

# Inviting immigrants in: Field experiments in voter mobilization among immigrants in Norway

Johannes Bergh<sup>a,\*</sup>, Dag Arne Christensen<sup>b</sup>, Richard E. Matland<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Institute for Social Research, Oslo, Norway

<sup>b</sup> Norce, Bergen, Norway

<sup>c</sup> Loyola University Chicago, USA

## ARTICLE INFO

### Keywords:

Voter turnout  
Experiment  
Get out the vote (GOTV)  
Immigrants

## ABSTRACT

This paper reports on a randomized field experiment testing three direct mail mobilization appeals among immigrants in the 2015 Norwegian Local Elections. The three letters all included a general encouragement to vote in addition to practical information about voting. One paragraph was varied to present different mobilization messages. They were: 1) a message guaranteeing ballot secrecy. 2) a message with consistent prescriptive and descriptive norms emphasizing the importance of immigrant participation and that participation has been increasing. 3) a message with inconsistent prescriptive and descriptive norms emphasizing the importance of immigrant participation, but noting immigrant participation has been low.

All three letters increased turnout among both first time voters and previously eligible voters. The effect is strongest, 5.8 percentage points, among those who were eligible to vote for the first time. Control group turnout was 20.9 percent. Among previously eligible immigrant voters there is an average treatment effect of 3.3 percentage point from a baseline of 40.2 percent turnout. In comparison to previous GOTV mail studies, these are very strong effects, far exceeding the typical response among low propensity voters. GOTV letters can therefore be an effective way to mobilize immigrant voters to participate in host country elections.

## 1. Introduction

Over the past thirty years, Europe has seen a remarkable increase in ethnic diversity.<sup>1</sup> The influx of immigrants has led to struggles adjusting to new populations with different cultural values and traditions. Integration into the political sphere mirrors other parts of society. Voter turnout among immigrants eligible to vote lags well behind that of the native populations in Western democracies (Helbling et al., 2016; Wüst et al., 2010). In Norway participation in the last local elections among immigrants who were eligible to vote for the first time was approximately 20%, among immigrants who have been long-term residents around 40%, while the native Norwegian population voted at just over 60% (Kleven, 2017). This paper presents the results of a field experiment developed to test ways to improve immigrant integration through increased political participation. We test Get Out The Vote (GOTV) letters aimed at mobilizing immigrants to exercise their legal right to vote.

Raising voter turnout in an underrepresented group is a worthwhile

endeavor in and of itself. It may help bringing the interests of immigrants into the political process. Furthermore, it is conceivable that if immigrants are encouraged to increase participation through voting this will both lead to greater acceptance of the existing institutions and greater integration into society. We know certain voters have higher levels of political efficacy. We also know those who feel efficacious both vote more and show greater support for the political system (Abramson and Aldrich, 1982; Hackett and Omoto, 2010). Finkel (1985) looks at the causality of that relationship, and finds that the act of voting increased overall system support especially among those least likely to vote. Using an innovative experimental design, Shineman (2018) finds those who were motivated to vote made greater efforts to be informed regarding the election. She argues information is endogenous to participation, “institutions that encourage participation not only increase voter turnout - mobilizing electoral participation motivates citizens to become more politically informed.” Sobolewska et al. (2017) find that immigrants in the UK and the Netherlands are seen as more integrated by the majority population if they are described as voters. These types of

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [jbe@socialresearch.no](mailto:jbe@socialresearch.no) (J. Bergh).

<sup>1</sup> See e.g. <https://data.oecd.org/migration/foreign-born-population.htm>.

potential positive downstream effects of voting are an additional motivation for our study.

This article has two specific goals. First, we are interested in testing whether sending GOTV letters to immigrants can prove to be an effective way to mobilize immigrant voters to participate in local elections. We look at first-generation immigrants with voting rights in local elections. These rights are granted to foreign nationals after three years of legal residence.<sup>2</sup> Finding an effect would suggest a relatively simple public policy nudge that could be widely adopted at little cost could contribute positively to dealing with the issue of improved integration of immigrants into society. Our second goal is to test the robustness of studies done in other contexts. There have been several hundred studies of GOTV techniques, especially letters, but they have been overwhelmingly done in the U.S. context. Danish colleagues have done similar studies (see e. g. [Bhatti et al., 2014a, 2014b, 2015; 2016, 2018; Hansen and Hansen, 2018](#)). The results in this paper provides an additional opportunity to test the robustness of these findings and to see if they travel well across the Atlantic.

## 2. Theory and expectations

### 2.1. Mobilizing voters with GOTV letters

[Gerber and Green \(2015\)](#) survey a large number of studies assessing the ability of various campaign tools to increase voter participation. This research finds voters can be motivated to vote, but not all GOTV methods are equally effective. Field experiments have scrutinized the effectiveness of different tactics such as canvassing, direct mail, phone calls and text messages ([Arceneaux and Nickerson, 2009; Gerber et al., 2008; Gerber and Green, 2015; Green et al., 2013; Matland and Murray, 2012; Michelson et al., 2009; Michelson and Nickerson, 2011; Nickerson, 2007](#)). Previous studies find the way voters are contacted matters; the more personal the contact the more effective. In the U.S. face-to-face canvassing is consistently found to be most effective (see [Bhatti et al., 2016](#) for preliminary findings suggesting canvassing's impact is smaller in Europe). Phone calls can be effective but only when high quality phone banks are used, while direct mailings generally have limited effects.

If letters have the weakest effects why did we choose letters? First, while letter effects may be modest letters are substantially less expensive to produce in terms of cost and time compared to either telephone banks or canvassing. On the other hand, it is more expensive than text messages. Second, even though U.S. results may be modest, letters have rarely been tested in Europe, especially with immigrants, and there is no reason to automatically assume the results will be the same.

### 2.2. Mobilizing immigrants

Message content is not the only factor that impacts GOTV letter effectiveness. The population being exposed to a GOTV message also matters. Several US-based studies have shown that habitual voters and abstainers are less likely to respond to GOTV messages than episodic voters ([Arceneaux and Nickerson, 2009; Enos et al., 2014; Matland and Murray, 2012](#)). Danish GOTV experiments indicate that low propensity voters are mobilized by these efforts ([Bhatti et al., 2014a, 2014b; 2015, 2016; 2018; Hansen and Hansen, 2018](#)). Furthermore, individual characteristics of voters can influence message effectiveness (see [Gerber et al., 2013](#)).

A key strength of our study is that we target low-propensity voters.

<sup>2</sup> Laws allowing non-citizens with permanent residence, including non-EU citizens, to vote in local elections, usually after meeting a three or five year residency requirement, also exist for Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Sweden.

[Enos, Fowler & Vavrick \(2014\)](#) in a critical study have estimated the distributional impact of GOTV efforts across 24 U.S. studies. They find most increases in turnout generated by GOTV efforts further skew the socio-economic bias of the electorate. That is, while mobilization efforts are touted as a way to insure greater participation among those who are underrepresented in the electorate, careful inspection reveals that it is more likely to be those who regularly but do not always vote who are influenced by GOTV messages. Consequently, the political power of those who tend to have lower socio-economic status (SES) is further diminished as they become a smaller part of the overall voting population. Our study specifically target a low SES, low turnout group.

