

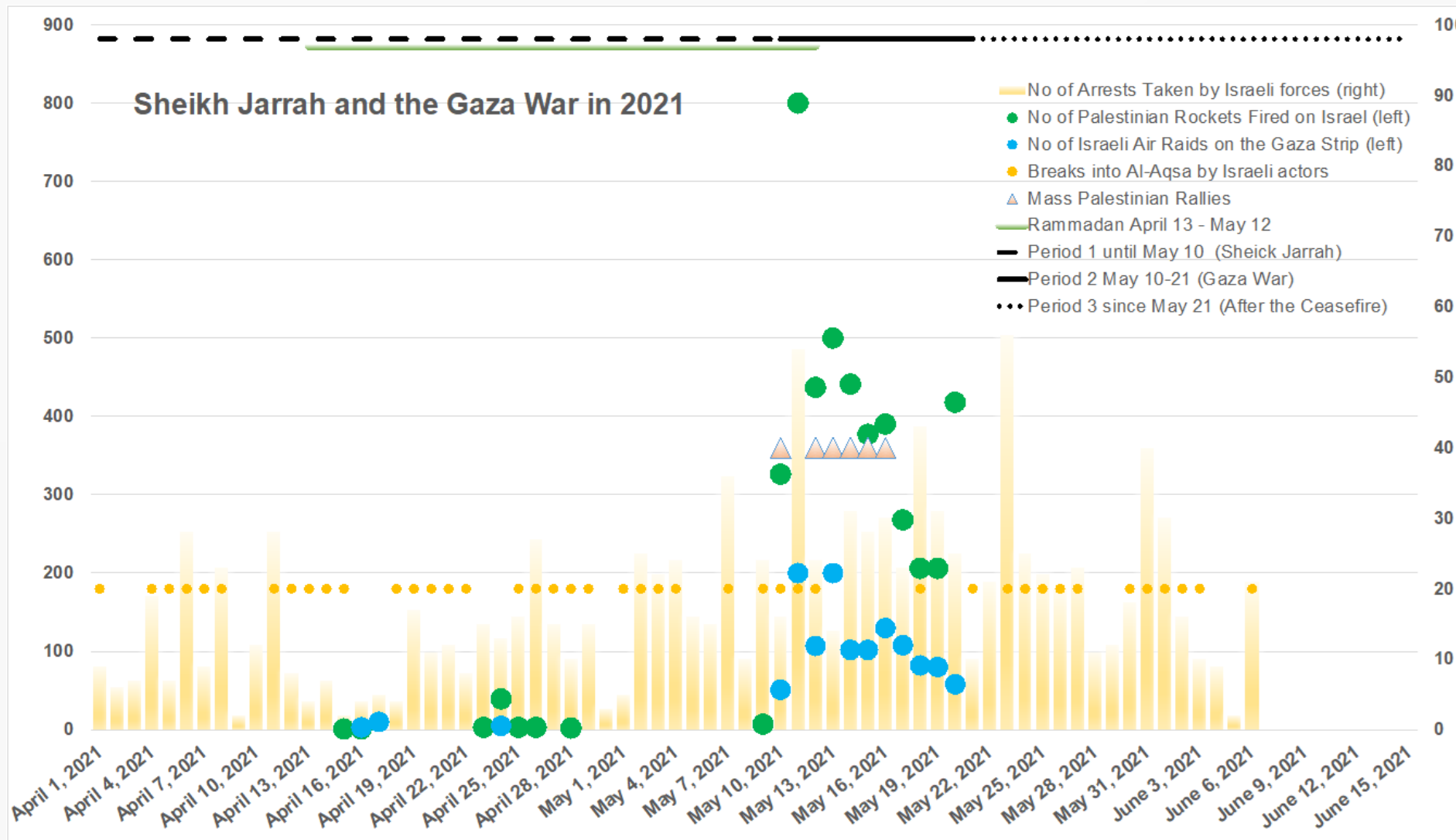
Impact of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict on antisemitism in Germany: Evidence from a natural experiment

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Introduction

On May 10, 2021, the military confrontation between elements of the Israel Defense Forces and several militant Islamist Palestinian groups from the Gaza Strip escalated. As a result of this 2021 Gaza war, 258 Palestinians and eight Israelis died, according to United Nations data (OCHA 2022). Partly in Israel, but particularly in Gaza, there was enormous damage to civilian infrastructure during the war, estimated at \$290 million to \$380 million for Gaza (ReliefWeb 2021). We analysed, whether the Gaza war of May 2021 had an impact on political radicalization - particularly on the prevalence of antisemitic attitudes in Germany.

