

# Understanding the Political Stigmatization of Rebel Parties

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## Abstract

The long-term electoral viability of rebel parties depends, in part, on acceptance of them as legitimate political actors. Yet existing work suggests that civilians often punish perpetrators of past violence at the ballot box and that conflict generates long-term antipathies. This paper uses a mixed-methods approach to clarify why civilians may penalize rebel parties. First, we conduct a series of semi-structured interviews with Co-munes party leaders and members. These uniformly claim that civilian *stigmatization* of the party is pervasive. Second, we design an endorsement experiment to measure the extent of aversion toward the party and whether it is distinct from assessments based on ideology or platform. Findings show that civilians penalize policies endorsed by Co-munes and their endorsement elicits aversion even when compared to the endorsement of other ideologically similar parties.

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# 1 Introduction

The political inclusion of former insurgent organizations has become a crucial aspect of peace processes [Jarstad and Sisk, 2008, Matanock, 2017]. Democratic political participation of former insurgent parties provides ex-combatants with a peaceful channel to address their political grievances. Yet the viability of rebel parties as long-term political contenders depends partly on civilian acceptance of them as legitimate political actors. If conflict-related animosity is widespread enough among civilians, rebel parties, and the prospect of peace through politics, are likely to fail. Some rebel parties do garner civilian support, suggesting that sometimes civilians do legitimize rebel parties despite their violent past. Moreover, in contexts where rebel parties do not receive support, it is possible that civilians do not hold conflict-related aversions to rebel parties but instead are not ideologically aligned with them or make other political calculations. Thus it remains unclear, to what extent do civilians hold conflict-related aversion towards rebel parties? And if so, what explains variation in such aversion? Why are some civilians accepting of rebel parties while others are not?

We study these questions in the context of the democratic transition of Colombia’s rebel group Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), and their political party, now known as Comunes. We investigate the extent to which popular support for the Comunes party platform is shaped by the party’s rebel past. We experimentally test whether civilian distaste towards the rebel party is driven by ideological differences, a conflict-related penalty (or “stigmatization”), or by political competition.

We find that, on average, civilians penalize policies when they are associated with the Comunes Party, and the rebel party endorsement elicits adverse reactions compared to the endorsement of other ideologically similar parties. Participants randomly assigned to a Comunes Party endorsement are less supportive of three, otherwise identical, policy positions. These findings suggest that civilian distaste for the rebel party is not fully explained by differences in policy preferences.

Surprisingly, we find that antipathy towards Comunes is not more or less pronounced

among civilians who experienced the rebel groups' violence nor among those who lived under the rebel groups' rule. The evidence suggests a more nuanced political mechanism, where the strongest repudiation of Comunes comes from civilians who are the most ideologically *aligned* with the rebel party. Our findings suggest that the strongest challenge to this rebel party does not come from violently victimized populations but rather from "politically victimized" populations: those who did not endorse the FARC's use of violence but who have paid a price for sharing an ideological similarity to the armed group. Respondents with the closest ideological platform to the rebel party are the ones who react strongest to its endorsements. Thus, general stigmatization hampers the effectiveness of Comunes party campaigns and outreach efforts. But then outreach to potential constituents who share Comunes's policy preferences may even backfire.

The political transition of the Colombian rebel group FARC constitutes one of the most important recent episodes of post-conflict democratic transitions and an opportunity to explore how to strengthen transitions towards peace more generally. To understand the electoral performance of the FARC we carried out an investigation in two steps: a set of interviews with party leaders and an experiment with potential supporters affected by years of civil conflict.

First, we conducted semi-structured interviews with former combatants and party members to learn their take on the organization's electoral performance. From the interviews, we identified a set of explanations for the unexpectedly poor electoral performance of the former rebel party. Leaders expected substantially more support from voters and mentioned that the primary reason for the ultimate lack of support was "stigmatization" based on the group's violent past. Additionally, party leaders also noted the unwillingness of other left-ist parties to work with them. Despite Comunes's intentions to create alliances with other parties, long-established parties maintained their distance.

Second, based on the insights obtained from the interviews, we implemented a survey experiment - both in the field and online - across a variety of localities, ensuring heterogeneity

across numerous dimensions including rurality and conflict experience. We used an endorsement experiment that allows us to disentangle whether civilian distaste towards the rebel party is driven by party ideology or, as suggested by the qualitative work, by stigmatization and a sense of “political victimization” among those who share similar ideology. In the survey, respondents are asked to rate their support for a number of political statements. They are randomly assigned to versions of the statement endorsed by either the Comunes party, leftist parties, or ambiguous politicians. Thus we interpret the differences in respondents’ support as their reactions to the endorser.

The conflict-related penalty that rebel parties face, particularly from ideologically like-minded citizens, is an understudied but potentially important barrier to the democratic inclusion of former insurgent organizations. Despite the broad emphasis on the legacies of conflict in terms of victims of violence, our findings suggest that there are other types of barriers beyond direct exposure to violence for which people may penalize these new groups.

The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 situates our results within theoretical and empirical contributions on the electoral fortunes of former rebel organizations, highlighting the role of public support, conflict experience, and stigma. Section 3 places each of these aspects in the Colombian context and explains the role of the newly formed political party in the electoral landscape. Section 4 presents the analysis of the qualitative evidence we collected. Section 5 presents the research design of the experimental component of the study and the main findings. Finally, Section 6 presents our discussion and main conclusions.

## 2 Political Mobilization Post-Conflict

Rebel groups often gain political support through their control of territory and civilians during conflict [Stewart, 2018, Arjona, 2016, Weinstein, 2006]. In the post-conflict period, however, the competition from other parties and the withdrawal of rebels’ coercive power can undermine former rebel groups’ ability to retain political support [Costalli and Ruggeri,

2015, Allison, 2006, Esparza and Ishiyama, 2023].

Rebel-to-party transitions are increasingly common worldwide (See Figure 1). However, the involvement of rebel parties in the electoral arena varies considerably [Flores and Nooruddin, 2012, Zaks, 2017]. In some cases, such as with the former Maoist Guerrilla in Nepal, the rebel group’s party comes to dominate national electoral politics. However, in other contexts such as with the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, the ex-rebel party has won no more than a few percent of the vote in subsequent elections. Given that these post-conflict experiences can shape the current and future electoral landscape [Lupu and Peisakhin, 2017, Rozenas and Zhukov, 2019, Balcells, 2012, Hadzic et al., 2020], we want to understand: what explains civilian support for former rebels’ political platforms?

Recent scholarship has advanced in understanding the factors that affect the electoral fortunes of former rebel parties with consequences for the post-conflict consolidation of democracy. Evidence suggests that voters prefer conflict winners [Daly, 2019] and that relative military strength at the end of the conflict affects electoral support during peace [Ishiyama and Widmeier, 2013]. Rebel groups’ wartime organization, including proto-party structures of “bush bureaucracies” can also improve post-conflict electoral performance [Zaks, 2017, Manning and Smith, 2019, Ishiyama and Widmeier, 2019].

The role of rebel party’s violent past, the type of governance they oversaw during the conflict, and the nature of victimization that they inflicted have received less attention in the rebel-to-party transitions literature and are the focus of this paper. We shed light on a crucial yet understudied barrier to the successful entry of rebel parties into the democratic system: the political price rebel parties pay for their violent origin.

## 2.1 Group Stigmatization

Research has shown that stigma associated with rebel groups’ violent pasts affect ex-combatant reintegration [Humphreys and Weinstein, 2007, McMullin, 2013, Kaplan and Nussio, 2018, Blattman, 2009]. This mechanism may also affect a rebel group’s transition to a political

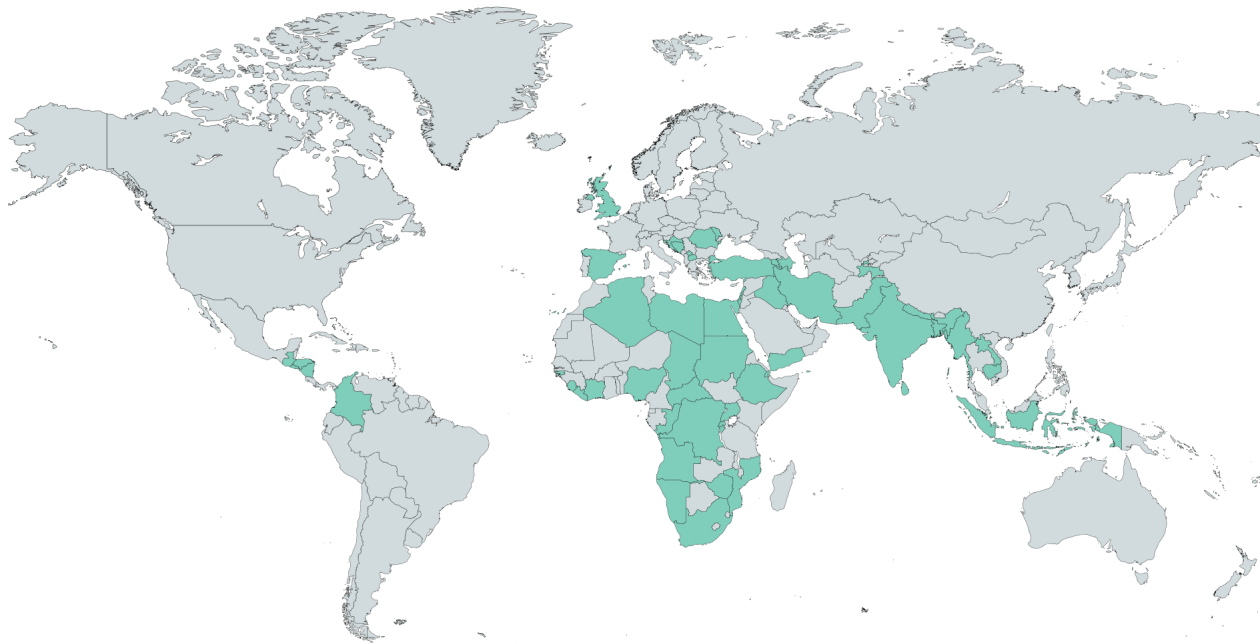


Figure 1: Cross-national instances of rebel parties

sources: Based on [Curiel, 2023], [Matanock, 2016], [Söderberg Kovacs and Hatz, 2016], [Daly, 2020]

party. Citizens may have an aversion toward former armed groups, either because of distaste for their violence, having been victimized directly, or because of the effects of governments' wartime propaganda. This could make citizens hesitant towards proposals issued by the group even if they might support such proposals when voiced by others. Thus, our first hypothesis is that the endorsement of a rebel group will decrease support for policies and political statements.

Peoples' reaction to a proposal that is endorsed by a rebel party could reflect a reaction to the rebel party per se or to the ideological content of their proposal. Simply put, leftist guerrilla parties may face rejection for being leftist just as much as for being former guerrillas. To disentangle these possibilities our analysis compares the effects of rebel party endorsements to endorsements by non-guerrilla left-wing parties. A negative rebel party endorsement effect would suggest that a conflict-specific penalty, and not just their political positioning, can be a tangible barrier to rebel parties' electoral success.

## 2.2 Conflict Experience and Democratic Support

The legacies of the war may also shape popular support for rebel parties' proposals. During conflicts, rebel groups establish different types of contact with the communities where they operate. First rebel groups can operate as a quasi-state and be the main provider of public goods and other institutional capacities. Such rebel governance can be described as *Rebelocracy* [Arjona, 2016], and may generate a sense of dependency or obligation toward the rebel group. These findings inform our second hypothesis: the negative stigmatization effect of the endorsement of the former rebel groups disappears for those subject to *Rebelocracy* or with a history of dependency on security provided by the rebel group.

## 2.3 Political Victimization

Finally, we want to call attention to the differentiated effect that the endorsement of the rebel group can have depending on citizens' political affiliation. Ideological proximity could theoretically affect our results in different ways. On the one hand, given the prevailing atmosphere of polarization and right-wing opposition to FARC, we anticipate a particularly pronounced opposition from right-wing partisans. On the other hand, it remains plausible that concerns related to competition from the FARC among individuals who share ideological *similarities* with the Comunes Party, albeit without direct affiliation, might engender a negative reaction. This is consistent with work documenting how political competition among leftist groups affects entry into electoral politics versus into more radical politics [Chandra and García-Ponce, 2019, Fergusson et al., 2020, Staniland, 2021].

Rebel parties often come to occupy a space that was, in fact, already occupied ideologically by other parties and legal organizations. The rejection of a rebel party's endorsement for specific policies may come from "political victims". These political victims can be understood in two different ways. First, some organizations can be seen as political victims of the rebel group, given that they shared similar positions and were conflated with the rebel organization by government or public opinion during the conflict, harming their electoral

prospects. Second, in the electoral arena, other ideologically aligned parties and organizations seek a set of constituents for their political objectives, so they may reject the entry of “usurper” newcomers. This translates into the hypothesis that the endorsement of the former rebel party would be lowest among ideologically aligned citizens.

We preregistered hypotheses based on these arguments before receiving and analyzing our data. In the pre-analysis plan, we hypothesized a negative effect of the Comunes endorsement and discussed several possible mechanisms: (i) stigmatization, (ii) abandonment that some citizens may have felt with the peace process, (iii) saturated political space occupied by other left-wing parties, and (iv) lack of knowledge of the party that translated into poor campaigning strategies.

