



# Fragility of media-effects in Russia and the deliberation effect: attitudes towards Trump

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# Media framing research

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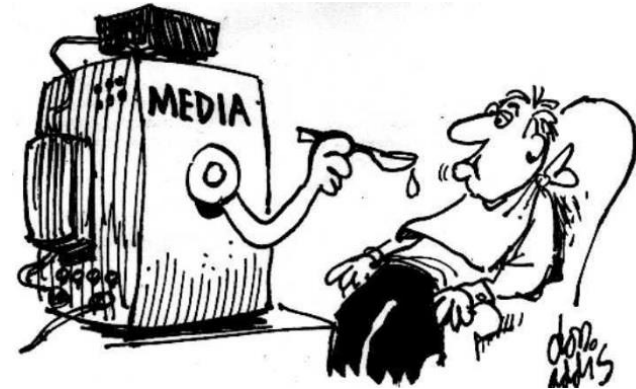
## In democracies

- How media selection and salience influence public opinion and how people think on different issues (Entman, 1993, 2004)
- A necessary element of democracy: bolsters openness of competition between various elite groups, stimulates to deliberate on competing issues (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Simon & Xenos, 2000).

# Media framing research

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## In authoritarian regimes



- To what extent we can use the concept of framing in non-democratic regimes? Or propaganda and persuasion?
- We still will use the concept of “media framing”:
  - dictators monopolize access to media as a resource, rather than directly oppress it (Carothers, 2002; Diamond, 2002; Levitsky & Way, 2002; Schedler, 2013);
  - manipulation of information in mass media in authoritarian regimes (Guriev & Treisman, 2015);
  - journalists’ self-censorship rather than propaganda (Simons & Strovsky, 2006; Schimpfossel & Yablokov, 2014).

# Media effects

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## In democracies

- Media loses its 'leveling effect' due encourage selective exposure among fragmented audiences

## In Russia

- The major part of the Russian media landscape remains discursively homogeneous and dependent on state-owned TV-channels.
- Political information as a byproduct of consumption of TV-channels: 'inadvertent audience' sporadically encounters political information.

## Research question

How strong are media framing effects in Russia?

## Hypotheses

The media effects are weak:

- *Counter-framing would provoke opinion change*
- *Counter-framing has a stronger effect in opinion change on those who consume political news from state-owned TV-channels*

# Experimental Design

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Positive framing

Counter-framing

Control condition  
= no framing

Experimental conditions

Articles varied from 600 to 750 words

**3 survey waves:**

pre-survey

post-survey

delayed survey  
(a week after discussion)

# Method and procedure

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- 22 discussions with students in November-December 2016 at the Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia.
- Sample:
  - N = 270 (RR1=76%) - students of the first year at HSE Faculty. N=225 in the delayed survey.
  - Mean age 18 (SD=0.67). 81% are women.
- Discussions:

