

## **Online Appendix**

Partisan Selective Engagement: Evidence from Facebook

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## Online Appendix A: Further information on outlets and parties

Table A1: Sample of news outlets

Outlet	Facebook domain	Total likes	Main owner
Hamburger Abendblatt	abendblatt	105,294	Funke Mediengruppe
Augsburger Allgemeine	AugsburgerAllgemeine	107,793	Mediengruppe Pressedruck
Badische Zeitung	badischezeitung.de	79,717	Badisches Pressehaus
Berliner Morgenpost	morgenpost	222,188	Funke Mediengruppe
Berliner Zeitung	berlinerzeitung	182,601	DuMont Mediengruppe
Bild	bild	2,421,363	Axel Springer
B.Z.	B.Z.Berlin	116,138	Axel Springer
Cicero	CiceroMagazin	71,002	Res Publica
Compact	Compact.Magazin	92,914	Compact-Magazin GmbH
Epoch Times	epochtimes.deutsch	77,541	Epoch Times Europe GmbH
Express	EXPRESS.Koeln	213,365	DuMont Mediengruppe
Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung	faz	494,080	Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung
Focus	focus.de	710,333	Hubert Burda Media
Focus Politik	FOCUSOnlinePolitik	533,093	Hubert Burda Media
Frankfurter Rundschau	FrankfurterRundschau	86,480	Ippen
Freie Presse	freipresse	98,810	Chemnitzer Verlag und Druck
der Freitag	derfreitag	119,017	der Freitag Mediengesellschaft
General-Anzeiger	gaonline	55,144	Rheinische Post Mediengruppe
Handelsblatt	handelsblatt	218,853	DvH Medien
Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung	HannoverscheAllgemeine	81,976	Madsack Mediengruppe
heute	ZDFheute	723,537	ZDF (public service broadcaster)
Hildesheimer Allgemeine Zeitung	hinews	28,567	Gerstenberg Verlag
Hessische/Niedersächsische	HNA	79,705	Ippen
Huffpost	huffpostde	647,886	AOL
idowa	idowa	28,147	Mediengruppe Straubinger Tagblatt
inFranken.de	inFranken	166,703	Mediengruppe Oberfranken
Jung & Naiv	jungundnaiv	274,017	Tilo Jung
Junge Freiheit	jungefreiheit	130,884	Junge Freiheit Verlag
Junge Welt	junge.welt	61,791	Verlag 8. Mai
KenFM	kenfm.de	280,763	Ken Jebsen
Kieler Nachrichten	kielernachrichten	51,965	Kieler Zeitung Verlags
Kreiszeitung Syke	kreiszeitung.de	26,963	Ippen
Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger	ksta.fb	128,168	DuMont Mediengruppe
Lausitzer Rundschau	lausitzerrundschau	20,761	Neue Pressegesellschaft
Leipziger Volkszeitung	lvzonline	90,762	Madsack Mediengruppe
Main-Echo	mainecho	20,250	Verlag und Druckerei Main-Echo
Main-Post	mainpost	38,759	Mediengruppe Pressedruck
Märkische Allgemeine	MAZonline	36,489	Madsack Mediengruppe
Münchner Merkur	merkuronline	45,074	Ippen
Mitteldeutsche Zeitung	mzwebde	97,607	DuMont Mediengruppe
Monitor	monitor.wdr	128,867	ARD (public service broadcaster)
MOPO	hamburgermorgenpost	150,097	DuMont Mediengruppe

Table A1 (continued)

Outlet	Domain	Total likes	Owner
n24	n24	1,076,015	Axel Springer
NachDenkSeiten	NachDenkSeiten	95,031	Albrecht Müller
Norddeutscher Rundfunk	NDR.de	152,938	NDR (public service broadcaster)
Neue Westfälische	NeueWestfaelische	53,288	SPD-Medienholding
Neues Deutschland	neuesdeutschland	60,598	Die Linke/Communio
nordbayern.de	nordbayern.de	33,189	Verlag Nürnberger Presse
Nordwest-Zeitung	nwzonline	51,261	Nordwest Medien
Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung	neueoz	78,946	Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung
n-tv	ntvNachrichten	858,392	RTL Group
Offenbach-Post	oponline.de	26,271	Ippen
Osthessen-News	osthessennews	42,468	Medienkontor M. Angelstein
Ostthüringer Zeitung	otz.de	33,136	Funke Mediengruppe
Passauer Neue Presse	pnp.de	88,167	Verlagsgruppe Passau
PI-News	PINEWSNET	12,393	Stefan Herre
Rheinische Post	rponline	136,312	Rheinische Post Mediengruppe
RT Deutsch	rtdeutsch	318,272	Rossija Sewodnja
RTL aktuell	RTLaktuell	1,123,276	RTL Group
Ruhr Nachrichten	RuhrNachrichten	62,998	Lensing Media
SAT.1 Nachrichten	Sat.1Nachrichten	77,315	ProSiebenSat.1 Media
Schwäbische Zeitung	schwaebische.de	46,645	Schwäbisch Media
shz.de	shzonline	97,113	Neue Osnabrücker Zeitung
Der Spiegel	DerSpiegel	438,871	Spiegel-Verlag
SPIEGEL ONLINE	spiegelonline	1,454,841	Spiegel-Verlag
Stern	stern	730,027	Gruner + Jahr
Stuttgarter Zeitung	stuttgarterzeitung	81,085	Stuttgarter Zeitung Verlagsgesellschaft
Südkurier	Suedkurier.News	28,781	Mediengruppe Pressedruck
Südwest Presse	swp.de	40,007	Neue Pressegesellschaft
Süddeutsche Zeitung	ihre.sz	698,695	Südwestdeutsche Medien Holding
tagesschau	tagesschau	1,382,819	ARD (public service broadcaster)
Der Tagesspiegel	Tagesspiegel	134,908	DvH Medien
Die Tageszeitung	taz.kommune	271,001	Taz Verlagsgenossenschaft
Thüringische Landeszeitung	tlz.de	22,711	Funke Mediengruppe
Thüringer Allgemeine	thueringerallgemeine	63,298	Funke Mediengruppe
Tichys Einblick	tichyseinblick	34,082	Roland Tichy
t-online.de	tonline.de	192,722	Ströer Media
tz	tzmuenchen	47,308	Ippen
Westfälische Anzeiger	westfaelischer.anzeiger	31,065	Ippen
Westdeutsche Allgemeine Zeitung	waz	123,443	Funke Mediengruppe
Westdeutscher Rundfunk	WDR	171,469	WDR (public service broadcaster)
Die Welt	welt	933,445	Axel Springer
Die Zeit	diezeit	428,543	DvH Medien
Zeitonline	zeitonline	835,239	DvH Medien

Notes: The domain denotes the URL of the outlet's Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/...](http://www.facebook.com/.../)). The total number of page likes refers to August 2017. This number is usually very similar to the number of followers of a page.

Table A2: Most characteristic terms in parties' election programs (top 20)

Linke (left party)		Grüne (green party)	
mindestsicherung	minimum income	garantierent	guaranteed retirement benefits
demokratisierung	democratization	einmischen	intervene
profit	profit	wählt	vote
gesundheitsversicherung	health insurance	verbraucherinnen	female consumers
streitet	quarrel	urheberinnen	female originators
gewoba	gewoba	klimakris	climate crisis
superreichen	super-rich	schlüsselprojekt	key project
neoliberal	neoliberal	teilhab	Participation
sozialökologischen	socio-ecological	familienbudget	family budget
erwerbslos	unemployed	geschlechtergerecht	gender-neutral
militarisierung	militarization	menschenrechtlichen	human right
rüstungsforschung	research on armament	kohleausstieg	fossil fuel phase-out
einwohnerinnen	female inhabitants	handwerkerinnen	female craftspeople
kapitalismus	capitalism	klimastadtwerk	green municipal utilities
erwerbslosen	unemployed	fair	fair
sozialökologisch	socio-ecological	geflüchtet	refugees
rüstungsprodukt	armaments	chancen	opportunities
teilhab	participation	atomausstieg	nuclear phase-out
mieterinnen	female tenants	kindergrundsicherung	children's minimum income
arbeitszeitverkürzung	reduction of working hours	eier	eggs
Piraten (pirate party)		SPD (social democrats)	
grundeinkommen	basic income	teilhab	participation
socketeinkommen	minimum income	staatsregierung	state government
überwachungssoftwar	monitoring software	chancen	opportunities
ezigaretten	e-cigarettes	arbeiterinnen	female employees
bge	bge	digitalisierung	digitization
programmpunkt	item on the agenda	solidarrent	solidary retirement benefits
suchtpolitik	addiction policy	qualität	quality
esport	e-sports	weiterentwickeln	advance
meldedaten	registration data	verbraucherinnen	female consumers
dateiform	file format	familienarbeitszeit	family working time
abgeordnetengesetz	law pertaining to MPs	umsetzung	implementation
jmstv	jmstv	fortsetzen	continue
ermittlungsschwerpunkt	focus of investigation	bürgerinnenprojekt	female civil project
liquid	liquid	bürgerkonv	civil convention
nutzung	usage	verlässlich	reliable
psychiatrischen	psychiatric	beratung	consultation
naturressourcen	natural resources	jugendlichen	juvenile
beimengungen	addition	jugendlich	juvenile
sonderregelung	special rule	jugendarbeit	youth work
bedingungslosen	unconditional	studierenden	students

Table A2 (continued)