Escalation dynamics in the Gaza war 2021



Political background to the escalation in May 2021

- Changes in US policy under the Trump administration
 - 2017: Recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel
 - 2018: Relocation of the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem
 - Funding cut for the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees
- Changes in policy of Arab Gulf states
 - Idea of an independent state of Palestine was no longer a priority
 - Establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel
- May 2020
 - Israel announces intention to annex up to 30% of the West Bank
 - Forced eviction of homes occupied by Palestinian families in the East Jerusalem neighbourhood of Sheikh Jarrah
- April 13, 2021 (start of Ramadan=independence day Israel)
 - Israeli police invade al-Aqsa mosque and shut down loudspeakers
 - Palestinians are denied access to Damascus Gate (East Jerusalem)
- Until May 10, 2021
 - Protests by Palestinians
 - Israeli police: invade al-Aqsa mosque (tear gas and sound grenades)
 - Protest marches by right-wing Israeli groups (slogans: "Death to the Arabs")
- April 29, 2021
 - Mahmoud Abbas cancels elections to the Palestinian Legislative Council
 - Hamas sets ultimatum: withdrawal of police by May 10, 2021 at 6 p.m.
- May 10, 2021
 - Rocket fire on Israeli sites by Islamic militants from the Gaza Strip
 - Israeli forces attacks on Hamas and Islamic Jihad positions
- May 21, 2021: Ceasefire agreed

