

Supplementary Material:**It was important because we won: Self-serving biases shape the relationship between future thinking and remembering of elections****Supplementary Note 1: Background on the studied elections**

Elections for EU parliament are often difficult to grasp for voters, who in many cases do not know what exactly they are voting for. Nevertheless, turnout in the 2024 election in Germany was the second highest ever (64.7%). The results broadly confirmed the low polls for the sitting coalition with poor results for the Social Democratic SPD and the Greens (the latter being the most popular party in our sample), while the liberal FDP had a low but somewhat better than expected result. On the other hand, the conservative Christian Democrats (CDU) and far-right AfD were regarded as the election winners. In the aftermath, a discussion ensued about the continued electoral success of the far right, likely contributing to a negative view of the leftist sample on the election.

In the UK, sitting prime minister Rishi Sunak unexpectedly called an election, at a point where his Conservative Party was far behind the Labour party in the polls. The race was believed to be decided from the beginning after the Conservatives had been in power for 14 years, going through five prime ministers during this time. The results confirmed the polling, and the Labour party obtained a large majority in the House of Commons. The Conservatives lost a high number of seats, including some high-profile members of parliament such as former Prime Minister Liz Truss.

The race in the US, on the other hand, was much more uncertain. After the replacement of Biden with Harris on the Democratic ticket, polls were tight, and few experts were ready to make a prediction. In the end, Donald Trump won overwhelmingly, with all seven swing states in his favour and leading over Harris in the popular vote.

Supplementary Note 2: Full outputs of all reported models

As the manuscript only includes β and p -values, the full outputs of all reported models are listed below. For the direct comparisons between future thinking and remembering, the “Time” variable refers to levels of a given variable after the election compared to before. In all tables, the controlled-for covariates are listed under the horizontal line. Political interest is a mean score of multiple items, and the timing variables refer to how many days before or after the election each survey was completed by a participant (Germany and UK). In the US, all participants did the survey exactly seven days before the election, so that only the timing of the post-survey is controlled (most participants completed it seven days after the election, but responses were still permitted up to two days after that).

Supplementary Table 1

Germany: Pre-Post comparison on Valence

Predictor	β	b	SE	t	p
Time	-.51	-1.12	0.11	-9.92	<.001
Political Interest	-.06	-0.05	0.04	-1.14	.257
Timing pre-survey	-.15	-0.5	0.08	-0.59	.554
Timing post-survey	.33	0.10	0.08	1.13	.196

Supplementary Table 2

UK: Pre-Post comparison on Valence

Predictor	β	b	SE	t	p
Time	.34	1.02	0.21	4.92	<.001
Political Interest	.20	0.25	0.09	2.77	.006
Timing pre-survey	.02	0.01	0.14	0.04	.966
Timing post-survey	-.11	-0.04	0.14	-0.28	.779

Supplementary Table 3

US: Pre-Post comparison on Valence

Predictor	β	b	SE	t	p

Time	-.15	-0.64	0.20	-3.26	.001
Political Interest	.22	0.04	0.08	0.48	.634
Timing post-survey	.004	0.02	0.27	0.09	.928

Supplementary Table 4*Germany: Pre-Post comparison on Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.15	0.37	0.14	2.58	.010
Political Interest	.30	0.29	0.06	5.09	<.001
Timing pre-survey	.76	0.28	0.10	2.75	.006
Timing post-survey	-.89	-0.31	0.10	-3.19	.002

Supplementary Table 5*UK: Pre-Post comparison on Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.28	0.80	0.20	4.09	<.001
Political Interest	.34	0.41	0.08	4.84	<.001
Timing pre-survey	.37	0.13	0.13	0.99	.321
Timing post-survey	-.43	-0.15	0.13	-1.15	.251

Supplementary Table 6*US: Pre-Post comparison on Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.56	1.81	0.12	15.07	<.001
Political Interest	.25	0.33	0.05	6.86	<.001
Timing post-survey	-.08	-0.38	0.17	-2.29	.023

Supplementary Table 7*Germany: Pre-Post comparison on Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	-.15	-0.64	0.20	-3.26	.001

Time	.02	0.04	0.13	0.35	.726
Political Interest	.38	0.32	0.05	6.51	<.001
Timing pre-survey	.17	0.06	0.09	0.63	.528
Timing post-survey	-.41	-0.13	0.08	-1.50	.135

Supplementary Table 8

UK: Pre-Post comparison on Importance

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.03	0.07	0.15	0.44	.661
Political Interest	.52	0.51	0.07	7.58	<.001
Timing pre-survey	-.30	-0.09	0.11	-0.83	.411
Timing post-survey	.36	0.10	0.10	0.93	.355

Supplementary Table 9

US: Pre-Post comparison on Importance

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.004	0.01	0.08	0.10	.917
Political Interest	.46	0.37	0.03	11.16	<.001
Timing post-survey	-.05	-0.14	0.12	-1.22	.223