When evaluating what to expect for immigrants in the Norwegian case, we can take a closer look at U.S. mobilization studies aimed at Latino and Asian voters, voters where a large portion of the population is immigrants (see [Abrajano and Panagopoulos, 2011; Garcia Bedolla and Michelson, 2009; 2012; Michelson and Garcia Bedolla, 2014; Matland and Murray, 2012; Garcia Bedolla and Michelson, 2009](#)). [Garcia Bedolla and Michelson \(2012\)](#) analyse over 250 GOTV experiments, using a variety of mechanisms directed at Latino, African-American and Asian-American voters in California, they find substantial variation in effectiveness. Personal contact methods were effective in most cases, while impersonal methods such as mail were largely ineffective. [Michelson and Garcia Bedolla](#) argue what makes personal contact methods effective is their ability to change the manner a possible voter see themselves. The political science literature argues that resources, political interest, and issue concerns affects an individual's likelihood of voting ([Garcia Bedolla and Michelson, 2012:11](#)). In most cases, none of these variables are significantly changed by a GOTV contact.<sup>3</sup> What is changed by effective GOTV efforts, according to [Garcia-Bedolla and Michelson](#), is the individuals's perception of themselves. They emphasize the importance of personal contact and that contact is with an individual who "looks like the voter". When faced with a canvasser speaking her native language and looking like her talking about voting it becomes much easier for the individual concerned to imagine herself as a voter.

Among minority communities, results for GOTV experiments using mail have been bleak. Reviewing the earliest U.S. literature on GOTV-campaigns targeting minority populations [Chong and Jane Junn \(2011: 327–28\)](#) observe that "Taken together - none of the field experiments shows strong or consistent positive effects from direct mailings, regardless of content, or format." [Garcia Bedolla and Michelson \(2012\)](#) developed and ran three different postcard and mail experiments using either ethnic solidarity or civic duty messages in California. The results across the three studies were a weakly significant positive effect in one primary election test (13 sites: 1.1 percentage points increase), no noticeable effect in a second primary test (4 groups: 0.01 percentage point increase), and a significant negative effect in a general election test (8 sites: 3.2 percentage points). In short, their extensive tests at over 25 sites with more than 60,000 voters produced no consistent pattern.

There are exceptions. [Abrajano and Panagopoulos \(2011\)](#) found social pressure in the form of a letter pointing out the individual voter had failed to vote in the previous local election but was eligible to vote in the upcoming election worked effectively at raising Latino turnout. Turnout increased by 2.2 percentage points with an English language letter and by 1.0 percentage points with a Spanish language letter. [Matland and Murray \(2012\)](#), studying a Latino community in the 2004 US presidential election, find substantial and statistically significant effects of their mailing campaign: a 2.9 percentage point rise in turnout. The most common results, however, is to find small non-significant effects for mail

<sup>3</sup> In an early study, [Garcia Bedolla and Michelson \(2009\)](#) explicitly tried to raise the individual voter's resources by providing them with detailed information on how to register, where to vote, and a voter guide with information on the offices and issues on the ballot. The election guides had no effect on turnout among those immigrants receiving them.

campaigns directed at minority voters, just as for the overall population. Of particular note several studies have used a group solidarity or minority power message without these messages increasing turnout noticeably over a generic civic duty message.

There have been a few mobilization experiments run outside the United States that have tested letters (Bhatti, Dahlgaard, Hansen & Hansen, 2014a, 2014b, 2015; 2016; Fieldhouse et al., 2013). Fieldhouse et al. (2013) ran a GOTV mobilization campaign using both telephone banks and direct mail for the 2009 European Parliamentary elections and for the 2010 National Elections in England. Their mail results were somewhat stronger than those found in the U.S. studies albeit effects were still small. A civic duty letter increased turnout by slightly more than 1 percentage point in the European Elections, while increasing turnout by slightly less than 2 percentage points in the National parliamentary elections.

A team of researchers in Denmark have run several mobilization experiments (Bhatti et al., 2014a, 2014b; 2015, 2016; 2018), including some that targeted immigrants (Hansen and Hansen, 2018). Some of the effects are stronger among immigrants than among the native Danish population. Generally, they found significant heterogeneity in effects. The treatment had virtually no effects on those with a predicted propensity to participate above 70 percent, but led to as much as a 5 to 6 percentage point increase in participation among those whose propensity scores were in the 20 to 40 percent range.

The results from the English and Danish teams using direct mail generated increases in turnout but of modest size. These results suggest we should expect to see a limited ability to move immigrants to the polls.

### 2.3. Message content

We partnered with the Norwegian National Diversity and Inclusion Directorate (IMDi) to develop our letters. After surveying the literature for effective measures that would be plausible to replicate in a Norwegian context we identified three separate messages tested in the U.S. and produced above average turnout-effects. We chose not to use a social pressure message both because the information is not easily available (past voting history is not public information) and because the research team and IMDi felt it would be inappropriate. The experiment we fielded used a single page letter from the County Governors (Fylkesmenn) with a general appeal to participate and practical information concerning voting, but with a single paragraph that varies aimed at testing three specific mobilization treatments identified in the literature (See online Appendix A.1 & A.2).<sup>4</sup> All letters were written in Norwegian, which is a second language for immigrants. All refugees and their (reunited) family members receive mandatory language training in Norway. People from the Nordic countries generally understand Norwegian. We therefore expect most of the recipients of these letters to be able to make sense of the content.

Our first message builds on work Gerber et al. (2013) did looking at non-voters and the possibility of mobilizing them through assurances their vote is secret. In a survey of non-voters Gerber et al. (2013) found non-voters had a variety of misconceptions regarding voting. These misconceptions often included assuming voting was NOT anonymous. If voters worry about retaliation for the choices they make or if they believe they have to justify their choices they may be kept from the polling booth (2013:539). Following up on their survey Gerber et al. (2013) sent out letters randomly to a sample of non-voters in Connecticut assuring them their vote was private. The letter increased turnout among registered voters without a previous record of voting by

<sup>4</sup> County Governors are the highest-ranking representative of the national government at the county level. The position is appointed and is responsible for overseeing national policy at the local level including election administration. The County Governor is also in charge of Norwegian citizenship ceremonies for immigrants.

more than three percentage points but had no effect among citizens who had previously voted. If such an impact is found among non-voters in Connecticut, we may expect to find an effect among immigrants in Norway with no previous voting history.

