds. Taxation and income transfers affect the disposable income of citizens. Income redistribution means that the state uses taxes and subsidies to reduce income differences between citizens. Politicians also decide on the funding of public services, such as education and healthcare.

Next, we will show you 6 pairs of cards, one pair at a time. Each card pair presents the views of two fictional politicians on income differences and redistribution. For each pair, choose the candidate you would prefer to vote for in the next parliamentary elections.

When politicians decide on the size of the public budget, I would prefer to vote for a candidate who believes that...

Large income differences are...	unfair		fair
Large income differences are...	the result of good luck experienced by high earners.		the result of the hard work of high earners.
Income redistribution would...	increase employment and boost economic growth	not have an impact on employment or economic growth	decrease employment and diminish economic growth
political system...	functions to foster the common good of the citizens		does not function to foster the common good of the citizens
Large income differences...	reduce societal stability and increase crime	do not affect societal stability or crime	increase societal stability and reduce crime

4. Experimental design details

4.1 2024 Survey

Randomisation method:

Randomization done in office by a computer

Randomisation unit:

Tax Day treatment: Respondents are randomized based on the timing of Finland's Tax Day. Half of the respondents are surveyed before the Tax Day and the other half after, creating two groups based on exposure to the real-life event.

Video treatment: Within both the 'before' and 'after' Tax Day groups, respondents are randomly assigned at the individual level to either watch an informational video on tax collection and public services or not. This creates four treatment arms overall (no treatment, Tax Day only, video only, and both Tax Day and video).

Sample size (or number of clusters) by treatment arms

In total we have 4000 respondents. The treatments create following treatment arms:

Pure control group: no video and surveyed before Tax Day, 1000 respondents

Treatment group 1: watch the video and surveyed before tax date, 1000 respondents

Treatment group 2: surveyed after Tax Day, 1000 respondents

Treatment group 3: surveyed after Tax Day and watch the video, 1000 respondents

4.2 2026 Survey

Randomisation method:

None

Randomisation unit:

None

Sample size (or number of clusters) by treatment arms:

Our target is 3000 total respondents which consists of 1000 politicians, 1000 bureaucrat and 1000 citizens.

5. Analysis of Results

5.1 2024 Survey

Background characteristics and questions

First, we will begin by analyzing the background characteristics of the respondents to provide an overview of the sample composition. This will include descriptive statistics for key demographic and attitudinal variables such as education, gender, political views and media consumption habits. Most of the background variables are categorical, and we will present their frequencies and percentages.

We will then ensure that the distribution of these background characteristics is balanced across the four treatment groups (no treatment, video, tax day, and tax day & video). This will serve as a randomization check to confirm that the random assignment of treatments did not result in significant imbalances in key demographic and attitudinal variables across groups. If necessary, the differences will be controlled in our analysis. We take into account that US Presidential elections take place just shortly before the Tax Day, which is both a confounding factor for the Tax Day and a potential treatment. The elections may affect responses such as which party to support or questions related to trust and whether income differences reduce societal stability and increase crime.

After confirming balance, we will present descriptive statistics for the responses to the direct survey questions detailed in previous section. Part of these questions cover respondent attitudes and preferences and mirror the attributes presented in the conjoint analysis. The remaining questions cover a range of topics, asking individuals to evaluate their relative social status and life satisfaction, assess the current state

of income inequality, report how frequently they discuss politics, and gauge their knowledge of redistributive policies. The distribution of responses to these questions will be illustrated using histograms to provide a visual representation of how these preferences and answers are distributed among the overall sample and across the different treatment groups. Lastly, we will include cross-tabulations or other graphical presentations to compare how these background characteristics and direct responses are distributed within each treatment group.

We will also use the background questions to study the representativeness of the sample by comparing the characteristics (age, gender, region, education and income) to those of the whole population based on Statistics Finland data. We will conduct the main analysis with the survey data as such, but if substantial selection to the sample is observed, we will conduct robustness analysis that implement corrective weights. This robustness analysis will be run on all the main analysis that study the effects of the information treatments.

Those standard format questions that ask directly about opinions we are interested, that is, redistribution views will also be used as outcome variables to study the effects of the Tax Day treatment and the information video treatment. These are the questions that relate to expressing their views, and test their knowledge, about redistributive matters. We will analyze these effects will standard OLS regressions.

Baseline conjoint analysis

Second, we conduct analysis of our conjoint survey results. Following Hainmuller et al. 2014, we estimate the average marginal component effect (AMCE) for each attribute, which captures how changes in one attribute level affect the likelihood of a profile being chosen. The analysis is conducted simply such that each card is used as one row in the data and the outcome variable in the OLS regression is a dummy for whether the card for chosen. Explanatory variables are dummies for each of the possible attribute values all at the same time in the model. One attribute value per attribute is omitted from the model to be a reference group. This method allows us to simultaneously assess the influence of multiple attributes on respondents' preferences and allows us to analyze how respondents weigh different factors in their decision-making process. We also conduct marginal means analysis for robustness in the appendix.