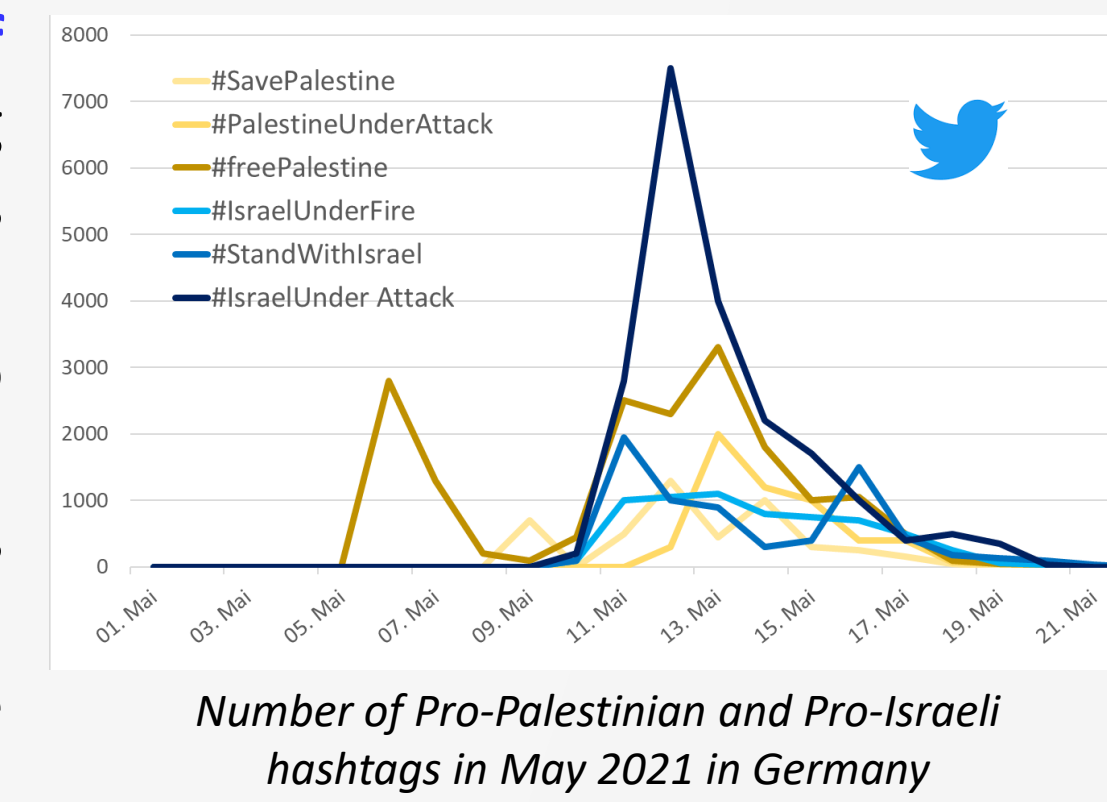
Who we are



MOTRA is a network of 9 research institutions, pursue the goal of contributing to an interdisciplinary and comprehensive analysis of radicalization and political extremism in Germany. This is done by a) a systematic monitoring of politically and religiously motivated radicalization and b) the creation of an infrastructure for the exchange of knowledge and experience between science, practice and politics.

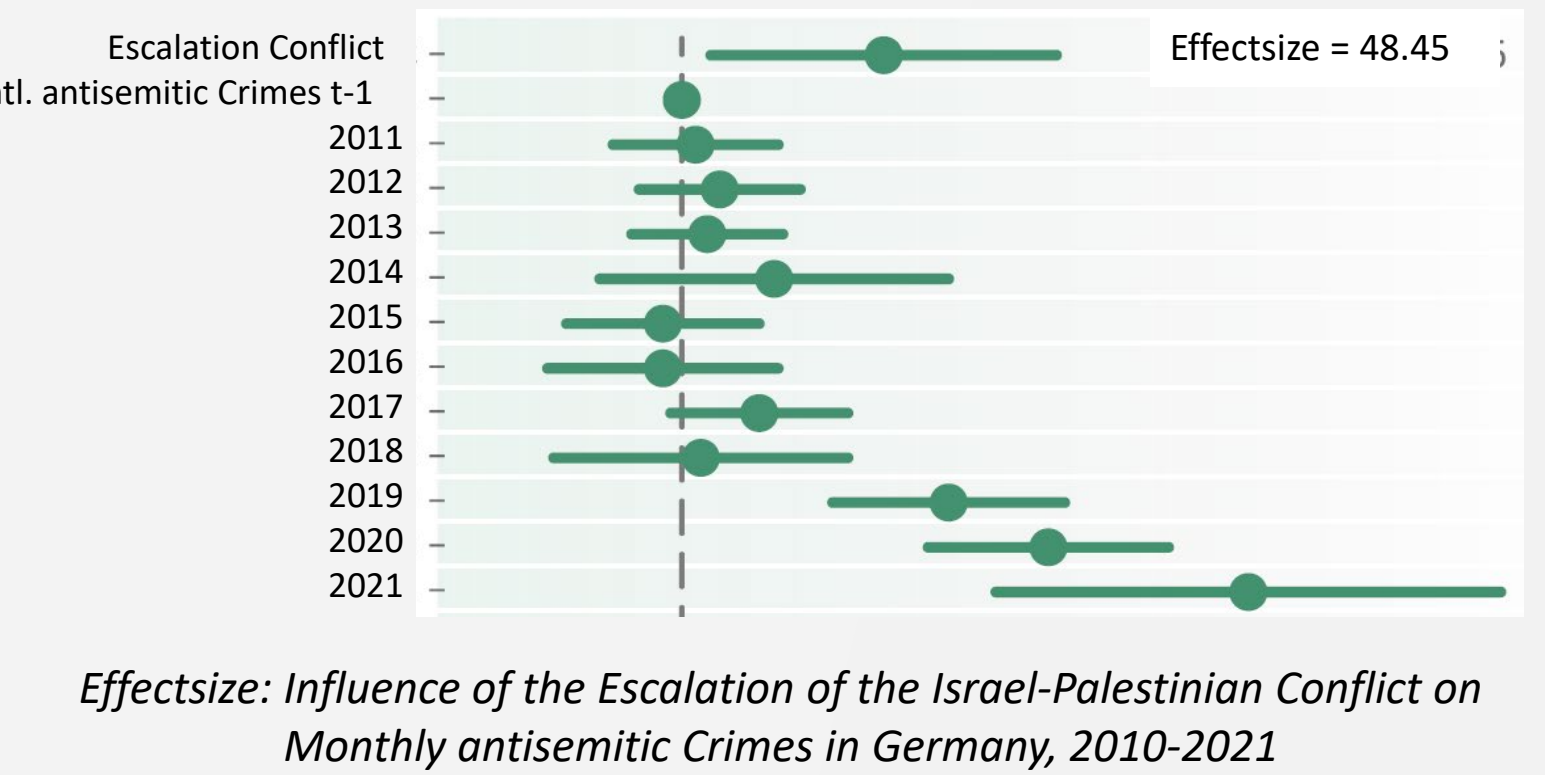
Related findings from other MOTRA-Partners