Positive framing

**8 discussions**  
**N=91**

Counter-framing

**8 discussions**  
**N=104**

Control condition  
= no framing

**6 discussions**  
**N=75**



# Measures

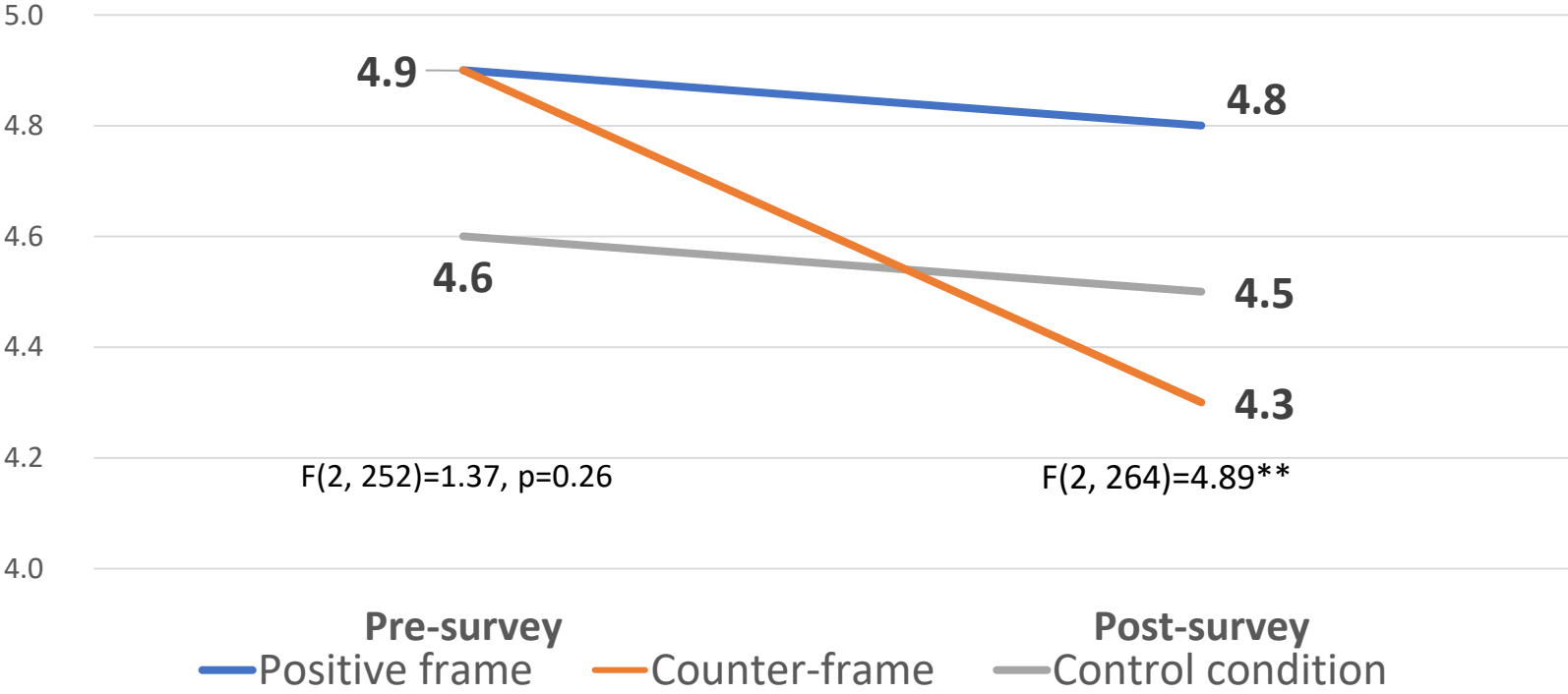
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- (1) An evaluation of how beneficial for Russia the election of Donald Trump would be: 1 – not beneficial, 7 – beneficial.
  
- (2) If the relationship between Russia and the US would improve after Donald Trump's election: would improve/would not improve.



# How beneficial for Russia the election of Trump (pre-post)

Counter-frame produced lower evaluation of how beneficial the election of Trump for Russia is

