

Hot Politics: The Role of Emotions in Politics and its Implications

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Hot Politics Lab.

Mission

To understand the role of personality,
emotion and rhetoric in contemporary
politics

Affective responses to political rhetoric
you agree or disagree with

Hot Cognition (i)

- Core assumption is that politics is affectively charged
- Positive / negative affect influences subsequent cognitive processing
 - Disconfirmation bias
 - Confirmation bias

Hot Cognition (ii)

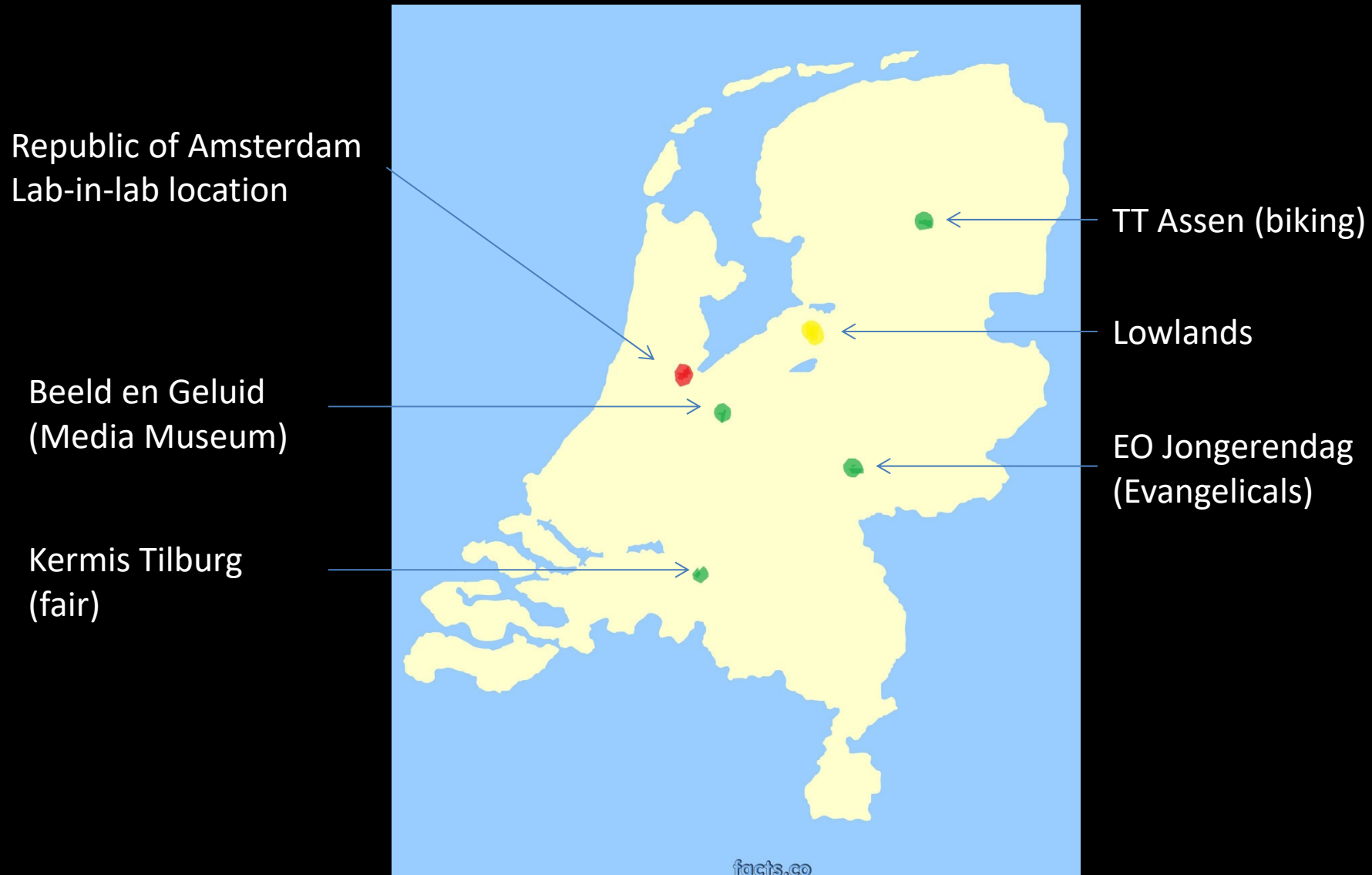
- Affect precedes the experience of discrete emotions
- Affect is two-dimensional: arousal and valence
- Affect can be measured with physiological measures
- Arousal = heart beat & skin conductance
- Valence = EMG

