Breaking News: How Media Coverage Shapes Criminal Justice Responses to Violence against Women

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Abstract

In many countries, most cases of violence against women never reach court. I study how media coverage affects the criminal justice response to this violence, combining novel data on nearly 800,000 sexual and intimate partner violence cases in France, covering prosecution through final ruling, with daily TV news broadcasts. Exploiting the quasi-random timing of news stories, I find that coverage of (unrelated) cases of violence against women increases the rate at which prosecutors pursue cases by 2.3% over the following week, with a significantly larger effect after #MeToo. Judges do not become more stringent that week, and the marginal cases prosecuted following coverage appear just as likely to be convicted as other cases. This shift is consistent with news stories drawing prosecutors' attention to cases of violence against women, particularly when public scrutiny raises the cost of wrongful dismissals. These results suggest that prosecutors dismiss viable cases in the absence of media coverage and that coverage thus strengthens the criminal justice response to this violence.

JEL codes – D91, J16, K14, K42, L82
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1 Introduction

Violence against women (VAW) is a pervasive social and public health issue, with one in three women worldwide reporting having experienced physical or sexual violence in their lifetime (WHO 2021). Beyond the immediate physical and mental harm, such violence can have long-lasting economic consequences for victims' education and employment (Borker 2021; Folke and Rickne 2022; Adams et al. 2024, 2026; Batut et al. 2026). Yet criminal justice systems in many countries still struggle to respond effectively, as reflected in widespread underreporting and low prosecution rates (Daly and Bouhours 2010).[1] These crimes typically occur in private settings, with few witnesses and little physical evidence, which often leaves considerable room for discretion in how cases are processed. This discretion can make institutional responses to VAW sensitive to context, including harmful norms and beliefs[2] that may influence how police, prosecutors, and judges handle these crimes (Sleath and Bull 2017; Bielen et al. 2022), as well as growing public attention to this violence. But does greater visibility of VAW change criminal justice responses?

This paper answers this question by examining the effect of media coverage of VAW along the criminal justice pipeline. Assessing whether this effect is causal is empirically challenging without granular data and a source of exogenous variation to address reverse causality. Moreover, it is not clear ex ante whether media influence is desirable: while it could correct an under-response to VAW, it could also push decision-makers toward overpunishment (Tversky and Kahneman 1974; Bordalo et al. 2015). I address these issues by combining high-frequency data on the daily content of France's main 8 p.m. national TV newscasts, which reach over 10 million viewers each day, with rich, novel administrative microdata on the universe of cases handled in French correctional and juvenile courts between 2012 and 2019. These case-level data contain detailed information on 792,802 cases of sexual or intimate partner violence and track each case through every stage of the criminal justice process, from registration to sentencing. Leveraging quasi-random variation in the timing of TV news stories, this setting enables causal identification of the impact of news coverage of VAW on prosecutors' and judges' decisions.

Prosecutors are central to the criminal justice response. They dismiss about three-quarters of sexual and intimate partner violence cases at the outset, mainly on evidentiary grounds that typically involve a high degree of prosecutorial discretion. Dismissal is thus the main source of case attrition, whereby cases are dropped or fail to progress through

[1] For example, in France, victimization surveys estimate that only 10–20% of victims of sexual or intimate partner violence report their assault to the authorities (SSMSI 2019). Administrative data further indicate that, among these reported cases, 70–80% are dismissed by prosecutors in correctional and juvenile courts, and 15–30% result in conviction in those courts (Stricot 2024).

[2] Social psychology has long documented the existence of rape myths, defined by Burt (1980) as "prejudicial, stereotyped, or false beliefs about rape, rape victims, and rapists" (p. 217), such as the belief that women lie about rape or are responsible for it (Lonsway and Fitzgerald 1994), and the related "real rape" stereotype of a sudden violent attack by a stranger in a deserted public space (Estrich 1987).

the criminal justice process. Understanding what drives this attrition is crucial, as it weakens accountability and deterrence, and may further discourage victims from coming forward (Wieberneit et al. 2024). By contrast, 94% of prosecuted cases result in conviction. Since plea bargaining plays only a minor role in France, this high conviction rate reflects judges' rulings at trial rather than negotiated guilty pleas. This pattern suggests that the primary margin for adjustment lies at the prosecution stage, consistent with a model of decision-making under constraints: in justice systems with limited resources, pursuing cases with weak evidence is costly when conviction is unlikely (Landes 1971; Easterbrook 1983). As a result, prosecutors may adopt implicit evidentiary thresholds to decide which cases proceed to trial, which could be affected by extraneous factors such as the media.

I measure TV news coverage of VAW by identifying news stories on this violence in the 8 p.m. newscasts through keyword searches and content classification. The empirical strategy exploits the quasi-random timing of such news stories relative to case processing in the short run. Building on Philippe and Ouss (2018), I compare prosecution, conviction, and sentencing decisions made shortly after isolated days of news coverage with those made during periods without such coverage. Identification relies on the assumption that, absent news coverage, outcomes in the days following TV news stories about VAW would have evolved similarly to those in the days following no stories, conditional on case characteristics and seasonality. Empirically, I show that cases decided just after news stories are similar to other cases. I rule out reverse causality by focusing on news stories about crimes against women that do not mention trials or legislation and are unlikely to relate to the cases under examination. To ensure that results are not driven by changes in the composition of cases entering the system, I also examine effects on reporting.

I find that routine TV news coverage of VAW significantly influences prosecutorial decisions in the short run. Each news story on crimes against women broadcast in the week before a decision reduces the probability that the case is dismissed by 0.54 percentage points. Relative to a baseline prosecution rate of 23%, this corresponds to a 2.3% increase in the likelihood of prosecuting sexual or intimate partner violence, translating to up to about 300 additional cases prosecuted per year. The effect shows no pre-trends and emerges only after the #MeToo movement, when it reaches more than twice the full-period estimate. It is concentrated in cases where prosecutors can more easily shift toward prosecution, such as those dismissed on factual rather than legal grounds, decided more quickly, or involving several types of offense. News stories also lead to a modest increase in the number of reported cases on the day of the broadcast, without changing reporting lag or case composition, so this inflow is unlikely to drive the prosecutorial response.

By contrast, news coverage of crimes against women has no direct effect on judges' conviction or sentencing decisions in the following week. But does the higher likelihood of prosecution bring weaker cases to trial? If prosecutors were lowering their standards in response to increased public attention, conviction rates would be expected to drop.

However, examining long-term outcomes, I find that the marginal cases prosecuted following news coverage seem just as likely to result in conviction as other cases. The absence of direct effects on judges and the typically long interval between prosecution and conviction make it unlikely that judges are also lowering their threshold for conviction. These results suggest that media attention primarily affects the prosecution stage without compromising case quality: cases that might have been dismissed without media attention were legally viable and met the evidentiary threshold for conviction.

I conduct several placebo tests to ensure that the results are not driven by other underlying trends. In particular, I show that news coverage of crimes against women does not affect the propensity to dismiss other crimes against persons, and that news unrelated to VAW does not affect the propensity to dismiss VAW cases either. A falsification test using 500 randomly assigned fake treatment dates similarly yields no significant effect. The results also hold when controlling for periods of heightened visibility of women or for VAW-related legislative changes, which helps rule out potential confounding factors. Finally, the findings are robust to a wide range of alternative specifications, samples, and measures of news coverage, including limiting the sample to cases registered before the news coverage, controlling for holidays, removing weekends, and excluding each news day, month, or county in leave-one-out analyses.

I investigate four plausible mechanisms for these results: learning, salience, reputational concerns, and increased effort. The patterns are hard to reconcile with learning or increased effort. The effect fades within days and does not increase with the number of stories, whereas new information should have lasting effects. There is also no sign of systemic delays or crowding out of other crimes against persons, suggesting that this shift does not stem from a reallocation of resources. Instead, the patterns point to salience and reputational concerns as complementary channels. Prosecutors, who must triage a large flow of cases, appear to respond to news stories that temporarily draw their attention to VAW cases. This response emerges only after #MeToo and is absent among independent judges, consistent with a shift in norms and heightened public scrutiny that may have raised the reputational or internalized cost of wrongful dismissals. Moreover, I find no robust evidence that news on other serious offenses (e.g., drug trafficking or theft) causes a similar response for these offenses. The prosecutorial response to news thus seems specific to the discretionary margins and normative stakes of VAW cases.

Together, these findings underscore the pivotal role of prosecutors in the criminal justice response to VAW. Although prosecutors dismiss about three-quarters of cases, this initial decision proves malleable: media coverage increases prosecution rates in the short run, bringing additional viable cases to trial without affecting judges' conviction and sentencing decisions. Case outcomes are therefore not determined solely by evidentiary strength but also depend on contextual factors such as public attention to VAW. This reveals that in resource-constrained environments, broad prosecutorial discretion can lead

to the suboptimal attrition of cases that could have resulted in a conviction. From a policy perspective, these results suggest that the visibility of such violence can improve how the criminal justice system handles it, but only temporarily, and that reducing case attrition durably may require greater prosecutorial capacity and clearer priorities for these cases.

This paper relates to three strands of the literature. First, I contribute to the literature on institutional responses to gender-based violence. Prior work has examined how reforms of policing, prosecution, and courts (Aizer and Dal Bó 2009; Iyengar 2009; Chin and Cunningham 2019; Amaral et al. 2023; García-Hombrados et al. 2024; Sviatschi and Trako 2024), as well as women's representation in institutions (Iyer et al. 2012; Miller and Segal 2019; Amaral et al. 2021), affect this violence and its reporting. Much less is known, however, about how changes in public attention shape these responses. My results indicate that even short-lived shifts in attention can strengthen the criminal justice response to VAW by bringing viable cases to trial. While previous studies have linked social movements like #MeToo to increased reporting (Gauthier 2022; Levy and Mattsson 2026), I show that it also marked a turning point in how routine media coverage influences criminal justice actors, with prosecutors responding to such coverage only after the movement. These results complement those of Cai et al. (2024), who show that female judges in China made harsher decisions after #MeToo, and of Marchenko and Pakzad-Hurson (2025), who find that the movement made sexual harassment complaints more likely to succeed.

Second, I build on a growing literature showing that judicial decisions respond to extraneous factors, such as working conditions (Danziger et al. 2011; Heyes and Saberian 2019; Shumway and Wilson 2022), emotional shocks (Eren and Mocan 2018; Chen and Philippe 2023), and salience (Philippe and Ouss 2018; McConnell and Rasul 2021; Bharti and Roy 2023; Shayo and Zussman 2011). This research has largely focused on sentencing decisions by judges and juries, using highly selected samples of cases that reach trial. By contrast, despite prosecutors' central role in case attrition (Daly and Bouhours 2010; Hohl and Stanko 2015), prosecutorial decision-making remains comparatively understudied, particularly outside the United States, where they are usually appointed rather than elected (Garoupa 2012; Tonry 2012). Notable recent exceptions examine how highly salient events affect prosecutors in the Netherlands and find mixed evidence of a prosecutorial response (Bielen and Grajzl 2021; Hanemaaijer et al. 2026). I add to this literature by shifting the focus upstream, to prosecutorial decisions on the near-universe of cases, in a setting where prosecutors and judges are career civil servants. The results highlight prosecutorial discretion as an important margin through which external attention shapes the handling of VAW cases, in line with research showing that the motivations of public sector workers affect how they use their discretion (Prendergast 2007; Chalfin and Gonçalves 2026).