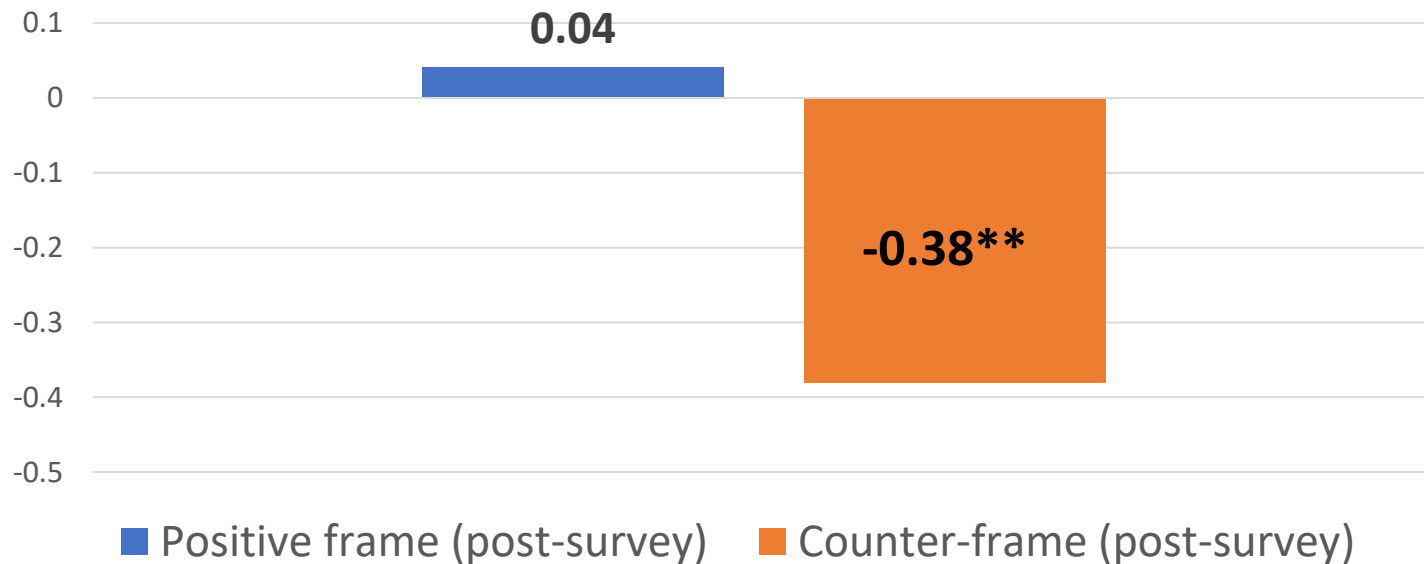


\*\*p<0.01

# How beneficial for Russia the election of Trump (OLS, pre-post)

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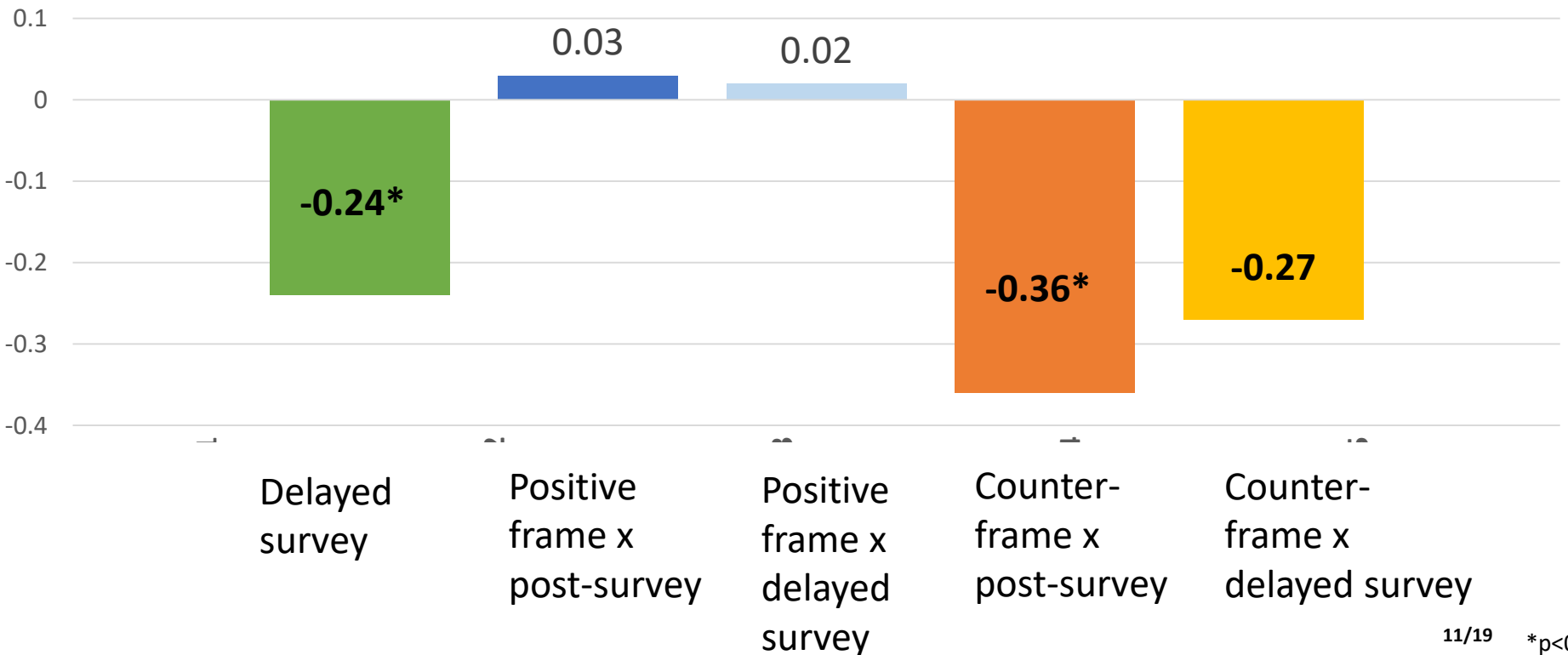
Counter-frame produced lower evaluation of how beneficial the election of Trump for Russia is