The second paragraph of the privacy letter is worded as follows:

1. Your vote is private!

*In the polling place you enter into a booth where you are completely alone when voting. After deciding which party you will vote for you put the ballot into a locked container with a lot of other ballots. Neither the election officials nor anyone else in the polling place are allowed to ask you who you voted for. You can be completely certain that your vote is private.*

Norway has strong formal rules to secure ballot secrecy. Some immigrants, however, come from countries with low-quality electoral institutions. Problems such as electoral fraud, ballot stuffing, and violence occur with elections around the world and survey data suggest that people's perceptions of such malpractices lead to lack of confidence in elected authorities, and discourage voter turnout (Norris, Frank & Martinez i Coma 2014).<sup>5</sup> It seems especially plausible that people with backgrounds from countries with faulty democratic procedures will be affected by information emphasizing ballot secrecy. To maximize the privacy letter's relevance it is tested only among immigrants who were not eligible to vote previously.

The last two letters test group-identity theory, which states that invoking consistent descriptive and prescriptive norms leads to stronger effects than invoking inconsistent descriptive and prescriptive norms (Gerber and Rogers, 2009). Prescriptive norms always emphasize the importance of voting, but descriptive norms can emphasize increases in turnout and high levels of compliance, or they can emphasize disappointing levels of turnout and the failure of people to perform their civic duty. Gerber and Rogers (2009) argue when prescriptive and descriptive norms are consistent the message recipient is under greater pressure to conform, while if there is explicit acknowledgement that many fail to do their civic duty the pressure is lessened as individuals realize their shirking behavior is replicated by large numbers of people. We used two separate letters, both invoke the prescriptive norm urging immigrants to vote and including practical voting information. The two letters varied in terms of how descriptive norms were described. Randomly assigned immigrants received either a letter suggesting participation among immigrants had increased in the last election (the norm consistent letter), or a letter suggesting immigrants participate at lower rates compared to the ethnic Norwegian population (the norm inconsistent letter). Both messages are true. The language in these letters is as follows:

2. Participation among immigrants is increasing. Do your part and set a new voting record!

*You do not have to be a Norwegian citizen to take part in the election. Anyone who has lived in Norway for three years or more has the right to vote. In the local election in 2011, more immigrants voted than ever before. Voter turnout in several immigrant groups was well above 50 percent. Do your part and contribute to even greater participation among immigrants in this year's election!*

3. Participation among immigrants is too low. Help turn this trend around!

*You do not have to be a Norwegian citizen to take part in the election. Anyone who has lived in Norway for three years or more has the right to vote. Unfortunately, immigrants took part at a much lower rate than the rest of the population in the local election in 2011. Voter turnout in several immigrant groups was well below 50 percent. You can contribute*

<sup>5</sup> Norway's immigrant population include people from every country that have a low score on electoral integrity, according to Norris et al (2014). Afghanistan and Iraq are two of the largest countries of origin in that category.

to turning this trend around and to raising turnout levels among immigrants by voting on September 14!

These two letters investigate if norm consistent and norm inconsistent messages have differential effects on immigrant turnout.

Gerber and Rogers found the letter was significantly more effective when descriptive and prescriptive norms were consistent, although they tested this using a public opinion survey framing experiment rather than an actual field experiment using verified turnout as the dependent variable. Matland and Murray (2014) did test the norm consistent and norm inconsistent messages against each other and found the predicted effect using validated vote. This finding has, however, been contradicted by Panagopolous, Larimer & Condon (2014) who find no difference in effects. With only two studies using validated vote and those showing different results, this is clearly an area where further research is warranted.

The norm inconsistent message has an important twist as it directly compares the immigrant population with the ethnic Norwegian population and does so in a negative light. In previous work Nickerson and White (2013) suggest that it matters if individual voters or subgroups of voters receive either positive or negative feedback about their participation rates. In a study of Democratic Party caucus participation among African-Americans in North Carolina, they find stark differences. When African-Americans, who resided in areas where black participation was lower than white participation, are told they participate less than the majority Whites their participation was depressed by the message, while African-Americans who reside in areas where black participation levels were equal to whites, and they were informed of this fact, their participation increased. This suggests yet another reason why we can expect lower effects for the norm inconsistent message.

### 3. Experimental format and data

Our experiment was fielded prior to the September 14, 2015 Norwegian municipal elections. Norway has a two-tier system of local government consisting of 428 municipalities (*kommuner*) and 19 counties (*fylker*). The mean number of inhabitants in Norwegian municipalities is about 11,000. However, most municipalities are smaller; the median municipality has only 4500 inhabitants. Elections are based on proportional representation and are held every second year, alternating between elections for the parliament (Storting) and local/county government. Hence, there is a four year interval between each parliamentary election, and each local election. Turnout for parliamentary elections is high, comparatively speaking. In the 2013 Norwegian national parliamentary election turnout was 78.2 percent. Municipal- and county-level turnout, however, is lower and has decreased over time (Christensen and Arnesen, 2013). In the September 2015 local elections, turnout was 60.2 percent.

We used an electronic version of the electoral roll for approximately 1.7 million Norwegian voters living in 27 municipalities<sup>6</sup> that have adopted electronic registration of turnout. Since practically all of Norway's larger towns and cities have electronic registration of turnout, our data file includes 42 percent of Norway's eligible voters.<sup>7</sup> Turnout in this sample of 27 municipalities is 61.2, exactly 1 percentage points higher than in the country as a whole. The gap in turnout in our sample between immigrants and natives is practically identical to that found in national-level statistics (Kleven, 2017).

To pull our samples we received information from the National

<sup>6</sup> The 27 municipalities are (ordered by population size, from large to small): Oslo, Bergen, Trondheim, Stavanger, Bærum, Fredrikstad, Drammen, Sandnes, Sarpsborg, Asker, Skien, Skedsmo, Bodø, Sandefjord, Larvik, Tønsberg, Karmøy, Porsgrunn, Haugesund, Ålesund, Mandal, Vefsn, Hammerfest, Re, Tynset, Radøy and Bremanger.

<sup>7</sup> In total, about 4 million residents were entitled to vote in 2015.

Population Registry on every individual in our voter registration file with respect to birthdate, gender, country of origin, citizenship, and parents' country of origin and citizenship. For those who immigrated to Norway we also had date of entry to Norway. Date of entry was used to identify immigrants (without Norwegian citizenship) who had not voted previously (based on the requirement of three years of legal residence to get voting rights). After the election, the Ministry of Local Affairs provided us with updated records on the 1.7 million citizens as to whether they voted or not.

The datafile includes 279,230 voters with immigrant backgrounds, of whom 69,086 are eligible to vote in Norway for the first time. Because of the very close ties between the Nordic countries and the special status they have when living in the other Nordic countries we chose to exclude Swedes, Danes, Finns, and Icelandic citizens from our sample of first time immigrant voters. They are not included in this sample of 69,086. The remaining category of all other immigrants numbers 210,144 and it also includes citizens of the other Nordic countries.

Another mobilization experiment using text messages did in part target immigrants (see Bergh et al., 2019). This involved 8910 individuals in the group of first-time-eligible voters and 38,610 among other immigrants. We exclude these from our samples; reducing them to 60,176 and 171,534, respectively.