Colleagues at the [University of Munich](#) investigated the positioning of right-wing Twitter accounts during the Gaza war in May 2021. For the German right-wingers two classic enemies were at odds here: Historically, German right-wingers have been characterized by a deeply antisemitic attitude. On the other side the refugee crisis in 2015 increased antimuslim attitudes within the German right. While internationally 96% of Twitter activity was Pro-Palestinian, in Germany Pro-Israeli hashtags predominated with 53%.



Colleagues at the [Berlin Social Science Center](#) showed that in Germany, protests related to the Gaza war accounted for almost 14% of all protests in 2021. Compared with protests on other topics, these showed a relatively high degree of radicalism: Nearly 40% of protest events were confrontational or violent.

Colleagues from [German Institute for Global and Area Studies](#) examined in cooperation with the [Bundeskriminalamt](#) whether escalations of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict are systematically associated with an increase in antisemitic hate crime registered by the Federal Police in Germany between 2010 and 2021. The results show that an escalation of the Gaza war 2021 leads to an increase in antisemitic crimes by more than one third.



1. Hypotheses

- Individuals who perceived the escalation of the Gaza war show stronger antisemitic attitudes (significant differences of the prevalence of antisemitic attitudes before conflict vs. after conflict escalation).
- This effect is stronger among Muslims than Non-Muslims (stronger identification with inferior Muslim group)