FDP (free democrats/liberals)		CDU/CSU (Christian democrats/conservatives)	
weltbest	world's best	schöpfung	creation
chancen	opportunities	aussiedl	resettler
bildungsgutschein	education voucher	chancen	opportunities
bürgergeld	citizen's dividend	umsetzung	implementation
verantwortungsgemeinschaft	civil union	bevölkerungswandel	demographic change
digitalisierung	digitization	spätaussiedl	late repatriate
stabilitätsunion	stability union	digitalisierung	digitization
vorankommen	advance	christdemokraten	chrisian democrats
vorsorgekonto	retirement benefits account	qualität	quality
studierenden	students	feuerwehrlaut	firefighter
vertragsfreiheit	freedom of contract	verlässlich	reliable
weinbau	viticulture	unterstützt	supports
istbesteuerung	actual receipts taxation	zukünftig	prospective
entwicklungszusammenarbeit	development assistance	weiterentwickeln	advance
qualität	quality	ideen	ideas
träume	dreams	schulvorbereitung	pre-school
geldwertstabilität	monetary stability	imker	beekeeper
schulfreiheitsgesetz	autonomy education act	landeskompetenzzentren	state competence center
bildungssparen	education saving	ehrenamt	volunteer work
hebesatz	tax factor	jugendlich	juvenile
AfD (right-wing party)		NPD (far-right party)	
altparteien	old parties	nationaldemokraten	national democrats
massenzuwanderung	mass immigration	volksgemeinschaft	ethnic community
genderideologi	gender ideology	nationaldemokratisch	national democratic
mainstreaming	mainstreaming	massenzuwanderung	mass immigration
frühsexualisierung	early sexualization	müttergehalt	maternal salary
magist	magister	überfremdung	foreign domination
schächten	kosher butchering	produktivvermögen	productive assets
gender	gender	generalstab	general staff
steuerverschwendung	tax misspending	rußland	russia
deutschtürkisch	german-turkish	ausländerkriminalität	crime by foreigners
sozialversicherungsabkommen	social security agreement	vaterland	fatherland
eurowrettungspolitik	euro salvation policy	nationalstaat	national state
schulkleidung	School uniform	raumorientiert	territorially oriented
volkssouveränität	popular sovereignty	zuteil	bestow
handlungsschwerpunkt	field of action	islamisierung	islamization
multikulturalismus	multiculturalism	mißbrauch	abuse
erstarrt	frozen	mitbeteiligung	workers' participation
schwerstkriminalität	serious crime	solidarprinzip	principle of solidarity
tatverdächtig	suspected	sozialversicherungswesen	social security
wirtschaftssanktionen	economic sanctions	beitragsgerecht	social contribution act

Notes: The table shows the terms with the highest term frequency-inverse document frequency (TF-IDF) values, based on all national- and available state-level election programs between 2012 and 2017. The TF-IDF is computed as  $f_{t,p}/F_p \times \log(P/pf_t)$ , where  $f$  denotes the frequency of term  $t$  in the election programs of the parties  $p$ ,  $F_p$  is the total number of words per party,  $P = 8$  refers to the number of parties, and  $pf$  counts the number of election programs containing term  $t$ .

Figure A1: Distribution of immunity story posts across outlets

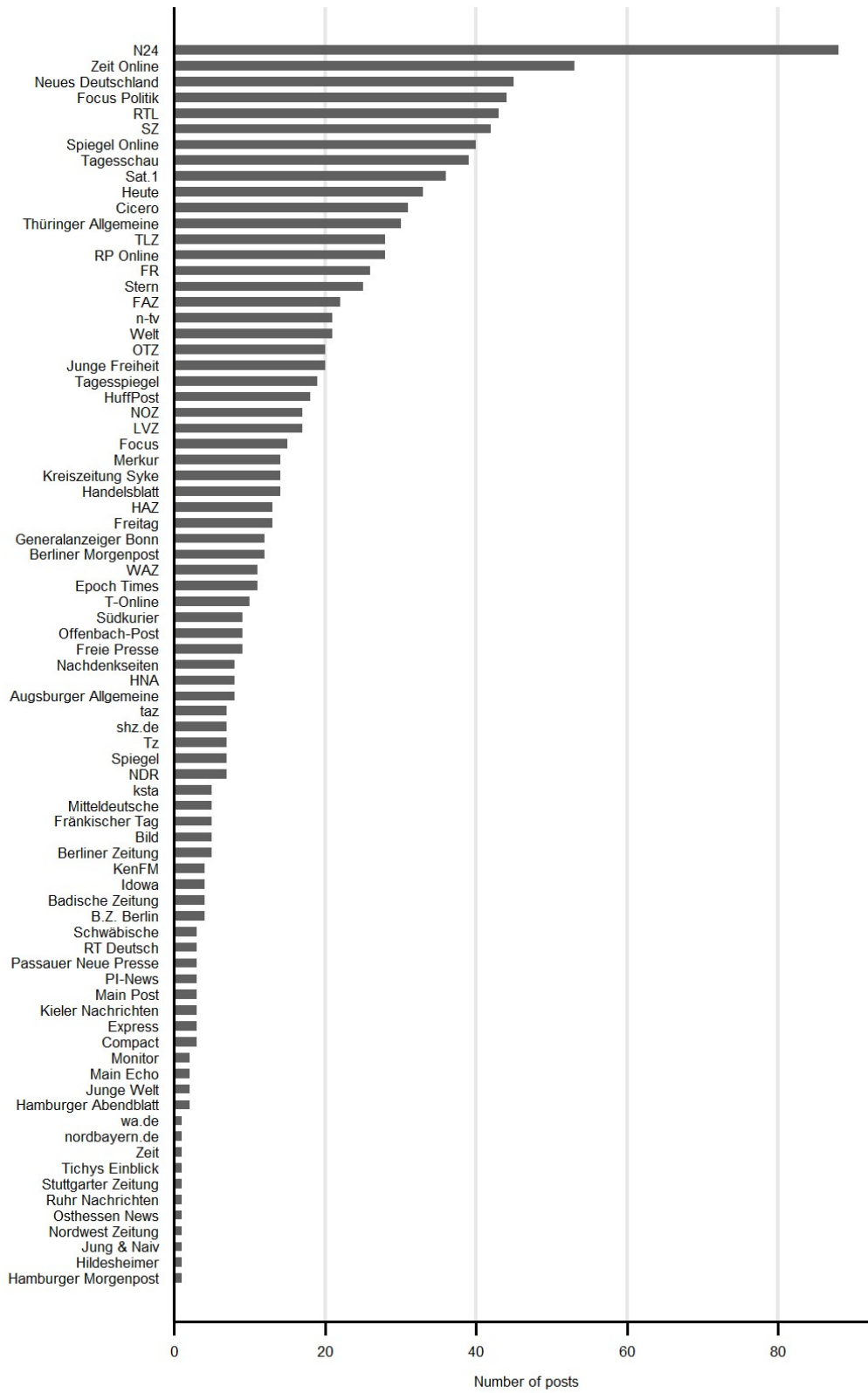
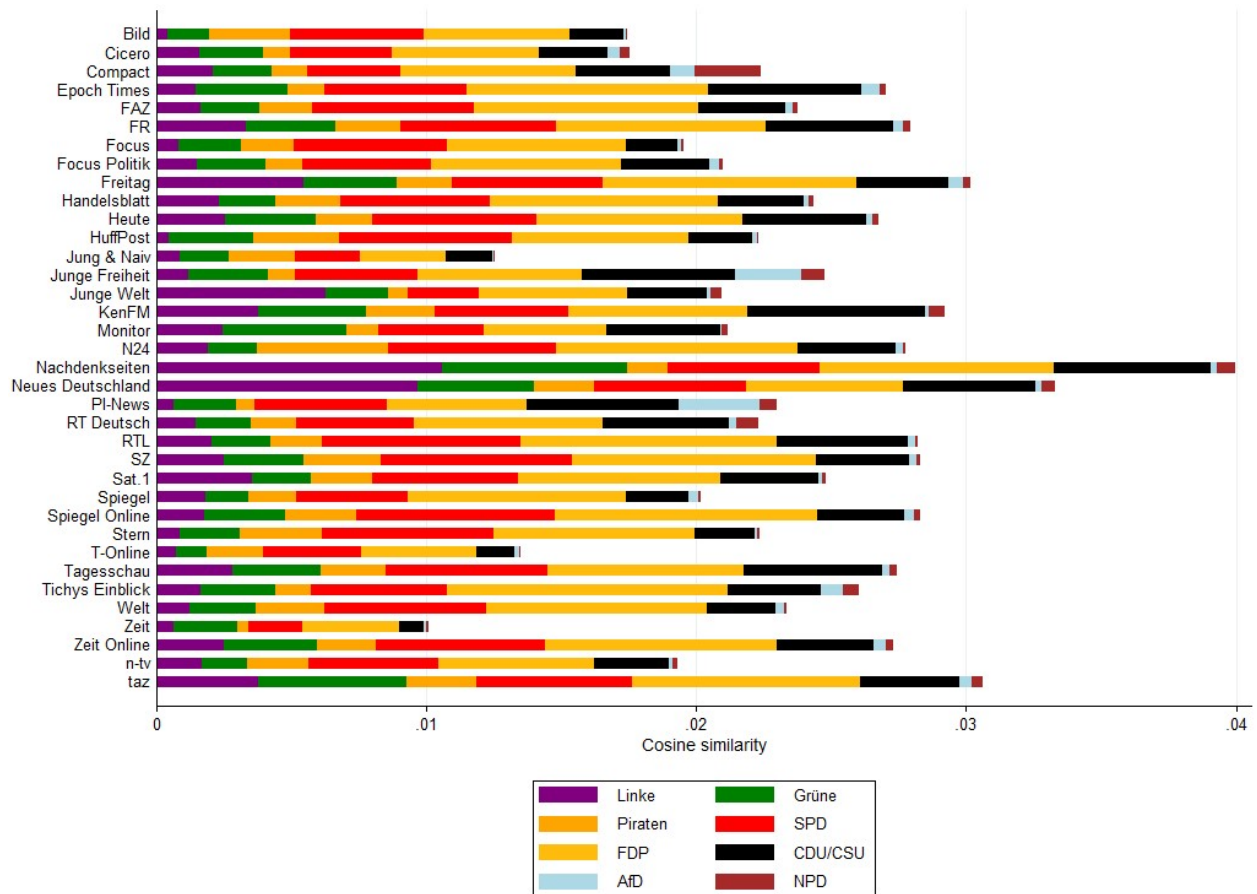
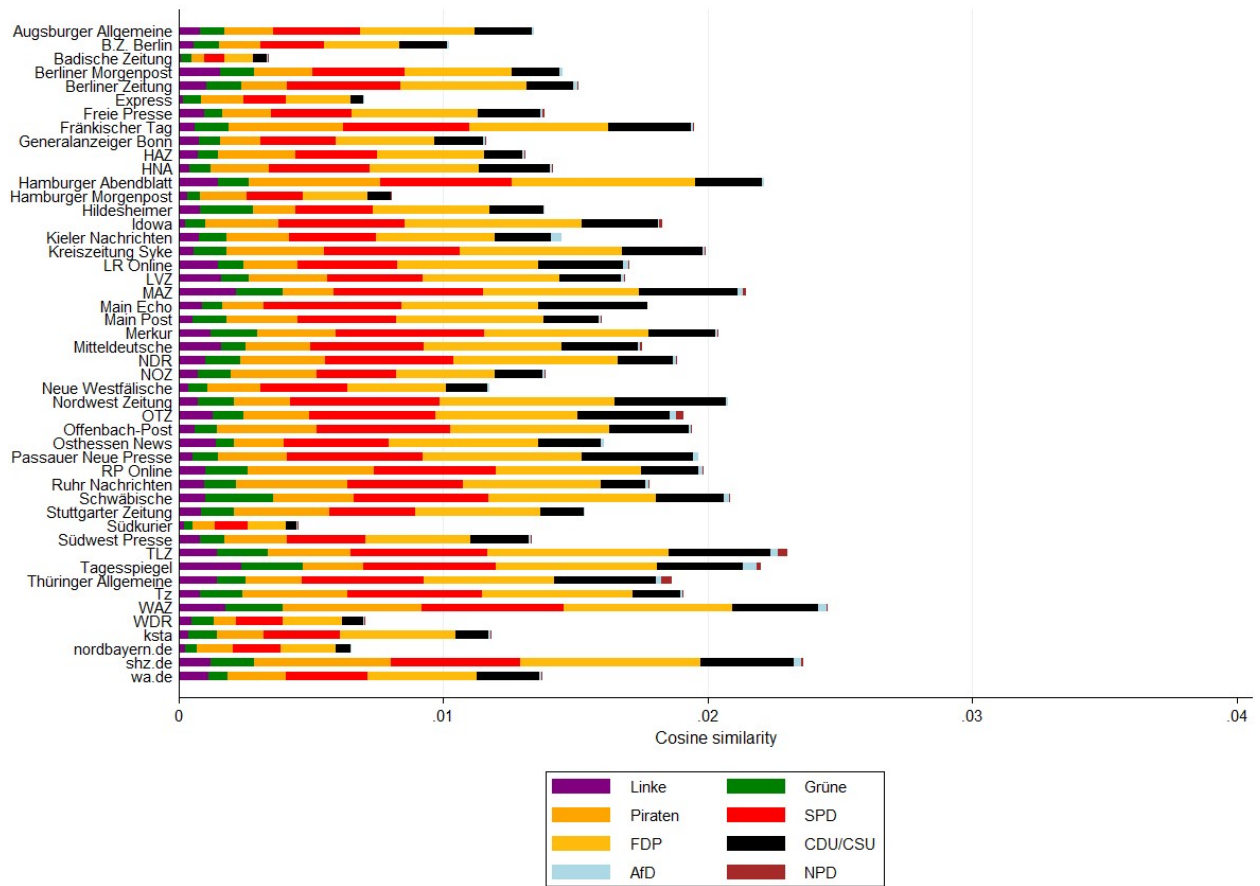