The norm in field experiments in the U.S. is to stratify by number of voters in the household from 1 to 5 and randomly select one individual from each randomly selected address and to drop addresses with more than five registered voters because these tend to be apartment buildings (Gerber et al 2010, 2013; Matland and Murray, 2016). Apartment dwellers in the U.S. tend to be transient, making them less likely to participate in politics. Furthermore, voter registration addresses can be several years old and no longer be current for voters listed in apartment buildings. The registry we received was current for all citizens as of July 1st, 2015, less than three months before the election, so we have a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the registration data. In addition, especially in the cities, large numbers of individuals live in apartment buildings permanently. Since many immigrants live in apartment buildings, which can be extremely large, especially publicly built housing, rather than dropping addresses with large number of immigrants, we followed the standard U.S. protocol for households with between 1 and 5 registered voters and we resampled from addresses with greater than five registered immigrant voters. For every additional 12 names per address above five we sampled one more name. Thus, if the address had 125 names we randomly picked 13 individual names to receive letters or be part of the control group.

This procedure left us with what we considered to be too few individuals in the category of voters with immigrant backgrounds who were eligible to vote for the first time (about 12,000). We therefore dropped that procedure for this part of the sample. The category of "immigrant first time voters" therefore includes everyone that were not part of the other experiment (60,176 individuals). The practical consequence of this is that some people in the control group will be in a household that receives a letter. This could potentially raise turnout in the control group, thus reducing effect sizes. There is a chance, in other words, that we may underestimate effect sizes in this group.

For the group of other immigrants, the sample is reduced to 81,627 eligible voters. Our entire sample sums up to 141,803 individuals. The experiment group consisted of 19,211 individuals, divided into three groups of approximately 6400 each. The control group was made up of individuals selected for the sample, but not pulled for treatments. These 122,592 individuals received nothing.

Table 1 presents the data for those countries that constitute the largest immigrant groups in our sample. The immigrants come mostly from Europe (Eastern and Western) or Asia. Labor immigration from European Union countries has gone up in recent years and has overtaken the other two main causes for immigration to Norway: seeking refuge status and family reunification. The two largest groups of immigrants in our sample are Swedes and Poles, both being large suppliers of labor

**Table 1**  
Country of origin for the 20 largest immigrant groups in the sample.

| Country               | Number of voters | Country                | Number of voters |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Poland                | 28,575           | Turkey                 | 7,537            |
| Sweden                | 22,061           | Lithuania              | 7,066            |
| Pakistan              | 13,785           | The Philippines        | 6,658            |
| Iraq                  | 12,875           | Great Britain          | 6,463            |
| Somalia               | 12,481           | Russia                 | 6,221            |
| Iran                  | 9,027            | Sri Lanka              | 6,115            |
| Denmark               | 8,899            | Bosnia and Herzegovina | 5,955            |
| Vietnam               | 8,101            | Afghanistan            | 5,538            |
| Serbia and Montenegro | 7,913            | Thailand               | 5,483            |
| Germany               | 7,725            | India                  | 4,718            |

immigrants to Norway.

The letter emphasizing privacy was sent exclusively to a randomized group of voters with immigrant backgrounds who were eligible to vote for the first time in 2015. The sample used for the second and third letters was randomly pulled from the total immigration population, irrespective of their previous voting eligibility.

As noted, the content of the letters (the treatment) was based on existing literature and developed in cooperation with The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). IMDi’s main task is the settlement and integration of immigrants that have been granted permanent residence in Norway. As part of its work, the agency has been actively involved in mobilizing the immigrant population to vote in elections.<sup>8</sup> IMDi sponsored the distribution of the letters, and during the election campaign coordinated with the County Governors who mailed the letters to the subjects’ homes. The letters were mailed so they arrived at most households on Friday, September 11th, three days prior to the election on Monday, September 14.<sup>9</sup>

#### 4. Results

Our objective is to estimate the causal effect of receiving a letter encouraging immigrants to vote. We begin with a simple bivariate regression analysis comparing the three treatment groups with the control group (see online Appendix A). This regression estimates the Intent-to-Treat effect (ITT) evaluating subjects as they were originally randomized regardless of whether they received the treatment or not (Gerber and Green, 2012). ITT analysis maintains the benefits of randomization and provides an accurate measure of how effective a treatment is given realistic conditions where coverage is less than complete. Based on the ITT-analysis we also test whether varying the letter content results in differences in impact. We did two robustness checks. First, we ran regression models with control variables (see online Appendix B). Including control variables should not change the treatment effects notably compared to the model without controls because randomization should guarantee the treatment is uncorrelated with any relevant control variable. Second, we used inverse probability weights (IPW) to test if the probability of treatment varied by household size (see online Appendix C). While ITT is a conservative measure, the Complier Average Causal Effect (CACE) considers the effects only on those who received the treatment (Gerber and Green, 2012). CACE effects are calculated using a two-stage least squares regression of vote on actual contact using selection into the experimental group as an instrumental variable (see online Appendix D). All analysis is done separately for immigrants eligible to vote for the first time, and for immigrants who

were previously eligible to vote. This is because we expect the effects to differ and because the baseline rates of participation, captured by the control groups, are expected to be markedly different.

Table 2 present our results with the first column showing the control group and treatment group turnout and the second column showing the ITT effects. Looking at the effects, we see that immigrants voting for the first time have a low turnout rate. Approximately 21 percent of the control group voted. The results for all treatments suggest the letters from the County Governors were effective. First time immigrant voters receiving the *privacy letter* voted at a rate of 26.5 percent, whilst the participation rate among those receiving the *norm consistent letter* was 25.7 percent. Turnout climbs to 27.9 percent among first time voters who received the *norm inconsistent letter*. The latter is an impressive 7.0 percentage point increase in turnout. The effect is even more impressive in relative terms, as turnout increases 35 percent.

The ITT effects among first time voting immigrants are substantially larger than those found in previous experiments in the US, the UK, and Denmark. The results sharply diverge from the modest effects in previous GOTV-experiments aimed at minority populations (see Chong & Junn 2011). Our results suggest direct mail may be a fruitful strategy to increase participation rates among immigrants that are eligible to vote for the first time.

Continuing to the long term immigrant population with a minimum of seven years in Norway we find smaller but still powerful effects. Table 2 shows that the initial propensity to vote is substantially higher. Approximately 40.1 percent voted in the control group. Despite starting from a much higher base-level both letters increased turnout. Immigrants receiving the *norm-consistent letter* voted at a rate of 43.1 percent, compared to 43.8 among those receiving the *norm-inconsistent letter*. The combined results for this group suggest that receiving a letter increased turnout by approximately 3.3 percentage points.

Finding a stronger effect among first time voters who have the lowest propensity to vote is surprising. Matland and Murray (2012) predict the strongest effect for GOTV letters among episodic voters who vote occasionally but not always, which would seem to fit the immigrant population with a 40 percent baseline turnout rate. Enos, Fowler & Vavreck (2014) find in an extensive study of 24 individual experiments that GOTV efforts tend to have the strongest impact on those who vote regularly, and they are less effective among groups who have low voting propensities. As such our Norwegian results are inconsistent with the results from U.S. studies. Interestingly, the results are consistent with previous research findings from Denmark where treatment effects are stronger for individuals with the lowest propensity to vote (Bhatti et al., 2015).