# How beneficial for Russia the election of Trump (OLS, 3 waves)

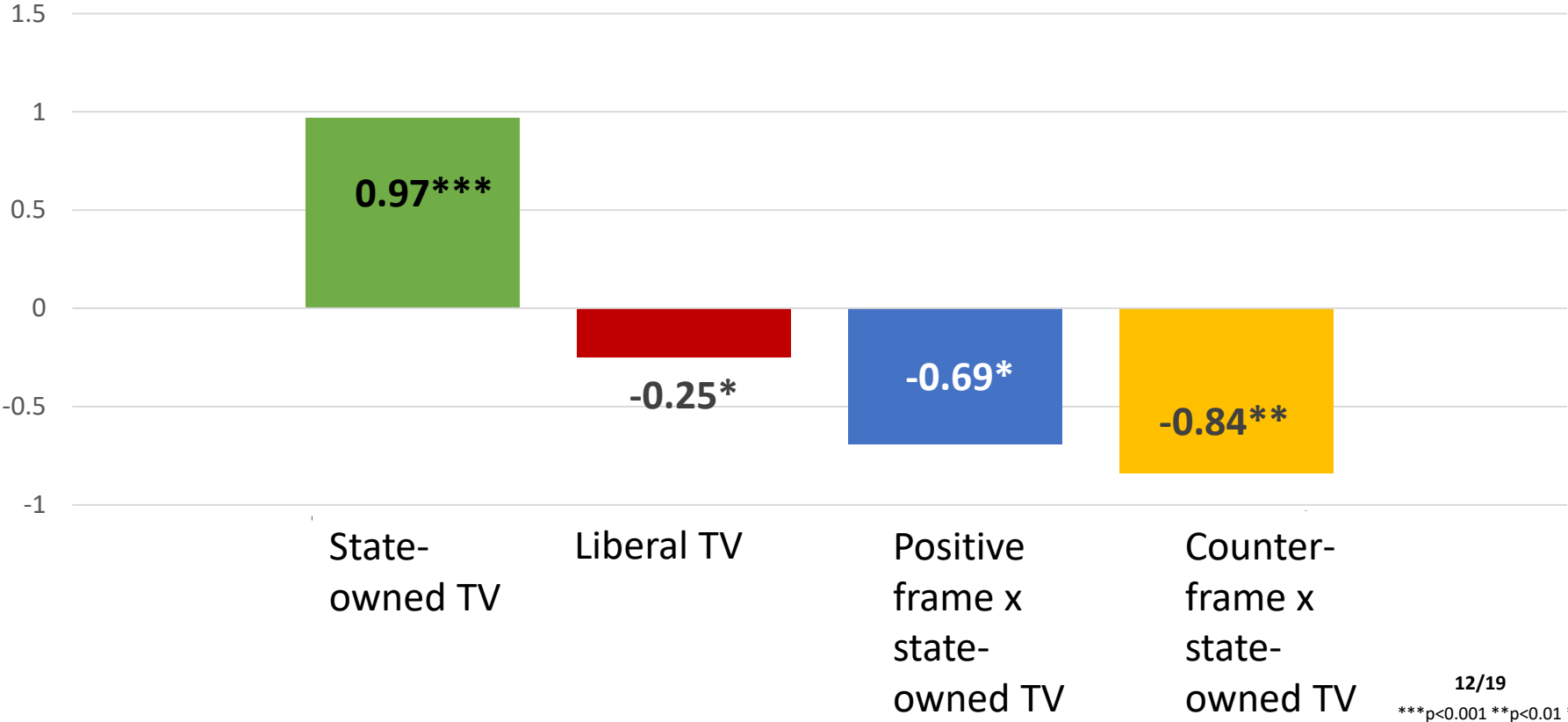


- Participation in any condition produced lower evaluation in a week after discussion (delayed survey)
- Counter-frame produced lower evaluation in post-survey