Figure A2: Levels of slant, by outlet and party (national outlets)



Notes: The x axis refers to the cosine similarity as calculated in Equation (2) in the main text.

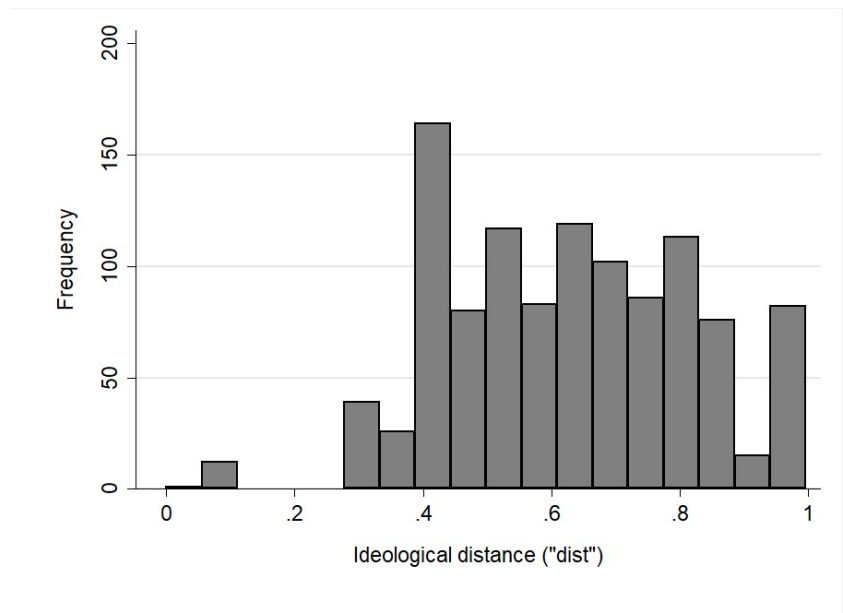
Figure A3: Levels of slant, by outlet and party (regional outlets)



Notes: The x axis refers to the cosine similarity as calculated in Equation (2) in the main text.