To assess the impact of our experimental treatments, we divide the sample into two based on the treatment (for both treatment separately). Then we can compare the preferences that the conjoint revealed between the samples. Alternatively, we run regressions where we incorporate our treatment indicators in the AMCE model to assess the direct effect of each treatment on choice preferences. We also incorporate interaction terms between the treatment indicators and the conjoint attributes.

Heterogeneity analysis

For our heterogeneity analysis, we will employ several approaches to analyze how the background characteristics, knowledge and stated preferences affect preferences revealed for the conjoint attributes and the treatment effects we find. This analysis will allow us to assess whether certain subgroups of respondents display different preferences or react differently to the treatments.

We begin our analysis on how the treatment effects vary by respondent characteristics by dividing the sample into subgroups based on key respondent backgrounds characteristics and views (education, income, gender, age, urban vs. rural, various political views, media source, life satisfaction, trust in government etc.). For each subgroup, we estimate separate models to see how preferences for the attributes differ. This allows us to determine whether certain groups place more or less importance on specific attributes. The estimated AMCE for each subgroup can then be compared to identify significant differences across groups.

This approach allows us to simultaneously assess how different characteristics, stated preferences and views of the society influence preferences that are revealed in the conjoint. This will allow us to determine if the treatments have heterogeneous effects depending on the respondent's background, shedding light on how these factors shape the influence of the treatments on preferences. One of the most important aspects that we explore is the interaction between the stated preference for redistribution and motivational factors. E.g. do people with low. vs. high redistributive preferences have different preferences for specific motivational attributes (conjoint 2).

Robustness and validity checks

We conduct robustness and validity checks standard to conjoint analysis:

1. No carryover effects. An important identification assumption is the stability or the avoidance of carryover effects across different hypothetical choices in our experimental design. We test for these types of spillovers by executing distinct regressions of respondent choices per individual choice task/round among voting decision outcomes.
2. No attribute and profile order effects. Another concern for identification could be that respondents are affected by the order, in which attributes are presented to them. This could be due to a priming (or primacy) effect in which a larger share of the attention goes to attributes placed near the top of the choice task. Our survey design, in which the attribute order randomized, (but keep it constant for a given respondent), attenuates this concern considerably. Nevertheless, we test for such attribute order effects with a set of regressions for each attribute, in which we regress the binary choice on a set of dummies for the attribute realizations, a dummy for the position of the attribute, and the interactions of these variables. A related concern could be that respondents favor different profiles due to the order in which they are presented within a particular task, that is, whether a given profile is shown as card A or B. We test this by splitting our sample depending on whether a given profile was presented on the left or right side of the choice task.
3. Specification checks. We also show the robustness of our results with a number of sensitivity checks, varying our econometric specification. We will include set and/or card-level fixed effects as well as standard errors without clustering. Moreover, we try a logit model instead of a linear probability model. We check whether our standard errors are robust to multiple hypothesis testing when accounting for the multitude of treatments in our survey design. We follow the procedure proposed by Westfall and Young (1993). We treat each attribute realization as separate treatments.
4. When analyzing subgroups, we also estimate marginal means instead of conditional AMCEs to account for potential differences in the omitted categories between subgroups (Leeper et al., 2020).
5. We will also include background characteristics as fixed effects in our conjoint model to control for their influence on choice behavior. This is done to account for baseline differences in preferences across respondents. By controlling for these individual-level factors, we will isolate the main effects of the conjoint attributes and treatments on choice outcomes.
6. Additionally, we will explore how respondents' answers to direct survey questions, which mirror the conjoint attributes, reflect their preferences in the conjoint tasks. We will include respondents' answers to these questions as interactions with relevant conjoint attributes. This will help us assess whether their stated preferences are consistent with their revealed preferences in the conjoint analysis. These consistency checks validate our conjoint analysis results by comparing respondents' revealed preferences with their directly stated preferences.

5.2 2026 Survey

Our methods and overall approach follow closely the 2024 plan described above, excluding components related to the video and Tax Day treatments.

In the analysis of the 2026 survey, heterogeneity plays a central role, as we compare the characteristics, responses, and preferences of three groups: citizens, bureaucrats, and politicians. We examine differences in preferences across these groups by estimating separate models for each subgroup and comparing the importance of attributes in the conjoint analysis. Specifically, we estimate AMCEs for each subgroup and compare them across groups to identify systematic differences in preferences.

As in the 2024 survey, we also analyze how background characteristics affect preferences, and whether these effects differ across the three groups. The background characteristics we consider include, but are not limited to, political affiliation, income, and education. In addition, we examine heterogeneity in preferences stated in the direct questions, measured using questions 3–9 (see section 3.2), both in terms of how these relate to preferences stated in the conjoint and how they differ across groups.

Robustness and validity checks will be conducted as detailed in the 2024 survey section. In addition, we examine whether respondents favor more realistic or internally consistent conjoint profiles, for example by avoiding choices that combine conflicting attributes (e.g., reducing taxes and debt while increasing public spending).