### **3 Context: Post-Conflict Elections in Colombia**

The peace process between the Colombian government and the FARC presents an opportunity to examine how the legacies of war and other dynamics affect support for rebel parties. Following a bloody decades-long conflict, in 2016 the Colombian government and the FARC guerrilla signed a peace agreement that emphasized a political solution to the conflict. This agreement allowed the leftist revolutionary guerrilla movement to create a new political party to participate in the democratic process.

From the start, there was considerable uncertainty about the potential for FARC’s electoral success. There was fierce opposition from right-wing parties and elements of the government establishment [Lafuente, 2016, Cobb and Casey, 2016]. At the same time, FARC members themselves held high expectations of support in certain localities, especially those that showed support for the peace agreement in the 2016 referendum.

Here, it is worth mentioning the relationship of the new political party founded by FARC with other parties operating at the time. Right-wing parties (Conservative Party, Democratic Center, National Unity) mostly rejected the peace agreement and the participation of the

rebels in the electoral process. By contrast, leftist parties (Polo, the Unión Patriótica, and Progresistas) supported the peace agreement, and the creation of the new party, but initially did not create alliances with FARC. As noted by news reports, some politicians saw the new party as competition: “A difficult panorama opens up because, after all, the FARC comes with a political project that competes with ours, which is the opposition to the economic model that the governments have imposed on us. They will look for the same space” [García Segura, 2016]. Reactions like this inform the theoretical logic of “political victims” that were described above.

Despite high expectations from members of the FARC, electoral support for the Comunes Party has been very low. The October 2019 regional elections were the first regional elections in which the FARC party participated since becoming a political party in 2016. These local elections were considered to be the first true test of FARC’s political viability [Dickinson, 2019]. FARC’s hold over a number of regions in Colombia throughout the war did not translate into electoral support. They received very low voteshares even in localities perceived to have supported the FARC during the conflict. The only former FARC combatant who became mayor did not run with the FARC party, even though he did not shy away from referring to his decades-long militancy with the FARC [Oquendo, 2019]. His repudiation of the party was less about straying from the beliefs and platform of the FARC, and even from his identity as a former combatant, and more about the viability of the FARC party brand.

### **3.1 FARC Electoral Performance**

A closer look at the electoral results of these local elections confirms the rebel party’s failure to garner electoral support. FARC ran candidates for local positions in only 66 out of the 1123 municipalities in Colombia. This includes 59 municipalities where they competed for local council seats and 13 municipalities where they ran candidates for mayor. Having competed in such few municipalities indicates a severely limited capacity to organize politically from the get-go, which is puzzling given how widespread FARC’s presence was throughout Colombian

territory during the conflict (Figure 2 top panel).

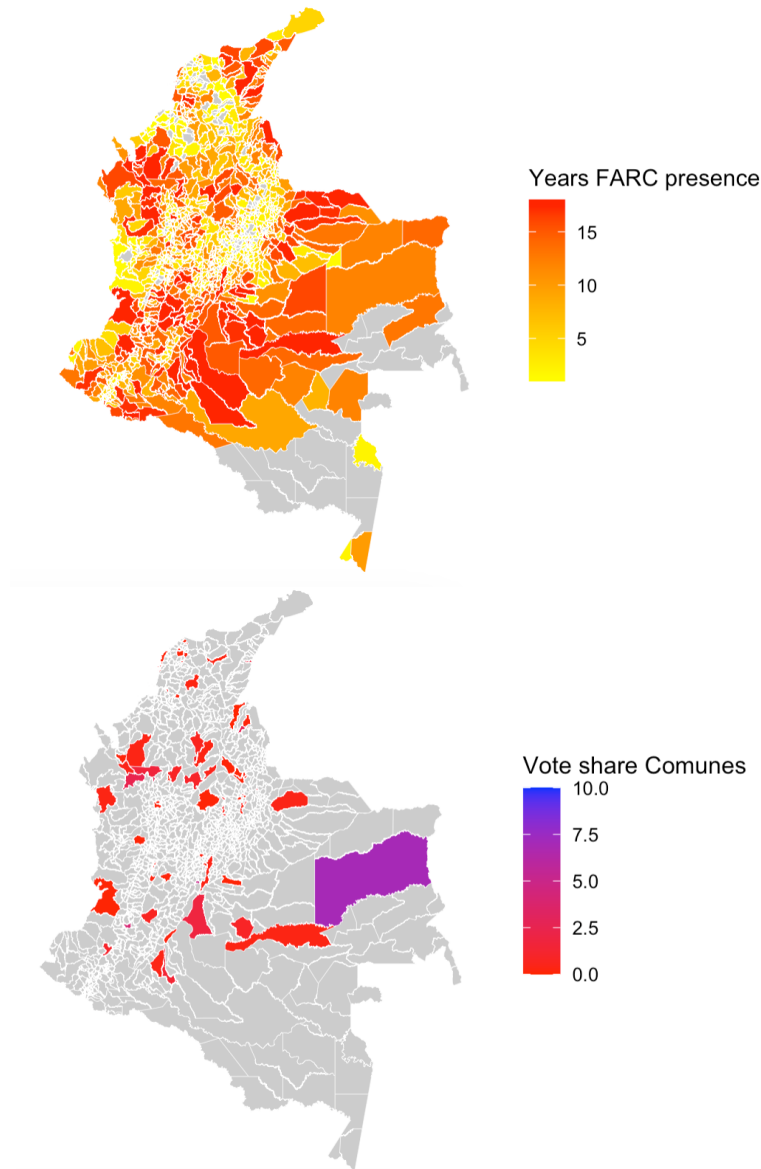


Figure 2: Years of FARC presence in Colombian municipalities since 1990 (top), and electoral vote shares won by Comunes Party in 2019 communal elections (bottom).

Even more surprising is that, even in places where they thought it was reasonable to compete, they did not receive meaningful support. Figure 2 (bottom panel) illustrates the geographical distribution of vote shares at the municipal level both for the mayoral and local council races that were on the same ballot.<sup>1</sup> As Table 1 shows, the rebel party did not

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<sup>1</sup>Note there are 20 municipalities for which there is no electoral data available. These are

manage to exceed 11% of the total vote share, and in 75% of the municipalities in which they competed, they did not exceed 5% of the vote share.

Table 1: FARC 2019 results in municipalities with at least one FARC candidate

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
All candidates	66	151.83	91.05	35	548
Parties	66	14.52	4.43	6	25
Total FARC candidates	66	3.30	3.23	1	16
FARC local council candidates	66	3.11	3.23	0	16
FARC mayoral candidates	66	0.20	0.4	0	1
Mayoral vote share FARC (%)	13	2.41	3.14	0.14	10.18
Local council vote share FARC (%)	59	1.21	1.83	0	11.15
Total vote share FARC (%)	66	0.77	1.35	0	6.98
Total votes FARC	66	649.15	3,160.86	0	25,729

*Notes: Electoral data from the Misión de Observación Electoral [MOE, 2024].*

These outcomes are striking for a few reasons. First, literature on violent insurgencies often posits that insurgent groups rely heavily on civilian contributors and supporters to wage war [Galula, 1964], particularly groups like the FARC who remained active for decades. Existing work suggests that these groups can carry over the civilian support they relied on during the war to the ballot box [Ishiyama and Widmeier, 2019, Manning and Smith, 2019, Zaks, 2017], especially within former wartime strongholds [Arjona, 2016]. This was evidently not the case for the FARC party, who managed to muster less than 50,000 votes in the 2019 communal elections, despite substantial gains by other left parties [Freeman, 2019]. In the 2022 parliamentary elections, amidst a continued leftist surge, Comunes candidates mustered fewer than 26,000 votes [MOE, 2024]. Second, the political legitimization of the FARC and the possibility that they might govern was an important part of the Uribe-led rightwing campaign against the peace agreement. The fear that FARC could be popular enough in some regions to win elections was a real concern that drove a majority of Colombians to oppose the peace agreement in a 2016 referendum. The FARC and Comunes’s electoral municipalities in the southeastern states of Amazonas (9), Vaupés (3), Guainía (8).

performance establishes a puzzle that our mixed-methods empirical analysis attempts to unpack, guided by the theoretical arguments developed above.

## 4 Qualitative Evidence

We now turn to qualitative evidence based on a series of interviews with civil society members, former FARC combatants, and politicians from the Comunes party. We conducted 21 semi-structured interviews between December 2021 and February 2022, before the design and implementation of the survey (see Appendix Section J for a description of recruitment, interview structure, and analytical approach). We interviewed people connected with the FARC and Comunes from various municipalities in the country who were either directly involved with campaign activities or with the peace agreement. Our objective was to learn about the Comunes electoral strategy and the reasons insiders inferred for the party's performance. The interviews were semi-structured, and most interviews lasted at least an hour. Questions were designed around three main topics, the first being the decision to become a party and the objectives, concerns, and expectations of the party prior to their first electoral competition. The second part contained questions to gauge their understanding of the party's electoral performance, the implications of said performance, and what they believe in retrospect has motivated and challenged the party's electoral participation to date.

The interviews revealed two types of explanations regarding the electoral performance of the Comunes party: a) low support in areas of rebel control, with particularly low support from campesino and other rural organizations, and b) general stigmatization of former FARC given their violent past. Members of the Comunes party were surprised by the low electoral support they obtained in places where the peace agreement was well received and supported in the referendum. In particular, peasant groups and other civil organizations, in places where FARC had an active participation, did not show up for them at the polls in the magnitude they had expected. According to our interviews, insiders perceived that the

main reason why they received little electoral support was what they referred to as the “stigmatization” of the party. To expand on these explanations, we refer to the interviews as well as to official documents and speeches from the Comunes party, especially the so-called *Tesis de Abril* plan adopted in the party’s founding congress.

## 4.1 Rebel Control and Expected Support

A recurring theme throughout our interviews was the expectations of party members and militants in the places where the FARC operated during the conflict. This is captured well by one interviewee, a former FARC clandestine urban militant who stated:

The process of the agreement and the negotiations was very perfect, and the content of the agreement was a reason for enormous hope and held the potential for changing the future. I held the expectation of what happened in South Africa... I hoped that FARC might have the capacity... They did after all at one point govern 40% of the national territory.<sup>2</sup>

The party expected more support specifically from peasant organizations and other groups who supported them during the conflict and the peace process. Several interviewees mentioned that before the first election, FARC expected to receive at least one million votes. Another interviewee noted:

We expected that all of the campesinos and the organizations that fought for the peace agreement would be right there supporting the party.<sup>3</sup>

These expectations were partially based on how support for the peace agreement in the 2016 referendum has been distributed geographically. Support for the peace agreement (the yes vote) in the 2016 peace referendum was higher in the places most affected by the conflict and in the country’s poorest municipalities [[Fergusson and Molina, 2016](#)].

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<sup>2</sup>I8, civilian militant, former party member

<sup>3</sup>I4, former FARC militant, reintegration project

Additionally, in the foundational congress for the party held in the run-up to elections, it was also clear that FARC leadership was confident in their rural bases: “We have accumulated significant political and organizational support [...] Our work with peasant organizations at the national, territorial and local levels should be highlighted” [Farc, 2019, pp. 127]. The same confidence in campesino organizations and other groups in the places that they controlled is present in several documents and speeches [Marquez, 2019]. When making the transition into a political party, the organization planned to build on these apparent bases of support and emphasize political projects in areas where they had control as a rebel organization.

FARC expectations of electoral support relied heavily on civilians they interacted with during conflict and people who shared their ideological position. Across interviews and in various public statements, Comunes officials and sympathizers emphasize campaigning in urban areas based in part on the assumption that their agenda and political base were already consolidated in rural areas.

## 4.2 FARC Stigma

To understand Comunes’ poor performance, interviewees regularly brought up the idea of “stigma”: a distaste for the party that existed because of the party’s history as a violent rebel group. In 16 out of the 21 interviews, participants mentioned stigma as the main reason for Comunes’ poor electoral performance. One party leader noted,

Campaigning is difficult for all parties, but for us, it is especially difficult because of the stigma. People cannot trust us and always want to associate us with the violence from the conflict.<sup>4</sup>

Interviewees believed the anti-Comunes stigma was driven by the negative propaganda that the government and opposing parties deployed against the FARC during the war. “It’s

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<sup>4</sup>I2, Comunes party leader

been impossible to escape the constant media campaign since during the war,” a party member noted. Another relayed a similar sentiment, “This is the result of a targeted media campaign... people say they cannot believe people who kidnapped, murdered, used a *collar bomba*.”<sup>5</sup> Such stigma was taken to be a nearly insurmountable obstacle: “No matter what we do the symbolism and stigma is horrible...”<sup>6</sup> “Those images stay with people. That doesn’t change easily.”<sup>7</sup>

Interviewees posited that Comunes’ political agenda has some clear distinctions from the interests of other parties and organizations in Colombia, and therefore in their view presents no clear political threat to other parties. Yet, they argued, years of negative information by the government as well as the distance that other left-wing parties sought from the FARC prevented voters from hearing the FARC party’s message. Party leaders publicly voiced concerns along these lines as well: “The implementation must succeed in mobilizing the broadest majority of Colombian society amid a continuous media campaign that sows doubts and falsehoods about the Peace Agreement” [Farc, 2019]. Elsewhere, the organization refers to the fearful “state of opinion” that opposition groups try to promote [Farc, 2019, pp. 114] and the obstacles to changing such opinions [Espinosa Macías, 2020, p. 69].