2. Data and Methods

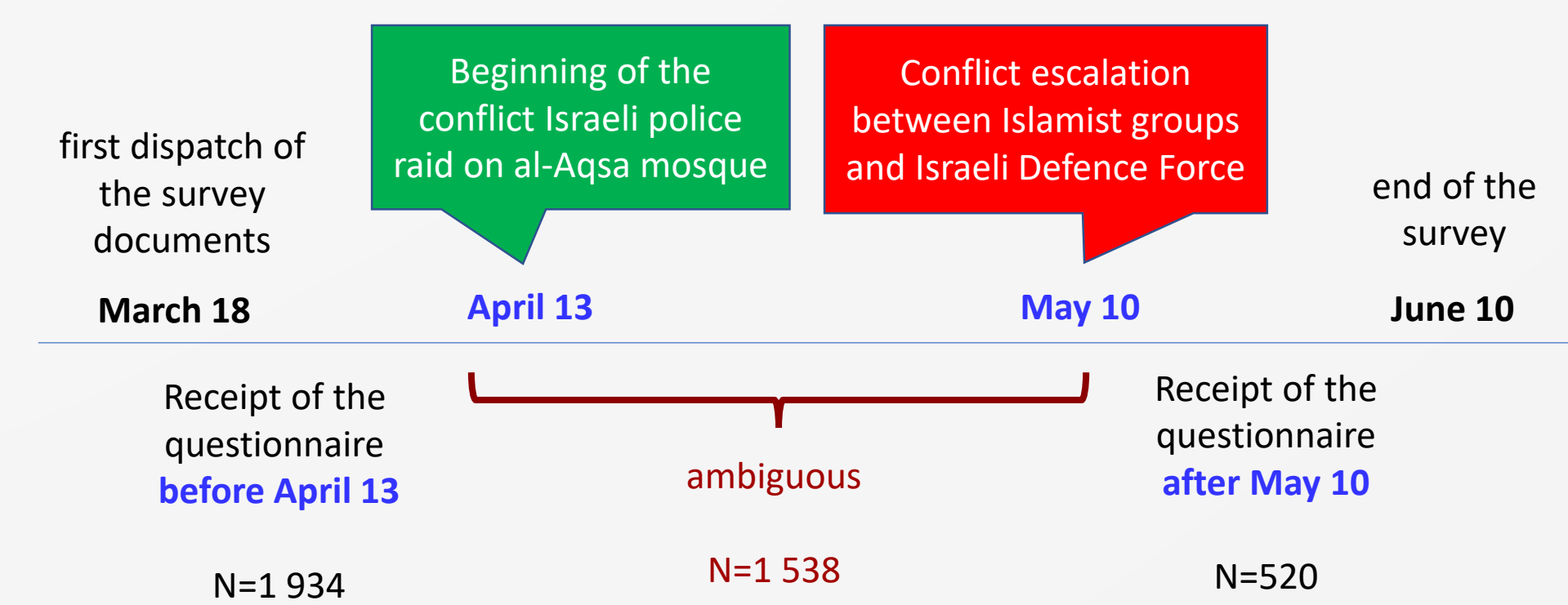
As part of the MOTRA research network, the [University of Hamburg](#) conducts annually repeated representative population surveys.

- Survey of population aged 18 and above (n=2 000)
- Oversample Migrants (n=1 000)
- Oversample Muslims (n=1 000)
- MiD 2021 ("People in Germany"):
 - 23.6% response rate
 - N=4 483 respondents
 - of which n=1310 Muslims



2.1. Israel-Gaza conflict 2021 and Time schedule of MiD2021

The escalation in Gaza war 2021 occurred four weeks after the launch of our survey. So part of the sample was interviewed before and another part after the escalation of the Gaza war in May 2021.



2.2 Measurement of antisemitic attitudes

	strongly disagree	partially disagree	partially agree	strongly agree	M	SD
	1	2	3	4		
Jews have too much influence in Germany	61.2	25.7	9.7	3.4	1.55	.80
Jews cannot be trusted	79.9	14.8	3.5	1.7	1.27	.61