Third, I add to the literature on the effects of media on policy-relevant behaviors (reviewed in DellaVigna and La Ferrara 2015), particularly on how media coverage shapes the decisions of public officials (Strömberg 2004; Eisensee and Strömberg 2007; Snyder

and Strömberg 2010; Durante and Zhuravskaya 2018), public perceptions of their conduct (Moreno-Medina® et al. 2025), and how they adjust their behavior in response (Pope et al. 2018). In the United States, media attention affects police clearance rates (Mastrorocco and Ornaghi 2025) and judicial decisions, especially where judges are elected (Lim 2015; Lim et al. 2015; Ash and Poyker 2024). Using the same 8 p.m. news archives, Philippe and Ouss (2018) show that unrelated crime news lengthens the sentences imposed by lay jurors for serious offenses in France, whereas professional judges do not respond. I take this approach one step further by exploiting new administrative data that follow each case from registration to sentencing, and show that the response occurs mainly at the prosecution stage rather than at trial. While prior work shows that media exposure can shape public attitudes and victims' reporting behavior in the context of gender-based violence (Jensen and Oster 2009; Colagrossi et al. 2023), evidence on its effects on criminal justice actors remains scarce, with limited findings from India on conviction decisions for sexual violence (Vasishth 2022). By comparing news on VAW with news on other crimes, I can also show that the prosecutorial response appears specific to this violence.

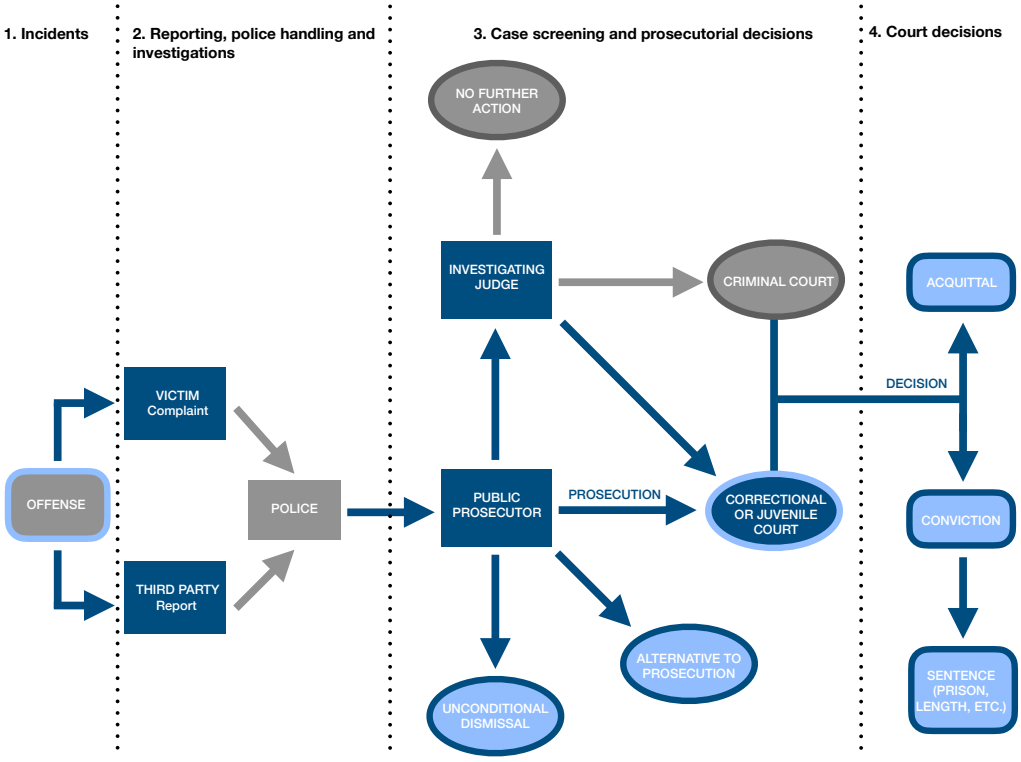
The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 provides a brief overview of the institutional background. Section 3 presents the data and some descriptive statistics. Section 4 outlines the theoretical basis and empirical strategy. Section 5 presents the main results, discussed in Section 6. Finally, Section 7 concludes.

2 Institutional background

The French criminal justice system The French criminal justice system consists of three main stages shown in Figure 1, in which police officers, prosecutors, and judges each make key decisions. All of these actors are civil servants affiliated with the Ministry of the Interior or the Ministry of Justice, with specific provisions for judges, such as guarantees of independence and security of tenure. Unlike in the United States, where many prosecutors and judges are elected, prosecutors and judges in France are appointed by presidential decree on the recommendation of the Ministry of Justice, after passing competitive entrance exams and completing a formal training program. Their careers do not depend on electoral or government cycles.

Criminal proceedings typically begin when an offense is reported to the police, through either a complaint filed by the victim or a report submitted by a third party, such as a witness. Once an offense is reported, the police must immediately forward information about it to the public prosecutor. The law requires this transmission to occur as quickly as possible, within a matter of hours or days (Article 40 of the French Code of Criminal Procedure). The public prosecutor may also become aware of an offense directly, through complaints or reports filed with their office, or through civil servants, who are legally required to report any offense they learn of.

Figure 1: Chronology of the French criminal procedure



Notes: Main steps of the criminal procedure in France, from offense reporting to the defendant's trial. The data contain information only about cases registered by the authorities, without details on the police handling of cases. Among those registered cases, they provide information on the universe of completed cases handled by the criminal justice system, excluding those dropped by the investigating judge or sent to the criminal court (steps shown in gray). In 2019, 84% of cases prosecuted by the public prosecutor's office were brought before correctional courts, 8% before juvenile courts, 5% before police courts, and 3% were referred to investigating judges (SDSE 2019).

Prosecutors and judges In France, the public prosecutor is the magistrate who advocates for the enforcement of the law and leads criminal proceedings on behalf of society (Articles 53 to 80 of the French Code of Criminal Procedure). Prosecutors' authority primarily applies to criminal matters, from the initiation of the police investigation to the trial of the defendant. Prosecutors are responsible for the legal classification of the facts and have sole authority to decide how a case is handled. For example, they supervise police investigations and police custody, and decide whether to bring a case to court. Each court has its own public prosecutor's office, composed of a chief prosecutor and several deputy prosecutors, who function as a single body. Members of the public prosecutor's office are considered indivisible and interchangeable, meaning that any of them may represent the public prosecutor's office at any stage of the proceedings.[3] Prosecutors are subject to a hierarchical structure and are subordinate to the Ministry of Justice. They usually hold a

[3]In 2019, there were about 2,100 full-time-equivalent prosecutors across all French jurisdictions and about 7,400 professional judges in judicial and administrative courts (SDSE 2019). This corresponds to about 3 prosecutors and 11 judges per 100,000 inhabitants, well below the respective European medians of 11.2 and 17.6 in 2022, while French prosecution offices receive almost three times as many criminal cases per inhabitant as the European median (CEPEJ 2024). By comparison, US state prosecutor offices employed about 11 attorneys per 100,000 inhabitants in 2020 (Bureau of Justice Statistics 2024).

given post for several years (often 3 to 7), but may be transferred or promoted over the course of their careers and reassigned without their consent. They receive directives and circulars aimed at implementing a comprehensive and uniform criminal policy across the country, such as guidelines for handling cases and prioritizing certain offenses. In addition, chief prosecutors may issue local guidelines for their own court.

By contrast, judges are responsible for applying the law and delivering decisions with full independence and impartiality. In criminal matters, they determine guilt and impose sentences on convicted offenders. Their role is to examine case files, conduct hearings, and render judgments in the name of the people. Their status guarantees independence and security of tenure, meaning that they cannot be reassigned without their consent and that the government cannot interfere with their career advancement.

Prosecutors' handling of a case After learning of an offense, prosecutors are responsible for overseeing the police investigation and have several options for directing the case based on the information received (Figure 1). If they decide not to prosecute, they can issue a pure dismissal, for instance, if the perpetrator is unknown or if prosecution seems inappropriate. There is no further investigation, no trial, and the case is closed.[4] When a case is dismissed, the public prosecutor's office must notify the complainant and state the reason for dismissal. Prosecutors can also order alternatives to prosecution (e.g., reparation of damage, compensation for the victim, therapeutic injunction, reminder of the law), which also legally result in a dismissal and do not appear on the suspect's criminal record.[5]

Alternatively, if prosecutors find sufficient grounds, they can prosecute the defendant. Prosecuted cases are referred to a trial court or to an investigating judge, depending on the seriousness and complexity of the facts. If further investigation is needed, prosecutors can refer the case to an investigating judge, a referral that is mandatory for felonies. The investigating judge can then decide to drop the case or send it to court for trial. Among prosecuted cases tried in correctional courts, 24% of sexual violence cases were referred by an investigating judge, compared with less than 1% of intimate partner violence cases (Appendix Figure B.1). Prosecutors can choose among several procedural routes to bring a case before a court for trial (e.g., immediate appearance, summons, guilty-plea procedure). Each has distinct implications, for instance regarding the time to judgment, the possibility of pretrial detention, or the severity of the sentence. Unlike in the United States, plea bargaining plays only a limited role, especially for the cases I study: the

[4]Dismissal is not final: prosecutors can reopen the case and prosecute at any time until the statute of limitations expires or the perpetrator dies. The complainant can also contest the dismissal and has legal means to ensure that action is taken, by filing a complaint with an investigating judge (complaint with civil-party application), by referring the case to court through a direct summons (although this is rare in practice), or by filing a civil claim for damages—all at their own expense.

[5]The only exception is the penal composition (*composition pénale*), a more formal alternative to prosecution that is recorded on the criminal record.

guilty-plea procedure[6] accounts for only 10% of prosecuted intimate partner violence cases and 3% of sexual violence cases over 2012–2019 (Appendix Figure B.1).

Criminal judgment and types of courts A judgment is then handed down by the court, where judges determine whether the defendant is guilty, resulting in either a conviction or an acquittal. Three main types of courts handle criminal matters in France: (i) correctional courts (*tribunal correctionnel*), (ii) criminal courts (*cour d'assises*), and (iii) juvenile courts (*tribunal pour enfants*). The most serious offenses (felonies, e.g., murder or rape), which carry a maximum prison sentence of more than 10 years, are tried in criminal courts, composed of professional judges and lay jurors.[7] Other offenses (misdemeanors, e.g., sexual assault), which carry a maximum sentence of up to 10 years, are tried in correctional courts, composed solely of professional judges. Misdemeanors committed by defendants younger than 18 and felonies committed by defendants younger than 16 are tried in juvenile courts.[8] This paper studies cases dismissed by prosecutors or tried at first instance in correctional and juvenile courts, as the data cover neither jury trials nor appeals. In these lower, non-jury criminal courts, guilt and sentencing are both determined in a single judgment, delivered at the end of the hearing or at a later date set by the court. The decision can be appealed by the defendant or the prosecutor. Further details on the French criminal justice system are provided in Appendix A.

3 Data and descriptive statistics

3.1 Criminal justice data

Data source The criminal justice data used in this paper are extracted from *Cassiopée*, the case management software of the French Ministry of Justice. This software is used by court clerks and prosecutors' offices in French first-instance courts to process all cases involving minor offenses, misdemeanors, and felonies, committed by individuals (adults

[6]The guilty-plea procedure (*comparution sur reconnaissance préalable de culpabilité*, CRPC), introduced in 2004, allows defendants who admit the facts to accept a sentence proposed by the prosecutor, subject to a judge's approval. In contrast to plea bargaining in the United States, charges cannot be negotiated: the prosecutor proposes a sentence for the offense as charged, which the defendant accepts or refuses. The procedure is also excluded by law for sexual assaults and violent offenses punishable by more than five years of imprisonment (Article 495-7 of the French Code of Criminal Procedure).