Supplementary Table 10

Germany: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Vividness

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.04	0.05	0.11	0.42	.677
Political Interest	-.05	-0.05	0.10	-0.54	.592
Timing pre-survey	-.45	-0.20	0.19	-1.07	.285
Timing post-survey	.43	0.17	0.17	0.99	.322

Supplementary Table 11

Germany: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Importance

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.12	0.12	0.08	1.42	.158
Political Interest	-.07	-0.06	0.07	-0.85	.399
Timing pre-survey	-.11	-0.04	0.13	-0.27	.787
Timing post-survey	-.19	-0.06	0.12	-0.45	.651

Supplementary Table 12*Germany: Correlation between Changes in Vividness and Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Vividness Change	.35	0.47	0.11	4.10	<.001
Political Interest	-.02	-0.03	0.10	-0.27	.789
Timing pre-survey	-.41	-0.18	0.17	-1.04	.299
Timing post-survey	.49	0.20	0.16	1.22	.224

Supplementary Table 13*UK: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.44	0.53	0.12	4.36	<.001
Political Interest	.18	0.23	0.14	1.70	.092
Timing pre-survey	-.24	-0.10	0.21	-0.45	.654
Timing post-survey	.13	0.05	0.21	0.24	.809

Supplementary Table 14*UK: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.10	0.07	0.08	0.94	.350
Political Interest	-.08	-0.06	0.09	-0.67	.505
Timing pre-survey	-.30	-0.07	0.14	-0.50	.621
Timing post-survey	-.32	0.07	0.13	0.53	.595

Supplementary Table 15

UK: Correlation between Changes in Vividness and Importance

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Vividness Change	.35	0.17	0.06	2.78	.007
Political Interest	-.02	-0.09	0.08	-1.14	.258
Timing pre-survey	-.41	-0.05	0.13	-0.41	.686
Timing post-survey	.49	0.06	0.13	0.50	.621

Supplementary Table 16*US: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.15	0.09	0.04	2.30	.022
Political Interest	-.09	-0.12	0.09	-1.35	.180
Timing post-survey	-.11	-0.50	0.30	-1.69	.092

Supplementary Table 17*US: Correlation between Changes in Valence and Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Valence Change	.20	0.07	0.02	3.09	.002
Political Interest	-.13	-0.09	0.05	-1.97	.0499
Timing post-survey	.03	0.08	0.16	0.50	.620

Supplementary Table 18*US: Correlation between Changes in Vividness and Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Vividness Change	.07	0.04	0.03	1.06	.293
Political Interest	-.16	-0.12	0.05	-2.52	.013
Timing post-survey	.04	0.10	0.16	0.64	.521

Supplementary Table 19*Germany: Party identifications predicting Changes in Valence*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
CDU	.13	0.11	0.07	1.52	.130
FDP	.12	0.12	0.08	1.45	.149
Freie Wähler	-.03	-0.03	0.10	-0.31	.757
Green	-.15	-0.12	0.07	-1.66	.100
Left	-.04	-0.03	0.06	-0.51	.614
SPD	-.23	-0.20	0.08	-2.61	.010
Volt	.02	0.01	0.06	0.19	.851

Supplementary Table 20*Germany: Party identifications predicting Changes in Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
CDU	.02	0.02	0.10	0.19	.851
FDP	.17	0.21	0.11	2.02	.046
Freie Wähler	.09	0.13	0.13	1.00	.320
Green	-.11	-0.11	0.09	-1.12	.267
Left	.07	0.06	0.08	0.73	.467
SPD	-.07	-0.08	0.11	-0.80	.424
Volt	-.08	-0.07	0.07	-0.89	.374

Supplementary Table 21*Germany: Party identifications predicting Changes in Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
CDU	-.07	-0.06	0.07	-0.79	.433
FDP	-.07	-0.06	0.08	-0.81	.418
Freie Wähler	-.08	-0.09	0.09	-1.02	.309
Green	-.14	-0.10	0.07	-1.55	.124
Left	.04	0.03	0.06	0.44	.663
SPD	-.19	-0.17	0.07	-2.26	.026
Volt	.09	0.06	0.05	1.07	.287

Supplementary Table 22

UK: Labour Favourability predicting Changes in Valence

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Labour Favourability	.01	0.01	0.14	0.08	.938
Political Interest	-.22	-0.24	0.12	-1.99	.0497
Timing pre-survey	.29	0.09	0.20	0.48	.636
Timing post-survey	-.18	-0.06	0.19	-0.29	.772

Supplementary Table 23*UK: Labour Favourability predicting Changes in Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Labour Favourability	.25	0.39	0.17	2.27	.026
Political Interest	.06	0.08	0.14	0.67	.572
Timing pre-survey	-.45	-0.18	0.24	-0.75	.457
Timing post-survey	.38	0.15	0.23	0.63	.532