3. Results

3.1. Hypothesis I

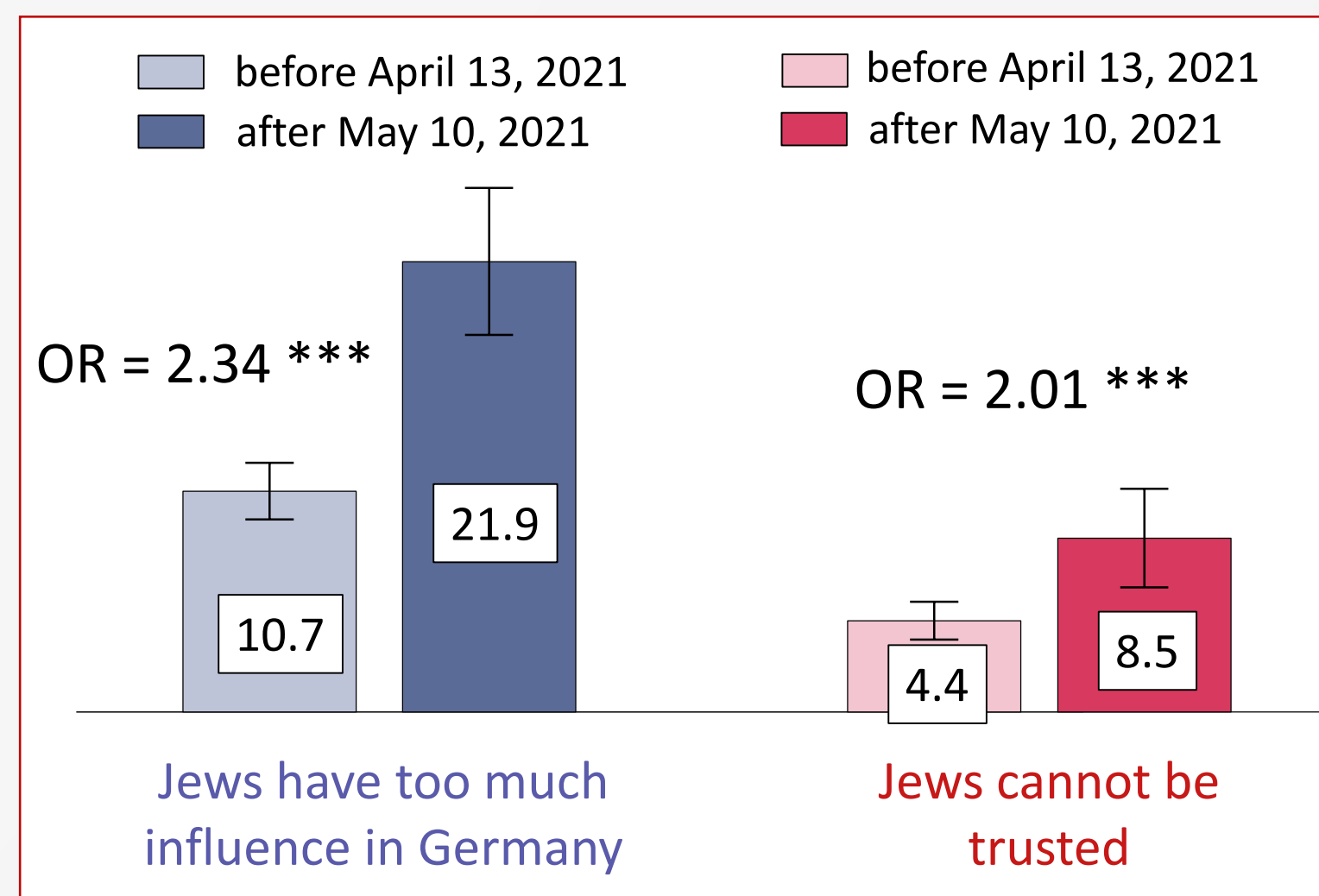


Figure 1: Antisemitic attitudes: Percentage agreement by date of participation in the survey

