

Across 26 countries, people prefer individual control over online choice architectures

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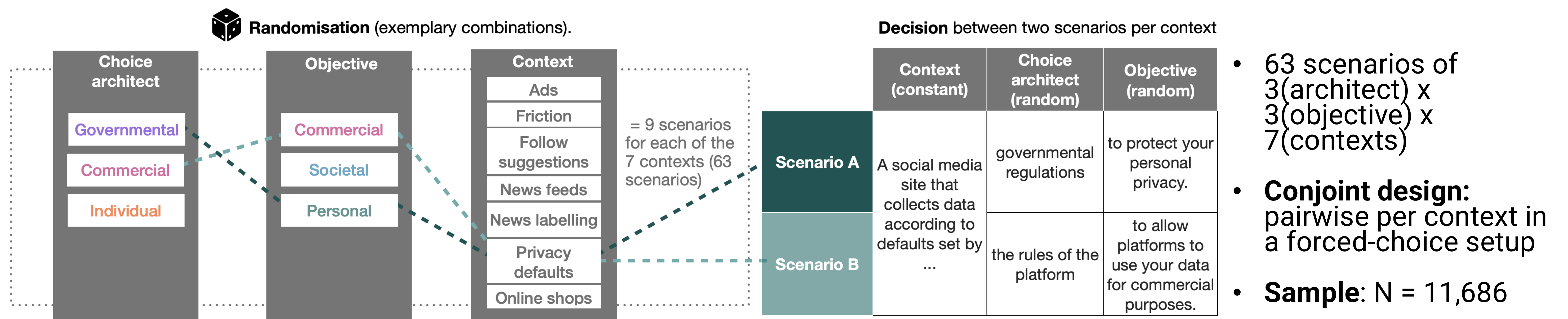


Large online platforms hold great power over online choice architectures, that is, the environments in which people make decisions [1, 2].

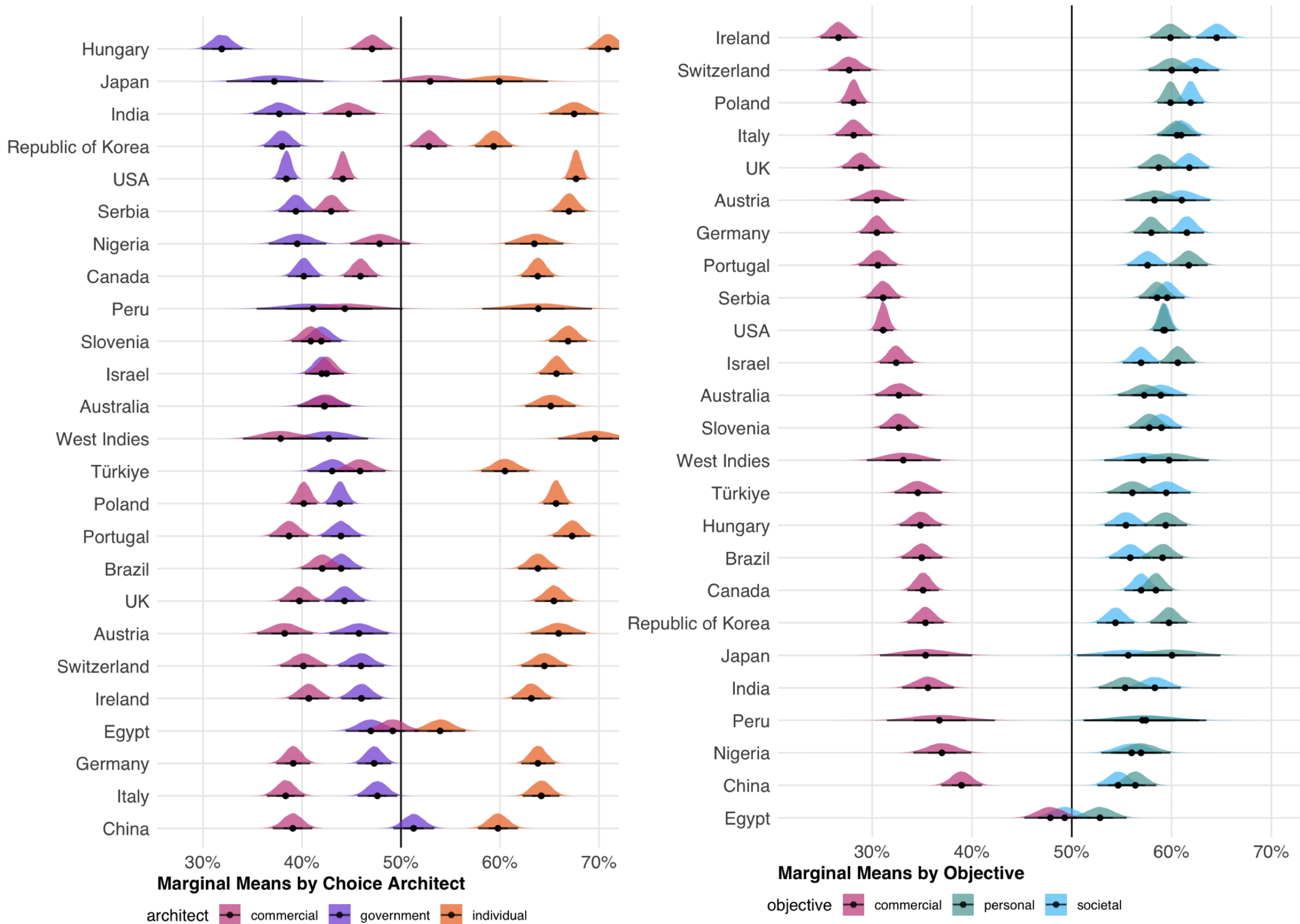
In principle, there are **three possible choice architects** that can be in charge of at least parts of the online choice architecture: **commercial entities, government bodies and individuals themselves** [3] can shape online environments for different objectives.