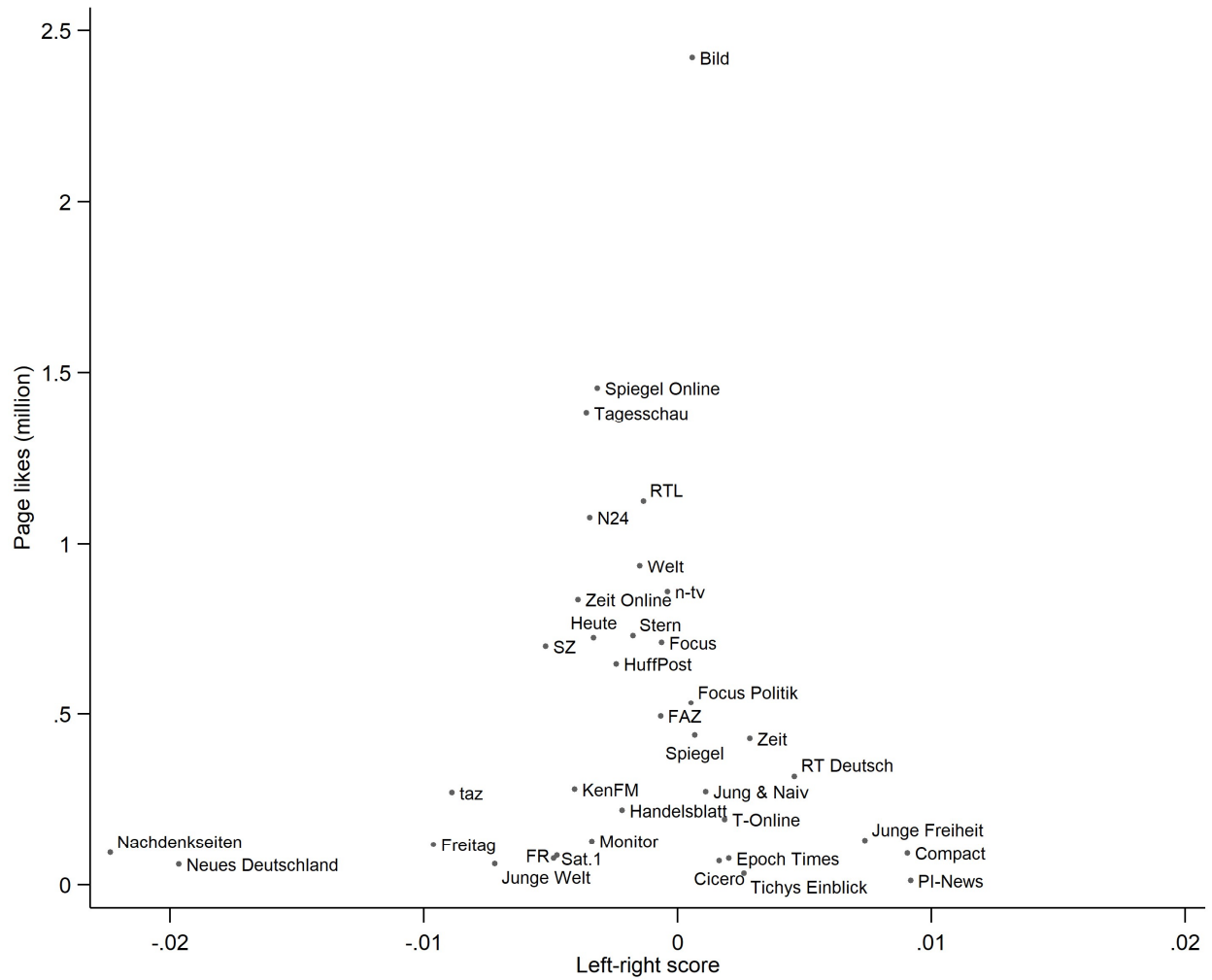


Figure A4: Ideological distances between outlets and parties



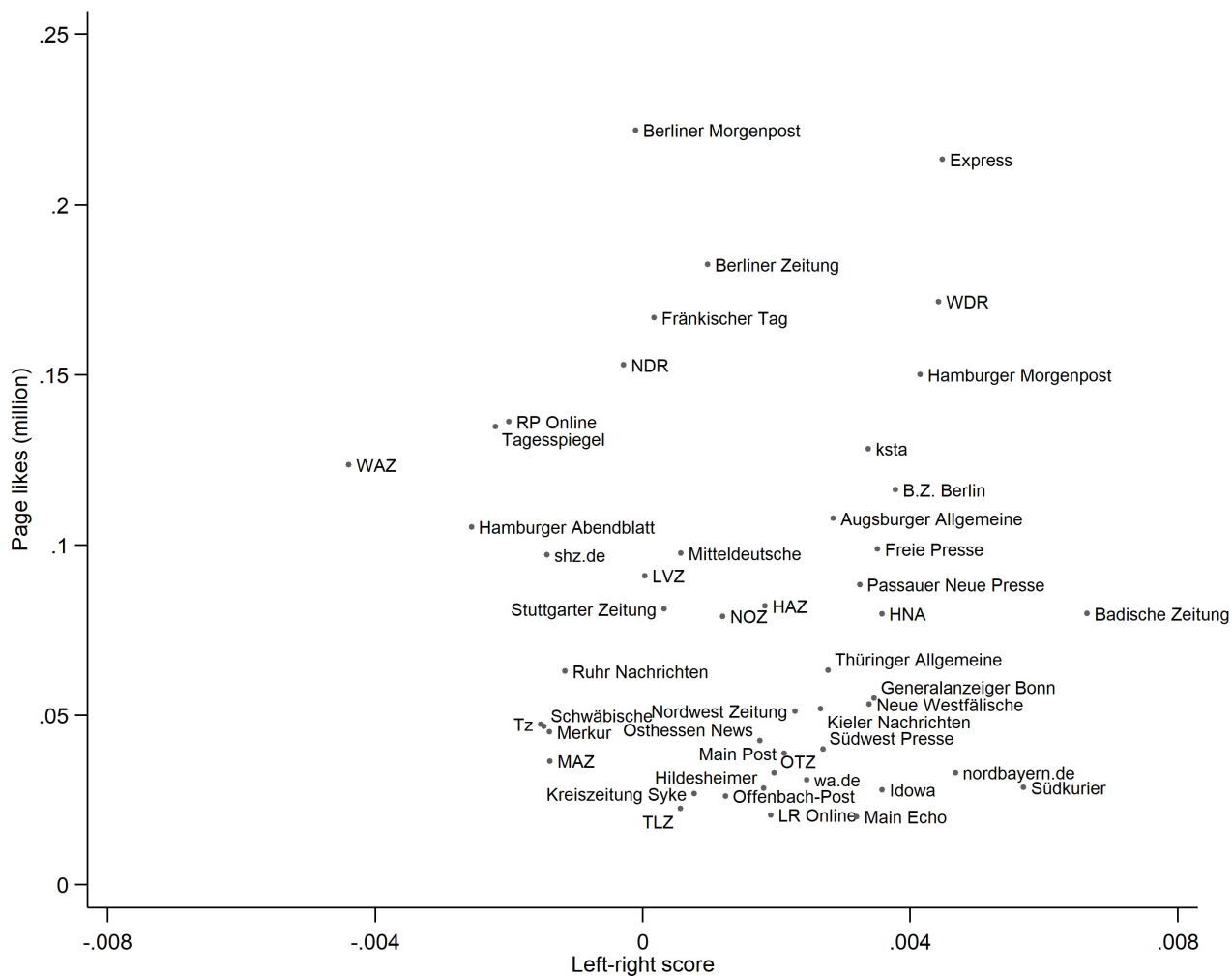
Notes: Based on 1,115 political immunity story posts. The graph shows the distribution of the distance measure as calculated in Equation (3).

Figure A5: Popularity and slant of Facebook news pages, national outlets (left-right mapping based on Politbarometer data)



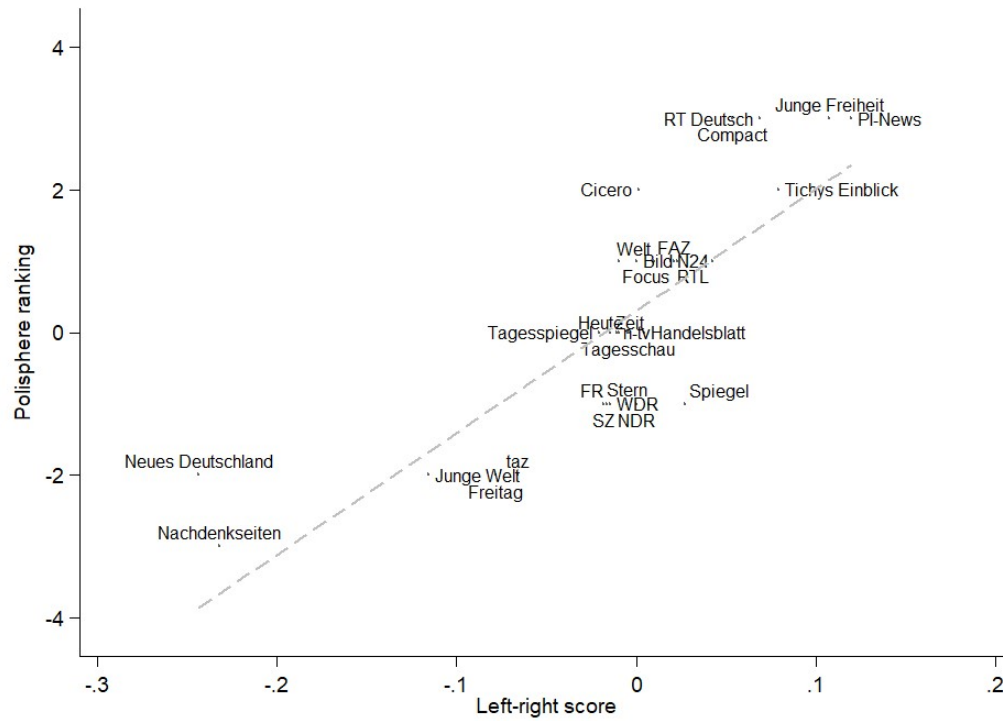
Notes: The page likes refer to August 2017. The score on the x axis is computed as described in Equations (4) and (5) in the main text. However, the graph uses average left-right scores of the parties based on the 2016 Politbarometer surveys (N = 17,556) instead of Manifesto Project scores.

Figure A6: Popularity and slant of Facebook news pages, regional outlets (left-right mapping based on Politbarometer data)



Notes: The page likes refer to August 2017. The score on the x axis is computed as described in Equations (4) and (5) in the main text. However, the graph uses average left-right scores of the parties based on the 2016 Politbarometer surveys (N = 17,556) instead of Manifesto Project scores.

Figure A7: Language-based and perceived slant



Notes:  $N = 32$ . The graph shows the left-right score computed in this study on the x axis and the Polisphäre (2017) rating on the y axis. The latter measure is based on subjective survey data and varies between -3 and 3, with negative (positive) values indicating left-wing (right-wing) slant. The figure includes all outlets for which both measures are available. The correlation coefficient is 0.80 ( $p < 0.001$ ).

## Online Appendix B: Case-level data

This appendix provides details on robustness checks and further results pertaining to Section 4.1 in the paper.

First, we conduct different robustness checks to verify that the estimates of Equation (6) in the main text hold when we modify our measure of congeniality. When constructing this measure, we use an arbitrary threshold to select the set of ideologically relevant expressions from the election programs (i.e., the top 0.1% of the distribution of TF-IDF values; see Section 3.4.1). Tables B1 and B2 show results when using cut-offs at 0.01% and 0.2% instead. The size of the coefficients slightly changes, but the estimates remain statistically insignificant.

Table B3 shows the results when using an alternative measure of congeniality. Specifically, we use the index of perceived slant by Polisphere (2017), as shown in Figure A7. Based on survey data, this index rates a subset of the outlets in our sample on a seven-point scale from -3 (very left) to 3 (very right). We use the numeric values of this rating but change their sign to distinguish between congenial and uncongenial cases. That is, the alternative measure of congeniality takes positive values (i.e., 1, 2, or 3) in the case of left-wing outlets and parties right of the center (i.e., FDP, CDU, CSU, AfD, and NPD), and right-wing outlets and parties left of the center (i.e., Linke, Grüne, Piraten, and SPD). In contrast, the measure takes negative values (i.e., -1, -2, or -3) to reflect uncongenial constellations (i.e., left-wing outlets and parties left of the center, right-wing outlets and parties right of the center). The estimates confirm that there is no robust relationship between the amount of posts and the ideological distance. All but one coefficient are insignificant. According to the one significant estimate (Panel A, Column 1), a one standard deviation increase in distance (0.992) reduces the number of posts by 0.003. This decrease is tiny, as it equals 0.27% of the standard deviation of the amount of posts.