The norm-inconsistent letter has the strongest effect in raising voter turnout, particularly among immigrants who are first time voters. This was unexpected, and to see how robust this finding is we test if the difference in effectiveness is statistically significant. Fig. 1 presents the estimated ITT effects with 95% confidence intervals. First time voters, show a noticeably larger effect for the norm inconsistent message. Online Appendix E presents the formal pairwise tests of whether different letter contents had different effects. The norm-inconsistent letter is more effective than both the norm consistent letter and the privacy letter among first time voters ( $p < .05$ , two-tailed test).<sup>10</sup> The difference between the norm consistent and inconsistent letter, however, does not approach significance among immigrants who are not new voters. Viewing these results, it is probably safest to note all of the letters raise turnout in the immigrant population; but the negatively framed letter may be stronger, pending additional tests.

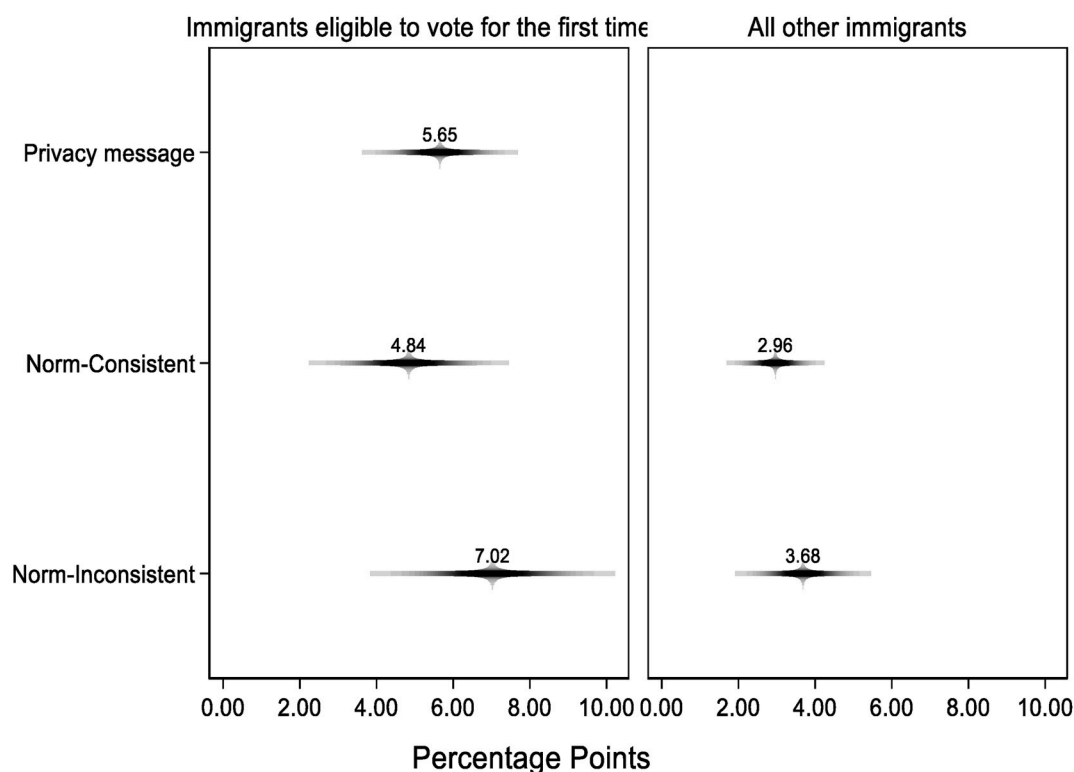
<sup>8</sup> This has always been a non-partisan effort; as are the letters used in our experiment.

<sup>9</sup> To confirm the letters arrived on time we recruited ten friends to receive the letters. All reported the letters arriving either on Thursday or Friday.

<sup>10</sup> The confidence intervals in Fig. 1 is based on a comparison between treatment- and control-groups, whereas the formal test in appendix E is done pairwise, between treatment groups. That is why the latter reveals a statistically significant difference between two treatments that have overlapping confidence intervals in Fig. 1.

**Table 2**  
Experimental results. Intent-to-treat effects, percentage points increase in voter turnout in treatment groups.

|                             | Turnout | 1. generation Immigrants voting for the first time |        |        | Turnout | All other 1. generation Immigrants |        |        |
|-----------------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------|--------|--------|---------|------------------------------------|--------|--------|
|                             |         | ITT                                                | (s.e)  | N      |         | ITT                                | (s.e.) | N      |
| Letter – Privacy message    | 26.52   | 5.65**                                             | (.73)  | 6,367  |         |                                    |        |        |
| Letter – Norm Consistent    | 25.71   | 4.84**                                             | (.94)  | 1,960  | 43.08   | 2.96**                             | (.46)  | 4,457  |
| Letter – Norm Inconsistent  | 27.89   | 7.02**                                             | (1.15) | 1,968  | 43.79   | 3.68**                             | (.64)  | 4,459  |
| Control group voter turnout | 20.87   |                                                    |        | 49,881 | 40.11   |                                    |        | 72,711 |



**Fig. 1.** Intent-to-Treat Effects (with 95% confidence intervals).

To generate more precise estimates of the treatment effects we run separate OLS regression models including a number of controls. This approach corrects for imbalances between experimental groups due to chance. We also include robust standard errors, clustered on the 27 municipalities, to correct for non-independence across respondents within municipalities. The full results are presented in online [Appendix B](#). [Table 3](#) shows the results for the experimental variable of interest: the three different letters. The column with the intent-to-treat effect is similar to the results in [Table 2](#). Adding the controls lead to a small drop in effects for all the treatment variables, but all remain statistically significant and substantively strong. Furthermore, the household weighted analysis in [Appendix C](#) does not indicate that randomizing subject from within households has produced biased treatment effects.

[Table 3](#) also displays the complier average causal effect; which is the effect of the letters on those who actually received them. As our calculated contact rate was over 90% (1109 letters were returned and thus could not have been received by the voters), the CACE effects are only slightly larger than the ITT effects found using controls.

### 5. Discussion

The effects we present in this paper are stronger and broader than virtually any other published GOTV experiment. Turnout among first time eligible immigrant voters increased by 4.8, 5.6, and 7.0 percentage points and by a solid 3.0 and 3.7 percentage points among long term

immigrants. The only mail experiment we know of with a greater impact for a single letter is the infamous “neighbors” social pressure experiment assuring people they are being watched and their neighbors would be informed as to their voting behavior after the election ([Gerber et al., 2008](#)). Furthermore, most of the effects in U.S. experiments comes from getting episodic voters with a previous history of participating in elections to the polls, often skewing the socio-economic electorate even more in favor of the advantaged ([Enos et al., 2014](#)). Our target audience was low propensity voters. Turnout in the control groups of immigrant voters was 21% and 40%, well below the native Norwegian turnout of 60%. Our findings are therefore in line with the results of the Danish experiments showing the greatest effects among low-propensity voters.