[7]Rape is a felony under French law and should therefore be tried in criminal courts (*cour d'assises*), but many rapes are downgraded to misdemeanors (*correctionnalisation*) and tried in correctional courts. Law No. 2004-204 of March 9, 2004, legalized this practice to relieve congestion in criminal courts. Studies of court files estimate that almost half of the sexual assaults prosecuted in correctional courts are reclassified rapes (Cromer et al. 2017). In 2018, 80% of rape convictions were handed down by criminal courts and 20% by other courts (SDSE 2019). Results are robust to excluding rapes from the analysis.

[8]At first instance, correctional courts are made up of three professional judges or a single judge for less serious offenses. Juvenile courts are made up of a juvenile judge and two lay assessors; felonies committed at age 16 or 17 are tried by a juvenile criminal court (*cour d'assises des mineurs*), made up of professional judges and lay jurors.

and minors) or legal entities. It enables court clerks and magistrates to keep track of all ongoing cases for administrative purposes. The French Ministry of Justice also uses these data for statistical purposes.

The microdata extracted from this software provide unique and rich information on all completed cases received by prosecutors and judges, classified as dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts from 2012 to 2023.[9] The software was gradually rolled out to all public prosecutors' offices between 2008 and 2012, with data completeness ensured from 2012 onward. However, since data are available only for completed cases and not for those still being processed, the Ministry of Justice's statistics department considers them reliable only up to two years before the latest release. For these reasons, and because criminal justice activity was substantially disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, I limit the analysis to the 2012–2019 period. With one observation per charge (suspect × offense), the initial dataset contains over 22 million observations.

This source contains information on the incident (e.g., nature of the offense, number of offenses, number of victims), the suspect (e.g., gender, age, nationality, recidivism), the court that handled the case (type and location), the prosecutor's decision to dismiss or prosecute the case and the associated grounds, the judge's decision to convict or acquit the defendant and the associated sentence, and the date of each stage in the process. Information pertains only to the criminal justice process, with no data on police handling, preventing me from accessing direct information on police practices related to the recording, forwarding, or investigation of cases. Because I do not observe the exact date of the complaint, I approximate the reporting date by the date on which the case is first registered in the criminal justice system. This approximation is reasonable because the police must legally transmit cases to prosecutors almost immediately (see Section 2). In addition, the data include no information on individual prosecutors or judges, such as their gender or age, as French law prohibits using their identity data to analyze their professional practices.[10]

Case identification When a case arrives at the public prosecutor's office, it is assigned a main case type (NATAFF) from an official nomenclature, which provides an initial classification.[11] The NATAFF code is present in all cases and is used to classify them into broad categories throughout the referral process. Using this code, I restrict the sample to cases of sexual violence (rape, sexual assault, or sexual harassment) or intimate partner violence (violence by a spouse, partner, or ex-partner). The resulting sample contains

[9]The data are anonymized and accessible only through a highly secure platform, the Secure Data Access Center (CASD).

[10]Article 33 of Law No. 2019-222 of March 23, 2019, on the 2018–2022 Programming and Reform of the Justice System.

[11]The nature of the case (NATAFF) is described using a 350-item nomenclature (subject to minor variations over time). A single case can be assigned up to three different NATAFF codes. I identify cases as relevant if at least one NATAFF code of interest is present among the three, regardless of their order.

792,802 charge-level observations, involving 703,695 identified suspects and 732,644 case files (3.6% of all cases handled by the criminal justice system). For simplicity, I refer to these charge-level observations as cases throughout the paper. Marital rapes are generally classified as intimate partner violence. When there is more than one incident of sexual violence, the classification refers to the most serious. However, the NATAFF classification may not capture all cases of intimate partner violence, as some may fall under other categories of physical violence (e.g., assault resulting in a temporary inability to work). These cases cannot be identified systematically by other means, in particular when they are dismissed—though this limitation appears to affect only a very small proportion of cases. Further details on case identification are provided in Appendix B.

3.2 Descriptive statistics on criminal justice data

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics on sexual and intimate partner violence cases received by the French criminal justice system and dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts between 2012 and 2019. On average, 305 new cases reach the criminal justice system each day, 64% of which are cases of intimate partner violence, 23% sexual assault, 12% rape, and 1% sexual harassment. The vast majority of cases were referred by the police (87%), while 7% originated from reports by other government agencies and 5% from individuals (e.g., victims, witnesses) who approached the prosecutor directly. Suspects are predominantly male (90%) and born in France (76%), with an average age of 36.2 years. Fourteen percent of prosecuted defendants were repeat offenders (6% in sexual violence cases and 17% in intimate partner violence cases).

The prosecution rate is low: only 23% of cases are prosecuted on average (17% for sexual violence and 29% for intimate partner violence), with some variation across courts (from 12% to 39%, with half of the courts between 21% and 27%; Appendix Figure B.2). As a result, this initial decision drives much of the case attrition. Figure 2 shows that 21% of all cases are dismissed with an alternative to prosecution (mostly a simple reminder of the law or mediation), 7% are dismissed following a failure to prosecute (i.e., on public-interest grounds, notably because the victim does not comply with requests for information or because the perpetrator cannot be found), and about half are dismissed because they are deemed non-prosecutable. Within this last category, the most common reason is that the offense is insufficiently established (36% of all cases). Such a dismissal does not imply that the offense did not occur, but rather that there is not enough evidence or that the facts are not clearly established. Because this ground for dismissal hinges on evidentiary assessments, it entails a high degree of prosecutorial discretion and is particularly common in sexual and intimate partner violence cases.

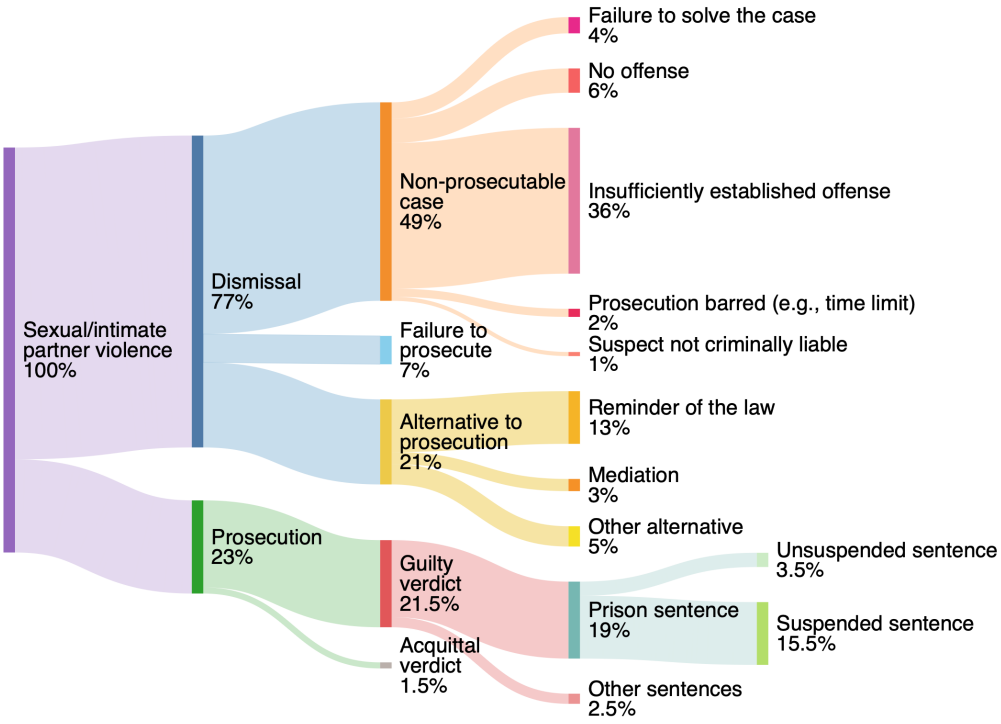
By comparison, Appendix Figure B.3 shows that the dismissal rate for all other types of offenses—mainly thefts or burglaries (28.62%), traffic offenses such as driving under

Table 1: Summary statistics on criminal cases of sexual and intimate partner violence

	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
	A. Sexual and intimate partner violence cases (N = 792,802)				
Number of new cases per day	305.20	118.75	333.00	77.00	2044.00
Offense:					
Rape	0.12	0.33	0.00	0.00	1.00
Sexual assault	0.23	0.42	0.00	0.00	1.00
Sexual harassment	0.01	0.11	0.00	0.00	1.00
Intimate partner violence	0.64	0.48	1.00	0.00	1.00
Origin:					
Police	0.87	0.34	1.00	0.00	1.00
Persons	0.05	0.22	0.00	0.00	1.00
Justice	0.01	0.11	0.00	0.00	1.00
Other public agencies	0.07	0.25	0.00	0.00	1.00
Prosecution rate	0.23	0.42	0.00	0.00	1.00
Conviction rate (if prosecuted)	0.94	0.24	1.00	0.00	1.00
Prison sentence (days) (if convicted)	274.80	330.25	180.00	6.00	6480.00
Time from registration to judgment (days) (if prosecuted)	255.61	336.22	137.00	0.00	2881.00
Time from registration to dismissal (days) (if dismissed)	206.88	265.01	115.00	0.00	2873.00
Suspect:					
Fraction male	0.90	0.30	1.00	0.00	1.00
Age	36.22	13.54	35.00	10.00	96.00
Fraction French-born	0.76	0.43	1.00	0.00	1.00
Fraction recidivist (if prosecuted)	0.14	0.35	0.00	0.00	1.00
	B. Sexual violence cases (N = 279,511)				
Number of new cases per day	111.33	54.90	124.00	9.00	663.00
Origin:					
Police	0.71	0.46	1.00	0.00	1.00
Persons	0.10	0.29	0.00	0.00	1.00
Justice	0.03	0.16	0.00	0.00	1.00
Other public agencies	0.17	0.37	0.00	0.00	1.00
Prosecution rate	0.17	0.37	0.00	0.00	1.00
Conviction rate (if prosecuted)	0.90	0.30	1.00	0.00	1.00
Prison sentence (days) (if convicted)	557.94	533.32	360.00	8.00	5400.00
Time from registration to judgment (days) (if prosecuted)	550.81	502.60	408.00	0.00	2881.00
Time from registration to dismissal (days) (if dismissed)	246.36	306.30	139.00	0.00	2862.00
Suspect:					
Fraction male	0.94	0.23	1.00	0.00	1.00
Age	32.08	16.76	30.00	10.00	96.00
Fraction French-born	0.81	0.39	1.00	0.00	1.00
Fraction recidivist (if prosecuted)	0.06	0.23	0.00	0.00	1.00
	C. Intimate partner violence cases (N = 519,183)				
Number of new cases per day	196.37	68.75	208.00	52.00	1407.00
Origin:					
Police	0.96	0.19	1.00	0.00	1.00
Persons	0.02	0.15	0.00	0.00	1.00
Justice	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.00	1.00
Other public agencies	0.01	0.10	0.00	0.00	1.00
Prosecution rate	0.29	0.45	0.00	0.00	1.00
Conviction rate (if prosecuted)	0.95	0.21	1.00	0.00	1.00
Prison sentence (days) (if convicted)	204.62	201.37	150.00	6.00	6480.00
Time from registration to judgment (days) (if prosecuted)	173.59	207.73	116.00	0.00	2797.00
Time from registration to dismissal (days) (if dismissed)	181.99	232.02	103.00	0.00	2873.00
Suspect:					
Fraction male	0.88	0.32	1.00	0.00	1.00
Age	37.83	11.64	36.00	10.00	96.00
Fraction French-born	0.73	0.44	1.00	0.00	1.00
Fraction recidivist (if prosecuted)	0.17	0.37	0.00	0.00	1.00