Physiological measures



Immigration Treatment

Locations data collection



Hot Politics@Lowlands



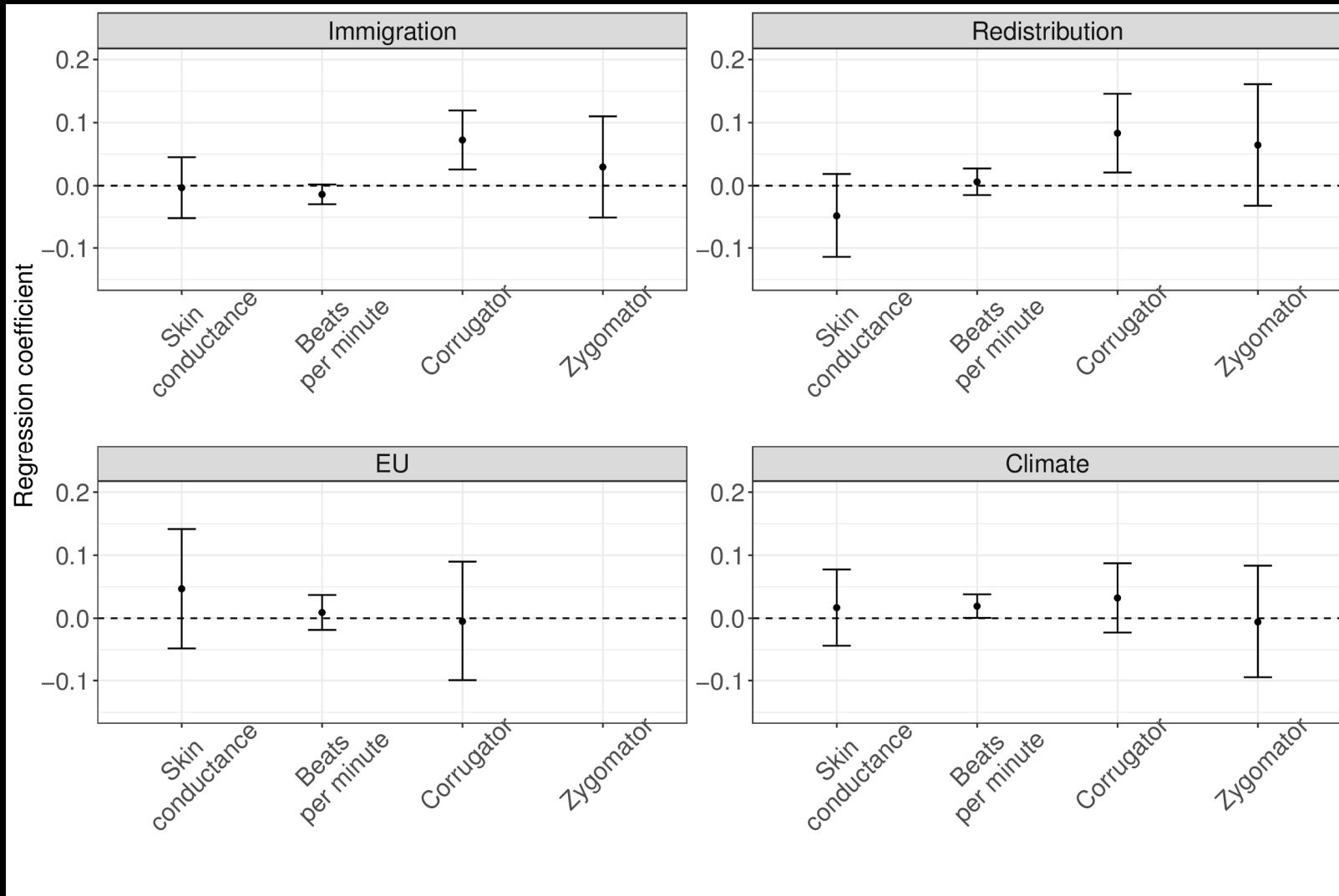
Hot Politics@Lowlands



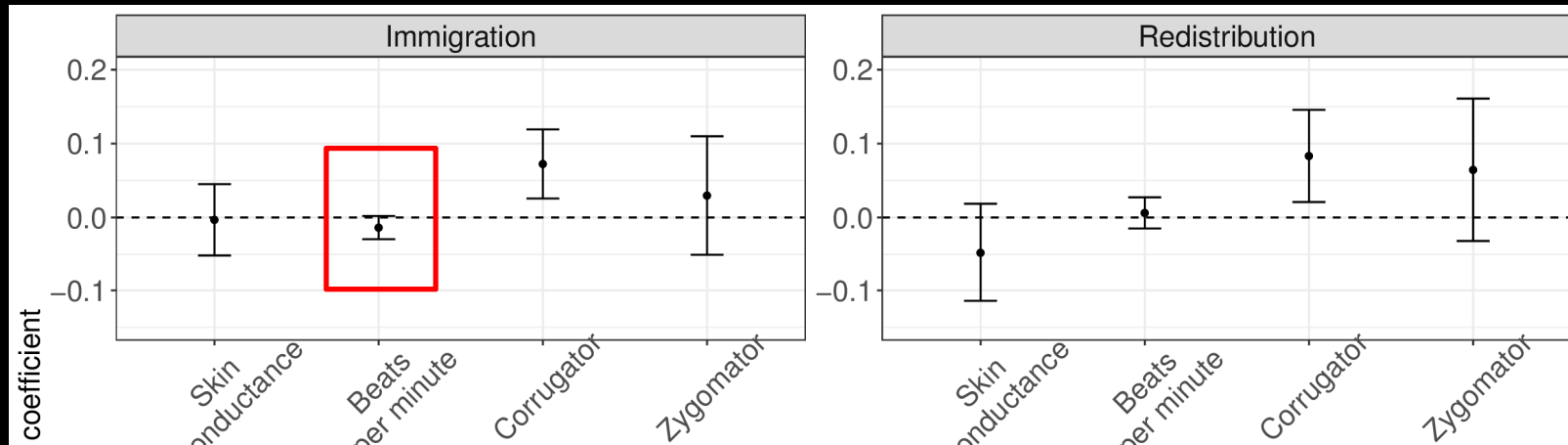