### 4.3 Traditional Left and Political Competition

In the interviews, when we asked about the main challenges to the Comunes party, many participants mentioned the role of other leftist organizations. One ex-combatant noted that the challenge is “the exclusion of some political parties and barriers that parties from the left have put on us, such as limiting the possibility for us to join coalitions.”<sup>8</sup> Another party member noted that this rejection had been unexpected, “The party did not anticipate this

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<sup>5</sup>I5, Ex-combatant reintegration expert, Comunes sympathizer

<sup>6</sup>I10, Comunes party cadre

<sup>7</sup>I20, Peace negotiation participant on behalf of Colombian government

<sup>8</sup>I2, Comunes party leader.

rejection from the left. It has always been difficult to get the left to cooperate, but we didn't anticipate this level of rejection. Recall the instance of the Historical Pact for example.”<sup>9</sup>

In different scenarios, party leaders expressed the importance of placing themselves on the political map. Remarkably, the Comunes party announced that it wanted to be part of the left-wing coalition that supported Gustavo Petro's presidential candidacy, the Historical Pact. However, the parties that make up said coalition preferred not to campaign with Comunes. The members of the coalition did not want to carry the costly political weight of the ex-guerrilla support. In the words of a member of the leftist coalition party: “Comunes themselves win more if they stand aside. If we appear in a photo with them, we lose the election” [Florez Arias, 2021].

Other participants, such as a member of the Norwegian delegation in the peace process, referred to the exclusion of the party by traditional left organizations as a major challenge for the success of the party: “The left has generally had a hard time in Colombia because they have been considered to be close to the guerrilla. Now that Petro is strong and the peace agreement has been signed they are perceived to be separate.”<sup>10</sup>

We now turn to the experiment we designed to quantify the relevance of this penalty (what Comunes refers to as stigma) and the lack of support from the left. This design disentangles the extent to which these aspects may be additional barriers relative to other concerns.

## 5 Survey Experiment Design

Drawing on the insights from the qualitative interviews and the current literature on rebel party integration, our experiment aims to investigate the extent to which *stigma*—an intrinsic distaste for the party related to their origin that is difficult for the party to overcome—affects

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<sup>9</sup>I6, Comunes party member.

<sup>10</sup>I3, Peace Negotiator participant on behalf of Norwegian delegation.

public support. We conducted an endorsement experiment as part of a survey in March 2022, in advance of national elections in Colombia. We relied on this design, rather than only on direct measures of support, for two reasons.

First, although we use conventional measures of support towards Comunes and other parties, such as direct questions on attitudes (e.g. Do you support the Comunes party? Why or why not?) and behaviors (e.g. voting or campaigning for the party), we cannot use such expressed preferences to disentangle the effects of the party’s ideological platform versus stigma. Second, direct questions may not elicit some civilians’ true preferences in this context [Lyall et al., 2013]. Matanock and Garcia-Sanchez [2018] shows evidence of Colombian civilians falsifying their preferences when asked about their support for the Colombian military. Although FARC is demobilized and does not present as much of an active threat to the population in the way Matanock and Garcia-Sanchez [2018] suggests the military might in their study, security threats were not altogether absent and may thus affect respondents’ expressed support for the party.

The endorsement experiment uses a subtle approach to address these concerns. We ask respondents simply to rate their support for a policy. However, respondents randomly assigned to the treatment group will be given contextualizing information that the Comunes party endorsed the policy, while those randomly assigned to one of the control condition will not receive such contextualizing information. The design allows us to control for features of the policy, by also varying its content, and also to control for different aspects of the Comunes party by randomly assigning respondents to endorsements by parties similar to Comunes in certain ways. If respondents’ attitudes towards the policy differ when endorsed by the Comunes party, the difference in support can be attributed to concerns related to the Comunes party rather than the policy itself. Our approach follows existing scholarship that uses endorsement experiments to gauge political support in sensitive and conflict-affected contexts (e.g. [Haas and Khadka, 2020], [Anjum et al., 2021], [Bullock et al., 2011]). Section 5.9 presents the anticipated contrast between respondents’ indirect penalization of Comunes

captured by the endorsement experiment, and their expressed attitudes towards Comunes (collected before the survey experiment).

Finally, the endorsement experiment allows us to evaluate preferences in a way that is not confounded by considerations of parties' competence. This is one reason that for our investigation, we prefer the endorsement design to alternatives such as conjoint experiments that ask for direct comparisons between parties or candidates.

## 5.1 Survey Modules

In the first part of the survey, respondents were asked a series of demographic questions, as well as questions relating to their quality of life, political engagement and knowledge, including their knowledge of the Comunes party. Next respondents were presented with a brief prompt, explaining that they were going to be asked questions about their attitudes towards and knowledge of several political parties, including the “Comunes party (formerly known as the Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común).”<sup>11</sup> Questions in this section asked about presidential candidate preferences, ideology, attitudes towards six different parties, as well as exposure to party campaigns and knowledge of party platforms. Note that when respondents were asked about their explicit attitudes towards the different parties, which included the Comunes party, respondents had not yet been reminded of the connection between FARC and Comunes. This allowed us to gauge familiarity with Comunes, separate from familiarity with the former FARC guerrilla which is widely known.

The following section of the survey included a set of three endorsement experiments. Respondents were asked to rate their support for three statements regarding specific ideological and policy platforms. All statements were true and related to support for anti-capitalism, support for a statement denouncing the healthcare system, and support for anti-fracking leg-

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<sup>11</sup>The party changed its name from Fuerza Alternativa Revolucionaria del Común (FARC) to Comunes in 2021, so it was important to clarify this in case some respondents were not yet aware of the name change. This clarification was done prior to the endorsement experiment.

isolation. The full statements and treatment conditions are specified in Appendix Section C. Each statement was endorsed by either the Comunes party, leftist parties, or unspecified politicians (the “ambiguous” condition). We randomly assigned the endorsement in such a way that the statements were identical except for information on the identity of the endorser. The final part of the survey asked respondents to recall their experiences of the conflict, the extent to which they interacted with the FARC, and their preferences for the agreement when it was signed. The survey was designed to take 10-15 minutes to complete and respondents were compensated for participating.

## 5.2 Recruitment

We hired a survey firm, IPSOS Colombia, for implementation. Respondents were recruited into the study in two ways: online and in-person. This dual approach ensured our sample included significant variation in baseline characteristics, described further in the next section. Online respondents were contacted by IPSOS based on the firm’s existing sampling frame in the municipalities we selected. Interested participants were then sent a Qualtrics link designed by us, and completed the survey on their own devices. Respondents who were surveyed in person were approached by IPSOS enumerators in public plazas and residential areas. To ensure that the experience between individuals being surveyed online and in-person was as similar as possible, in-person respondents were handed a tablet so that they could respond to the survey privately. Enumerators were also instructed to allow participants to respond privately and to ensure they did not interact with other individuals during the survey.

## 5.3 Sample

We largely sampled respondents from a subset of municipalities where the Comunes party had run at least one candidate to focus on places where the choice of a Comunes candidate was relevant. Our sample includes respondents from 24 of the 66 municipalities where Co-

munes ran in the 2019 elections. This subset of municipalities in our sample was selected based on our survey firm's (IPSOS) existing online and in-person access, statistical power considerations for contextual effects that we wanted to estimate, budget constraints, and security considerations. First, we needed to include respondents from localities that were both urban and rural given our interest in assessing the role of past wartime experience on current assessments of the Comunes party. Given our budget constraint and sample size considerations, we mixed online and in-person recruitment. This allowed us to access a large enough sample of respondents in rural localities that we would not have otherwise been able to access online because of limited connectivity in these areas. We have a total of 206 in-person respondents and 600 online respondents. Table 2 shows the municipalities states and municipalities that are included in the sample, and whether they were sampled online or in-person. Figure 3 shows the locations of the study and the subset of municipalities where Comunes had previously run for office.

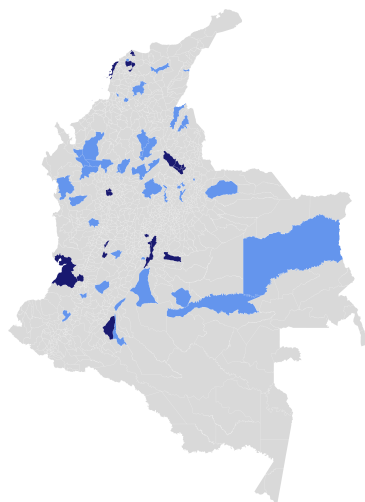


Figure 3: All municipalities in color are places where Comunes ran in the 2019 regional elections, and among these, the bolded municipalities are in our sample.

Table 2: Geographic distribution of the study

<b>Departments in sample</b>	<b>Online municipalities*</b>	<b>In-person municipalities</b>
Antioquia	Bello, Itagui, Medellín	-
Atlántico	Baranquilla, Soledad	Campo de la Cruz, Ponedera, Sabanalarga
Bogotá, D.C.	Bogotá	-
Bolívar	Cartagena	-
Caqueta	Florencia	-
Cesar	Manaure	-
Cundinamarca	Facatativá, Soacha	-
Meta	Villavicencio	-
Quindío	Armenia	Circasia, Genova
Santander	Bucaramanga, Floridablanca, Girón	Lebrija, San Gil
Valle del Cauca	-	Buenaventura
<b>Total municipalities</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total participants</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>206</b>

*\*There were two online waves of the survey. Of the respondents that were sampled in the first wave, 53 respondents were not located in municipalities of interest. Findings are robust to excluding the first wave of online responses.*

## 5.4 Data

The sample includes 806 respondents, each of whom rates all three policy statements, with endorsements randomized within-subject across the statements. Respondents are relatively young with a median age of 35, more female (58% women), and more educated than the general Colombian population (median respondent attended high school). Importantly, our sample has varied conflict experience: 48% of respondents lived in FARC-controlled territory during the conflict, following the territorial coding by [Arjona \[2016\]](#). Table 3 summarizes the characteristics of the sample, as well as covariate balance across the three endorsement treatment conditions (Comunes, leftist, or unspecified party endorsement). Table 4 shows the distribution of endorsement conditions for each statement and in the pooled sample. The assignment across endorsement conditions is balanced so that in each experiment, about one-third of the policy statements were assigned to the Comunes condition, one-third to the leftist condition and the rest to the control condition. There is almost no missingness in responses to the anti-capitalism nor the fracking statements, but there is some missingness in the healthcare conditions due to an error in the first wave of online surveys, where 103 respondents were mistakenly not shown the healthcare-related statement. This missingness does not meaningfully differ across treatment conditions, however.

Table 3: Summary statistics and balance of pooled data

	Control condition			Comunes condition		Left condition		Diff in means	
	Range	Mean	<i>Sd</i>	Mean	<i>Sd</i>	Mean	<i>Sd</i>	vs. Control	vs. Left
<b>Demographics</b>									
Gender	(0,1)	0.58	0.49	0.60	0.49	0.59	0.49	0.02	0.01
White	(0,1)	0.34	0.47	0.37	0.48	0.35	0.48	0.03	0.02
Black	(0,1)	0.07	0.25	0.05	0.22	0.06	0.24	-0.02	-0.01
Education	(0,8)	5.68	1.93	5.61	1.98	5.66	2.00	-0.05	-0.03
Age	(18,85)	36.36	11.72	36.94	11.92	35.95	11.59	0.56	0.96
<b>Quality of life</b>									
Unemployed	(0,1)	0.27	0.44	0.26	0.44	0.23	0.42	-0.01	0.02
Economic condition	(1,5)	2.61	0.83	2.59	0.85	2.66	0.85	-0.02	-0.07
Agriculture, cattle, fishing	(0,1)	0.07	0.25	0.10	0.30	0.08	0.27	0.03**	0.02
White collar employment	(0,1)	0.09	0.29	0.11	0.31	0.10	0.31	0.02	0.00
Personal safety	(0,3)	0.78	0.93	0.81	0.93	0.81	0.95	0.03	0.00
<b>Political knowledge</b>									
Political knowledge	(1,4)	3.87	0.50	3.89	0.44	3.90	0.47	0.03	-0.01
Trust in elections	(1,5)	2.18	1.04	2.22	1.01	2.19	1.00	0.03	0.02
Voted in 2019 elections	(0,1)	0.80	0.40	0.78	0.41	0.79	0.41	-0.02	-0.01
Election security	(0,1)	0.14	0.35	0.15	0.36	0.15	0.36	0.01	0.00
<b>Political preferences</b>									
Ideology	(0,10)	5.13	2.17	5.10	2.15	5.15	2.21	-0.05	-0.07
Petro favorite	(0,1)	0.28	0.45	0.26	0.44	0.27	0.44	-0.02	-0.01
Familiarity with Comunes	(0,1)	0.53	0.50	0.56	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.02	0.03
Feels represented	(0,2)	0.96	0.88	0.97	0.87	0.95	0.90	0.01	0.02
<b>Past conflict experience</b>									
Support for FARC	(1,5)	2.28	1.09	2.26	1.09	2.25	1.08	-0.02	0.01
Wartime experience	(0,2)	0.73	0.82	0.71	0.79	0.67	0.80	-0.02	0.03
Support for agreement	(1,5)	2.85	1.25	2.85	1.30	2.86	1.23	0.00	-0.01

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

Table 4: Tabulation of observations under the endorsement conditions

Statements	Respondents by endorsement conditions			
	Comunes (T1)	Leftist (T2)	Ambiguous	Total
On anti-capitalism	265	267	270	802
On fracking	266	264	268	798
On healthcare*	214	209	212	695
Total (pooled)	745	740	750	2235

Notes: \*sample size is lower due to a programming error in the first wave of online surveys such that 103 respondents did not receive the healthcare-related statements. Other deviations from the sample size of 806 are due to random data errors.