Notes: Summary statistics on all sexual and intimate partner violence cases that arrived in the justice system from 2012 onward and were either dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019. Panels B and C overlap because some cases involve both sexual and intimate partner violence.
Reading: Between 2012 and 2019, the French criminal justice system registered an average of 305 new sexual and intimate partner violence cases per day, 64% of which involved intimate partner violence. Among these cases, 23% were prosecuted, and 94% of the prosecuted defendants were convicted.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

Figure 2: Criminal justice handling of sexual and intimate partner violence (2012–2019)



Notes: Share of cases at each stage of the criminal justice process. The sample consists of all sexual and intimate partner violence cases that arrived in the justice system from 2012 onward and were either dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 792{,}802$).
Reading: Of all sexual and intimate partner violence cases completed between 2012 and 2019, 77% were dismissed, with 49% of all cases dismissed because they were deemed non-prosecutable. Overall, 23% of cases were prosecuted and 21.5% ended in a guilty verdict, with a prison sentence imposed in 19% of all cases.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

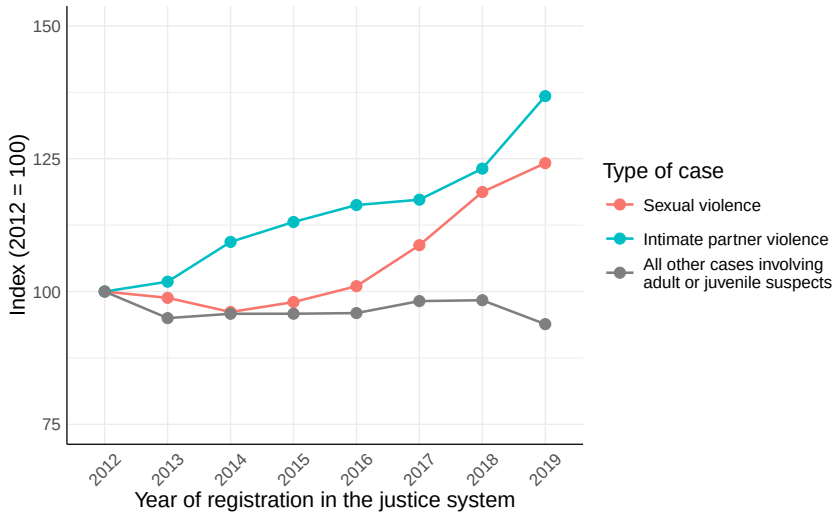
the influence of alcohol or drugs (8.76%), physical violence (8.40%), or property damage (8.34%)—is also very high (80%). However, these cases are mainly dismissed due to failure to solve the case, notably because the perpetrator is identified in only three out of five cases. In contrast, perpetrators of sexual and intimate partner violence are identified in 90% of the cases.

Strikingly, once prosecuted, the vast majority of defendants (94%) are found guilty at trial (90% for sexual violence and 95% for intimate partner violence). Across both stages, Figure 2 shows that one fifth of all cases ultimately lead to a conviction and 19% to a prison sentence, but only 3.5% to an unsuspended sentence, in which the offender is incarcerated. These descriptive patterns highlight the considerable power and discretion of French prosecutors, who determine the outcome of most cases, regardless of the type of offense (Appendix Figure B.3). By contrast, there appears to be little room to influence judicial decision-making at the conviction stage since most prosecuted cases result in a conviction.

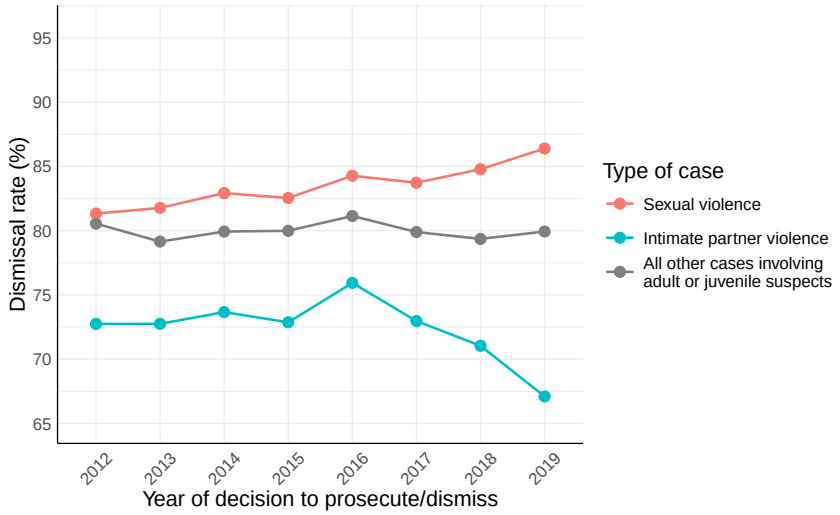
Regarding overall trends, Figure 3a shows that the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered within the criminal justice system increased steadily

Figure 3: Trends in registered cases and dismissal rates, by type of case (2012–2019)

(a) Number of cases registered in the justice system (index, 2012 = 100)



(b) Dismissal rate



Notes: Trends in sexual violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), and all other cases involving adult or juvenile suspects (excluding legal entities) in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019. Panel (a) shows the number of cases registered in the criminal justice system each year, relative to their 2012 level. Panel (b) shows, for each year, the share of cases dismissed by public prosecutors among the cases dismissed or prosecuted that year.
Reading: Compared with 2012, the number of sexual violence cases registered in the justice system increased by 24% in 2019 and the number of IPV cases by 37%, while the dismissal rate for IPV cases decreased from 73% in 2012 to 67% in 2019.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

between 2012 and 2019, while it remained stable (or even decreased slightly) for other types of offense. Appendix Figure B.4 shows the trend in absolute numbers. The rise in sexual violence cases accelerated in 2017, the year when the #MeToo movement[12]

[12]In October 2017, a series of public accusations of sexual harassment and assault in work-related contexts against film producer Harvey Weinstein gave rise to the global #MeToo movement, sparking a flood of statements about experiences of sexual violence. Although the case originated in the United States, it also received wide media coverage in France, leading to the #BalanceTonPorc movement.

emerged. In 2019, the French government also announced a series of new measures to combat domestic violence as part of the *Grenelle des violences conjugales*, held from September to November 2019.[13] This increase more likely reflects a change in victims' behavior (more reporting) than in police behavior (recording more complaints). Indeed, Appendix Figure B.5 shows that the average number of days between the start of the incident and its registration in the criminal justice system has also increased over time, suggesting that victims tend to report older incidents. Survey data point in the same direction: in the French victimization survey, the share of women who declare being victims of such violence is stable over 2012–2019, whereas the share of female victims who file a complaint rises from 2016 onward (Appendix Figure B.6).

Finally, Figure 3b shows a drop in the share of intimate partner violence cases dismissed from 2016 onward, contrasting with a slight increase in the dismissal rate for sexual violence. The rise in dismissals was especially pronounced for rape (from 82% in 2012 to 92% in 2019) and more modest for sexual assault, while the share of sexual harassment cases dismissed fell from 94% to 85% (see Appendix Figure B.7). Many factors could explain these trends, including changes in criminal justice policy after the French government adopted measures to combat domestic violence, and extensions to the statute of limitations for sexual offenses in 2017 and 2018,[14] both of which I account for in the analysis. Moreover, the post-#MeToo increase in sexual violence complaints recorded by the police has been accompanied by a rise in reports of older incidents, which are more difficult to prove and therefore to prosecute (SSMSI 2020).

3.3 Television news data

Data source To measure media coverage of VAW, I use archives of the 8 p.m. news broadcasts (i.e., the prime-time news programs) of the main French national TV channels,[15] collected by the National Audiovisual Institute (INA) from 2000 to 2021 (Lezer 2022). I focus on TV news because television remained one of the main sources of information in France over that period.[16] An example of the data structure appears in

[13]Launched by the French government on September 3, 2019, the *Grenelle des violences conjugales* was a consultation process involving nonprofit organizations, field practitioners, victims' families, and all relevant government agencies. It concluded on November 25, 2019, with a national action plan against intimate partner violence. Most of the resulting measures (including those requiring new legislation, such as the electronic anti-approach bracelet) were implemented from 2020 onward, that is, after the end of my analysis period.

[14]Law No. 2017-242 of February 27, 2017, doubled the standard limitation periods for felonies and misdemeanors, from 10 to 20 years and from 3 to 6 years, respectively, including for rape and sexual assault, while Law No. 2018-703 of August 3, 2018, further extended the limitation period for sexual crimes committed against minors from 20 to 30 years after the victim reaches adulthood.

[15]TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, and Arte.

[16]As highlighted by Kennedy and Prat (2019), the main French media groups are centered on television, which remains citizens' main source of information. The 2021 Reuters Institute Digital News Report confirms this pattern: television was still the primary source of news in France from 2013 to 2021, though its share declined slightly in favor of online media. Relying on TV news also has a methodological

Appendix Table C.1. For each news story, these data provide information on the channel, the date and time of broadcast, the program type, the duration of the story, a title (about 7 words), a short summary (about 48 words), and a list of keywords describing its content (about 12 words). The INA staff manually document information for each show broadcast on TV and assign keywords using a standardized list (Philippe and Ouss 2018). I also have access to the audience ratings for each news broadcast, as calculated by Médiamétrie, the official organization responsible for measuring TV and media audiences in France.

Story identification Using these data, I identify stories on VAW through a keyword search in all text-based variables. I code a news broadcast as featuring a news story about VAW if the title, summary, or keyword variables include words pertaining to sexual violence (rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment) or intimate partner violence and femicides.[17] I make some restrictions to exclude news stories related to violence against children and pedophilia in the Church to focus on women and adolescents only. I also exclude cases taking place abroad (except those involving French nationals or related to #MeToo) to focus on the domestic context of victims, prosecutors, and judges. Appendix Figure C.1 displays the most common keywords that appear in the selected news stories.

I then group these stories into three mutually exclusive categories based on their content: (i) crime reports (e.g., rape, murder, assaults, excluding trials), (ii) trials, and (iii) law and society (e.g., awareness campaigns, legislation or policies to combat VAW, and broader societal issues). Appendix C.1 presents the full list of keywords used to perform this classification. I manually reviewed all news stories in the final sample to discard errors. This methodology gives me 100% precision (zero false positives, or Type I errors) but may still miss some news stories (some false negatives, or Type II errors).

Sample and time restrictions I restrict the news sample to 2012–2019, the period covered by the criminal justice data, and to France's two main free national channels (TF1 and France 2), which are the best documented by INA staff and attract the largest 8 p.m. news audiences (see also Appendix C.2). These two channels had a combined average audience of 10.4 million viewers per day for the 8 p.m. news program over this period (5.8

advantage: the INA data are exhaustive and highly reliable and do not suffer from the limitations of retroactive social media scraping. Appendix C.2 uses survey data from the ELIPSS panel to provide further evidence on television news consumption and viewer profiles. While TV news content is more heavily curated, and viewers of the main 8 p.m. newscasts are older and less educated than the general population, their occupational profile closely mirrors that of the population.