In terms of expectations, the Gerber and Rogers prediction that having consistent prescriptive and descriptive norms would be most effective was not confirmed. The norm inconsistent message was more effective for both populations we tested, albeit significantly so only for first time voters. More importantly all five tests were significant. There was no secret sauce that made one letter far more effective, all of the letters worked. That suggests it may be less the specific message used than something about the context that matters.

What precisely leads to these strong results must necessarily be a matter of speculation and inspiration for future work. There are several factors we believe help explain the relatively powerful effects. First, is the context of local election campaigns and voter mobilization in Norway. Electoral campaigns in Scandinavia tend to focus on public events

**Table 3**

ITT estimates without and with control variables, and complier average causal effect (CACE).

|                          | Immigrants eligible to vote for the first time (N = 60,176 <sup>+</sup> ) |                   |             | Other immigrant voters (N = 79,076 <sup>+</sup> ) |                   |            |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
|                          | ITT w/o controls                                                          | ITT with controls | CACE        | ITT w/o controls                                  | ITT with controls | CACE       |
| Privacy letter           | 5.65 (.73)                                                                | 5.26 (.72)        | 6.09 (.59)  |                                                   |                   |            |
| Norm Consistent letter   | 4.84 (.94)                                                                | 4.23 (.87)        | 5.18 (1.01) | 2.96 (.45)                                        | 2.36 (.53)        | 3.10 (.79) |
| Norm Inconsistent letter | 7.02 (1.15)                                                               | 6.83 (1.01)       | 7.59 (1.02) | 3.68 (.63)                                        | 3.40 (.69)        | 3.83 (.77) |

+ The N is lower in Table 3 than in Table 2 because of the control-variables that had some missing information.

such as party rallies, and information stands on public squares, even individual voter mobilization is more likely to occur at the office or the factory rather than on the doorstep (Esiasson, 1993). There is limited door to door canvassing efforts and virtually no phone banks. While campaigns do use letters their use is limited and is nowhere near the overflow of political mail directed at the individual in the U.S. context. Campaigns concentrate on getting information out to the public.

Considering the historical context this makes sense. Norwegian voters have historically voted in national elections at rates over 80%, and in local elections at over 70%. Under these conditions, with 70–80 percent voting with no mobilization campaigns it takes a leap of faith to believe you will find sufficient numbers of episodic voters through a mobilization effort to influence election outcomes (targeting is complicated because there can be as many as ten other parties on the ballot). Your efforts are far more likely to come into contact with people who will vote regardless. Campaigns would face difficulty finding non-voters and even more difficulty finding non-voters who may lean towards your party. In addition, since campaigns emphasize the party label more than individual candidates, there is less incentive for individual candidates to emphasize a get out the vote campaign. Karp, Banducci, and Bowler (2007) find systematic differences with greater individual voter mobilization in candidate centered electoral systems (STV & SMS) than in party centered systems (list PR). This may change as immigrants vote at a much lower rate than native Norwegians, but their numbers have only recently reached a point where they are sufficiently numerous to possibly influence election results.

Under these conditions, a personalized letter urging an individual to vote, from the County Governor, may have considerable impact because it is unusual and rare. If it were simply one of dozens of letters received, as they often are in the U.S. case, it might receive far less attention and have far less impact. If, on the other hand, it is the only letter the individual received concerning the election it may have an outsized effect.<sup>11</sup>

Another factor we believe may have enhanced treatment effectiveness is the reaction by the targeted individuals to the letter. While the letter merely recommends the person go out and vote, it could be interpreted as stronger than that, not a request to vote but an order to vote. Immigrants may be especially sensitive to governmental requests. Language difficulties may also increase the likelihood that new immigrants do not pick up the nuanced difference between urging and ordering them to vote. New immigrants may even not be aware of their voting rights. A survey conducted by Statistics Norway (SSB) in 2015 show that 12 per cent of foreign citizens said they did not believe they had the right to vote as the reason for not voting (SSB 2016). Among Norwegian citizens, including voters with immigrant backgrounds, almost no one reported the same. This would also explain why the effects are more powerful for those who are eligible to vote for the first time.

<sup>11</sup> Interestingly, this is similar to results in the U.S. Matland and Murray (2012) generated an unusually large effect for a relatively simple mailer. Their experiment was done in Brownsville, Texas during a presidential campaign in a heavily Democratic area in a very Republican state. Neither presidential campaign spent any resources in Texas as the outcome was a forgone conclusion. Under these conditions, a high salience election but with no active campaigning by either party, one simple mailer can have a strong effect as, unlike in so many other situations, it does not compete with many other messages.

A third possibility, concerning the letters that include norm statements, has to do with how the letters are interpreted. We do not explicitly use social pressure (nowhere do we note the individuals voting behavior is being monitored). Yet, it may be the letters are interpreted as individual social pressure. The two norm letters refer to turnout levels among immigrants, as either record high or falling well below native Norwegian results. The messages are targeted at immigrants as a group. We wonder, however, whether it is interpreted as being targeted at an individual. Even if the native Norwegian population sees immigrants as a coherent group, we know less about whether immigrants themselves see it that way and as such the letter may be interpreted as an individual message rather than a collective message.

Maybe the term “immigrant” used in the Norwegian GOTV letter campaign resonates with some voters’ sense of group identity.<sup>12</sup> The norm consistent and norm inconsistent letters could also be interpreted as more of an individual message directed at the person who receives them. The norm-inconsistent letter has a negative tone which could be seen as a rebuke of previous abstention, while the positive letter could be seen as an expression of appreciation for their previous vote. Gerber, Green and Larimer (2010) test the effectiveness of pride and shame by taking a sample of voters who had voted in one election but not another. One group received a letter praising their vote in the first election, while the other group received a letter designed to shame them for failure to vote in the next election. Both messages increase turnout, but the more effective message, just as in our case, is the one that refers to previous abstention. The negative message that perhaps induces a feeling of shame in people for not having voted proved more effective. Given this research, and considering the possibility that voters interpret the letters as a personal rebuke or as recognition of past voting, this may explain why both letters are effective, with the *negative* letter being slightly more so.