As discussed in Section 3.3, approximately 6.2% of the post messages are slanted in defense of the accused politician. It is not clear if these posts have a reversed congeniality; i.e., if the slant causes readers to perceive a post about an ideologically close politician as congenial, and vice versa. It is advisable to re-estimate Equation (6) while distinguishing between posts that do and do not defend the accused. The corresponding estimates in Table B4 do not indicate substantial differences between both types of posts though.

In Table B5 we exclude outlets in the top quartile of the overall number of immunity story posts published (i.e., outlets with more than 19 posts). This sample restriction limits the impact of influential outlets but yields very similar results as the full sample.

Table B6 verifies that the outlets do not respond to the congeniality of the case when we exclude prominent politicians. In Columns (1) to (3) we remove the case of Christian Wulff, Germany's then president. Columns (4) to (6) show results excluding the ten most prominent cases according to the overall number of posts the cases received. All coefficients remain small in magnitude and statistically insignificant.

The baseline regressions pertaining to Equation (6) in the main text use all 107 cases and 84 outlets. However, when estimating Equation (7), we only use 49 cases and 79 outlets because some cases did not receive any posts and a few outlets never posted about a political immunity story. Thus our main analyses use different samples, which may pose a challenge to the interpretation of the results. We evaluate if the unmatched samples are an issue by estimating Equation (6) while excluding all cases and outlets with zero posts. As Table B7 shows, the coefficients remain insignificant. Their absolute size slightly grows, which is mostly a consequence of the increase in the mean number of posts caused by dropping observations with zeros.

As mentioned in Section 4.1, maximum likelihood estimates on the data often fail to converge, which is why we cannot use models for count variables. However, it is possible to use linear probability models with binary dependent variables indicating if an outlet reported about a case or not. We present these results in Table B8, according to which the outlets are slightly less likely to post about a case the greater the ideological distance to the politician in question. The coefficients are estimated more precisely here, being significant at the 5% and 10% levels. According to the coefficient in Column (1), a one standard deviation increase in distance lowers the likelihood of posting by  $0.095 \times 0.193 = 1.8\%$ . This is in line with the baseline regressions.

Table B9 investigates if the relationship between the congeniality of the case and the amount of posts varies across outlets. Columns (1) to (3) show regressions in which we interact our distance measure with a binary variable that distinguishes outlets below and above the median of the left-right score, as calculated in Equation (5) in the main text. We do not find any significant differences here. As Columns (4) to (6) show, we do not detect any notable differences either when we interact the distance measure with a dummy for outlets in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> quartile of the distribution of left-

right scores. Thus extreme and centered outlets do not differ in their propensity to react to the congeniality of the case.

We also check if the outlets adjust certain qualitative elements of their posts when the congeniality of the case changes, rather than the quantity of posts. For that purpose, we identify posts that include a call to action. Specifically, we find 54 posts that directly address the user, asking about their opinion about some issue (e.g., “What would be your headline?”, “What do you think about the accusations?”) or encouraging some action (e.g., “Take a vote!”). As Table B10 shows, there is no significant relationship between the use of this kind of posts and the congeniality of the case.

We also evaluate the following outcome variables: the average number of words per post (congenial posts might be longer); the average number of days since the first post on a case (outlets could protract their coverage in congenial cases); the share of posts including a photo or video (because those posts might catch more attention than text posts); the share of posts published on Sundays; and the share of posts published at night (outlets might post about uncongenial cases when readers pay less attention). However, as Table B11 shows, none of these variables are significantly affected by the distance measure.

Table B1: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (0.01% TF-IDF cut-off)

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.105 (0.105)	-0.0995 (0.0944)	-0.140 (0.126)
$R^2$	0.282	0.277	0.262

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B2: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (0.2% TF-IDF cut-off)

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.656 (0.459)	-0.627 (0.441)	-0.493 (0.306)
$R^2$	0.284	0.279	0.264

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01



Table B3: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (alternative measure of congeniality)

	(1) Amount	(2) Amount, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) Amount, excluding multiple-politician posts
<i>Panel A: Coding outlets not included in the Polisphere ranking as neutral (N = 8,988)</i>			
Ideological distance	-0.00301*** (0.000938)	-0.00417 (0.00333)	-0.00302 (0.00330)
$R^2$	0.282	0.277	0.262
<i>Panel B: Dropping outlets not included in the Polisphere ranking (N = 3,424)</i>			
Ideological distance	-0.00543 (0.00478)	-0.00662 (0.00522)	-0.00462 (0.00398)
$R^2$	0.444	0.439	0.391

Notes: OLS estimates. The alternative distance measure is based on the Polisphere (2017) index of perceived media slant. It takes positive values in congenial cases (i.e., left-wing outlets and parties right of the center, right-wing outlets and parties left of the center) and negative ones in uncongenial cases (i.e., left-wing outlets and parties left of the center, right-wing outlets and parties right of the center). In Panel A, the measure takes the value 0 if the outlet is classified as neutral or is not classified at all. In Panel B, we exclude outlets that are not classified by Polisphere (2017). The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case in Panel A, and clustered by case in Panel B.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B4: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (role of posts that defend the accused)

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts	(4) # Posts	(5) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(6) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
		Posts that defend the accused			Other posts	
Ideological distance	-0.0901 (0.0578)	-0.0901 (0.0578)	-0.0891 (0.0578)	-0.322 (0.331)	-0.303 (0.317)	-0.207 (0.218)
$R^2$	0.104	0.104	0.103	0.281	0.275	0.261

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B5: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (excluding outlets with many political immunity story posts)

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.0880 (0.125)	-0.0934 (0.123)	-0.0519 (0.0978)
$R^2$	0.281	0.277	0.252

Notes: N = 6,741 (107 cases, 63 outlets). The sample excludes outlets in the top quartile of the number of immunity story posts published (i.e., outlets with more than 19 posts). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B6: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (excluding the most prominent cases)

	(1) # Posts	(2) Without Wulff case # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts	(4) # Posts	(5) Without ten most prominent cases # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(6) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.449 (0.340)	-0.426 (0.325)	-0.332 (0.231)	-0.0704 (0.0497)	-0.0704 (0.0497)	-0.0704 (0.0497)
$R^2$	0.301	0.296	0.280	0.0808	0.0808	0.0808
Observations	8904	8904	8904	8148	8148	8148

Notes: OLS estimates. Columns (1) to (3) exclude the case of Christian Wulff, whereas Columns (4) to (6) exclude the ten most prominent cases, according to the total number of posts. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B7: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (only cases/outlets with at least one post)

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.783 (0.671)	-0.746 (0.643)	-0.559 (0.464)
$R^2$	0.308	0.303	0.286

Notes: N = 3,871 (49 cases, 79 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B8 Probability of posting and congeniality of cases

	(1) Post (yes/no)	(2) Post (yes/no), excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) Post (yes/no), excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.0950** (0.0468)	-0.0973** (0.0468)	-0.0908* (0.0469)
$R^2$	0.309	0.303	0.281

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Heteroscedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B9: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases, by outlets' left-right score

	(1) # Posts	(2) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(3) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts	(4) # Posts	(5) # Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	(6) # Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	-0.351 (0.340)	-0.341 (0.331)	-0.240 (0.227)	-0.394 (0.375)	-0.380 (0.362)	-0.252 (0.239)
Left of median (yes/no)	-0.0917 (0.0767)	-0.0760 (0.0785)	-0.0628 (0.0530)			
Distance × left of median	-0.0959 (0.111)	-0.0810 (0.105)	-0.0887 (0.0948)			
1 <sup>st</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile (yes/no)				0.0627 (0.0541)	0.0519 (0.0494)	0.0945 (0.0644)
Distance × 1 <sup>st</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile				-0.0358 (0.107)	-0.0255 (0.105)	-0.0867 (0.0817)
$R^2$	0.283	0.278	0.263	0.283	0.278	0.263

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. The interaction terms are based on the left-right score of the outlets as calculated in Equation (5) in the main text. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table B10: Supply of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases (role of posts with call to action)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	# Posts	Posts with call to action		# Posts	Other posts	
		# Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	# Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts		# Posts, excluding multiple-topic posts	# Posts, excluding multiple-politician posts
Ideological distance	0.00943 (0.0149)	0.00719 (0.0127)	0.0112 (0.0147)	-0.422 (0.336)	-0.400 (0.322)	-0.307 (0.230)
$R^2$	0.0928	0.103	0.0946	0.279	0.273	0.258

Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

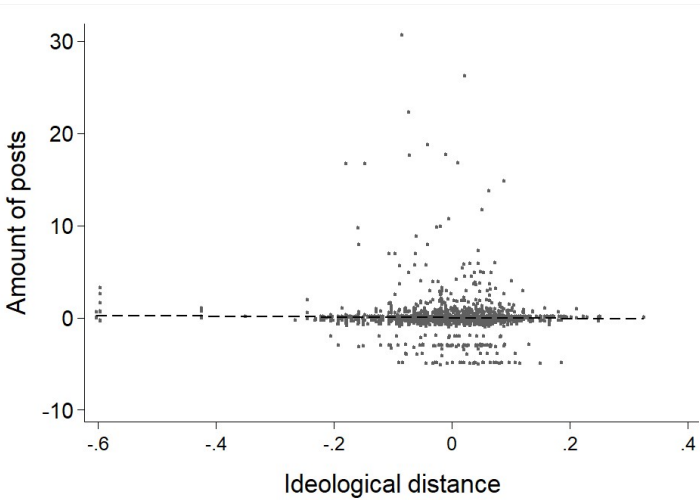
Table B11: Characteristics of political immunity story posts and congeniality of cases

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
	Mean # words	Mean # days since first post on the case	Share of photo or video posts	Share of posts published on Sunday	Share of posts published between 10 pm and 5 am
Ideological distance	257.9 (239.4)	-53.11 (60.60)	0.201 (0.124)	0.162 (0.136)	0.0427 (0.0794)
$R^2$	0.655	0.812	0.466	0.416	0.423

Notes: The models use all outlet-case combinations with at least one post (N = 390). OLS estimates. The column headers state the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Figure B1: Residuals of slant and amount of posts



Notes: N = 8,988 (107 cases, 84 outlets). The graph shows the residuals from regressing the distance measure and the amount of posts on outlet and party fixed effects and a constant.