[17]The list builds on the keywords used by the INA to study media coverage of VAW, supplemented with terms that frequently appear in the retrieved stories. The full list of keywords is as follows: rape, sexual violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, street harassment, sexual abuse, molestation, rapist, sexist violence, sexual crime, forced sexual intercourse, intimate partner violence, conjugal violence, femicide, marital drama, crime of passion, gender violence, woman+murder, woman+assault, woman+violence, girl+murder, girl+assault, girl+violence, spouse+murder, spouse+violence, prostitute+murder, and murder+NAME, where NAME is the name of the victim or of the accused in several widely covered murders of women.

million for TF1 and 4.6 million for France 2, out of a French population of 66 million). Together, they drew about 47% of French television viewers (author's calculations using INA data). The prime-time newscast starts at 8 p.m., lasts about 33 minutes, and covers an average of 20 stories on each of these channels.

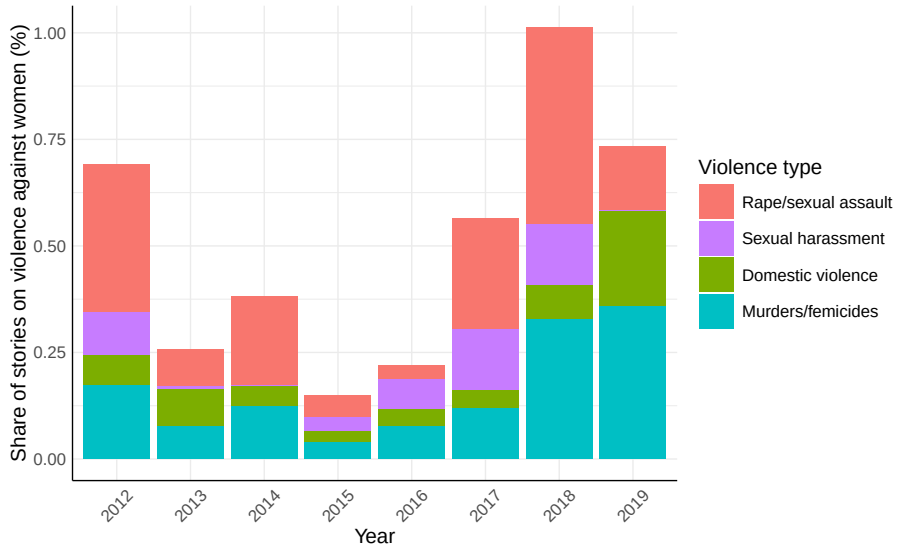
Coverage on these two channels is also a good proxy for broader media attention to VAW, as its monthly share is strongly correlated with that of other national TV channels (0.91) and of radio news (0.81), and more moderately with that of regional TV news (0.62; Appendix Figure C.2). Survey data from the ELIPSS panel show that these two channels remain a major source of news: television is the main source of news for about half of adults, and 52% of TV news viewers most often watch TF1 or France 2 for news (Appendix Figures C.3 and C.4). Although older people are overrepresented among these viewers (57% are aged 50 or over, compared with 47% of the population), their occupational profile is close to that of the population (Appendix Figures C.5 and C.6). In the occupational group that includes magistrates (senior civil servants, intellectual and artistic professions), 97% of respondents follow the news and more than half rely primarily on television or radio (Appendix Figure C.7). News coverage is therefore likely to reach magistrates, either through direct exposure or through professional and social interactions.

3.4 Descriptive statistics on television news data

Figure 4 plots the yearly share of stories on VAW among all stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 over 2012–2019. On average, VAW stories represent 0.5% of all stories, and a similar share of airtime (Appendix Figure C.8). In comparison, stories on crime in general represent about 4% of all stories (Appendix Figure C.9). Rape and sexual assault account for 41% of VAW stories, murders and femicides for 32%, domestic violence for 15%, and sexual harassment for 12%. The share of VAW stories more than doubled after October 2017, peaking at 1% in 2018. This rise coincides with the #MeToo movement, which began in October 2017, and was driven mostly by stories on rape and sexual assault, including allegations against public figures such as two government ministers in early 2018. Coverage of VAW on the six main national channels follows the same pattern over 2000–2021, with its share also more than doubling after October 2017 (Appendix Figure C.10). Coverage of intimate partner violence and femicides has also increased notably since 2018. It rose after the widely covered murder of Alexia Daval by her husband in Haute-Saône and again in late 2019, when the French government announced measures to combat intimate partner violence (*Grenelle des violences conjugales*; see above).

On TF1 and France 2, 43% of VAW stories relate to crime reports, 24% cover trials, and 33% deal with legal and societal aspects of VAW (Appendix Figure C.11). Over the period, the share of trial stories declines and that of law-and-society stories rises, while the share of stories on crime reports remains relatively stable. The vocabulary associated with

Figure 4: Share of stories on violence against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2, by type of violence (2012–2019)



Notes: Yearly share of news stories about violence against women (VAW) among all stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2. VAW stories are identified by keyword search in the title, summary, and keywords of each story and assigned to one of four mutually exclusive types of violence, in this order of priority: murders and femicides, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic violence.
Reading: Over 2012–2019, VAW stories represented on average 0.5% of the stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2. Their share more than doubled after October 2017, reaching 1.0% in 2018.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

these stories also changes. The word "femicide" is used more frequently from 2019 onward, while expressions that tend to minimize the violence, such as "family drama" or "crime of passion" (Houel et al. 2014; Sapio 2019), become less frequent (Appendix Figure C.12). This shift matters because the language used to report violence shapes how audiences assign responsibility (Moreno-Medina® et al. 2025), and may therefore increase public pressure on the institutions responsible for addressing it. Since these measures rely on the titles, summaries, and keywords recorded by INA archivists, part of this shift may, however, reflect changes in indexing practices.

Building on Philippe and Ouss (2018), I construct three main measures of TV news coverage of VAW, for each news category, grouping stories from TF1 and France 2 together: the number of stories, their duration in minutes, and dummies for whether these topics were covered at all. Table 2 shows that between 2012 and 2019, at least one news story on VAW was broadcast on 11% of days, most often a report on a crime against women (5% of days). Conditional on a topic being covered, the average number of stories on VAW rises to 1.87 per day, for a total duration of nearly 3 minutes, with 28% aired in the opening quarter of the newscast (36% for crime stories). The main analysis focuses on crime-related news stories, which are the most frequent and the most often aired in the opening quarter of the newscast, whereas other types of coverage (such as trials or legislation) are more likely to raise endogeneity concerns (see Section 4).

Examples of such news stories are provided in Appendix Table C.2. Most of these

Table 2: Summary statistics on 8 p.m. TV news content (TF1 and France 2, 2012–2019)

	Mean	SD	Median	Max
Probability of at least one story per day:				
Violence against women	0.11	0.31	0.00	1.00
Crime	0.05	0.23	0.00	1.00
Trial	0.03	0.17	0.00	1.00
Law & society	0.04	0.19	0.00	1.00
Number of stories (conditional on coverage):				
Violence against women	1.87	1.33	1.00	8.00
Crime	1.59	1.07	1.00	8.00
Trial	1.46	1.00	1.00	8.00
Law & society	1.69	1.08	1.00	7.00
Time in minutes (conditional on coverage):				
Violence against women	2.80	2.37	2.00	13.77
Crime	2.10	1.86	1.66	12.23
Trial	1.85	1.41	1.54	8.30
Law & society	3.23	2.26	2.67	12.07
Share of stories in the opening quarter (conditional on coverage):				
Violence against women	0.28	0.39	0.00	1.00
Crime	0.36	0.44	0.00	1.00
Trial	0.33	0.44	0.00	1.00
Law & society	0.26	0.39	0.00	1.00

Notes: Summary statistics on the coverage of violence against women (VAW) in the 8 p.m. TV newscasts of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019 (one observation per day). Stories on VAW are broken down into three subtopics: crime reports (*Crime*), court cases (*Trial*), and law, policy, and societal debate (*Law & society*). The first panel reports the daily probability that at least one story on the topic is broadcast on either channel. The other panels are computed conditional on coverage, i.e., over the days with at least one story on the topic: the number of stories, the total airtime in minutes, and the share of these stories broadcast in the opening quarter of the newscast (i.e., among the first 25% of its stories by order of broadcast).
Reading: Between 2012 and 2019, at least one news story on VAW was broadcast on the 8 p.m. news of TF1 or France 2 on 11% of the days (5% of the days for a story on a VAW crime). On such days, 1.87 stories on VAW were broadcast on average, for a total airtime of 2.80 minutes, and 28% of these stories were broadcast in the opening quarter of the newscast.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

crime-related news stories concern extreme cases of VAW, as Appendix Figure C.13 shows that 88% of them involve serious felonies (rape or murder).[18] Finally, Figure 5 displays the weekly variation in news coverage of crimes against women in the 8 p.m. prime-time TV news used for the analysis. The data reveal large fluctuations in coverage, with extended periods containing no news on this topic at all.[19]

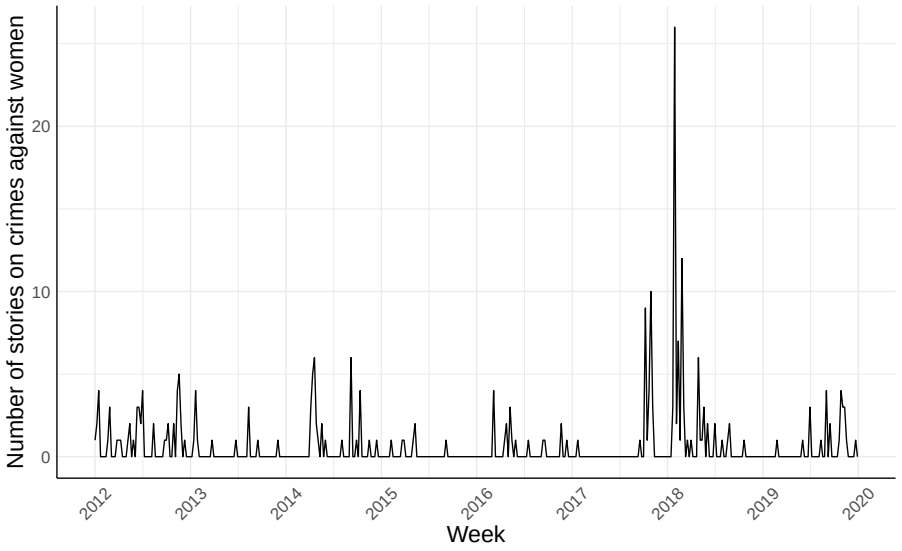
4 Empirical framework

The descriptive evidence points to an alignment between growing media attention to VAW and stronger criminal justice responses to such violence over time. Whether media coverage of VAW causally affects these responses is the key question I address next. To do so, I estimate the short-run effect of TV news coverage of VAW on the handling of

[18] Although the criminal justice data cover only a small share of prosecuted felonies—many of which are tried in criminal courts (*cours d'assises*)—there is still a clear link between these news stories and the cases I study: both relate to VAW of varying severity, and many rape cases are reclassified and tried in correctional courts, so they are also handled by the magistrates I study.

[19] Reassuringly, Appendix Figure C.14 shows that news coverage of VAW is essentially uncorrelated with coverage of unrelated topics (e.g., politics, sports, travel, cooking, gardening, leisure, DIY) and other types of crime, suggesting that this measure does not capture broader or unrelated media trends.