Hot Politics@Evangelical Rock Festival



Experimental Results: Effect of Incongruence



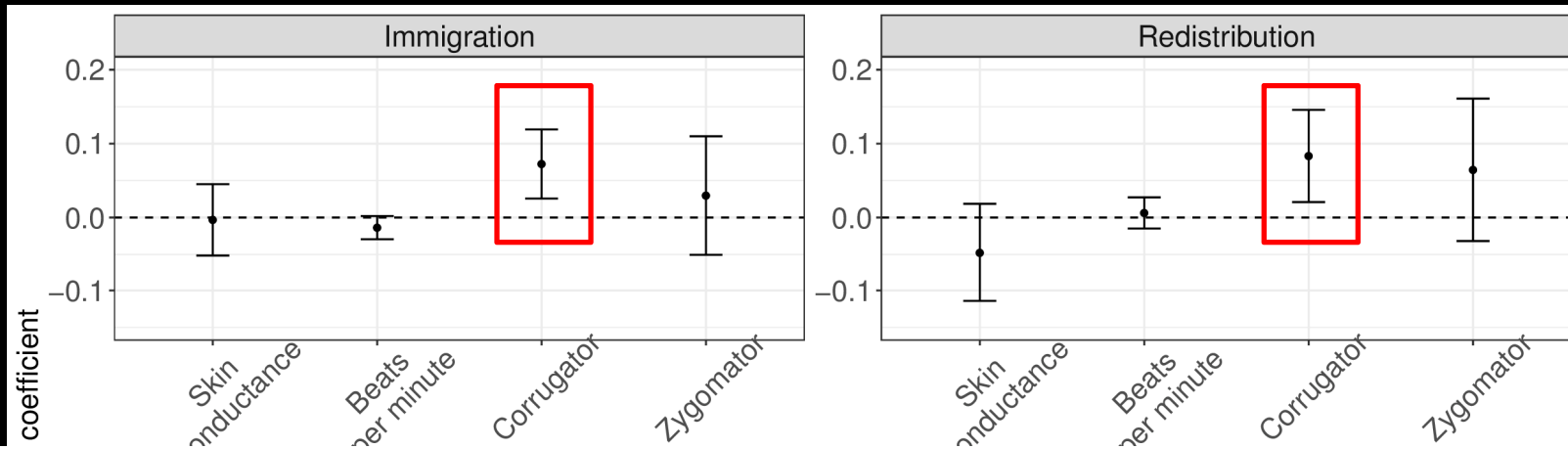
Experimental Results: Effect of Incongruence