Do the current design principles and their underlying objectives align with people's preferences?

This study investigates people's preferences from 26 countries regarding who should be in charge of regulating online choice architectures (**platforms, governmental institutions or the individual**) and for what objectives (**commercial, societal, personal**) such choice architectures should be designed.



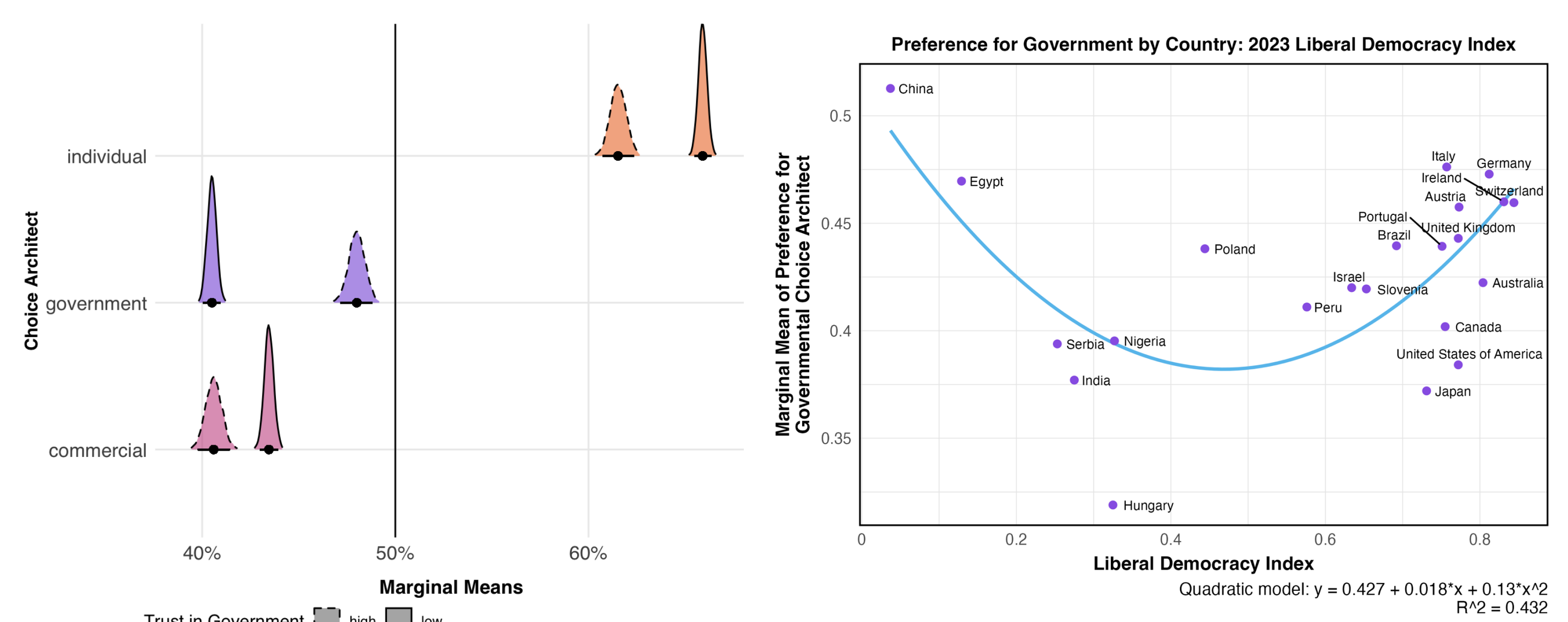
Finding 1 - People across all countries have a preference for more agency over their online choice architectures, and dislike a design for commercial objectives.