Figure 5: Weekly number of news stories on crimes against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 (2012–2019)



Notes: Weekly number of news stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 that report on crimes against women, 2012–2019; the two channels are pooled.
Reading: No story on crimes against women was broadcast in 76% of the weeks between 2012 and 2019. Coverage is concentrated in short episodes, the largest of which follows the #MeToo movement in late 2017 and early 2018. It peaks at 26 stories in the last week of January 2018, when Jonathann Daval confessed to the murder of his wife Alexia and Tariq Ramadan, an academic, was charged with rape.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

individual cases, exploiting the day-to-day timing of news stories. Before turning to this empirical strategy, I briefly outline the theoretical basis for understanding whether and how media coverage of VAW could affect criminal justice responses.

4.1 Theoretical basis

In most countries, criminal justice actors—such as prosecutors and judges—can be modeled as agents seeking to minimize expected social harm, subject to informational and resource constraints (Landes 1971). In this context, social harm includes both the direct harm caused by the crime and the expected harm from future offenses, conditional on the current decision. Future harm is minimized by obtaining maximum deterrence given available resources (Easterbrook 1983). Regarding informational constraints, agents face a fundamental trade-off when deciding whether to prosecute or seek a conviction: balancing Type I errors (wrongfully prosecuting or convicting an innocent person) against Type II errors (failing to prosecute or convict a guilty person) (Kaplow 1994). The perceived social cost of each type of error—and the relative weight assigned to it—may vary depending on the nature of the crime. For example, this trade-off is particularly acute in VAW cases, where the cost of underprosecution can be especially high because of repeat victimization and the risk of escalation (Arora et al. 2024).

Agents also face resource constraints, including limits on the time, effort, and attention they can devote to each case, a challenge that is especially acute for prosecutors (see

Section 2). Given the limited resources of the criminal justice system, pursuing cases with weak evidence is costly, particularly if they are unlikely to result in a conviction (Reinganum 1988; Baker and Mezzetti 2001; Garoupa 2009; Bandyopadhyay and McCannon 2015). Consequently, prosecutors may adopt implicit evidentiary thresholds based on the probability of making a correct decision; cases falling below these thresholds are dismissed rather than prosecuted. Previous research in criminology suggests that in VAW cases, prosecutors tend to prioritize minimizing the risk of pursuing cases unlikely to yield a conviction over avoiding the dismissal of cases that likely would (Frohmann 1991).

External factors such as media coverage may affect this decision-making process, either by changing the perceived risk of making a wrong decision, and thus these implicit evidentiary thresholds, or by changing the resources devoted to these cases. Section 6.3 investigates the mechanisms through which this could occur in light of the results.

4.2 Estimation strategy

To analyze whether increased public attention to VAW causally affects criminal justice decisions in such cases, I exploit variation in the exact timing of news coverage relative to prosecutors' and judges' decisions. I compare decisions made *shortly after* more TV news coverage of VAW with those made after relatively less or no coverage. Since my treatment consists of several news stories on VAW that occur repeatedly over a short period of time and at varying intervals, I focus on the short-term (daily) effect of TV news coverage of VAW. This strategy builds on Philippe and Ouss (2018), as well as similar designs that also exploit the daily timing of news or salient events in other contexts (Durante and Zhuravskaya 2018; Emeriau 2024). Specifically, I estimate regressions of the form:

$$Y_{i,t,j} = \alpha + \sum_{k=-6}^{7} \beta_k \, TV_{t-k} + \sigma X_t + \gamma W_j + \eta Z_i + \epsilon_{i,t,j} \tag{1}$$

where $Y_{i,t,j}$ represents the different outcomes observed at the case level: (i) a dummy variable for whether the case was dismissed,[20] (ii) (if prosecuted) a dummy variable for whether the defendant was convicted, and (iii) (if convicted) the associated sentence length (in log days),[21] for a case i whose decision was made on date t in county j. For each decision, the analysis is conducted on a distinct sample of cases that reached this stage, with different event times t based on the decision date. TV_{t-k} captures daily measures of TV news coverage of VAW k days before and after the decision date t. X_t controls for seasonality (day-of-the-week, calendar-month, and year fixed effects) and

[20] As described in Section 2, dismissals include cases closed after an alternative to prosecution (21% of all cases). The sample includes only completed cases, so every case was either dismissed or prosecuted, and the decision date is the day the prosecutor decides how to handle the case. I examine the results when alternatives are counted as non-dismissals in robustness.

[21] I also examine the time taken to reach each of these decisions as additional outcomes.

W_j for the county of jurisdiction that handled the case. Depending on the outcome of interest, Z_i controls for certain suspect and case characteristics (age, whether born in France, number of offenses, number of victims, nature of the offense, repeat-offender status, attempted crime, co-offending, mode of prosecution, and mode of judgment). I exclude cases involving female suspects, which represent a small share of all cases. The main specification is a linear probability model using ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions, with heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors.[22]

The coefficient of interest is $\hat{\beta}_k$, which captures the difference in the probability of dismissal, conviction, or average sentence length between cases decided in the days following TV news coverage of VAW and those decided on other days (i.e., when there is relatively less or no coverage), controlling for observable case characteristics and seasonality.[23] Intuitively, I compare otherwise similar cases that differ only in whether they were processed shortly after relatively more coverage of VAW (see the illustration in Appendix Figure D.2). Including lead coefficients allows me to test for pre-trends by assessing whether cases decided shortly before news coverage resemble those decided when there is no coverage (Appendix Figure D.3). In my main specification, TV news coverage of VAW is measured by using the number of news stories on crimes against women, but the results are robust to alternative measures.

Validity of the empirical design This strategy relies on certain parametric assumptions regarding the treatment, notably the independence of news events and the additivity of their effects when using the number or duration of news stories. While including both leads and lags of news coverage in the regression helps account for potential serial correlation in news stories over time, these assumptions may still be violated when a major high-profile case receives coverage over several consecutive days, which also complicates the interpretation of the results. To address this concern, I restrict the main analysis sample to decisions for which the decision day and the seven preceding days contain at most one day of TV news coverage of crimes against women ("isolated news days"). Although this restriction yields a slightly smaller sample than the one used for the descriptive statistics (Appendix Table B.1), it allows for a clearer interpretation of the results.[24]

Moreover, outcomes are conditional on a decision being made. Consequently, the

[22]The results are robust to clustering standard errors at the day or county level, among other levels, which partly addresses potential dependence across cases exposed to the same news coverage.

[23]Appendix Figure D.1 documents strong seasonal patterns in criminal justice activity: the number of decisions varies over the week, with far fewer decisions issued on weekends (though not zero for prosecutors, consistent with on-call procedures for the most urgent cases, whereas judges almost never rule on weekends). I account for these patterns with day-of-the-week fixed effects in the main specification, and the results are robust to excluding weekends.

[24]Restricting the sample to isolated news days reduces it from 758,305 to 687,198 observations. The results are robust to including periods with multiple days of news coverage, although the estimated effect becomes smaller (Section 5.5).

estimated effect may capture both the likelihood that a decision is made (e.g., whether the case is examined by prosecutors or brought before a judge) and the nature of that decision (e.g., whether the defendant is prosecuted or convicted). While this is less of a concern for judges' decisions, as trial dates are usually set months in advance, the timing of prosecutorial decisions may be more easily manipulated. To address this concern, I also examine the cumulative number of dismissal and prosecution decisions over a two-week period to assess whether prosecutors are simply postponing their decisions.

Finally, the composition of cases brought before decision-makers may change after news coverage—for instance, if the news prompts more victims to report or leads police to register additional complaints. To test this possibility, I examine the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of cases reported, using the natural logarithm of the number of VAW cases registered nationally with the criminal justice system on date t as a supplementary outcome (see also Appendix G).[25]

4.3 Identification strategy

Identifying assumption The coefficient $\hat{\beta}_k$ has a causal interpretation under the assumption that, on average, outcomes on days following relatively more TV news coverage of VAW would have been similar to those on days following relatively less or no coverage, had the coverage not occurred, after controlling for case characteristics and seasonality. This assumption holds if the timing of TV news coverage is as good as random in the short run. Although media coverage is unlikely to be exogenous to long-term trends in criminal justice decisions, the identification strategy requires it to be exogenous only to short-run changes around a news episode. This assumption is likely to hold given that the timing and intensity of daily news stories on extreme crimes against women fluctuate at high frequency in ways that are difficult for criminal justice actors to anticipate or manipulate, at least in the short run (Figure 5). For this reason, I restrict the analysis to short-term effects, capturing the effect of news coverage over a one-week horizon.

Threats to identification There are four main threats to this identification strategy. First, one may worry about reverse causality. However, TV channels are unlikely to adjust their coverage of VAW immediately after changes in criminal justice decisions, especially since most crimes and decisions never make national news. Over the analysis period, there are on average only 0.20 news stories per day (1.87 stories on the 11% of days with any coverage; Table 2), mostly on extreme crimes such as murders or rapes, compared with 305 new cases registered per day (Table 1). To further ensure that the news does not anticipate or cover upcoming cases or decisions, the main analysis focuses on TV news

[25]The logarithm is used to capture relative effects, given the time trend in the number of reports between 2012 and 2019. There is no day without newly registered sexual and intimate partner violence cases over this period.

stories reporting on crimes against women and excludes stories on VAW-related trials or legislation, whose inclusion is examined in robustness checks. Moreover, the crimes covered in the news are not those being processed by the criminal justice system at that time, since on average 567 days elapse between the initial incident and the final decision.[26] To rule out any overlap between the cases under examination and the news stories, I also re-estimate the model excluding cases decided on the same day as a news story about a crime committed in the court's county or a neighboring one (column 35 of Appendix Table E.6). Appendix Table C.3 shows that, among cases decided on the day of a news story on a located crime, only 2.3% were handled by a court in the county where the crime occurred and 6.7% by a court in an adjacent county.

Second, there may be measurement errors. Stories covered in the 8 p.m. TV news broadcast may have already appeared that day (or the day before) on morning radio shows or in press articles.[27] The effect of 8 p.m. news aired on the day of the decision is thus ambiguous. Moreover, while I manually reviewed all news stories to ensure no false positives, some stories may still be missing. Overall, these measurement issues would likely bias the estimates toward zero, making the results a lower bound. The NATAFF classification may also miss some sexual and intimate partner violence cases recorded under other categories of violence (Section 3.1). This would bias the estimates only if news coverage affected how incoming cases are classified, a possibility I test by restricting the sample to cases registered before the news coverage.

Third, there could be unobserved omitted variables affecting both criminal justice decisions and the likelihood of covering VAW in TV news broadcasts in the short run (such as the #MeToo movement). These factors are likely to be mostly absorbed by the time fixed effects. I also perform several falsification exercises to ensure that the results are not driven by other time-varying unobservables. Finally, I show that the findings are unlikely to be driven by selection, as TV news coverage is not significantly correlated with most observable characteristics of the cases under examination (see Appendix Tables D.1 and D.2). The main imbalance concerns the type of violence committed, but the point estimates are small and marginally significant, and I explicitly control for this variable in the regressions. Crucially for the identification strategy, the last column of Appendix Table D.1 shows that the time elapsed between the registration of a case at the prosecutor's office and the final prosecutorial decision is not associated with media content in the days preceding the decision. This speaks against strategic manipulation based on news coverage and supports the validity of the design: the exact timing of prosecutorial decisions is orthogonal to media coverage of crimes against women, and cases examined

[26] On average, 930 days for sexual violence and 358 days for intimate partner violence; 492 days until conviction and 588 days until dismissal.

[27] On 54% of the isolated news days, at least one of the seven national radio stations listed in Appendix Figure C.2 had already aired a story on a crime against women in its morning news (6 to 10 a.m.).

before and after coverage are similar with respect to observable characteristics.[28]

5 Results

This section first presents the effects of news coverage of VAW on prosecution decisions and examines which cases drive this response. It then turns to conviction and sentencing, distinguishing the short-run effect of coverage on judges' decisions in the following week from the long-term outcomes of the cases prosecuted after coverage, and finally reports robustness checks.