## 5.5 Data analysis

Our quantity of interest is the sample average treatment effect of being in one of the endorsement conditions, estimated via the following regression in the pooled analysis,

$$Y_{ie} = \alpha + \beta_1 D_{1ie} + \beta_2 D_{2ie} + \gamma \mathbf{X}_i + \epsilon_{ie}$$

where  $Y_{ie}$  represents each individual  $i$  support (1-5 scale) for a statement experiment  $e$ .  $D_{1ie}$  is an indicator for random assignment to the Comunes condition,  $D_{2ie}$  is an indicator for random assignment to the Leftist (or Control) condition,  $\mathbf{X}_i$  is a vector of demographic characteristics asked in the survey (age, gender, race, level of educational attainment), an index of interview quality (computed on the basis of response to the attention check, time and a Qualtrics quality measure), and employment status, in order to address a small imbalance in this characteristic. The study’s main hypotheses and description of statistical tests were preregistered prior to analyzing the data. The anonymized pre-registration is in the Appendix Section I.

## 5.6 Main Findings

In this section we present the main results of the endorsement experiments. First we show the effect of the Comunes endorsement on policy support, pooling all three types of policies (thus giving us three observations per respondent). Each observation is a respondent-experiment and the outcome is respondent support for either of the three policy statements, rated on a scale from 1 to 5.

Table 5, and the corresponding Figure 4, show that Comunes endorsement reduces support for the policy statement relative to different reference groups. In Column (1) the estimate of the Comunes endorsement is the effect of Comunes compared to both the control and leftist condition. The largest effect is in Column (2) where the Comunes endorsement effect is estimated with respect to a control condition in which statements were endorsed

by a politician or movement that had no clear ideological affiliation. These results align with the hypotheses outlined above, suggesting that agendas associated with parties with rebel origins receive less political support. However, lack of support for Comunes may be associated with both stigma and lack of support for the party's left-wing ideology.

As shown in Column (2), and also in more detail in Appendix Table 3, respondents tend to report less support for policies endorsed by leftist politicians or organizations (without Comunes being named), although estimates are not significant at the 90% level. Column (3) shows the Comunes endorsement effect relative to a control condition of leftist endorsement, showing that the Comunes penalty remains even when compared to the endorsement of movements that represent similar leftist platforms. In other words, the estimates from this specification suggest that negative reactions towards statements associated with Comunes cannot be entirely attributed to their leftist stance. This is consistent with the notion of *stigma* that Comunes' party members express. Recall that the endorsement experiment design (in contrast to designs like conjoint experiments) has respondents evaluate policy statements in a way that is relatively insulated from considerations of competence. This is another reason that our interpretation stresses stigma. The magnitude of the negative Comunes endorsement effect is small. The Comunes effect ranges from a 0.12 to 0.21 decrease in a point on a 1 to 5 point scale, equivalent to a decrease of 0.09 to 0.16 of a baseline standard deviation. Appendix Tables 9 and 11 show that the negative Comunes endorsement effect holds across all three policy statements.

Although the estimated endorsement effect is small, these results provide evidence for the phenomenon that Comunes' members refer to as *stigmatization*. If we take into account that i) the Comunes party is a leftist organization, ii) the policies and statements are all leftist in the Colombian context, and iii) the places where we conducted the survey are places where the FARC has had a significant presence, the differences in support of the policies and statements reflect a barrier faced by the rebel parties when entering the electoral arena. In the sections that follow we investigate heterogeneity in the Comunes endorsement effect

Table 5: Comunes endorsement effect on policy support

	Support for policy statement (1-5)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.12* (0.07)
Left endorsement		-0.09 (0.07)	
Ambiguous endorsement (Control)			0.09 (0.07)
Constant	2.99*** (0.16)	3.04*** (0.16)	2.95*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235
Baseline Mean	3.08	3.13	3.03
Baseline Sd	1.32	1.30	1.33

*Note: The outcome, support for the policy statement, ranges from 1 to 5. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment status and interview quality. HCSE in parenthesis. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

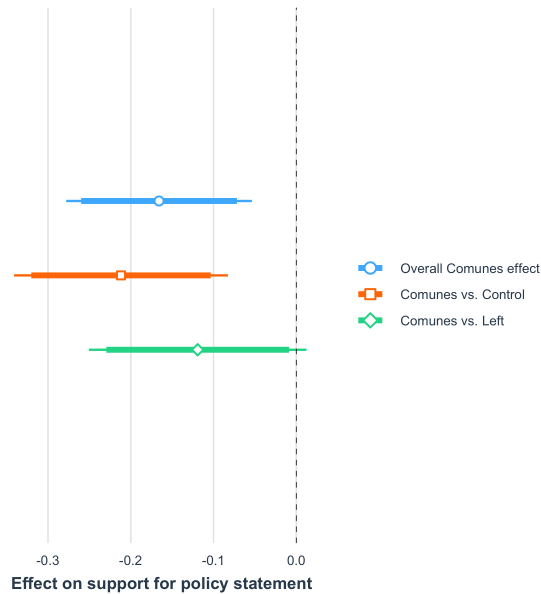


Figure 4: Comunes endorsement effects

to better understand whether this negative association with Comunes comports with the qualitative characterizations of stigmatization associated with violence.

## 5.7 Rebel Control and Conflict Experience

In this section, we examine how the past presence of the guerrilla during the conflict shapes how civilians react to policies endorsed by the rebel party. To conduct this analysis, we ensured that our sample included variation in the level of exposure to the conflict and in particular in the type of wartime FARC presence. Following [Arjona \[2016\]](#)'s approach to measuring wartime order, we asked respondents (prior to the endorsement treatments) to identify the extent to which their conflict experiences resembled two different scenarios, one where FARC presence and control was extensive and another where FARC's presence was more limited. We then constructed an ordinal variable where a value of 2 indicates the most extensive type of FARC presence, 1 indicates limited FARC presence and 0 indicates no FARC presence.

Table 6 shows heterogeneous Comunes endorsement effects by the FARC's wartime presence and the nature of their rebel governance. The Comunes endorsement generates a negative reaction from respondents who did not have any kind of FARC presence or contact during the conflict. Among those that had a limited presence during the conflict, the Comunes endorsement had a smaller negative effect on their support for statements. Finally, this evidence suggests that among those that had the most extensive FARC presence during the conflict, a Comunes endorsement generates *no effect* on support for the policy statement. These findings show that Comunes carries a negative connotation largely among people who did not live in contact with the FARC. Those who lived in places where the FARC had the most established presence, and often fulfilled many of the functions that the Colombian state did not, do not exhibit behaviors consistent with stigmatization of Comunes.

Relatedly, we investigate the extent to which current levels of security drive the negative endorsement effect, given the high rate of violence being perpetrated against former combat-

Table 6: Heterogeneous effect of Comunes endorsement by wartime experience (pooled)

	Support for policy statement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.27*** (0.08)	-0.27*** (0.08)	-0.22*** (0.08)
Wartime experience	0.04 (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)
Ambiguous endorsement (control)			0.09 (0.07)
Comunes x Wartime experience	0.14** (0.07)	0.14** (0.07)	0.14** (0.07)
Constant	3.05*** (0.05)	2.88*** (0.17)	2.84*** (0.17)
Observations	2,250	2,250	2,250
Controls	No	Yes	Yes

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment status and agricultural or ranching-related employment and interview quality. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

ants and Comunes party members specifically. We assess whether these “stigma” effects are stronger among individuals who express security concerns and do not find that respondents who feel more unsafe penalize Comunes more. Table A12 in the appendix shows the heterogeneous effects by security concerns, based on the level of individual sense of (in)security as well as the extent to which they are concerned about the security of the upcoming elections. If anything results suggest the opposite. Respondents who feel the safest are the most punishing of Comunes-endorsed statements. We also note that participants were informed that the survey was anonymous and responded privately, either on their own devices or with enumerator tablets.

## 5.8 Ideological Alignment

In this section, we investigate whether and how respondents’ ideological alignment with Comunes drives civilians’ penalization of Comunes. General distaste towards Comunes is anecdotally strong among supporters of conservative and right-wing parties. Much of the anti-agreement campaigning that took place during the 2014 plebiscite was driven by right-wing candidates and figures such as former president Alvaro Uribe. However, the notion of stigma provided in interviews points towards another source of distaste that is separate from ideological disagreements and among leftists who see themselves as “political victims” that political opponents and governments associated, unwillingly, with the FARC. If our negative Comunes endorsement effects are indeed capturing such stigma, the Comunes effect could be driven both by right-leaning respondents and left-leaning respondents.

To assess these possibilities, we measure ideology using a self-reported measure, on a scale from 0-10. We then subset individuals into five categories: extreme left, center left, center, center right, and extreme right. In addition, we collected information on respondents’ favorite candidates running in the primaries for the upcoming presidential election. Finally, we asked a question to measure whether respondents felt represented by elected officials. Table 7 shows the Comunes endorsement effect by left-leaning respondents: those with the

most ideological proximity to the Comunes party. Across measures, left-leaning respondents are generally more supportive of the policy statements provided. This is expected because all of the policy statements are left-leaning. However, people who identify as left-wing substantially decrease their support for the policy statements when they are endorsed by Comunes. Leftist respondents penalize statements up to a third of a point on a 1-5 scale. This effect seems to be particularly driven by the most leftist respondents, those closest to Comunes. As Table 8 shows this is not the case among right-identifying respondents.

Table 7: Heterogeneity by respondent ideological proximity to Comunes (leftist ideology)

	Support for policy statement				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Comunes endorsement	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.15** (0.06)	-0.10 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.08)
Left (extreme + center)	0.69*** (0.07)				
Extreme left		0.76*** (0.09)			
Center left			0.43*** (0.09)		
Petro favorite				0.73*** (0.07)	
Feels represented					0.16*** (0.04)
Comunes x Left (extreme + center)	-0.28** (0.13)				
Comunes x Extreme left		-0.28* (0.17)			
Comunes x Center left			-0.19 (0.16)		
Comunes x Petro favorite				-0.21* (0.12)	
Comunes x Represented					-0.14** (0.07)
Constant	2.75*** (0.16)	2.86*** (0.16)	2.91*** (0.16)	2.73*** (0.16)	2.89*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

This heterogeneity is consistent with the most left-leaning respondents viewing the Co-

Comunes party as political competition. These types of respondents may also have a particular disdain for Comunes because of the political costs they endured during the conflict. Being associated with the FARC implied significant costs for leftist individuals who did not endorse the guerrilla, and even translated to persecution by the Colombian state in a form of “guilt by ideological association”. Many far-left civilians did not endorse the FARC’s use of violence but paid a high price for sharing a similar platform to an armed group. Thus these individuals may be particularly resentful towards Comunes.

These results suggest that some of the firmest opposition, and even stigma, may come from those who would otherwise be Comunes’ natural allies or even constituents. This is especially concerning for the Comunes party given the current context in Colombia, where parties with leftist platforms have considerable popular support and more power than ever in modern history. This is not a context where political competition from Comunes necessarily poses a serious threat to other leftist parties. However, the potential for Comunes to establish itself electorally is limited by such strong negative reactions among other leftists.

## 5.9 Familiarity with Comunes

In this section, we present respondents’ expressed support and familiarity with Comunes, and we describe the contrast and the relationship between our measure of “stigma” and respondents’ expressed attitudes and familiarity with Comunes. The evidence in this section also highlights how the penalization of Comunes is a difficult barrier for the party to overcome.