## 6. Conclusion

Our results open up for a large number of follow up experiments that we are eager to pursue. There is an obvious need to replicate these experiments with immigrant populations in other European countries to see if the effects remain as strong as we find in Norway. There is also a need to see if we can repeat the results in Norway. Following up on our speculation concerning the impact of an official letter, we need to test if letters from non-governmental organizations can be equally as effective at mobilizing immigrant voters. Do identical messages mailed by different institutions produce identical results? Further we wish to test the effectiveness of both an official letter and an NGO letter on low propensity native Norwegian voters (probably young voters) to see if there is something unique about the immigrant population or whether

<sup>12</sup> We know of no Norwegian studies of group identity among immigrants. In studying group consciousness among Latinos in the US, Masuoka (2008) finds that “national origin consciousness” is most prevalent, but the type of group consciousness that affects political participation is a more general group consciousness. Other studies also have found increasing group consciousness leads to increases in political activities among immigrant communities (Sanders et al., 2014; Stokes, 2003; Wright Austin, Middleton & Yon 2012). It is plausible that a similar phenomenon exists among immigrants in Norway.

our effects generalize to other populations.

With almost 80 percent of new immigrant voters not participating, it is probable that general interest and awareness of the election is highly limited among some immigrants. Furthermore, there are no significant differences in the effectiveness of the three letters. This suggests these letters serve mostly to raise the visibility of the issues and to remind people of the election and that the distinctions in messages are fairly unimportant. While our results run counter to U.S. results where election reminders are largely ineffective, the context is different enough that this line of investigation should be pursued. Future research in this area should delve deeper into the effectiveness of different types of messages. Is a reminder enough to mobilize immigrants or are some messages more effective?

We opened by pointing out many European polities struggle to integrate immigrant populations into society. Base turnout in Norway, where immigrants vote at rates significantly lower than native Norwegians, shows this is also true in Norway. The rest of Europe shows a similar pattern of high overall turnout, but with immigrant voters lagging far behind the rest of the population in political participation (Helbling et al., 2016; Wüst et al., 2010).

These results show that GOTV mobilization drives among Europe's immigrant communities can be effective. Using three different letters addressed to eligible voters with immigrant backgrounds, we find all three letters had strong significant effects on voter turnout, both among first time voters and among long term immigrants. Significantly, the effect is strongest among those who have the lowest baseline vote rates, those who got voting rights for the first time in 2015.

These results are especially significant because of the strong correlation between voting and additional participation in society and in politics referenced at the outset. Levels of political efficacy are considerably higher among voters and participation rates in traditional political activities are higher. Satisfaction levels are noticeably higher among those immigrants who participate politically. It makes sense for governments to seriously consider such voter mobilization projects as they open up the opportunity for increasing integration into the political system with the additional payoff of enhanced system legitimacy.

One of the effects we will be testing in future research concerns whether these letters have any downstream impact. In other words, do they influence future elections? Several U.S. studies have shown mobilization effects can be detected several elections later (Davenport et al., 2010; Gerber et al., 2003) averaging 33%–50% of the original effect in later elections. Such an effect is consistent with the description of voting as a habit citizens develop over time (Plutzer, 2002). Importantly from our perspective this holds out the real promise of not just inspiring individuals to vote in one election but in several elections, and to eventually become habitual voters who are well integrated into the polity. Clearly, mobilizing immigrant voters is not a panacea to solve all integration woes, but we believe it can produce positive effects and improve conditions on the ground. Surely it is an area where greater research is justified.

## Acknowledgments

This research is funded by the Research Council of Norway (grant numbers 249687 and 300896) and the Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation.

## Appendix A. Supplementary data

Supplementary data to this article can be found online at <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2020.102160>.

## References

- Abrajano, Marisa, Panagopoulos, Costas, 2011. Does language matter? The impact of Spanish versus English language GOTV efforts on Latino turnout. *Am. Polit. Res.* 39 (4), 643–663.
- Abramson, Paul R., Aldrich, John H., 1982. The decline of electoral participation in America. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 76 (3), 502–521.
- Arceneaux, Kevin, Nickerson, David W., 2009. Who is mobilized to vote? A Re-analysis of 11 field experiments. *Am. J. Polit. Sci.* 53 (1), 1–16.
- Bergh, Johannes, Christensen, D.A., Matland, R.E., 2019. When is a reminder enough? Text message voter mobilization in a European context. *Polit. Behav.* <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11109-019-09578-1>.
- Bhatti, Yosef, Jens Olav, Dahlgaard, Jonas Hedegaard, Hansen, Hansen, Kasper Møller, 2014a. Kan Man Øge Valgdeltagelsen? Analyse Af Mobiliseringstiltag Ved Kommunalvalget Den 19. November 2013 (Copenhagen: CVAP Working Paper Series).
- Bhatti, Yosef, Jens Olav, Dahlgaard, Jonas Hedegaard, Hansen, Hansen, Kasper Møller, 2014b. The calculus of get-out-the-vote in a high turnout setting. In: MPSA Conference, Chicago 3-6. April 2014.
- Bhatti, Yosef, Jens Olav, Dahlgaard, Jonas Hedegaard, Hansen, Hansen, Kasper Møller, 2015. Getting out the vote with evaluative thinking. *Am. J. Eval.* 36 (3), 389–400.
- Bhatti, Yosef, Jens Olav, Dahlgaard, Jonas Hedegaard, Hansen, Hansen, Kasper Møller, 2016. Is door to door canvassing effective in Europe?: evidence from a meta-study across six European countries. *Br. J. Polit. Sci.* 36 (3), 389–400.
- Bhatti, Y., Dahlgaard, J.O., Hansen, J.H., Hansen, K.M., 2018. Can governments use Get Out The Vote letters to solve Europe's turnout crisis? Evidence from a field experiment. *W. Eur. Polit.* 41 (1), 240–260.
- Chong, Dennis, Jane Junn, 2011. Politics from the perspective of minority populations. Cambridge Handbook of Experimental Political Science 320.
- Christensen, Dag Arne, Arnesen, S., 2013. «Deltakelsen ved kommunestyrevalget 2011.» In: Johannes Bergh, Christiansen, Dag Arne (Eds.), *Et robust Lokaldemokrati – Lokavalget i Skyggen Av 22. Juli 2011*. Abstrakt Forlag, Oslo, pp. 47–68.
- Davenport, Tiffany C., Alan, S. Gerber, Donald, P. Green, Christopher, W. Larimer, Christopher, B. Mann, Panagopoulos, Costas, 2010. The enduring effects of social pressure: tracking campaign experiments over a series of elections. *Polit. Behav.* 32 (3), 423–430.
- Enos, Ryan D., Fowler, Anthony, Lynn, Vavreck, 2014. Increasing inequality: the effect of GOTV mobilization on the composition of the electorate. *J. Polit.* 76 (1), 273–288.
- Esiasson, Peter, 1993. Scandinavia. In: Butler, David, Austin, Ranney (Eds.), *Electioneering: A Comparative Study of Continuity and Change*. Oxford University Press, pp. 202–216.
- Fieldhouse, Edward, Cutts, David, Paul, Widdop, John, Peter, 2013. “Do Impersonal Mobilisation Methods Work? Evidence from a Nationwide Get-Out-The-Vote Experiment in England” *Electoral Studies*.
- Finkel, Steven E., 1985. Reciprocal effects of participation and political efficacy: a panel analysis. *Am. J. Polit. Sci.* 29 (4), 891–913.
- Garcia Bedolla, Lisa, Michelson, Melissa R., 2009. What do voters need to know? Testing the role of cognitive information in asian-American voter mobilization. *Am. Polit. Res.* 37 (2), 254–274.
- Garcia Bedolla, Lisa, Michelson, Melissa R., 2012. *Mobilizing Inclusion: Transforming the Electorate through Get-Out-The-Vote Campaigns*. Yale University Press, New Haven, CT.
- Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P., 2012. *Field Experiments: Design, Analysis, and Interpretation*. WW Norton, New York, NY.
- Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P., 2015. *Get Out The Vote: How to Increase Voter Turnout*. Brookings Institution Press, Washington DC.
- Gerber, Alan S., Rogers, Todd, 2009. Descriptive social norms and motivation to vote: everybody's voting and so should you. *J. Polit.* 71 (1), 178–191.
- Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P., Ron, Shachar, 2003. Voting may Be habit-forming: evidence from a randomized field experiment. *Am. J. Polit. Sci.* 47 (3), 540–550.
- Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P., Larimer, Christopher W., 2008. Social pressure and voter turnout: evidence from a large-scale field experiment. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 102 (1), 33–48.
- Gerber, Alan S., Green, Donald P., Larimer, Christopher W., 2010. An experiment testing the relative effectiveness of encouraging voter participation by inducing feelings of pride or shame. *Polit. Behav.* 32 (3), 409–422.
- Gerber, Alan S., Huber, Gregory A., David, Doherty, Conor, M., Dowling, C.M., Hill, Seth J., 2013. Do perceptions of ballot secrecy influence turnout? Results from a field experiment. *Am. J. Polit. Sci.* 57 (3), 537–551.
- Green, Donald P., McGrath, M.C., Aronow, P.M., 2013. Field experiments and the study of voter turnout. *J. Elections, Public Opin. Parties* 23 (1), 27–48.
- Hackett, Justin, Omoto, Allen M., 2010. Efficacy and estrangement: effects of voting. *Anal. Soc. Issues Public Policy* 9 (1), 297–314.
- Hansen, J.H., Hansen, K.M., 2018. Mobiliseringseksperimenter Ved Kommunalvalget 2017. CVAP Working Papers Series 4/2018.
- Helbling, Marc, Reeskens, Tim, Stark, Cameron, Dietlind Stolle, Wright, Matthew, 2016. Enabling immigrant participation: do integration regimes make a difference? Bilodeau. In: Antoine (Ed.), *Just Ordinary Citizens. Towards a Comparative Portrait of the Political Immigrant*. Toronto University Press, Toronto, Canada.
- Karp, Jeffrey A., Banducci, Susan A., Bowler, Shaun, 2007. Getting out the vote: party mobilization in a comparative perspective. *Br. J. Polit. Sci.* 38, 91–112.
- Kleven, Øyvind, 2017. *Innvandrere Og Kommunestyrevalget 2015. Valgafærd Og Representasjon Blant Innvandrere, Norskfødte Med Innvandrerforeldre Og Utenlandske Statsborgere*. Statistics Norway, Oslo.
- Masuoka, Natalie, 2008. Defining the group: Latino identity and political participation. *Am. Polit. Res.* 36 (1), 33–61.