5.1 Effects on prosecution

Prosecution I find that news coverage of crimes against women makes prosecutors less likely to dismiss cases of sexual and intimate partner violence. Figure 6 plots the estimated effects of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (equation (1)) for each lead and lag around the day of coverage, T.[29] I find no evidence of pre-trends, consistent with cases decided just around news coverage being comparable to those decided on days without coverage. The propensity to dismiss a case drops after news coverage and remains lower for about a week. As the 8 p.m. news airs at the end of the working day and its content closely tracks that of other media (see Section 3.3), the same-day decrease may reflect earlier coverage elsewhere. The decrease is particularly pronounced at $T + 2$, a pattern primarily driven by intimate partner violence cases (see Appendix Table E.1 for the individual lead and lag estimates).[30] On average, each additional news story on crimes against women broadcast in the week before a decision reduces the probability that the case is dismissed by 0.54 percentage points (significant at the 1% level; Table 3). Given the baseline prosecution rate of 23% for such violence, this corresponds to a 2.3% increase in the likelihood of prosecution. The response does not increase significantly with the number of stories broadcast the same evening (Appendix Table E.2), suggesting that it is driven by the occurrence of coverage rather than by its intensity. The effect is also

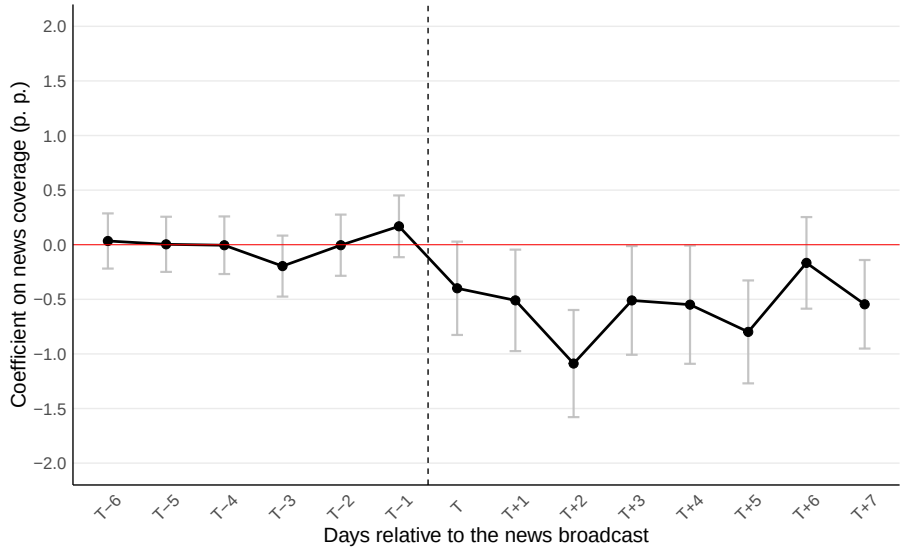
[28] I do not observe the exact dates of trial scheduling, which prevents me from running an analogous test for judges' decisions. However, concerns about manipulation of such decisions are less relevant, as trial dates (and their duration) are typically set months in advance according to court calendars (except for immediate appearances after police custody) and are therefore much harder to adjust strategically in response to media coverage.

[29] For interpretability, the event time is redefined relative to the date of news coverage (T), such that negative values correspond to days before coverage and positive values to days after: the coefficient plotted at $T + k$ is the estimate of β_k in equation (1).

[30] The later response for intimate partner violence (IPV) than for sexual violence may also reflect differences in case processing or police transmission speeds. The sociology literature suggests that IPV cases often face procedural hurdles or legal actors' tendency to discredit such claims (Pérona 2017), potentially leading to longer administrative delays before prosecution. However, the available data do not allow a formal test of this mechanism.

short-lived, fading out after about nine days when the window is extended (Appendix Figure E.1). This indicates that prosecutors respond to the context in which they make decisions in the short run: otherwise similar cases are less likely to be dismissed when examined shortly after news stories on crimes against women.

Figure 6: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news, the latter serving as placebo tests. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

The drop in dismissals could simply reflect postponed decisions. To assess this possibility, I examine the effect of news coverage on the number of prosecutorial decisions. Column 3 of Table 3 shows no significant change in the total number of decisions made in the week after news coverage (the day of the broadcast and the next seven days). By contrast, the number of prosecution decisions increases by 2.8% per story (Appendix Table E.3), consistent with the decline in dismissal rates. Appendix Figure E.2 displays cumulative effects over the two weeks following coverage. Cumulative coefficients are normalized by subtracting the average cumulative sum of the lead coefficients, so that they read relative to the pre-coverage trend. The figure shows a general increase in prosecutions over the two weeks following coverage, alongside a decrease or no change in dismissals. This suggests that the reduction in dismissal rates reflects an actual rise in prosecutions rather than a postponement of dismissals over time.

Table 3: OLS results for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on each stage of the criminal justice process

	Reporting	Prosecution		Sentencing	
Dependent variables:	Log number of new cases registered	Dismissal (0/1)	Log number of decisions made by prosecutors	Conviction (0/1)	Log sentence length (days)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0171**	-0.0054***	0.0081	-0.0014	0.0009
	(0.0080)	(0.0009)	(0.0189)	(0.0012)	(0.0037)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0002	-7.02×10^{-5}	0.0015	0.0003	-0.0024*
	(0.0021)	(0.0003)	(0.0032)	(0.0004)	(0.0013)
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics					
Observations	2,647	687,198	2,647	150,351	123,523
R^2	0.80745	0.18648	0.86295	0.03081	0.48889
Within R^2	0.00206	0.12848	0.00016	0.02544	0.47497

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on reporting, prosecution, and sentencing decisions for sexual and intimate partner violence cases (equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variables are (1) the log daily number of new cases registered in the justice system; (2) a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors; (3) the log daily number of decisions made by prosecutors; (4) a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial; (5) the log sentence length (in days) among convicted defendants sentenced to prison. Columns 1 and 3 are estimated at the daily level, the others at the case level. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before each decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to observations with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type (columns 2, 4, and 5). Columns 4 and 5 also control for the number of offenses; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

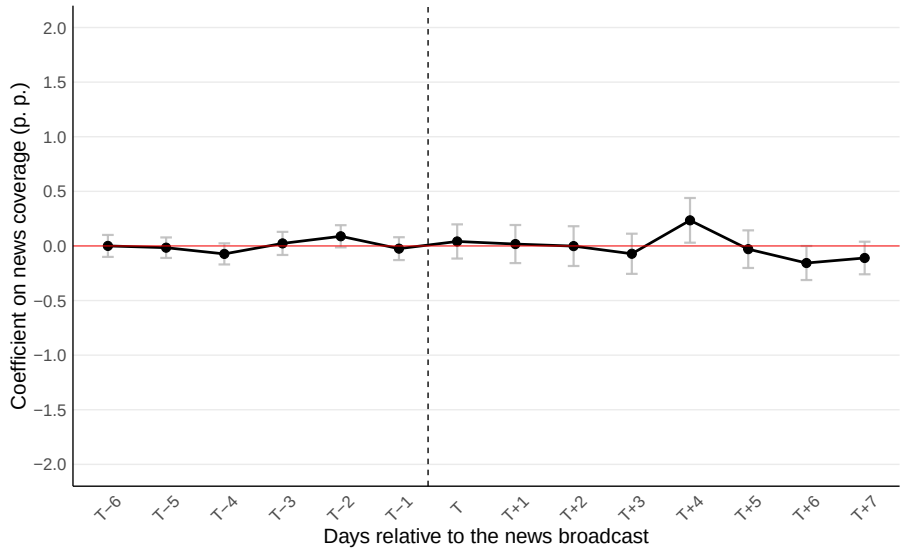
Placebos To verify that these results are not due to an artifact, I perform several placebo tests. First, I estimate the same regression but using the propensity to dismiss other crimes against persons as the new outcome variable. These offenses consist mostly of physical violence (32%), threats or blackmail (13%), injuries following traffic accidents (6%), and invasion of privacy (5%). Reassuringly, Figure 7 shows no systematic effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss such offenses.[31] Likewise, I find no significant decrease when restricting the sample to homicides and intentional bodily harm on adults, which constitute the most comparable groups in terms of severity and legal penalties (Appendix Figure E.3).

Second, I estimate the effect of unrelated news stories on the propensity to dismiss VAW cases. Appendix Figure E.4 shows that news coverage related to gardening, crafts, leisure, or travel has a precisely estimated null effect on prosecutorial decisions.[32] Interestingly,

[31]Similarly, in a difference-in-differences specification that pools VAW cases with other crimes against persons, the latter serving as a control group, the differential effect of news coverage on VAW cases is similar to the main estimates.

[32]Since such news stories are far more frequent than those about crimes against women, restricting the analysis to decisions with at most one day of such coverage in the past week, as in the main specification, would leave too few observations. These placebo tests therefore also include periods with multiple days of news coverage.

Figure 7: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss other crimes against persons



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss other crimes against persons (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of cases of crimes against persons unrelated to sexual and intimate partner violence (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 3{,}490{,}881$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. *Source:* Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

coverage of other crimes—excluding VAW—does not affect the propensity to dismiss VAW cases either. This null result holds for specific crime categories, such as drug trafficking, organized crime, theft, or other serious interpersonal violence: the confidence intervals exclude effects as large as the main estimate (see Appendix Table E.4; Appendix E.5 lists the keywords used to identify these news stories).

Finally, I conduct a falsification test using 500 randomly assigned fake treatment dates. Appendix Figure E.5 displays the distribution of the pooled coefficient estimated over the week following these placebo treatments, which is reassuringly centered around zero. In contrast, the actual estimated coefficient lies at the extreme end of this distribution (randomization-inference p-value < 0.002). These tests suggest that the main effect is unlikely to be driven by seasonal patterns or random fluctuations in the data. The results are also robust to a battery of checks described in Section 5.5.

Inflow of new cases A remaining concern is that news coverage changes the flow or the type of cases reaching prosecutors, for instance if it prompts more victims to report or police to record more complaints. To examine this possibility, I analyze the effect of news coverage on the (log) number of cases registered with the justice system. On average, each

additional news story on crimes against women increases daily registrations by 1.7% over the following week (column 1 of Table 3), statistically significant at the 5% level. This small increase is concentrated on the day of the broadcast, T, with about 5.5 additional cases that day (column 4 of Appendix Table G.1). It comes with no detectable change in the composition of registered cases: the effect does not differ significantly by type of violence, time elapsed since the incident, or suspects' characteristics, apart from minor differences in the origin of the report (Appendix Figure G.5 and Appendix Table G.2). News coverage does not change the time elapsed between the incident and registration either (Appendix Figure G.7). Given that cases take 210 days on average to reach a prosecutorial decision, these additional registrations are unlikely to drive the prosecutorial response, which also holds when excluding cases registered on the day of the decision (see Section 5.5). Appendix G analyzes this reporting response in more detail.