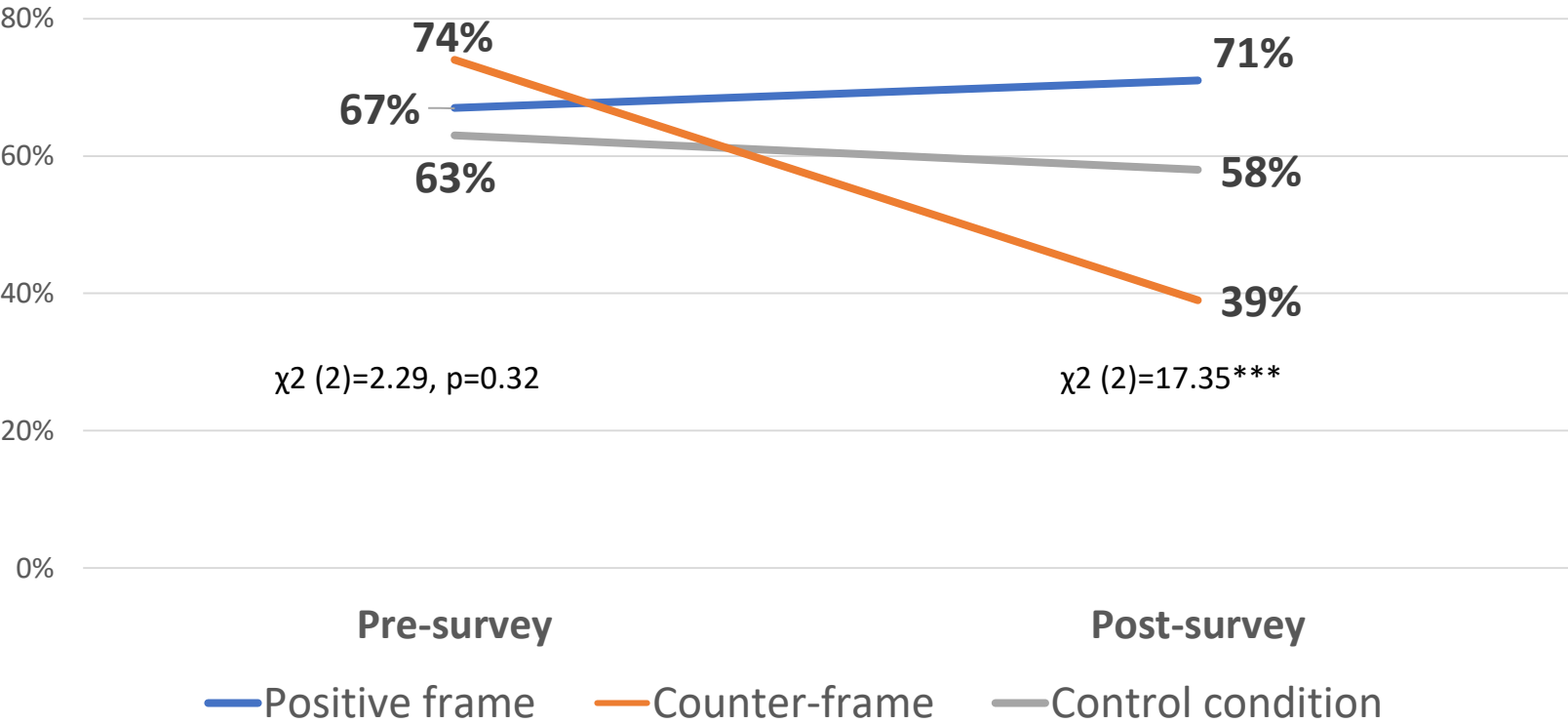
# How beneficial for Russia the election of Trump (OLS, pre-post): TV

- A weaker effect of the positive frame on those who watch TV news on state-owned channels
- Stronger effect of the negative frame on those who watch TV news on state-owned channels