## Online Appendix C: Post-level data

This appendix provides details about additional results and robustness checks pertaining to the relationship between the congeniality of political immunity story posts and user engagement.

To begin with, we exploit user-level data to verify our assumption outlined in Section 2.4 that the outlets' ideology approximates the ideology of the users who engaged with the political immunity story posts. Following Bond and Messing (2015), we check the users' like profiles (e.g., <https://www.facebook.com/zuck/likes>) for page likes of the political parties in our sample. In Facebook's terminology, liking a page makes the user a "fan" of this page, or a partisan user in our case. In compliance with privacy and data protection laws, we process and analyze these data anonymously. The main metric of interest is the number of *fans* of a political party  $f^p$  per outlet  $n$  relative to the overall number of *users* that engaged with the political immunity story posts  $i$  by that outlet ( $rel\_fans_{n,f^p} = \sum_{i=1}^I fans_{i,n,f^p} / users_{i,n}$ ). Comparing the relative number of "fans" with an outlet's overall slant— $dist_{n,p}$  as computed in Equation (3)—provides a simple check for overlapping ideologies. We implement this comparison with residuals of both variables, which we obtain by regressing the original values on outlet  $\mu_n$  and party  $\theta_p$  fixed effects (i.e.,  $dist_{n,p} = a + \mu_n + \theta_p + \varepsilon_{n,p}^{dist}$  and  $rel\_fans_{n,f^p} = a + \mu_n + \theta_p + \varepsilon_{n,f^p}^{rel\_fans}$ ). Using the residuals  $\varepsilon_{n,p}^{dist}$  accounts for overall differences in slant across outlets and parties, whereas we abstract from common variation across users and parties on Facebook by using  $\varepsilon_{n,f^p}^{rel\_fans}$  (i.e., some parties generally have more "fans" than others, and certain outlets are more often frequented by partisan users than their competitors). The corresponding scatter plot shown in Figure C1 indicates a negative relationship between the residuals: The greater the distance measure for an outlet-party combination, the lower the share of users that are "fans" of the respective party among all users engaging with the relevant posts by the corresponding outlet. Thus we observe relatively more "fans" of a certain party when the outlet is slanted towards this party, which implies that user and outlet ideologies are on average aligned here. In other words, the user engagement with the political immunity story posts primarily comes from users that share the ideology of the publishing outlet.

A series of robustness checks evaluates if the results of estimating Equation (7) in the main text hold when we modify our measure of congeniality. Table C1 shows estimates when using the top

0.01% of the distribution of TF-IDF values of political expressions to construct the distance measure, instead of the baseline cut-off of 0.1% (cp. Section 3.4.1). The coefficients remain statistically significant for likes and comments, but their size notably decreases. This is an expected consequence because a stricter cut-off implies that we treat some terms as neutral even if they are indicative of a party's ideology. Table C2 presents estimates based on a more generous cut-off than the baseline (0.2% rather than 0.1%). Here we obtain equally sized coefficients but larger standard errors. This pattern is also plausible because now we include a number of terms that are ideologically less relevant and indicative.

As stated in the Introduction, our slant index is not limited to the political left-right spectrum but captures multiple aspects of ideological differences. To test the relevance of a multi-dimensional index, we create a one-dimensional measure of ideological distance that is based on the difference between the left-right score of the outlet reporting about a case of lifting somebody's immunity and the left-right score of the party of that politician. For that purpose, we rescale the  $score_n$  and  $score_p$  variables in Equation (5) in the main text to vary between 0 and 1. The absolute value of the difference between both variables then captures the distance between outlet and politician in the left-right spectrum. Results are presented in Table C3. Accordingly, we do not find any significant relationship between the one-dimensional measure of the posts' congeniality and likes and shares. The relationship is positive and significant at the 5% level for comments though. The estimates thus indicate that our results are partially, but not entirely, related to differences in the left-right spectrum, which supports our claim that a multi-dimensional measure of slant is preferable when investigating multi-party systems.

Table C4 presents results based on the distance measure that refers to the index of perceived slant by Polisphere (2017). The effects on likes and shares remain significant at the 5% level at least, whereas none of the specifications indicate a significant impact on comments. According to Columns (4) and (5), Panel A, a one standard deviation increase in congeniality (0.997) raises the number of likes by approximately 22.6 and that of shares by 4.0 (or 26.9% and 23.6%, respectively). The difference in the magnitude of the effects—compared to the baseline specification—can be likely explained by the rather coarse approach to measure congeniality when using the alternative distance measure: it only captures the political left-right dimension, is based on

perceptions, and refers to the outlets' primary form of news distribution and not their Facebook pages.

Another concern relates to posts that defend the accused, because these posts could have a different congeniality (cp. Section 3.3). As Table C5 shows, excluding posts that are slanted in defense of the accused politician does not change the estimates in a substantial way.

We also verify that our results are not driven by outliers. We address the distribution of the engagement variables by re-estimating the baseline models while successively removing outliers (i.e., posts with exceptionally high numbers of likes, shares, and comments). The resulting estimates of the distance coefficient are plotted in Figure C3. As a common pattern, the coefficient decreases after removing the largest outliers, but so does the mean of the engagement variables, which implies that the magnitude of the effect remains similar. The effect on likes remains significant throughout. In the case of shares, the estimates fall below the 10% significance level when we remove the largest outliers. The opposite applies to comments. While there is no statistically significant effect for the entire sample, the estimates become more precise when we exclude the posts with the largest number of comments. Specifically, the coefficient of interest is significant for sample sizes smaller than 1,085 (i.e., after removing the 30 largest or more outliers).

Excluding the prominent case of then-president Christian Wulff does not substantially change the estimates (Table C6, Columns 1 to 3). However, we obtain considerably larger coefficients when we remove the ten cases that received the highest overall number of posts, especially for likes (Table C6, Columns 4 to 6). This finding suggests that (extra) user engagement with congenial cases decreases with an increasing number of posts on a case.

Figure 2 shows that two outlets (*Nachdenkseiten* and *Neues Deutschland*) have particularly extreme left-right scores. In Table C7, we drop all posts by these outlets to rule out that they drive our results. The coefficients slightly increase and remain statistically significant, except for comments.

We also check if our results could be driven by posts that include a call to action (e.g., “What would be your headline?”, “What do you think about the accusations?”, “Take a vote!”). Omitting these posts does not affect the results either (Table C8).



Table C9 evaluates if the relationship between congeniality and user engagement varies across outlets. The results shown in Columns (1) to (3) suggest that this relationship is stronger for outlets right of the median left-right score than outlets on the left side of the distribution. The difference is significant at the 5% level for likes and shares but insignificant for comments. Columns (4) to (6) indicate differences between extreme and centered outlets, at least in the case of likes. That is, the higher user engagement that we observe for congenial posts seems to be mostly driven by outlets in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quartiles of the distribution of left-right scores. This difference might be an indication that psychological and social motives are more relevant for readers of centered outlets than readers of outlets with more one-sided opinions.

Finally, we evaluate the role of Facebook’s news feed algorithm by estimating Equation (7) in the main text with data from Twitter. We collect data on user engagement with political immunity stories on Twitter, using Twitter’s advanced search and a web scraper. We apply the same search parameters as in the case of Facebook, for the same sample of news outlets.<sup>1</sup> The number of retrieved tweets (225) is substantially lower than the equivalent number of Facebook posts (1,115). This difference can be explained by Twitter’s limit of 140 characters per tweet, which favors tweets about topics that are less complex than political immunity stories. The character restriction also causes news outlets to split up longer headlines into several tweets, and our search routine only tags those that include the relevant keywords. Twitter started to test an algorithmically curated timeline in February 2016. Before that, the platform presented tweets simply in reverse chronological order to its users. We can exploit this change in platform policy to evaluate if our results are exclusively driven by algorithmic content selection. Table C10 summarizes regressions of Twitter engagement metrics on our measure of ideological distance, a dummy capturing tweets published after January 2016, and the interaction between the latter variables. Throughout, the coefficients on the distance measure are positive, and statistically significant in most cases, which suggests that users engaged more with more congenial posts prior to the introduction of Twitter’s algorithmically curated timeline. The coefficient on the interaction in Column (4) suggests that the liking of congenial tweets has increased by a factor of 2.5 after the introduction of the content selection

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<sup>1</sup> An alternative approach would be to search for the URLs contained in the relevant Facebook posts. We do not pursue this approach though, because 1) not all Facebook immunity story posts have a link to an external news item, 2) not all news items posted on Facebook are also tweeted by the outlets, and 3) there could be some tweets about political immunity stories that did not appear on Facebook.

algorithm. We do not observe an algorithm-related increase in retweets and replies though, as Columns (5) and (6) show. Thus we cannot completely rule out the algorithm as a factor. It is conceivable that algorithmic content selection amplifies the relationship between congeniality and user engagement. However, given the positive and significant relationship between user engagement and congeniality for the time until January 2016, it is unlikely for the Facebook results to be entirely driven by the news feed algorithm.