We begin by presenting a description of respondents’ explicitly expressed attitudes towards Comunes and several other political parties, using conventional questions of support (i.e. *What is your opinion of each of these political parties? Very bad, Bad, Neither good nor bad, Good, Very good, Don’t know*). We find that when asked explicitly about Comunes, respondents do not express particularly high dislike as compared to their reactions to other parties. Figure 5 shows a comparison of respondent attitudes towards six different parties including Comunes. The percentage of respondents expressing very negative overt opinions

Table 8: Heterogeneous effects by right-identifying respondents

	Support for policy statement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.20*** (0.06)
Right (extreme and center)	-0.34*** (0.08)		
Extreme Right		-0.25** (0.10)	
Center Right			-0.31*** (0.10)
Comunes x Right	0.16 (0.13)		
Comunes x Extreme Right		0.06 (0.17)	
Comunes x Center Right			0.21 (0.17)
Constant	3.05*** (0.16)	3.02*** (0.16)	3.01*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

towards Comunes (17.87%) is on par with other parties such as Cambio Radical and Colombia Humana. Similarly, the percentage of respondents who are indifferent towards Comunes is relatively similar to that of the other parties in the survey (31.76%) but the percentage of respondents with very positive opinions towards Comunes is the lowest of all parties (1.74% of respondents). However, although Comunes is not singled out in terms of voters' negative

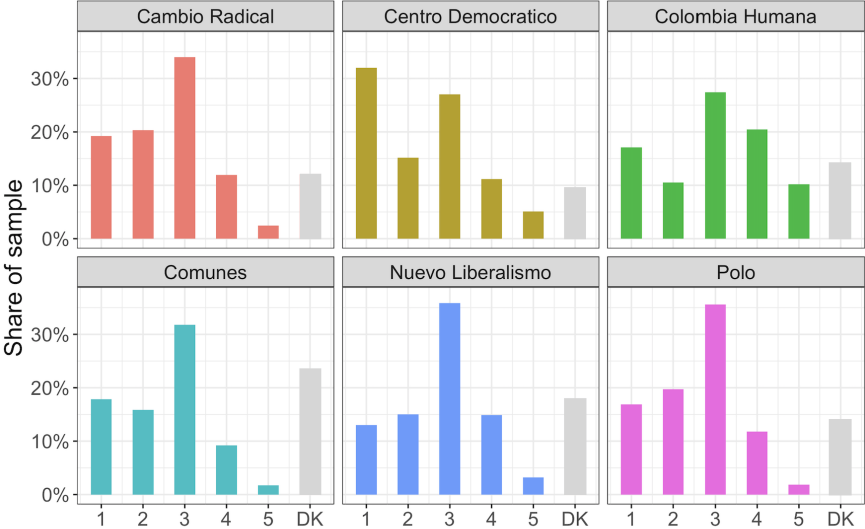


Figure 5: Attitudes towards political parties

attitudes, Figure 5 also shows that respondents are more hesitant to express attitudes towards Comunes (more “don’t know” responses). Recall that when asked about their explicit attitudes towards Comunes, respondents had not yet been reminded of the connection between FARC and Comunes. This allowed us to gauge familiarity with Comunes, separate from familiarity with the former FARC guerrilla which is widely known. We also assessed familiarity and engagement with Comunes by asking respondents to indicate how often they had seen campaigning from each of the parties, and also asked them to identify the slogan of each party from a list of potential responses. Figure 6, shows that Comunes campaign exposure and slogan recall is substantially lower compared to other parties. These indicators are consistent with more than half (54%) of respondents reporting that they did not know of the Comunes party before participating in the survey.

These data suggest that the former FARC’s efforts to raise awareness about their electoral

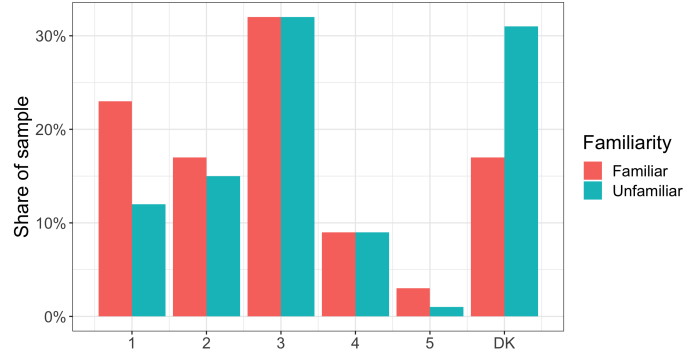


Figure 6: Attitudes towards Comunes by prior familiarity with Comunes

party have not been particularly successful. Thus, while we have evidence that a Comunes endorsement reduces policy support (after respondents were informed of the link between Comunes and FARC), one conclusion from the lack of familiarity with Comunes may be that, the Comunes endorsement effect also reflects this supply-side problem. It is possible that skepticism toward the unknown rather than stigma, produces the Comunes endorsement penalty we document. If so, the argument goes, then perhaps Comunes could improve its electoral fortunes by investing in more and better campaigning. The following evidence shows that this is not the case.

First, Figure 6 shows that attitudes towards Comunes are *clearly worse* among those that reported being familiar with Comunes before the survey. Distaste for Comunes among familiar respondents is comparable to distaste towards the most right-wing party in Colombia, Centro Democrático. This is stark considering that survey respondents are located in municipalities where Comunes fielded candidates—i.e., presumably the places that are the most favorable to Comunes.

Second, Table A13 shows that respondents who were familiar with Comunes before the survey have stronger negative reactions to the Comunes endorsement compared to respondents who did not know Comunes. The Comunes endorsement effect is negative albeit much smaller among respondents who did not know Comunes before the survey. This indicates that respondents are not more likely to penalize a statement associated with the Comunes party because they are unfamiliar with Comunes.

Finally, even if Comunes were to target their campaigns to increase awareness of the party, our evidence of heterogeneous endorsement effects by ideology suggests limits to this strategy. Colombians on the left are the target constituency of the party, but as Table 7 shows, they are also the most penalizing towards Comunes such that outreach towards this constituency is likely ineffective if not counterproductive. In sum, our findings suggest that increased outreach is unlikely to have done much for Comunes.

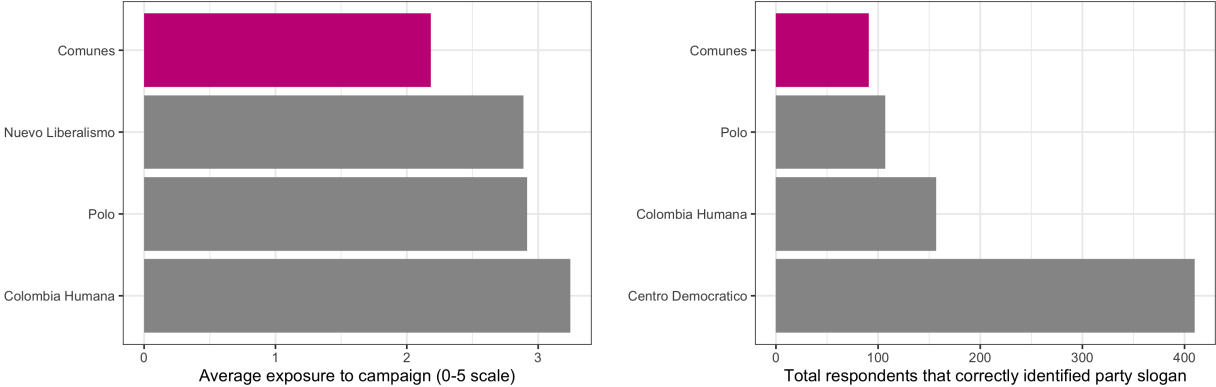


Figure 7: Campaigning

## 6 Conclusion

The phenomenon of political parties originating in rebel groups is widespread and has grown significantly in recent years. Political concessions and the participation of rebel parties are often fundamental to signing peace agreements and preventing future conflicts.

In this project, we study some of the barriers that can affect the electoral performance of these organizations. In particular, we offer evidence that stigma may inhibit support for these parties because of their violent origins, even by people who may support their cause. We find that when statements are endorsed by the Comunes party, which emerged from the former FARC guerrilla in Colombia, respondents tend to decrease support for said statements. This negative Comunes endorsement effect exists when comparing it with endorsements from other leftist parties.

Years of exposure to FARC violence as well as anti-guerrilla messaging from the government and other oppositions produced the Comunes penalty that our endorsement experiment captures and that Comunes cadres' described as stigma. This seems to explain at least in part why FARC's successor party, Comunes, has achieved so little through their campaigning to reach voters, much less to persuade them to view the party positively. One major implication of our evidence is that the Comunes penalty seriously limits the extent to which Comunes can invest in a strategy of increasing familiarity among potential constituents. The Comunes effect is strongest among individuals who identify as left-leaning, particularly far-left-leaning. These are the individuals who are most ideologically aligned with Comunes, but who also suffered politically during the conflict precisely because of their ideological proximity to FARC and being treated as guilty by ideological association.

These findings also speak to our understanding of the legacies of conflict. Scholars have focused intently on the electoral legacies of victimization and rebel governance, yet we find no evidence that stigma against Comunes is stronger in areas where FARC had a deeper presence during the conflict and instead find that the strongest repudiation of Comunes was in areas that had no FARC presence during the conflict. However, the legacies of *political*

victimization do appear to carry considerable weight. Leftists endured years of punishment for their ideological proximity to the FARC. As a result, it appears as though leftists engage in political retribution towards the FARC's successor party.

Future studies should explore other factors that affect tolerance, acceptance, and support for parties with origins in violent groups. For example, it would be important to compare the results from Colombia to other contexts regarding relations between ex-rebel parties and other ideologically proximate parties. Suggestive evidence from our project indicates that an important barrier to rebel parties lies among individuals who share ideological platforms, but who did not share former rebel groups' willingness to use violence to advance those ideals.

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# Appendix Tables & Figures for “Understanding the Political Stigmatization of Rebel Parties”

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# A Elections: Mayor and Local Council

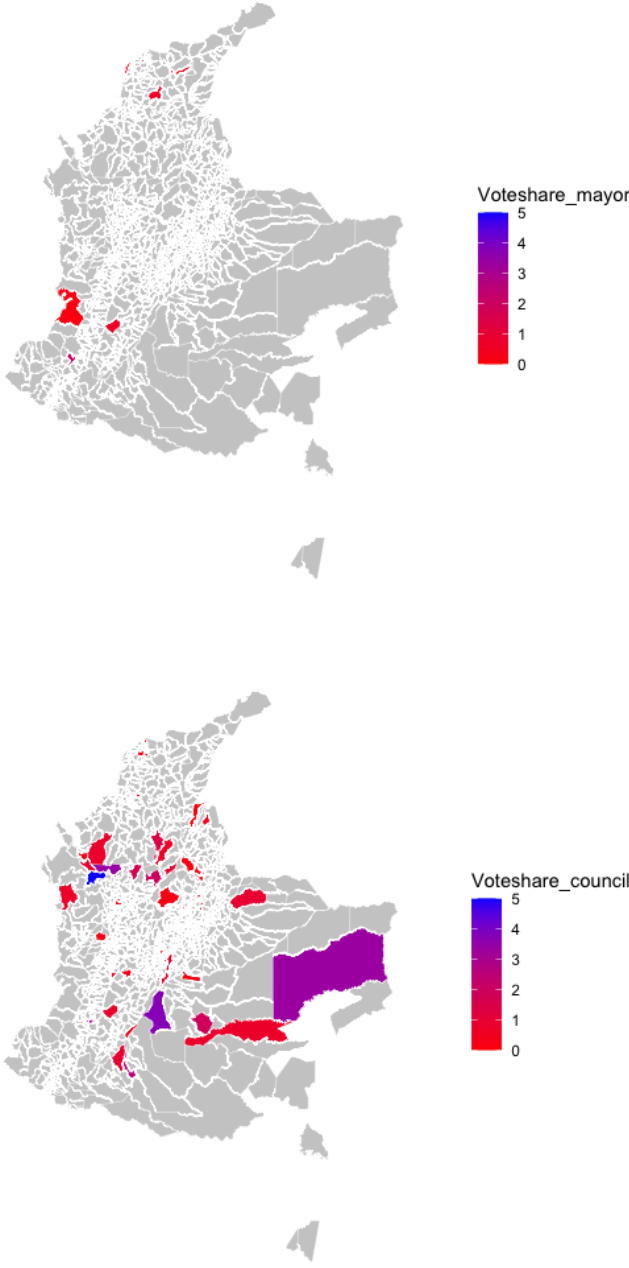


Figure A 1: Vote share for mayoral candidates (above) and for local council candidates (below)

# B Farc-EP Presence and Violence

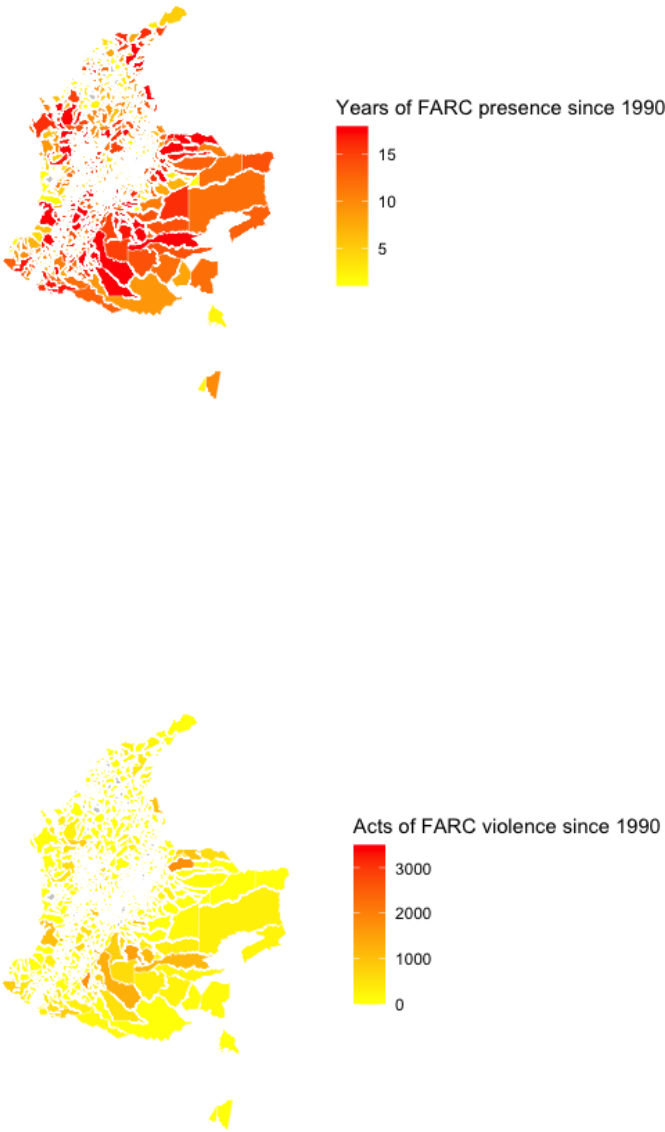


Figure A 2: FARC presence and violence since 1990

## C Treatment Statements

### The anti-capitalism statement

[Some people are / some leftist movements and parties are/ the Comunes party is] anti-capitalist and propose that the Colombian economy should be restructured away from the capitalist system, towards a different economic system that prioritizes social justice, broad economic redistribution and state intervention.