# Relationship between Russia and the US would improve (pre-post)

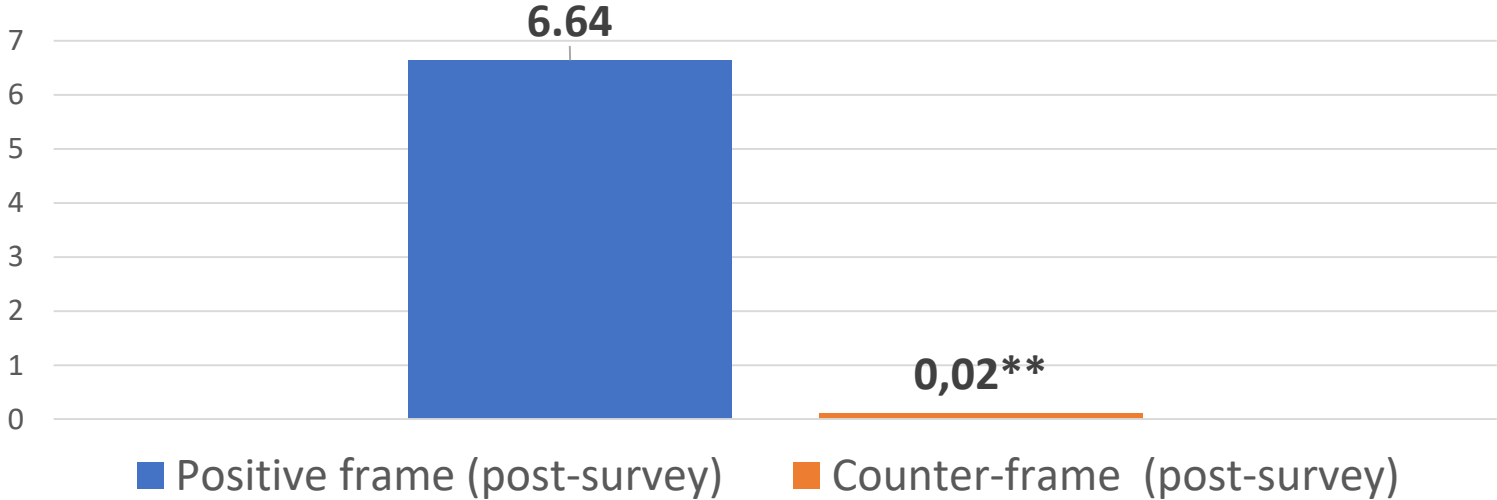
Counter-frame produced lower proportion of those who consider that the relationship between Russia and the US would improve



# Relationship between Russia and the US would improve (logit, pre-post, odds ratios)



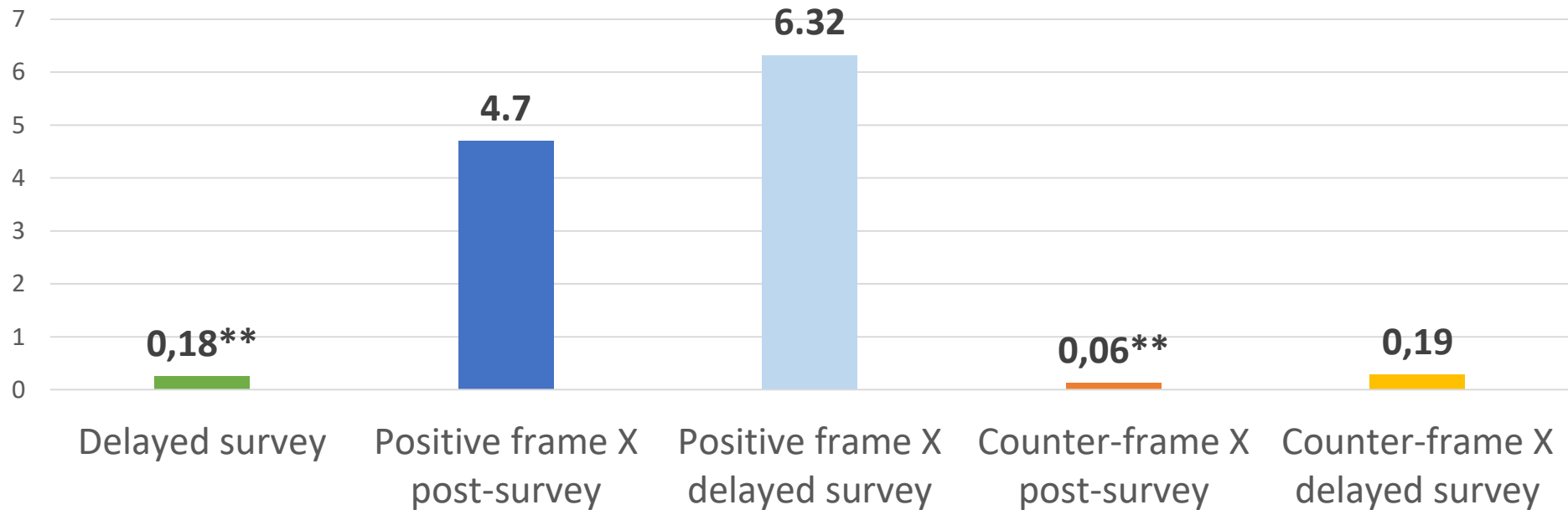
Counter-frame decreased the proportion of those who consider that the relationship between Russia and the US would improve