Supplementary Table 24*UK: Labour Favourability predicting Changes in Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Labour Favourability	.34	0.31	0.10	3.22	.002
Political Interest	-.13	-0.10	0.08	-1.18	.243
Timing pre-survey	-.73	-0.17	0.13	-1.25	.216
Timing post-survey	.75	0.17	0.13	1.29	.202

Supplementary Table 25*US: Voting Behaviour predicting Changes in Valence*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.86	4.88	0.18	27.58	<.001
Political Interest	-.12	-0.27	0.07	-3.81	<.001
Timing post-survey	.02	0.14	0.24	0.58	.566

Supplementary Table 26

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Changes in Vividness

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.07	0.25	0.23	1.10	.274
Political Interest	-.11	-0.15	0.09	-1.64	.102
Timing post-survey	-.09	-0.43	0.31	-1.37	.172

Supplementary Table 27

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Changes in Importance

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.19	0.35	0.12	3.03	.003
Political Interest	-.19	-0.13	0.05	-2.93	.004
Timing post-survey	.03	0.08	0.16	0.50	.618

Supplementary Table 28

US: Pre-Post Comparison on Fairness

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Time	.19	0.63	0.16	4.03	<.001
Political Interest	.02	0.02	0.06	0.40	.692
Timing post-survey	-.06	-0.27	0.22	-1.25	.213

Supplementary Table 29

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Changes in Fairness

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.60	2.74	0.25	11.15	<.001
Political Interest	-.05	-0.10	0.10	-1.01	.316
Timing post-survey	.01	0.09	0.34	0.26	.794

Supplementary Table 30

US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Valence

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>

Memory > Prediction	.14	0.36	0.12	3.07	.002
Political Interest	.22	0.22	0.05	4.78	<.001
Timing post-survey	-.002	-0.01	0.16	-0.04	.965

Supplementary Table 31*US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Memory > Prediction	.12	0.38	0.14	2.83	.005
Political Interest	.31	0.37	0.05	6.93	<.001
Timing post-survey	-.01	-0.03	0.19	-0.18	.856

Supplementary Table 32*US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Memory > Prediction	-0.01	-0.02	0.08	-0.21	.835
Political Interest	.48	0.38	0.03	11.57	<.001
Timing post-survey	-.06	-0.16	0.12	-1.40	.164

Supplementary Table 33*US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Hoped-for Outcome*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Memory > Prediction	-0.002	-0.01	0.27	-0.05	.961
Political Interest	-.09	-0.20	0.11	-1.85	.065
Timing post-survey	-.01	-0.11	0.37	-0.29	.776

Supplementary Table 34*US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Expected Outcome*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Memory > Prediction	-.12	-0.43	0.17	-2.63	.009
Political Interest	-.06	-0.09	0.07	-1.35	.178

Timing post-survey	-.04	-0.20	0.23	-0.86	.392
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Supplementary Table 35*US: Changes between Memory for Prediction and Prediction itself in Fairness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Memory > Prediction	.13	0.39	0.14	2.73	.007
Political Interest	.08	0.10	0.06	1.84	.066
Timing post-survey	-.11	-0.46	0.20	-2.30	.02

Supplementary Table 36*US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Valence*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	-.15	-0.39	0.17	-2.32	.021
Political Interest	-.13	-0.13	0.07	-2.01	.046
Timing post-survey	-.01	-0.05	0.23	-0.21	.837

Supplementary Table 37*US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Vividness*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	-.003	-0.01	0.21	-0.06	.956
Political Interest	-.05	-0.07	0.08	-0.82	.416
Timing post-survey	.06	0.26	0.29	0.92	.361

Supplementary Table 38*US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Importance*

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.11	0.21	0.12	1.71	.089
Political Interest	-.16	-0.12	0.05	-2.43	.016
Timing post-survey	.01	0.04	0.17	0.22	.824

Supplementary Table 39

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Hoped-for Outcome

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.01	0.01	0.08	0.13	.899
Political Interest	.05	0.02	0.03	0.69	.493
Timing post-survey	-.09	-0.15	0.11	-1.40	.163

Supplementary Table 40

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Expected Outcome

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.07	0.18	0.16	1.12	.262
Political Interest	.01	0.01	0.06	0.18	.860
Timing post-survey	-.12	-0.39	0.22	-1.82	.071

Supplementary Table 41

US: Voting Behaviour predicting Memory for Prediction vs Memory changes in Fairness

Predictor	β	<i>b</i>	SE	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
Trump > Harris	.15	0.45	0.19	2.30	.022
Political Interest	-.03	-0.04	0.08	-0.51	.614
Timing post-survey	-.08	-0.34	0.27	-1.29	.198