### The healthcare statement

[A senator / A senator from a leftist party/ Jairo Cala, a senator from the Comunes party] made the following statement “The Colombian healthcare model is a consequence of the economic model which has made human rights into businesses, nearly 80% of the hospital system in Colombia is in crisis and coverage in rural areas is inexistent.”

### The anti-fracking statement

Recently, [there was a proposed bill / some leftist parties supported a bill/ the Comunes party supported a bill] that seeks to limit the use of fracking to exploit oil fields in Colombia. The proposal says that the use of fracking should be limited to minimize social and environmental impacts in places like Cesar and La Guaira and to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

## D Estimates by Policies

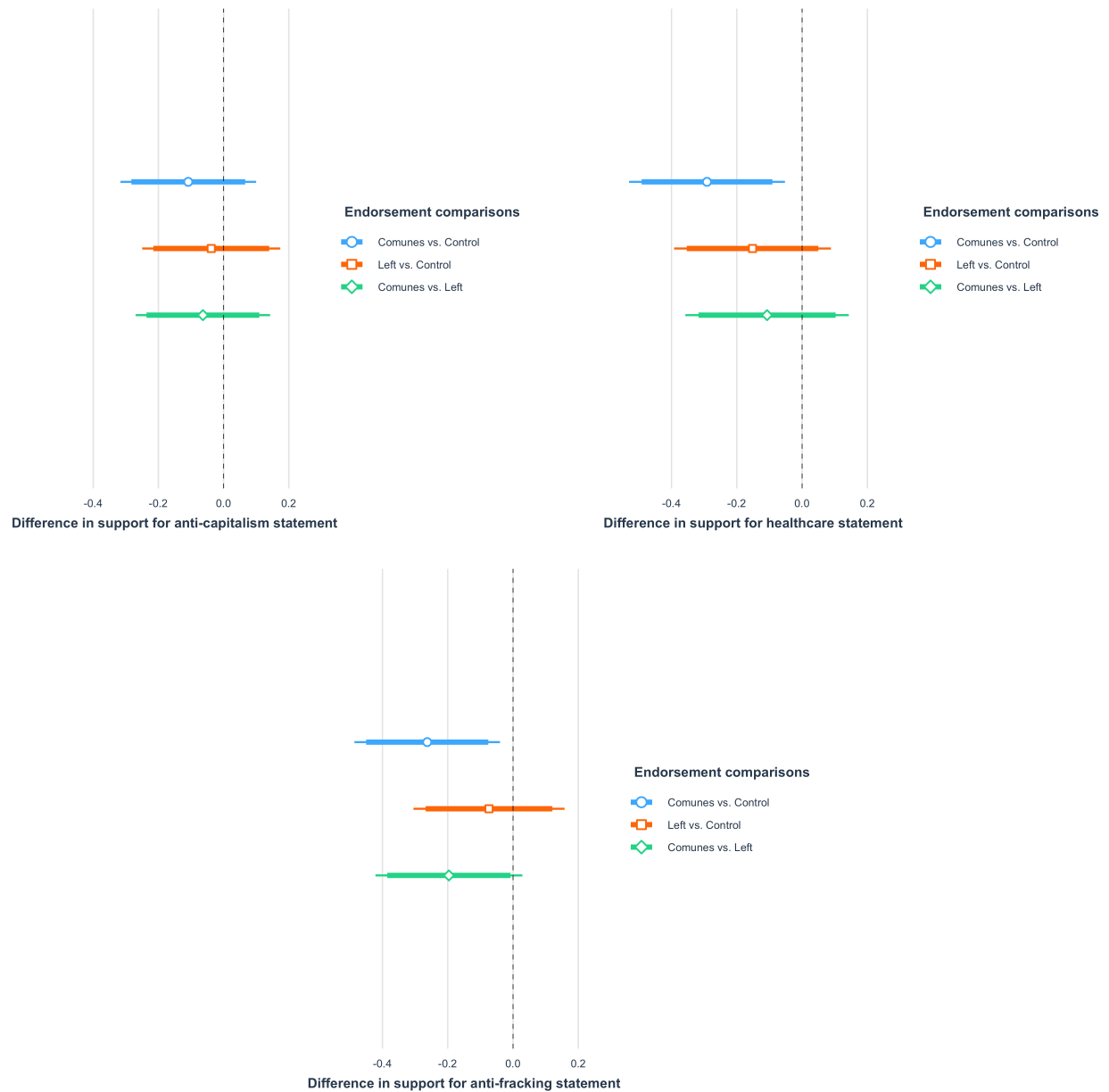


Figure A 3: Estimates of endorsement effects per outcome

Table 9 shows the effect of the Comunes endorsement with respect to the control group for each of the three policies. We find that the support for the three policies is lower under the former guerilla endorsement. The second test we carry out in our experiment is then whether we can distinguish the impact of Comunes endorsement from that of leftist organizations

Table A 1: Comunes condition vs. Control condition

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.27** (0.11)	-0.26** (0.11)
Constant	2.74*** (0.08)	3.17*** (0.31)	3.35*** (0.08)	2.99*** (0.30)	3.34*** (0.08)	3.04*** (0.33)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	535	535	426	426	534	534
Baseline Range	(1,5)	(1,5)	(1,5)	(1,5)	(1,5)	(1,5)

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment status and agricultural or ranching-related employment and interview quality. HCSE in parenthesis. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 2: Comunes condition vs. Leftist condition

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.21* (0.12)	-0.20* (0.11)
Constant	2.70*** (0.07)	2.91*** (0.31)	3.15*** (0.09)	2.94*** (0.31)	3.28*** (0.09)	3.09*** (0.32)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	532	532	423	423	530	530
Baseline Range	(1,5)		(1,5)		(1,5)	

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment status and agricultural or ranching-related employment and interview quality. HCSE in parenthesis. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 3: Leftist condition vs. Control condition

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Leftist endorsement	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.20 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.12)	-0.07 (0.12)
Constant	2.74*** (0.08)	3.31*** (0.29)	3.35*** (0.08)	2.82*** (0.33)	3.34*** (0.08)	3.31*** (0.34)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	537	537	421	421	532	532

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment status and agricultural or ranching-related employment and interview quality. HCSE in parenthesis. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

or recognized leftist individuals. Table 11 shows the results of the analysis in which the treatment group is composed of participants who saw the Comunes endorsement and the control group is participants that saw the left-wing endorsement. The results show that, on average, support for each of the policies and statements is lower when it is endorsed by Comunes than when the left endorses it. The effects are small, as expected, but are strikingly significant in some specifications. In particular, support for the anti-capitalist establishment and support for anti-fracking have the most significant effects.

Table 3 shows the impact of left wing endorsement for each policy. In this case, the treatment is the support by a leftist organization or individual leftist senator and the outcome is the level of support for the policy. These results are interesting. The effect that the endorsement of the left-wing parties is primarily negative but not very significant and relatively small. If we interpret these results in the light of Table 9, the effect of Comunes and the left is more clear when referring to criticism of the health system.

## E Results by Different Policies

Table A 4: Heterogeneous effects by wartime experience (Comunes vs. Leftist condition)

	Support for anti-capitalism (1)	Support for healthcare critique (2)	Support for anti-fracking bill (3)
Comunes	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.20* (0.11)
Communal experience of wartime	0.25** (0.10)	0.06 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.11)
Comunes x Wartime experience	-0.07 (0.13)	0.12 (0.16)	0.33** (0.15)
Constant	2.82*** (0.31)	2.90*** (0.32)	3.03*** (0.32)
Observations	532	423	530

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. The measure of individual wartime experience is mean centered. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 5: Heterogeneous effects by ideology (Comunes vs. Left)

	Support for anti-capitalism (1)	Support for healthcare critique (2)	Support for anti-fracking bill (3)
Comunes	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.18 (0.11)
Extreme Left	1.02*** (0.19)	0.90*** (0.23)	0.56** (0.25)
Comunes x Extreme Left	-0.61** (0.30)	-0.56 (0.35)	0.06 (0.36)
Constant	2.85*** (0.30)	2.98*** (0.31)	3.04*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 6: Heterogeneous effects by personal safety (Comunes vs. Left)

	Support for anti-capitalism (1)	Support for healthcare critique (2)	Support for anti-fracking bill (3)
Comunes	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.20* (0.11)
Personal Safety	0.10 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.10)
Comunes x Personal Safety	0.10 (0.11)	0.18 (0.14)	0.27** (0.13)
Constant	2.92*** (0.30)	2.91*** (0.31)	3.11*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. The measure of individual feeling of general personal safety is mean centered.*  
\*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

Table A 7: Heterogeneous effects by election security (Comunes vs. Left)

	Support for anti-capitalism (1)	Support for healthcare critique (2)	Support for anti-fracking bill (3)
Comunes	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.19* (0.11)
Election Security	-0.06 (0.25)	-0.34 (0.27)	-0.70*** (0.24)
Comunes x Election Security	-0.18 (0.34)	0.69* (0.38)	0.22 (0.31)
Constant	2.91*** (0.31)	2.93*** (0.31)	3.10*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. The measure of individual feeling of election security is mean centered.* \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01

## F Analysis Second Wave Subsample

The following section presents consistent estimates excluding respondents from the first wave.

Table A 8: Effect of Comunes and Left endorsement on support (pooled outcomes)

	Support for policy statement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.17*** (0.06)	
Left endorsement	-0.08 (0.07)		0.02 (0.06)
Constant	3.02*** (0.16)	2.98*** (0.15)	2.92*** (0.15)
Observations	1,914	1,914	1,914

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. HCSE in parenthesis. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 9: Comunes condition vs. Control condition

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.12)
Constant	2.69*** (0.08)	3.28*** (0.31)	3.34*** (0.08)	2.96*** (0.30)	3.29*** (0.09)	2.86*** (0.32)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	429	429	429	429	431	431

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. Specifications with clustered standard errors cluster at the individual level. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 10: Leftist condition vs. Control condition (first wave)

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Leftist endorsement	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.04 (0.12)	-0.20 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)
Constant	2.69*** (0.08)	3.25*** (0.30)	3.34*** (0.08)	2.79*** (0.33)	3.29*** (0.09)	3.07*** (0.34)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	427	427	424	424	428	428

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. Specifications with clustered standard errors cluster at the individual level. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

Table A 11: Comunes condition vs. Leftist condition

	Support for anti-capitalism		Support for healthcare critique		Support for anti-fracking bill	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.13)
Constant	2.72*** (0.08)	3.15*** (0.31)	3.15*** (0.09)	2.90*** (0.31)	3.19*** (0.09)	2.77*** (0.33)
Controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Observations	424	424	426	426	425	425

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. Specifications with clustered standard errors cluster at the individual level. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

## G Alternative Explanations

### G.0.1 Fear of association

Table A 12: Heterogeneous effects by security (pooled analysis)

	Support for policy statement			
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Comunes endorsement	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)	-0.16*** (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)
Ambiguous endorsement (control)		0.09 (0.07)		0.09 (0.07)
Personal insecurity	0.07* (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)		
Election security			-0.29*** (0.10)	-0.29*** (0.10)
Comunes x Personal insecurity	0.14** (0.06)	0.13** (0.06)		
Comunes x Election security			0.11 (0.17)	0.11 (0.17)
Constant	2.99*** (0.16)	2.95*** (0.16)	3.01*** (0.16)	2.97*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235

*Note: All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. HCSE in parentheses. Personal safety is a measure of 0-3 where 0 indicates respondents have not felt in danger in the past month, where 3 indicates respondents have felt in danger nearly every day in the past month. Election security is an indicator for whether, in an open question, respondents noted that the security of the election was one a main concern. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

## G.0.2 Familiarity with Comunes

Table A 13: Heterogeneous effects by familiarity with Comunes

	Support for policy statement		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)
Prior familiarity with Comunes	0.19*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.07)
Ambiguous endorsement (control)		0.09 (0.07)	
Left endorsement			-0.09 (0.07)
Comunes x Familiarity	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.20* (0.11)
Constant	2.93*** (0.16)	2.88*** (0.17)	2.98*** (0.17)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235

*Note: Heteroskedasticity robust standard errors in parenthesis. All specifications include controls for respondent race, gender, education, employment and interview quality. \*p<0.1; \*\*p<0.05; \*\*\*p<0.01*

## H Ethical considerations

This study adheres to the APSA Principles and Guidance on Research Involving Human Subjects. The interviews and the experimental component of the study were reviewed and independently approved by an IRB. We also discussed the design and study with local experts working in Colombia. We prioritized ensuring that potential participants in the activities agreed with the motivation and methodologies of the project, which is why we included these organizations in the discussion before starting the activities. Our conflict questions were consulted with different organizations (e.g., experts on trauma and conflict from the Colombian Reincorporation and Normalization Office (ARN), members of different political parties, and Colombian academics working on violence) to ensure they followed standard protocol and would not harm the participants. We were explicit about the voluntary and confidential nature of the study, so participants did not feel obligated to respond to any question they did not want to. We also made it clear that each person would only answer the questions they wanted and felt comfortable with to avoid the possibility of re-traumatization. We clarified that we were not affiliated with any political party, to ensure participants understood our neutral position during the interviews.