\*\*p<0.01

# Relationship between Russia and the US would improve (logit, 3 waves, odds ratios)

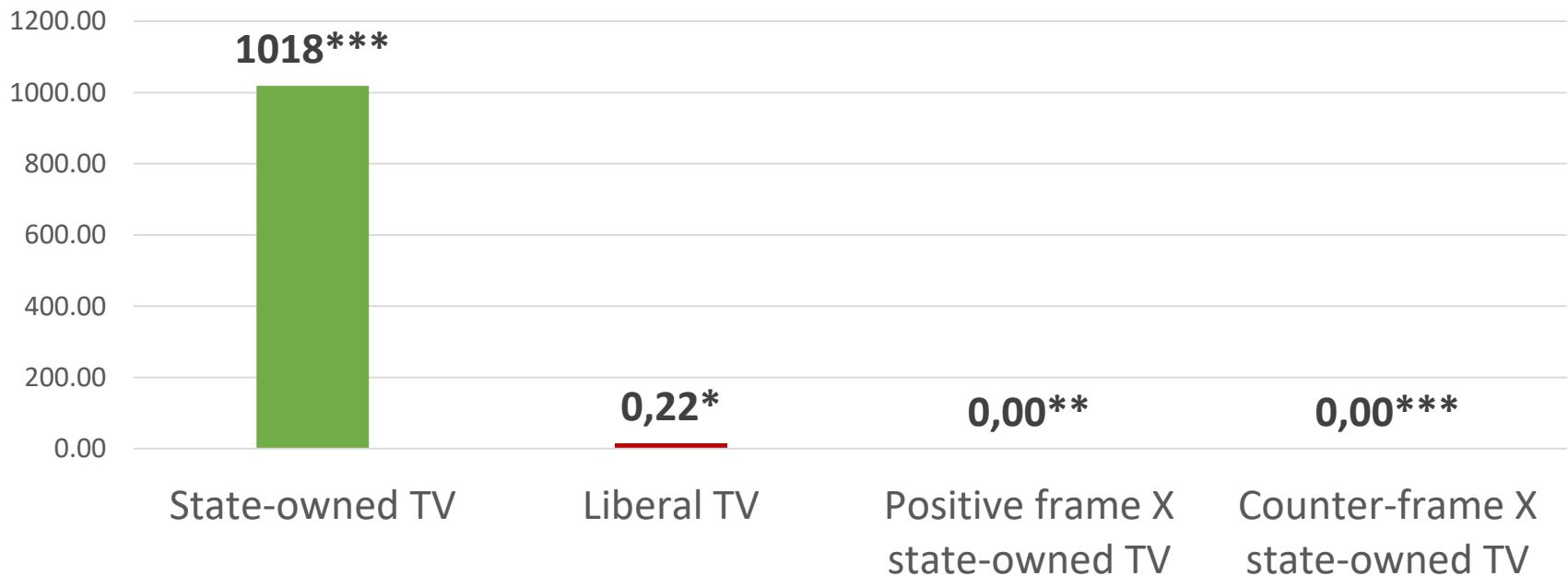
- Participation in any condition decreased proportion in a week after discussion (delayed survey)
- Counter-frame decreased proportion in a post-survey



\*\*p<0.01

# Relationship between Russia and the US would improve (logit, pre-post, odds ratios): TV

- A weaker effect of the positive frame on those who watch TV news on state-owned channels
- Stronger effect of the negative frame on those who watch TV news on state-owned channels





# Discussion and Conclusion

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- Counter-framing provoked an opinion change and decreased the evaluation of Russian-American relations.
- Counter-framing effect was stronger among those who watch news on state-owned TV-channels. The effect of a positive framing was weaker.
- Participation in the experiment increased the negative evaluation. This contributes to the literature on the influence of civic talk , everyday political talk, and deliberation on the rationalization of public opinion.

# Limitations

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- Based on a non-random sample of educated younger people (students).
- Our results rely on a gender biased sample with a prevailing number of women.
- We randomized on a group rather than on the individual level.
- Our results are based on the analysis of one specific topic.
- We used printed text as an experimental treatment.

**Thank you for your attention!**

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