Table C1: User engagement and congeniality of posts (0.01% TF-IDF cut-off)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	109.4*	11.99	61.67**	94.11*	4.552	58.14***
	(62.32)	(13.46)	(27.31)	(52.92)	(13.27)	(17.66)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.259	0.478	0.491	0.325	0.515	0.524

Notes: N = 1,115. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C2: User engagement and congeniality of posts (0.2% TF-IDF cut-off)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	418.2	34.57	152.6	318.9	19.71	139.4
	(363.2)	(39.42)	(109.1)	(281.9)	(33.50)	(88.68)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.262	0.478	0.494	0.327	0.515	0.526

Notes: N = 1,115. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C3: User engagement and congeniality of posts (congeniality based on one-dimensional measure of slant)

	(1) Likes	(2) Shares	(3) Comments	(4) Likes	(5) Shares	(6) Comments
Ideological distance	51.01 (45.07)	5.099 (8.633)	40.04** (18.70)	21.52 (54.32)	-3.258 (8.681)	37.58** (17.64)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.258	0.477	0.491	0.325	0.515	0.524

Notes: N = 1,115. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. The measure of distance used in the regressions only captures differences in the political left-right spectrum. It is computed as the absolute difference between the left-right score of the reporting outlet and the left-right score of the party of the politician in question (i.e.,  $score_n$  and  $score_p$  in Equation 5), after rescaling both variables to vary between 0 and 1. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table C4: User engagement and congeniality of posts (alternative measure of congeniality)

	(1) Likes	(2) Shares	(3) Comments	(4) Likes	(5) Shares	(6) Comments
<i>Panel A: Coding outlets not included in the Polisphere ranking as neutral (N = 1,115)</i>						
Ideological distance	26.84** (12.56)	4.843** (2.459)	2.338 (3.820)	22.65** (9.343)	4.034** (1.904)	2.164 (3.820)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.264	0.485	0.491	0.329	0.520	0.524
<i>Panel B: Dropping outlets not included in the Polisphere ranking (N = 712)</i>						
Ideological distance	26.58*** (9.650)	4.866** (2.039)	1.918 (3.789)	22.48*** (8.672)	4.175*** (1.574)	2.436 (4.106)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.316	0.550	0.562	0.393	0.593	0.601

Notes: OLS estimates. The alternative distance measure is based on the Polisphere (2017) index of perceived media slant. It takes positive values in congenial cases (i.e., left-wing outlets and parties right of the center, right-wing outlets and parties left of the center) and negative ones in uncongenial cases (i.e., left-wing outlets and parties left of the center, right-wing outlets and parties right of the center). In Panel A, the measure takes the value 0 if the outlet is classified as neutral or is not classified at all. In Panel B, we exclude outlets that are not classified by Polisphere (2017). The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case in Panel A, and clustered by case in Panel B.

\*  $p < 0.10$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$

Table C5: User engagement and congeniality of posts (omitting posts that defend the accused)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	529.5*	69.35*	93.90	484.8*	60.16*	85.10
	(302.7)	(38.51)	(91.49)	(248.2)	(31.67)	(76.87)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.281	0.484	0.501	0.344	0.520	0.536

Notes: N = 1,046. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C6: User engagement and congeniality of posts (excluding the most prominent cases)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Without Wulff case			Without ten most prominent cases		
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	368.1*	26.98	113.3*	798.9***	166.3**	107.2***
	(214.8)	(19.16)	(64.99)	(215.5)	(70.42)	(24.88)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.340	0.565	0.543	0.944	0.958	0.982
Observations	855	855	855	133	133	133

Notes: OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. Columns (1) to (3) exclude the case of Christian Wulff, whereas Columns (4) to (6) exclude the ten most prominent cases, according to the total number of posts. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C7: User engagement and congeniality of posts (excluding *Nachdenkseiten* and *Neues Deutschland*)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	808.3** (382.1)	100.9* (51.67)	157.8 (132.8)	725.1** (309.8)	86.28** (43.78)	143.5 (112.2)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.276	0.489	0.494	0.340	0.524	0.527

Notes: N = 1,062. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C8: User engagement and congeniality of posts (excluding posts with calls to action)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
	Likes	Shares	Comments	Likes	Shares	Comments
Ideological distance	440.1* (244.1)	57.22* (33.57)	103.4 (71.11)	394.4** (200.9)	48.83* (28.25)	91.22 (58.27)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.270	0.487	0.501	0.335	0.521	0.535

Notes: N = 1,061. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

Table C9: User engagement and congeniality of posts, by outlets' left-right score

	(1) Likes	(2) Shares	(3) Comments	(4) Likes	(5) Shares	(6) Comments
Ideological distance	632.5** (252.3)	78.33** (32.66)	166.2 (103.4)	652.0** (274.8)	80.54** (40.10)	121.0 (97.01)
Left of median (yes/no)	64.73 (148.8)	37.93 (25.89)	90.08 (85.14)			
Distance × left of median	-581.9** (258.2)	-71.78** (30.52)	-192.0 (122.7)			
1 <sup>st</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile (yes/no)				660.2** (317.2)	83.06** (41.63)	103.2 (110.0)
Distance × 1 <sup>st</sup> or 4 <sup>th</sup> quartile				-868.5** (440.6)	-106.5 (66.87)	-116.7 (150.7)
Controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.342	0.525	0.534	0.337	0.522	0.527

Notes: N = 1,115. OLS estimates. The column headers denote the dependent variables. The interaction terms are based on the left-right score of the outlets as calculated in Equation (5) in the main text. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the type of the post, the length of the post message, the outlets' monthly average number of likes over all published posts, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous posts on the same case, the number of days since the first post on the same case, a dummy to capture posts that refer to multiple politicians of different parties, and a dummy to capture posts about multiple topics. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

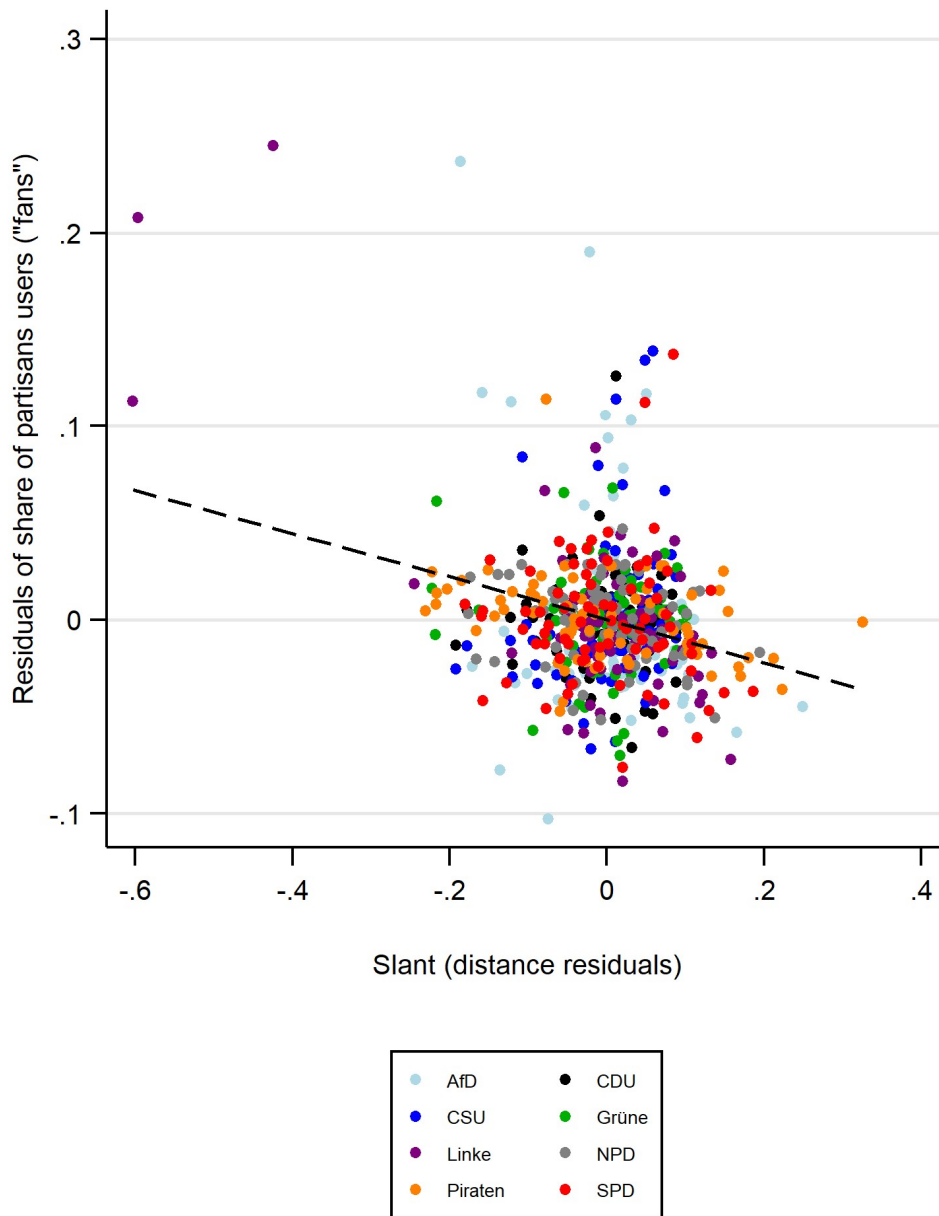
Table C10: User engagement and congeniality of tweets