We declare no ethical problems or conflicts of interest in this research.

Participation in both the interviews and survey study was completely voluntary. We anonymized participants and replaced names and/or identification with general categories such as 'former combatant' or 'party leader.' For more recruitment information, see the section on design in the document and the appendix. We used a standard consent form recommended and approved by the IRB at one of our universities before any activity occurred. We have written and in some occasions oral consent. We also did not record the interviews because that may create anxiety. There was no deception used in this study. We did not anticipate any risk of harm to participants, and none were reported.

# I Pre-registered Hypotheses and Tests

The following section includes the pre-registered hypotheses and tests.

Registration Information:  
From strong wartime collaborators to weak  
post-conflict electorate? Electoral support for  
FARC in Colombia

(anonymized)

**Is this Registration Prospective or Retrospective?**

Registration prior to researcher analysis of outcome data

**Is this an experimental study? — With “experimental” defined as random assignment of units to treatment and control conditions.**

Yes

**Date of start of study — Understood as first date of treatment assignment or equivalent for observational study**

23/02/2022

**Background and Explanation of Rationale**

In this project, we study the electoral trajectory of the party that emerged from the Colombian rebel group FARC, called Comunes. In particular, we explore the reasons why the political party has performed so poorly in the electoral area, even in places where they had territorial control during the conflict. We want to explore whether

the reasons why they do not have good electoral results are due to their ideological position or for other reasons related to stigma, the presence of other political parties, or poor electoral campaigns.

**What are the hypotheses to be tested/quantities of interest to be estimated?**

The electoral support of the FARC does not depend on its ideological positions, so the proposals that are accompanied by Comunes party endorsement will receive less support on average than the same proposals without the endorsement. Additionally, we will explore the following list of explanations of our potential results:

- **H1:** The stigma associated with FARC violent history has been a major political obstacle for them and has pushed away potential supporters who share ideological and political interests with them.
- **H2:** Civilians who relied on FARC to deliver public goods in these places feel abandoned by their demobilization and punish them FARC electorally.
- **H3:** FARC party receives little support because they are politically redundant and crowded out by other parties representing similar platforms.
- **H4:** It is possible that their limited support is related to bad campaigning so that civilians are not familiar with Comunes' political platform.
- **H5:** They are too ideologically extreme and some of their platforms may be consistent with that of other leftist parties.

**How will these hypotheses be tested?**

Given that the objective is to measure attitudes towards the FARC, we use an endorsement experiment by asking respondents to rate their support for a policy randomizing the endorsement by the Comunes party. We plan to implement the study in the field and online. The selection of places to do the field survey is based on previous FARC territorial control and municipal exposure to violence during the conflict. We also plan on utilizing sub-municipal electoral data to evaluate the extent to which our intuitions regarding the effect (or lackthereof) of wartime order are on perceptions of the Comunes party.

**Was a power analysis conducted prior to data collection?**

N/A

**Has this research received Institutional Review Board (IRB) or ethics committee approval?**

Yes

**IRB Number**

IRB-FY2021-5753

**Date of IRB Approval**

12/02/2022

**Will the intervention be implemented by the researcher or a third party?**

Third party

**Third party implementer information**

IPSOS and Offerwise

**Did any of the research team receive remuneration from the implementing agency for taking part in this research?**

No

**If relevant, is there an advance agreement with the implementation group that all results can be published?**

Yes

## **J Interviews**

In what follows, first we describe sample of participants including the process of recruitment and general characteristics of participants. Then we describe how interviews were structured followed by the approach taken to analyze the interviews. The interview protocol prioritized the well-being and safety of the participants throughout the project and we obtained the approval from the NYU IRB (IRB-FY2022-6153).

### **J.1 Recruitment and participation**

During Spring 2022, we interviewed 21 people regarding the political participation of the Comunes party. We contacted Comunes party members that currently hold public office through their publicly available emails, and relied on existing relationships with Colombian academics and individuals involved in the reintegration of FARC ex-combatants as well as officials who participated in the peace negotiations. After establishing initial contacts, we relied on the snowball sampling technique to obtain other interviews. Some interviews took place in person in Bogotá and Medellín, while others were interviewed over Zoom, Whatsapp and over the phone. Doing so allowed us to gauge the perspectives of people who were in different regions of Colombia including Cali, Villavicencio and Iconozo.

Eleven of the interviewees were Comunes party members 7 of which are ex-combatants, 2 were clandestine urban militants and 2 were civilians who were not previously associated with FARC. Among the party members, one is party leader with a seat in Congress, another is a former council candidate, another a formal member of the national party structure and another is a security team member. The party members include a party leader seated in Congress, a former local council candidate, members of the national party structure and a security team member. Among the non-Comunes party members, 3 were FARC clandestine militants, 4 participants of the agreement negotiation, 2 individuals involved in ex-combatant reintegration and 1 academic expert. Nine of the interviewees were women.

**Semi-structured interview questions**  
(English translation)

Thank you very much for your time and your interest in talking with me. Before starting I would just like to clarify with you that this work is part of my thesis, the content of this interview would not be used for any type of publication in news media or social networks, without your approval. This interview will also remain anonymous.

I want to understand the conditions under which this type of efforts of political integration, such as the one being carried out by the Comunes Party, are viable and stable.

**1. If you like, we can start at the moment when the definition of the party creation:**

**1a.** Why the creation of the party? In theory was it possible to promote the political participation of *fariano* militants without the creation of the party since there are other parties and politicians with similar platforms and ideologically close to the FARC or not?

**1b.** On the FARC side, did everyone agree to creation of the party and was there consensus around the importance of political participation? What were the arguments for and against?

**1c.** Was the existence of other parties that represent similar platforms considered? I'm thinking of Colombia Humana, the Communist Party, maybe Polo, parties like MAIS and other movements that represent populations indigenous and now afro parties.

**1d.** Before participating in the first election, how did you imagine the trajectory of the party. What was the expectation of the Comunes party?

**1e.** Was it thought that the party was going to be one with a long-term trajectory?

**1f.** What would achieving those objectives depend on?

**1g.** At that time, what population was thought was going to be the party's main source of support? Did the party count on places where the FARC took care of the welfare of the people?

**2. Moving on to the performance of the party so far:**

**2a.** Did the results of the 2019 regionals meet your expectations? Was anything surprising? Were there regions where they had more or less support than they expected? How about in areas where the FARC had previously provided goods and services?

**2b.** Do you believe that the continuity of the party depends on a good electoral performance in the next elections?

**2c.** How important is it to keep those seats assigned by the peace agreement? Does the party continue to exist without them?

### **3. Moving to today**

**3a.** Why has the Commons party participated in every election since its creation?

**3b.** What conditions have been important for the party to have been able to participate in all the elections that have taken place in the last 5 years? I mean conditions external, such as institutions, other political parties, etc. as well internal conditions, incentives, protections, etc.

**3c.** Five years later, have some of the party's objectives changed since its founding?

**3d.** What have been the greatest achievements of the Comunes party in the last 5 years?

**3e.** What have been the biggest challenges?

### **4. Finally, I would like to talk a little about those former members of the FARC-EP that today were not linked to the Comunes party:**

**4a.** Who stays in the Comunes party and who goes to other parties, such as for example, the mayor of Turbaco - the FARC singer - who won as a candidate for Colombia Humana-UP? Why?

**4b.** In your opinion, is there a link between the performance of the party and the fulfillment of its objectives, and the decision of some to be left out of the peace process and not to continue with the path of peace?

## **J.2 Analytical approach**

First, per IRB requirements, we removed any identifiers of the interviewee or of other people that the interviewee may have mentioned, and also removed any identifying characteristics from these notes including age, gender, location, and other characteristics of the person's life that may make them easily identifiable. All interviewees were assigned a number that is not indicative of the order in which these interviews were conducted nor any identifying feature of the interviewee. Finally interview notes were translated to English, and responses to each of the questions were cataloged into topics or types of answers in order to facilitate the process of identifying themes across respondent answers.

## K Tables of Results for Models with all Control Variables

Table A 14: Comunes endorsement effect on policy support (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.12* (0.07)
Left endorsement		-0.09 (0.07)	
Control			0.09 (0.07)
Gender	0.003 (0.06)	0.004 (0.06)	0.004 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.29*** (0.08)	0.29*** (0.08)	0.29*** (0.08)
Wave	0.04 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)
Response quality	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)
White	-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)
Afro	-0.26** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.13)
Schooling	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Unemployed	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)
Age	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	2.99*** (0.16)	3.04*** (0.16)	2.95*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235

Table A 15: Heterogeneous effect of Comunes endorsement by wartime experience (pooled)  
(with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.27*** (0.08)	-0.27*** (0.08)	-0.22*** (0.08)
Wartime Order	0.04 (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)	0.07 (0.04)
Control			0.09 (0.07)
Comunes x Wartime Order	0.14** (0.07)	0.14** (0.07)	0.14** (0.07)
Gender		-0.01 (0.06)	-0.005 (0.06)
Survey mode		0.30*** (0.08)	0.30*** (0.08)
Wave		0.08 (0.08)	0.07 (0.08)
Response quality		0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)
White		-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)
Afro		-0.28** (0.13)	-0.28** (0.13)
Schooling		0.03* (0.02)	0.03* (0.02)
Unemployed		0.003 (0.06)	0.0003 (0.06)
Age		-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	3.05*** (0.05)	2.88*** (0.17)	2.84*** (0.17)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235

Table A 16: Heterogeneous effects by ideology (pooled) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Comunes endorsement	-0.11 (0.07)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.15** (0.06)	-0.10 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.08)
Ideology Left	0.69*** (0.07)				
Comunes x Left	-0.28** (0.13)				
Extreme Left		0.76*** (0.09)			
Comunes x Extreme Left		-0.28* (0.17)			
Center Left			0.43*** (0.09)		
Comunes x Center Left			-0.19 (0.16)		
Petro favorite				0.73*** (0.07)	
Comunes x Petro				-0.21* (0.12)	
Represented					0.16*** (0.04)
Comunes x Represented					-0.14** (0.07)
Gender	0.003 (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)	-0.0004 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	0.01 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.29*** (0.08)	0.28*** (0.08)	0.30*** (0.08)	0.29*** (0.08)	0.28*** (0.08)
Wave	0.08 (0.08)	0.06 (0.08)	0.05 (0.08)	0.06 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)
Response quality	0.11** (0.05)	0.11** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.14*** (0.05)
White	-0.09 (0.06)	-0.11* (0.06)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.12** (0.06)	-0.15** (0.06)
Afro	-0.22* (0.13)	-0.26** (0.13)	-0.24* (0.13)	-0.30** (0.12)	-0.25* (0.13)
Schooling	0.03* (0.02)	0.03* (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Unemployed	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.03 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)
Age	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	2.75*** (0.16)	2.86*** (0.16)	2.91*** (0.16)	2.73*** (0.16)	2.89*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235

Table A 17: Heterogeneous effects by ideology (pooled) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes Endorsement	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.20*** (0.06)
Ideology Right	-0.34*** (0.08)		
Comunes x Right	0.16 (0.13)		
Ideology Extreme Right		-0.25** (0.10)	
Comunes x Extreme Right		0.06 (0.17)	
Ideology Center Right			-0.31*** (0.10)
Comunes x Center Right			0.21 (0.17)
Gender	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.001 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.28*** (0.08)	0.29*** (0.08)	0.28*** (0.08)
Wave	0.05 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)
Response quality	0.13** (0.05)	0.11** (0.05)	0.14*** (0.05)
White	-0.12** (0.06)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.15** (0.06)
Afro	-0.25* (0.13)	-0.26** (0.13)	-0.26** (0.13)
Schooling	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03* (0.02)
Unemployed	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)
Age	-0.01** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	3.05*** (0.16)	3.02*** (0.16)	3.01*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235

Table A 18: Comunes condition vs. Control condition (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.11 (0.10)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.27** (0.11)	-0.26** (0.11)
Gender		-0.04 (0.11)		0.12 (0.13)		-0.05 (0.12)
Survey mode		0.06 (0.16)		0.39** (0.17)		0.37** (0.17)
Wave		-0.20 (0.14)				-0.02 (0.15)
Response quality		0.14 (0.12)		0.13 (0.10)		0.33** (0.15)
White		0.02 (0.11)		-0.22* (0.13)		-0.18 (0.12)
Afro		0.01 (0.23)		-0.62** (0.30)		-0.12 (0.29)
Schooling		-0.02 (0.03)		0.06 (0.04)		0.07* (0.04)
Unemployed		0.06 (0.13)		-0.15 (0.14)		0.10 (0.13)
Age		-0.01 (0.005)		-0.004 (0.01)		-0.01 (0.005)
Constant	2.74*** (0.08)	3.17*** (0.31)	3.35*** (0.08)	2.99*** (0.30)	3.34*** (0.08)	3.04*** (0.33)
Observations	535	535	426	426	534	534