- Matland, Richard E., Murray, Gregg R., 2012. An experimental test of mobilization effects in a Latino community. *Polit. Res. Q.* 65 (1), 192–205.
- Matland, Richard E., Murray, Gregg R., 2014. Mobilization effects using mail: social pressure, descriptive norms, and timing. *Polit. Res. Q.* 67 (2), 304–319.
- Matland, R.E., Murray, G.R., 2016. I only have eyes for you: does implicit social pressure increase voter turnout? *Polit. Psychol.* 37, 533–550. <https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12275>.
- Michelson, Melissa R., Garcia Bedolla, Lisa, 2014. Mobilization by different means: nativity and GOTV in the United States. *Int. Migrat. Rev.* 48 (3), 710–727.
- Michelson, Melissa R., Nickerson, David W., 2011. Voter mobilization." *Handbook of*
- Michelson, Melissa R., Lisa García Bedolla, L., McConnell, M.A., 2009. Heeding the call: the effect of targeted two-round phone banks on voter turnout. *J. Polit.* 71 (4), 1549–1563.
- Nickerson, David W., 2007. Quality is job one: professional and volunteer voter mobilization calls. *Am. J. Polit. Sci.* 51, 269–282.
- Nickerson, David W., White, Ismael K., 2013. The Effect of Priming Racial In-Group Norms of Participation and Racial Group Conflict on Black Voter Turnout: A Field Experiment. Unpublished manuscript).
- Norris, Pippa, Frank, R.W., Martínez i Coma, F., 2014. "Measuring electoral integrity around the world: a new dataset." *PS. Political Science & Politics* 47 (4), 789–798.
- Panagopoulos, Costas, Larimer, Christopher W., Condon, Meghan, 2014. Social pressure, descriptive norms, and voter mobilization. *Polit. Behav.* 36 (2), 451–469.
- Plutzer, Eric, 2002. Becoming a habitual voter: inertia, resources, and growth in young adulthood. *Am. Polit. Sci. Rev.* 96 (1), 41–56.
- Sanders, D., Heath, A., Fisher, S., Sobolewska, M., 2014. The calculus of ethnic minority voting in Britain. *Polit. Stud.* 62 (2), 230–251.
- Shineman, V., 2018. If you mobilize them, they will become informed: experimental evidence that information acquisition is endogenous to costs and incentives to participate. *Br. J. Polit. Sci.* 48 (1), 189–211. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0007123416000168>.
- Sobolewska, Maria, Galandini, Silvia, Lessard-Phillips, Laurence, 2017. The public view of immigrant integration: multidimensional and consensual. Evidence from survey experiments in the UK and The Netherlands. *J. Ethnic Migrat. Stud.* 43 (1), 58–79. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2016.1248377>.
- Statistics Norway, 2016. Municipal and County Council Election, Electoral Survey. <https://www.ssb.no/en/valg/statistikker/vundkomm>. downloaded 28.08.2018.
- Stokes, A.K., 2003. Latino group consciousness and political participation. *Am. Polit. Res.* 31 (4), 361–378.
- Wright Austin, S.D., Middleton, R.T., Yon, R., 2012. The effect of racial group consciousness on the political participation of African Americans and Black ethnics in Miami-Dade County, Florida. *Polit. Res. Q.* 65 (3), 629–641.
- Wüst, A.M., Bird, K., Bergh, J., Dingu-Kyrklund, E., Jacobs, D., Jenny, M., Michon, L., Saalfeld, T., Tiberj, V., Tillie, J., Tøgeby, L., 2010. "Voter turnout amongst immigrants and visible minorities in comparative perspective" chapter 2. In: Bird, Karen, Saalfeld, T., Wüst, A. (Eds.), *The Political Representation of Immigrants and Minorities: Voters, Parties and Parliaments in Liberal Democracies*. Routledge Publishers.