3.2. Hypothesis II

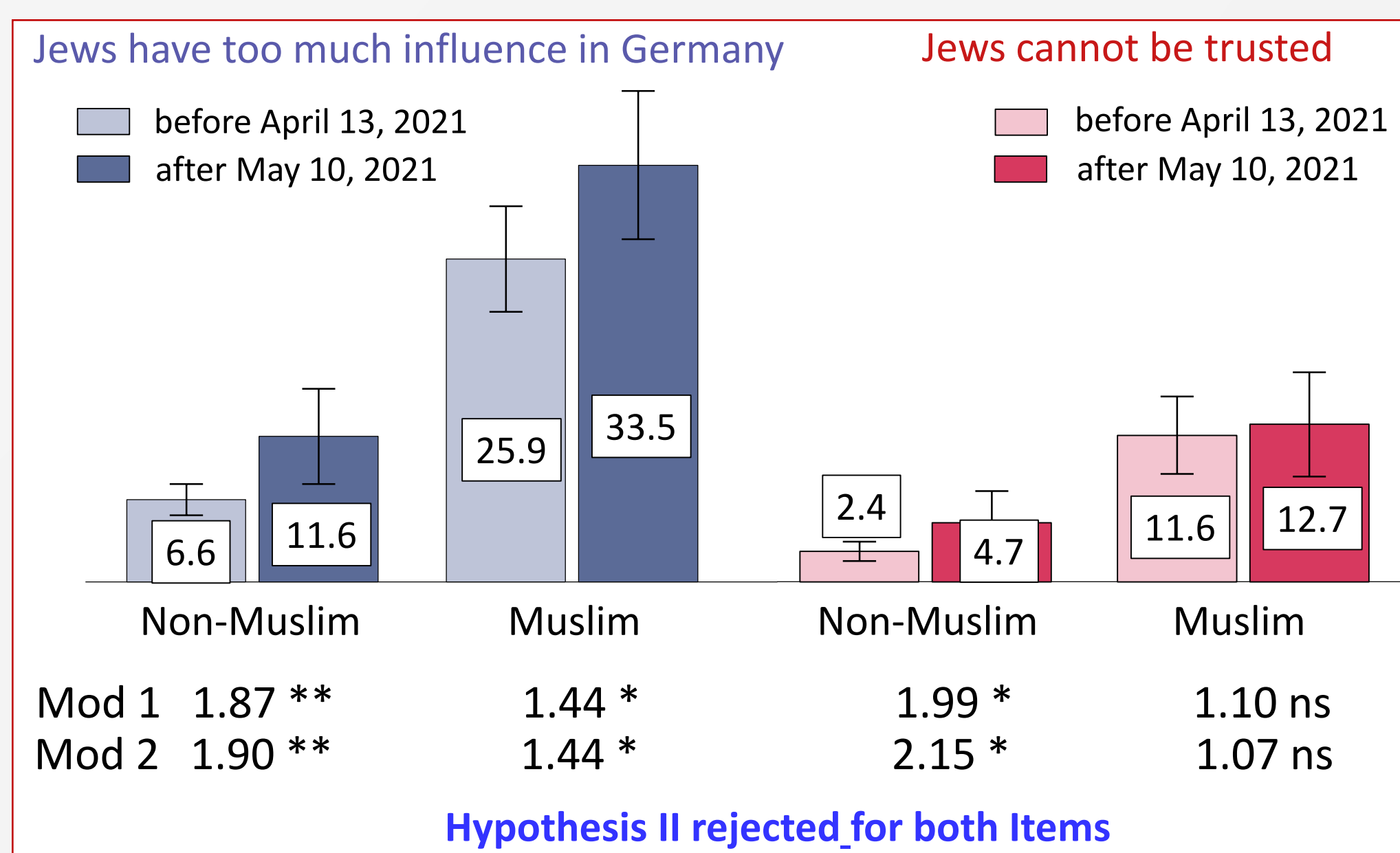


Figure 2: Antisemitic attitudes: Comparison of Muslims and Non-Muslims
Percentage agreement by date of participation in the survey and Odds-Ratios

4. Conclusions

The perception of the Gaza conflict has an influence on antisemitic attitudes in Germany. However, this does not affect the native German population. The effect is primarily evident among migrants, especially the Non-Muslim migrants. There are some open Questions: 1) Why do the effects differ so clearly between the two items? and 2) Why do the effects appear especially in the group of Non-Muslim migrants? The findings of our colleagues at the University of Munich suggest that German right-wingers adopt philosemitic positions in such constellations like the Gaza war. This would explain the non-significant effect of German natives. To test this, subsequent analyses will examine political orientation and anti-Islamic attitudes in more detail.

Table 1: Logistic regression of antisemitic attitudes on time of Survey participation, Controlling for Sociodemographic variables (Odds-Ratios)

	„Jews have too much influence in Germany“			„Jews cannot be trusted“		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
age		1.01 ^{-1**}	1.00		1.01 ⁻¹	1.00
sex (1=male)		1.25	1.07		1.73 **	1.52 *
education (1=high)		1.64 ^{-1***}	1.47 ^{-1**}		1.98 ^{-1***}	1.75 ^{-1**}
religion (1=muslim)			3.23 ***			3.51 ***
migration status (1=migrant)			2.44 ***			1.67
date of participation (1=after May 10)	2.34 ***	2.22 ***	1.49 **	2.01 ***	1.91 ***	1.31