Table A 19: Comunes condition vs. Leftist condition (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.06 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.21* (0.12)	-0.20* (0.11)
Gender		0.09 (0.11)		0.08 (0.14)		0.03 (0.12)
Survey mode		0.05 (0.16)		0.11 (0.18)		0.53*** (0.17)
Wave		-0.02 (0.14)				-0.08 (0.15)
Response quality		-0.01 (0.08)		0.17 (0.15)		0.16* (0.09)
White		-0.11 (0.11)		-0.31** (0.14)		-0.13 (0.12)
Afro		-0.27 (0.25)		-0.46 (0.31)		-0.01 (0.31)
Schooling		-0.02 (0.03)		0.09** (0.04)		0.05 (0.04)
Unemployed		-0.04 (0.13)		-0.05 (0.15)		0.09 (0.13)
Age		-0.002 (0.005)		-0.01 (0.01)		-0.01** (0.01)
Constant	2.70*** (0.07)	2.91*** (0.31)	3.15*** (0.09)	2.94*** (0.31)	3.28*** (0.09)	3.09*** (0.32)
Observations	532	532	423	423	530	530

Table A 20: Leftist condition vs. Control condition (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Left endorsement	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.04 (0.11)	-0.20 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.06 (0.12)	-0.07 (0.12)
Gender		-0.02 (0.11)		-0.05 (0.12)		-0.05 (0.12)
Survey mode		0.20 (0.15)		0.17 (0.17)		0.53*** (0.17)
Wave		0.02 (0.14)				-0.05 (0.16)
Response quality		-0.01 (0.08)		0.13 (0.09)		0.20** (0.10)
White		0.003 (0.12)		-0.31** (0.13)		-0.18 (0.13)
Afro		-0.24 (0.21)		-0.46* (0.28)		-0.25 (0.28)
Schooling		-0.04 (0.03)		0.11*** (0.04)		0.03 (0.04)
Unemployed		-0.09 (0.12)		-0.12 (0.14)		-0.05 (0.13)
Age		-0.01*** (0.005)		-0.001 (0.01)		-0.01* (0.01)
Constant	2.74*** (0.08)	3.31*** (0.29)	3.35*** (0.08)	2.82*** (0.33)	3.34*** (0.08)	3.31*** (0.34)
Observations	537	537	421	421	532	532

Table A 21: Heterogeneous effects by wartime order (Comunes vs. Leftist condition) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.20* (0.11)
Wartime Order	0.25** (0.10)	0.06 (0.12)	-0.05 (0.11)
Comunes x Wartime Order	-0.07 (0.13)	0.12 (0.16)	0.33** (0.15)
Gender	0.07 (0.11)	0.08 (0.14)	0.01 (0.12)
Survey mode	0.06 (0.15)	0.14 (0.18)	0.53*** (0.17)
Wave	0.04 (0.13)		-0.05 (0.15)
Response quality	-0.01 (0.08)	0.18 (0.15)	0.14 (0.09)
White	-0.11 (0.11)	-0.30** (0.14)	-0.14 (0.12)
Afro	-0.28 (0.25)	-0.46 (0.31)	-0.01 (0.30)
Schooling	-0.01 (0.03)	0.10** (0.05)	0.06 (0.04)
Unemployed	-0.01 (0.13)	-0.03 (0.15)	0.11 (0.13)
Age	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01** (0.01)
Constant	2.82*** (0.31)	2.90*** (0.32)	3.03*** (0.32)
Observations	532	423	530

Table A 22: Heterogeneous effects by ideology (Comunes vs. Left) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.18 (0.11)
Extreme Left	1.02*** (0.19)	0.90*** (0.23)	0.56** (0.25)
Comunes x Extreme Left	-0.61** (0.30)	-0.56 (0.35)	0.06 (0.36)
Gender	0.09 (0.11)	0.06 (0.14)	0.05 (0.12)
Survey mode	0.04 (0.15)	0.15 (0.17)	0.52*** (0.17)
Wave	0.01 (0.13)		-0.05 (0.15)
Response quality	-0.02 (0.08)	0.15 (0.15)	0.15* (0.09)
White	-0.07 (0.11)	-0.27* (0.14)	-0.11 (0.12)
Afro	-0.35 (0.25)	-0.43 (0.31)	-0.05 (0.32)
Schooling	-0.01 (0.03)	0.08* (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)
Unemployed	-0.04 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.15)	0.09 (0.13)
Age	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01** (0.005)
Constant	2.85*** (0.30)	2.98*** (0.31)	3.04*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

Table A 23: Heterogeneous effects by personal safety (Comunes vs. Left) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.08 (0.10)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.20* (0.11)
Personal insecurity	0.10 (0.08)	0.02 (0.08)	-0.04 (0.10)
Comunes x Personal insecurity	0.10 (0.11)	0.18 (0.14)	0.27** (0.13)
Gender	0.07 (0.11)	0.07 (0.14)	0.02 (0.12)
Survey mode	0.04 (0.16)	0.07 (0.18)	0.54*** (0.17)
Wave	-0.01 (0.13)		-0.06 (0.15)
Response quality	-0.01 (0.09)	0.19 (0.15)	0.15* (0.09)
White	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.31** (0.14)	-0.12 (0.12)
Afro	-0.29 (0.26)	-0.48 (0.31)	0.02 (0.31)
Schooling	-0.02 (0.03)	0.10** (0.04)	0.04 (0.04)
Unemployed	-0.003 (0.13)	-0.01 (0.15)	0.12 (0.13)
Age	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01** (0.01)
Constant	2.92*** (0.30)	2.91*** (0.31)	3.11*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

Table A 24: Heterogeneous effects by election security (Comunes vs. Left) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.07 (0.10)	-0.10 (0.13)	-0.19* (0.11)
Election security	-0.06 (0.25)	-0.34 (0.27)	-0.70*** (0.24)
Comunes x Election security	-0.18 (0.34)	0.69* (0.38)	0.22 (0.31)
Gender	0.09 (0.11)	0.07 (0.14)	0.02 (0.12)
Survey mode	0.05 (0.16)	0.11 (0.18)	0.51*** (0.17)
Wave	-0.02 (0.14)		-0.06 (0.15)
Response quality	-0.01 (0.09)	0.19 (0.14)	0.11 (0.10)
White	-0.10 (0.11)	-0.31** (0.14)	-0.11 (0.12)
Afro	-0.28 (0.25)	-0.42 (0.31)	-0.004 (0.30)
Schooling	-0.03 (0.03)	0.09** (0.04)	0.05 (0.03)
Unemployed	-0.04 (0.13)	-0.05 (0.15)	0.09 (0.13)
Age	-0.002 (0.005)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01** (0.005)
Constant	2.91*** (0.31)	2.93*** (0.31)	3.10*** (0.31)
Observations	532	423	530

Table A 25: Effect of Comunes and Left endorsement on support (pooled) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.21*** (0.07)	-0.17*** (0.06)	
Left endorsement	-0.08 (0.07)		0.02 (0.06)
Gender	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.23*** (0.08)	0.23*** (0.08)	0.22*** (0.08)
Wave			
Response quality	0.10* (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)	0.10* (0.05)
White	-0.18*** (0.06)	-0.18*** (0.06)	-0.19*** (0.06)
Afro	-0.32** (0.13)	-0.32** (0.13)	-0.31** (0.13)
Schooling	0.05** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)
Unemployed	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.02 (0.07)
Age	-0.01*** (0.003)	-0.01*** (0.003)	-0.01*** (0.003)
Constant	3.02*** (0.16)	2.98*** (0.15)	2.92*** (0.15)
Observations	1,914	1,914	1,914

Table A 26: Comunes condition vs. Control condition (first wave only) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.09 (0.11)	-0.09 (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.29** (0.12)	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.12)
Gender		-0.04 (0.12)		0.09 (0.13)		-0.04 (0.13)
Survey mode		0.12 (0.16)		0.38** (0.17)		0.30* (0.18)
Wave						
Response quality		0.02 (0.14)		0.11 (0.10)		0.43*** (0.14)
White		0.001 (0.13)		-0.23* (0.13)		-0.11 (0.13)
Afro		-0.13 (0.24)		-0.50* (0.29)		-0.17 (0.29)
Schooling		-0.06 (0.04)		0.06 (0.04)		0.10** (0.04)
Unemployed		0.08 (0.14)		-0.15 (0.14)		0.16 (0.14)
Age		-0.01* (0.01)		-0.004 (0.01)		-0.01 (0.01)
Constant	2.69*** (0.08)	3.28*** (0.31)	3.34*** (0.08)	2.96*** (0.30)	3.29*** (0.09)	2.86*** (0.32)
Observations	429	429	429	429	431	431

Table A 27: Leftist condition vs. Control condition (first wave only) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Left endorsement	0.04 (0.12)	0.04 (0.12)	-0.20 (0.12)	-0.15 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)
Gender		-0.04 (0.12)		-0.07 (0.12)		0.05 (0.14)
Survey mode		0.18 (0.16)		0.15 (0.17)		0.32* (0.18)
Wave						
Response quality		-0.01 (0.09)		0.12 (0.09)		0.16 (0.10)
White		-0.07 (0.13)		-0.33** (0.13)		-0.25* (0.14)
Afro		-0.34 (0.22)		-0.39 (0.27)		-0.49* (0.26)
Schooling		-0.04 (0.04)		0.12*** (0.04)		0.10** (0.04)
Unemployed		-0.09 (0.14)		-0.12 (0.14)		-0.09 (0.14)
Age		-0.01** (0.01)		-0.001 (0.01)		-0.01* (0.01)
Constant	2.69*** (0.08)	3.25*** (0.30)	3.34*** (0.08)	2.79*** (0.33)	3.29*** (0.09)	3.07*** (0.34)
Observations	427	427	424	424	428	428

Table A 28: Comunes condition vs. Leftist condition (first wave only) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Comunes endorsement	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.13 (0.12)	-0.09 (0.13)	-0.11 (0.13)	-0.17 (0.13)	-0.15 (0.13)
Gender		0.10 (0.13)		0.06 (0.14)		0.07 (0.14)
Survey mode		0.13 (0.17)		0.11 (0.18)		0.35* (0.19)
Wave						
Response quality		-0.06 (0.09)		0.16 (0.15)		0.13 (0.10)
White		-0.15 (0.12)		-0.32** (0.14)		-0.19 (0.14)
Afro		-0.36 (0.26)		-0.36 (0.30)		-0.15 (0.30)
Schooling		-0.06 (0.04)		0.10** (0.04)		0.11** (0.04)
Unemployed		-0.01 (0.14)		-0.05 (0.15)		0.07 (0.14)
Age		-0.005 (0.01)		-0.01 (0.01)		-0.01** (0.01)
Constant	2.72*** (0.08)	3.15*** (0.31)	3.15*** (0.09)	2.90*** (0.31)	3.19*** (0.09)	2.77*** (0.33)
Observations	424	424	426	426	425	425

Table A 29: Heterogeneous effects by security (pooled) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Comunes endorsement	-0.17*** (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)	-0.16*** (0.06)	-0.12* (0.07)
Personal insecurity	0.07* (0.04)	0.07* (0.04)		
Control		0.09 (0.07)		0.09 (0.07)
Comunes x Personal insecurity	0.14** (0.06)	0.13** (0.06)		
Electoral insecurity			-0.29*** (0.10)	-0.29*** (0.10)
Comunes x Electoral insecurity			0.11 (0.17)	0.11 (0.17)
Gender	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	0.003 (0.06)	0.003 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.28*** (0.08)	0.27*** (0.08)	0.27*** (0.08)	0.27*** (0.08)
Wave	0.05 (0.08)	0.04 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)
Response quality	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.10** (0.05)	0.10** (0.05)
White	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.13** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)
Afro	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.13)	-0.27** (0.13)
Schooling	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)
Unemployed	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)	-0.01 (0.06)
Age	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	2.99*** (0.16)	2.95*** (0.16)	3.01*** (0.16)	2.97*** (0.16)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235	2,235

Table A 30: Heterogeneous effects by familiarity of Comunes (pooled) (with control coefficients)

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Comunes endorsement	-0.06 (0.08)	-0.02 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.09)
Prior familiarity	0.19*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.07)	0.19*** (0.07)
Control		0.09 (0.07)	
Left endorsement			-0.09 (0.07)
Comunes x Familiarity	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.20* (0.11)	-0.20* (0.11)
Gender	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)	0.02 (0.06)
Survey mode	0.28*** (0.08)	0.28*** (0.08)	0.28*** (0.08)
Wave	0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)	0.03 (0.08)
Response quality	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)	0.12** (0.05)
White	-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)	-0.14** (0.06)
Afro	-0.25* (0.13)	-0.25* (0.13)	-0.25* (0.13)
Schooling	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Unemployed	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.06)
Age	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)	-0.01*** (0.002)
Constant	2.93*** (0.16)	2.88*** (0.17)	2.98*** (0.17)
Observations	2,235	2,235	2,235