	(1) Likes	(2) Retweets	(3) Replies	(4) Likes	(5) Retweets	(6) Replies
Ideological distance	7.742*** (3.000)	18.06 (11.12)	9.704** (4.811)	6.677* (3.995)	21.23** (8.398)	11.19*** (3.879)
After Jan 2016	-14.93 (11.35)	37.42*** (8.710)	2.377 (6.486)	-6.700 (7.816)	26.49*** (8.455)	2.163 (5.092)
Ideological distance × after Jan 2016	18.80 (13.40)	-17.02* (10.28)	1.916 (7.656)	17.73** (7.859)	-3.271 (9.872)	1.911 (5.788)
Controls	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
$R^2$	0.857	0.495	0.733	0.888	0.599	0.785

Notes: N = 225 (36 cases, 53 outlets). OLS estimates using Twitter data. The column headers denote the dependent variables. All models include outlet and case fixed effects. The control variables include the length of tweets, day of the week and hour of the day fixed effects, the overall and the outlet-specific number of previous tweets on the same case, the number of days since the first tweet on the same case, and a dummy to capture tweets that refer to multiple politicians of different parties. Standard errors (in parentheses) are clustered by outlet and case.

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

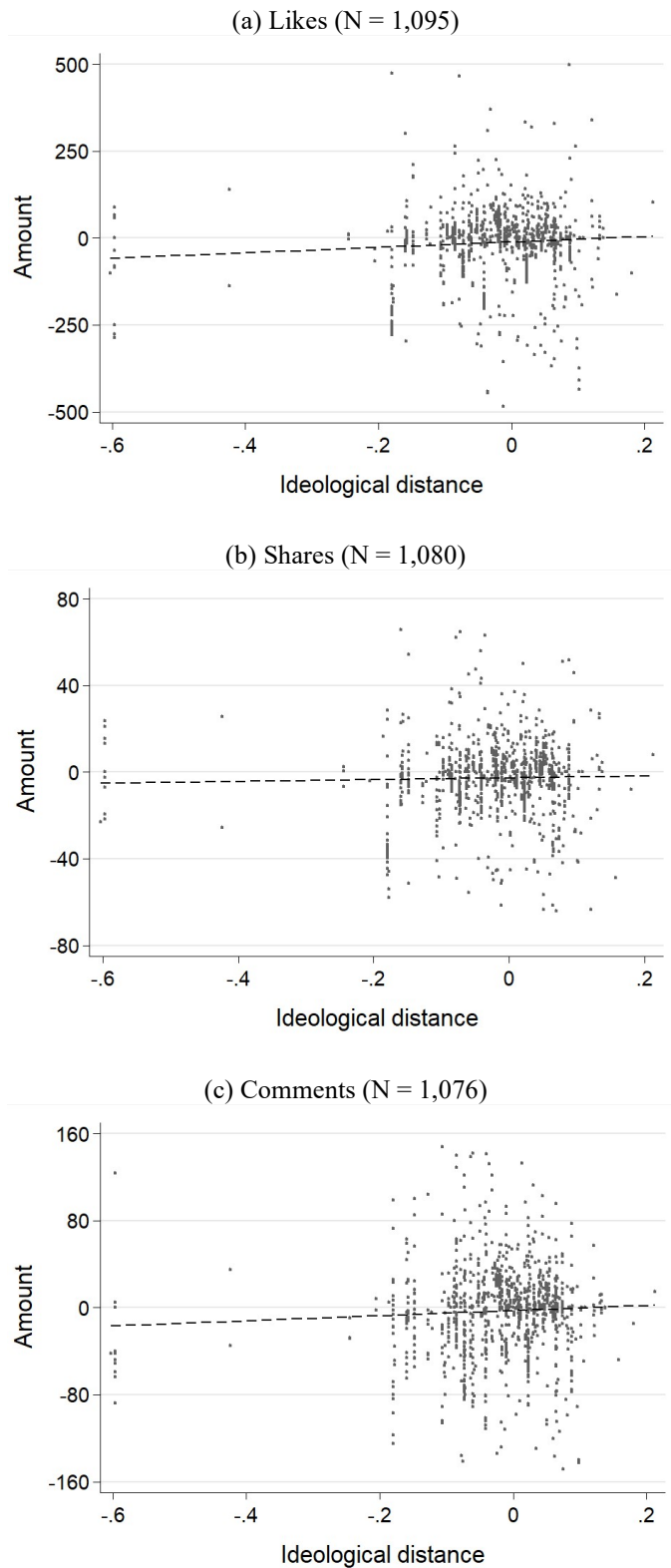
Figure C1: Outlet-level slant and ideology of users engaging with political immunity story posts, by political party



Notes: Each data point represents an outlet-party combination. The x axis shows residuals of regressing the outlet-level distance measure—as shown in Equation (3)—on outlet and party fixed effects. Higher values indicate a greater ideological distance between an outlet and a party. The y axis shows residuals of regressing the outlet-specific share of “fans” of a political party on outlet and party fixed effects. Higher values indicate that those users who engaged with the political immunity story posts of an outlet are more often “fans” of a certain political party. The dashed line shows the linear fit: The greater the distance measure for an outlet-party combination, the lower the share of users that are “fans” of the respective party. The correlation coefficient is  $-0.27$  ( $p < 0.001$ ).

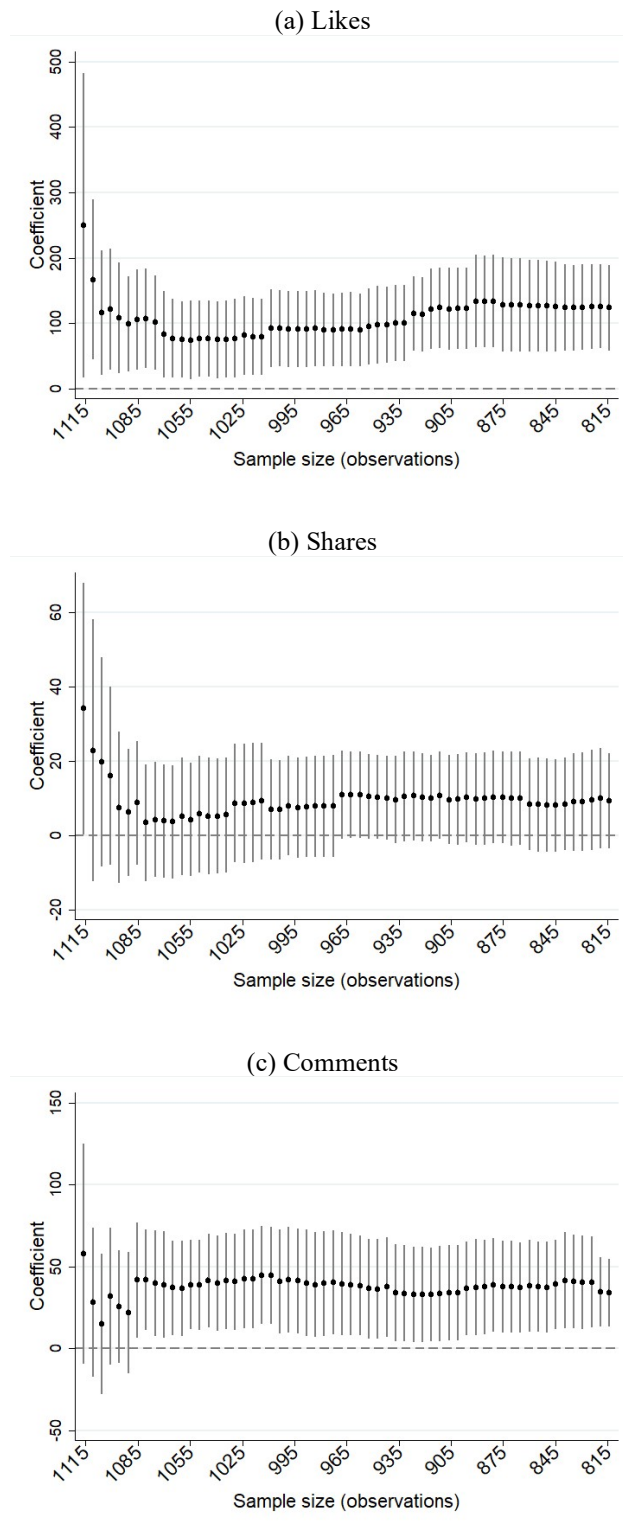


Figure C2: Residuals of slant of political immunity story posts and user engagement



Notes: The graphs show the residuals from regressing likes, shares, comments, and the distance measure on outlet and party fixed effects. To increase readability, the figures exclude observations that are larger or smaller than two standard deviations of the mean of the engagement measures.

Figure C3: User engagement and congeniality of posts (dropping outliers)



Notes: The coefficients shown in the graph are obtained by estimating versions of Equation (7). In contrast with the baseline specification, the coefficients are obtained after successively dropping the 300 observations with the largest engagement metrics. All models include outlet and case fixed effects, as well as the full set of control variables. The vertical spikes represent the 90% confidence interval, based on two-way clustered (by outlet and case) standard errors.