Hypothesis I confirmed

Hypothesis I rejected

3.3. Hypothesis II - Further Analysis

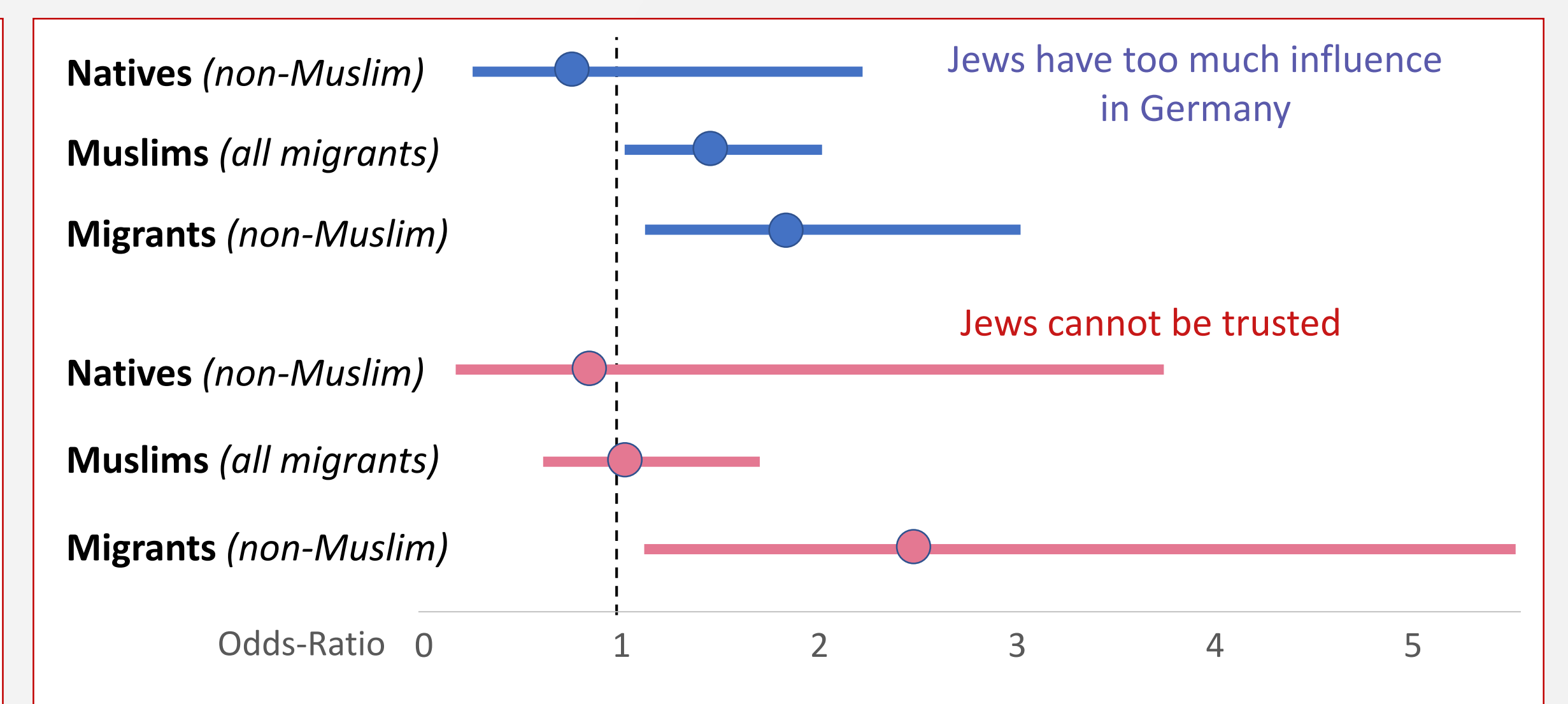


Figure 3: Antisemitic attitudes: Comparison of Muslims, Non-Muslim Migrants and Non-Muslim Natives - Effects of time of participation in the survey
Odds-Ratios after multivariate control

How to get the poster ...



... and further information?
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