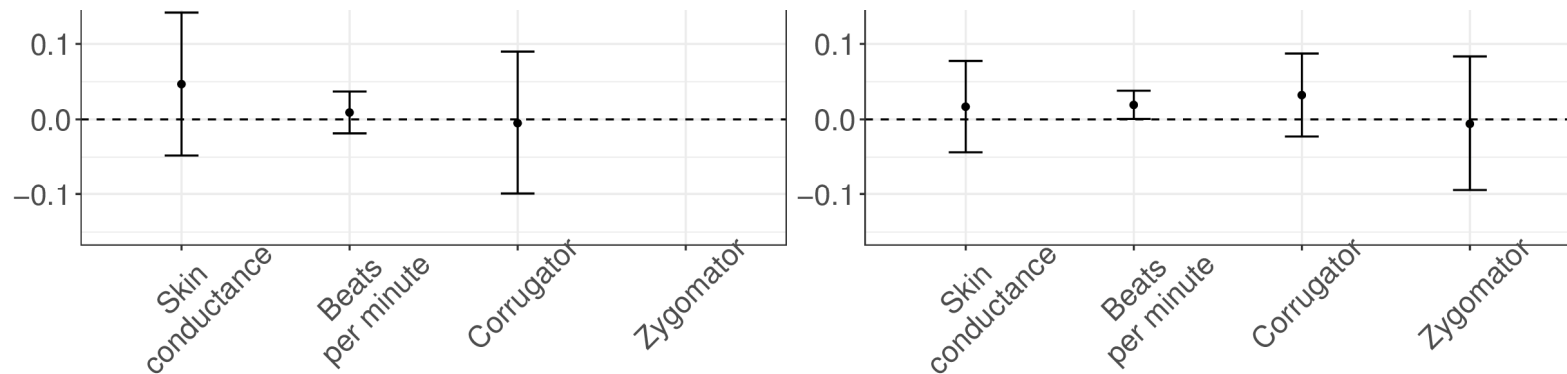
1. Incongruence only has an effect on heart beat in the immigration treatment
2. The effect is negative: more attention to an incongruent immigration treatment (disconfirmation bias). Less attention to congruent immigration treatment (confirmation bias)

Skin conductance Beats per minute Corrugator Zygomaticus Skin conductance Beats per minute Corrugator Zygomaticus

Experimental Results: Effect of Incongruence



1. Incongruence produces more corrugator activity (i.e. more negative valence) in the immigration and redistribution treatments



Conclusion

- Disagreement produces lower heart beat (attention) and more corrugator activity (negative affect)
- Agreement produces higher heart beat (arousal) but not positive/negative affect
- For Climate and EU we find no effects of incongruence/disagreement, but other effects (political knowledge & attitude strength)

Policy

- Persuasion is more than just giving more information
- Everyone has emotional responses to politics; not just the radical right/populist
- Knowledge utilization / Making impact
- More specificity in grants; appreciate both high-stakes-high-gains research and replication research

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- Hotpolitics.eu

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