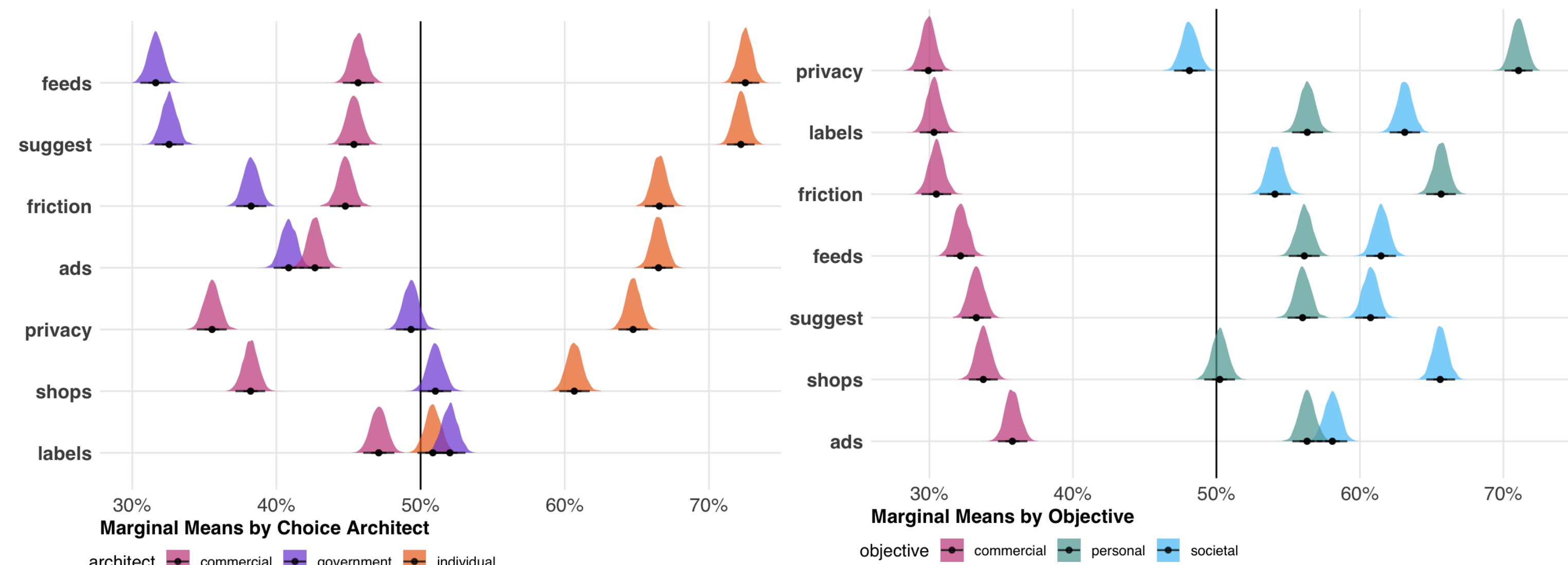
Marginal means show the descriptive favourability of a scenario including that feature (here shown: median posterior marginal means).

Density plots show Bayesian posterior distributions.

Finding 2 - The preference for a governmental or commercial architect is mediated by e.g. trust in the government and country-level indices of liberal democracy.



Finding 3 - The preference for choice architects and objectives varies by the context of the online choice architecture.



Conclusion - Our findings imply a **dissatisfaction with the status quo**: users want more agency in their online environments. When designing policies to regulate the online space, it is therefore crucial to empower users to become citizen choice architects.

References

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Preprint

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