5.2 Heterogeneity

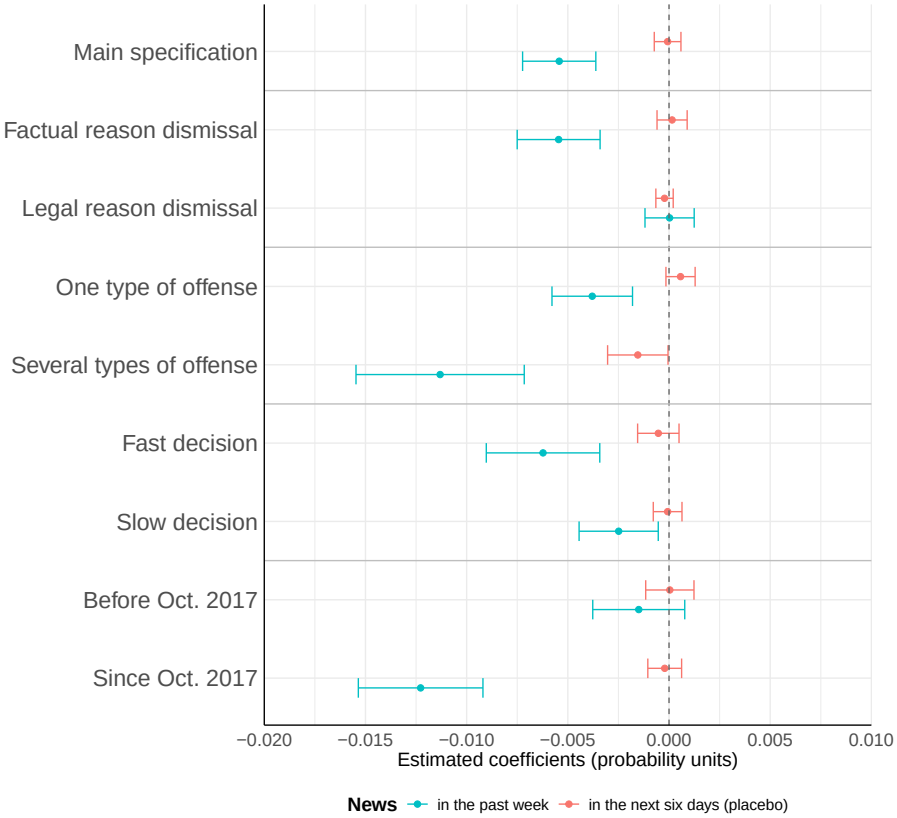
Which cases drive the lower propensity to dismiss? The effect is stronger in decisions that leave prosecutors more discretion, such as factual dismissals, and in cases they can more readily pursue, such as those involving several types of offense or decided quickly. It also emerges only after #MeToo. Figure 8 displays these estimates by case characteristics, and Appendix Table E.5 reports the full set of estimates and the formal tests of equality across subsamples.

First, the reduction in dismissals is concentrated among cases dismissed on factual rather than legal grounds (equality test $p = 0.002$). Factual dismissals (nearly nine in ten dismissals) cover cases in which the offense is deemed insufficiently established or the case remains unsolved, as well as dismissals following an alternative to prosecution (such as a reminder of the law or mediation), whereas legal dismissals (about one in ten dismissals) reflect obstacles to prosecution, such as statutes of limitations, procedural irregularities, the perpetrator's mental incapacity, or the complainant's withdrawal. Because factual grounds rely more heavily on evidentiary assessments, they leave greater room for prosecutorial discretion.

Second, the effect is significantly stronger for cases involving multiple offense categories (22% of cases, as identified by their NATAFF codes) than for those with a single recorded offense. Likewise, the reduction in dismissal propensity is more pronounced for faster decisions, for which the time between the case's arrival at the prosecutor's office and the prosecutor's decision is shorter than the median (96 days, about 3 months).

Importantly, the impact is driven by the post-#MeToo period. As shown in Figure 8, the reduction in dismissal rates materializes only after October 2017: before then, the estimate is small and not significant, whereas afterward each news story decreases the dismissal propensity by 1.23 percentage points, and the difference between the two periods

Figure 8: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by case characteristics



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately on each subsample or outcome definition reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$ in the main specification; the number of observations varies across rows, see Appendix Table E.5). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table E.5.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

is highly significant ($p < 0.001$; Appendix Table E.5). The full-period estimate of 0.54 percentage points is thus an average of no detectable effect before #MeToo and a large effect afterward. As documented by previous studies, the #MeToo movement profoundly altered the perception of sexual and domestic violence, significantly increasing reporting rates and public sensitivity to these issues (SSMSI 2020; Gauthier 2022; Levy and Mattsson 2026). This makes October 2017 a natural break—a finding further discussed in Section 6.3. The reporting response follows the opposite pattern: if anything, it is stronger before #MeToo (Appendix Figure G.4), which makes it unlikely that news-induced registrations drive the post-#MeToo prosecutorial response.

When I examine heterogeneity by news characteristics (Appendix Figure E.6 and

Appendix Table E.5), I find that the effect is larger when news stories reach larger audiences (above the median for each channel), and significantly stronger during the winter than during the summer months. These patterns are suggestive of an exposure mechanism: the impact of media coverage is larger when people are more likely to watch TV, and thus when prosecutors are more likely to have been exposed to the news.[33] However, headline stories that open the 8 p.m. news broadcasts do not yield a stronger effect, suggesting that the most prominent news events do not necessarily generate stronger behavioral responses.

Finally, I explore heterogeneity by the type and recency of the offense, victim and suspect characteristics, and court characteristics (Appendix Figures E.7 and E.8 and Table E.5). The effect is slightly larger for intimate partner violence than for sexual violence, though not significantly so, and the decline in dismissals is stronger after news about intimate partner violence or femicides than after news about sexual violence ($p = 0.001$; Appendix Figure E.6). While other differences in magnitude emerge, these estimates are imprecise and the equality tests do not allow for strong conclusions. The same caution applies to the coefficients on the leads, which are close to zero and precisely estimated in the main specification but reach significance in a few subsamples.

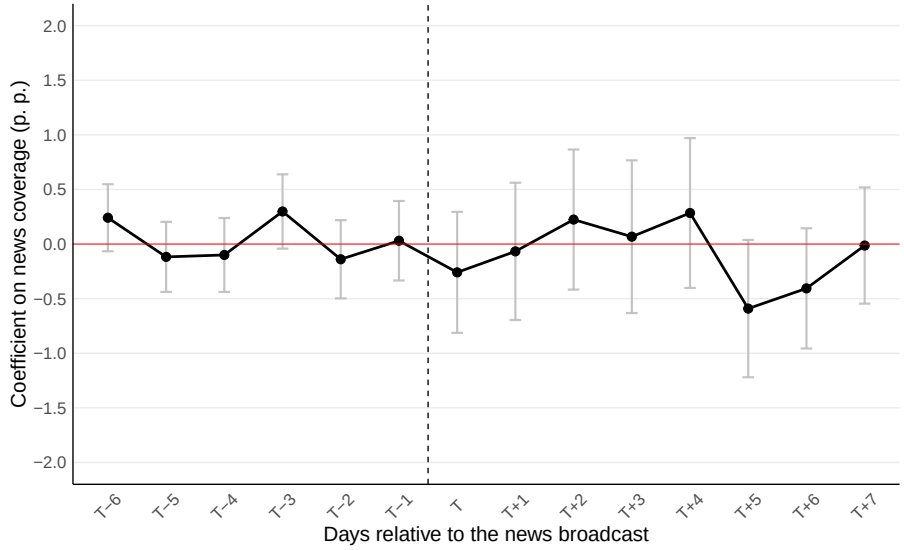
5.3 Effects on conviction and sentencing

Judges' decisions at trial By contrast, TV news coverage of crimes against women does not affect the conviction or sentencing decisions that professional judges make in correctional or juvenile courts in the following week (columns 4–5 of Table 3). Figure 9 shows that conviction rates do not change significantly on any of the days following media coverage. For defendants sentenced to prison, judges do not impose longer sentences either (whether measured in log days or in levels; see Appendix Figure F.1). Selection concerns arise because the sentencing analyses condition on cases that are prosecuted, and I find that news coverage may affect the decision to prosecute a case. However, given the long interval between prosecution and the sentencing decision (199 days on average; 420 for sexual violence and 130 for intimate partner violence), such selection bias is likely to be minimal. Moreover, the results remain unchanged when restricting the sample to cases prosecuted before the judgment day (Appendix Figure F.2), or when broadening the exposure measure to include trial-related news reports (Appendix Figure F.3).

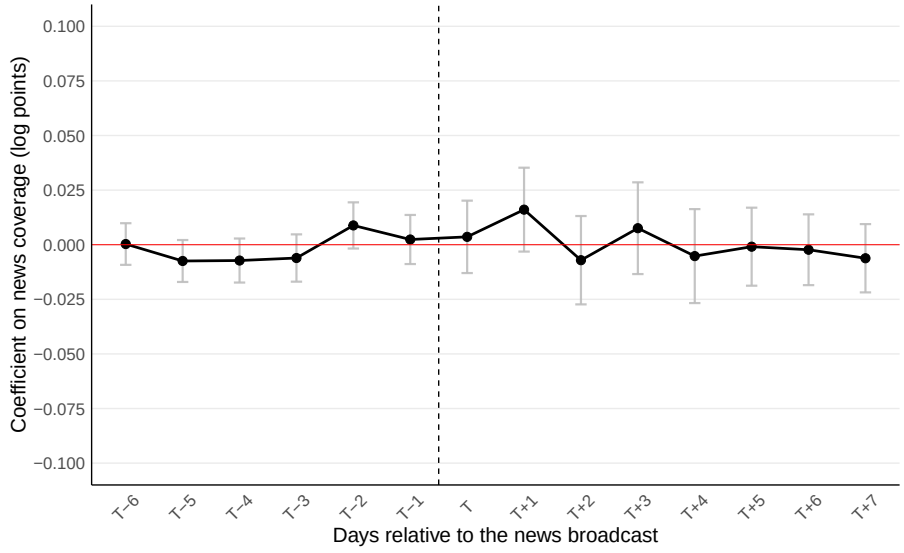
The absence of an effect on conviction and sentence length also holds across a broad set of case and news characteristics, including sexual versus intimate partner violence cases, high versus low audience levels, and the periods before and after the #MeToo movement (Appendix Figures F.4 and F.5). Appendix Table F.2 reports the detailed

[33] Nevertheless, audience size may also correlate with the type of stories covered on TV, as higher viewership is typically associated with more sensational news, which itself may prime criminal justice actors more strongly. Therefore, I cannot rule out the possibility that the nature of crimes featured in the news differs between high- and low-audience days, or between summer and winter periods.

Figure 9: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases



(a) Conviction



(b) Sentence length (log days)

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases and on sentence length (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals. Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 150{,}351$). In panel (a), the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial, with the estimated coefficients expressed in percentage points. In panel (b), the dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the length (in days) of the prison sentence, among convicted defendants sentenced to prison ($N = 123{,}523$), with the estimated coefficients expressed in log points. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

estimates and the tests of equality across subsamples. Only a few differences reach significance (for the number of offenses, the defendant's French-born status, and the type of news stories), and they are small in magnitude. The lead coefficient on sentence length is also slightly negative and marginally significant in several specifications.[34] Furthermore, Appendix Figure F.6 indicates that news coverage of crimes against women does not affect the time elapsed between prosecution and the final court decision, suggesting that it does not lead to faster judgments either.

Why judges do not respond The contrast between prosecutors, who respond to coverage, and judges, who do not, may partly reflect a ceiling effect. Because 94% of prosecuted cases already result in a conviction (Table 1), media coverage has little scope to raise conviction rates further, whereas the high dismissal rate at the prosecutorial stage leaves a much wider margin for adjustment. This ceiling, however, applies only to conviction: sentence length leaves ample room for adjustment, yet it does not respond to coverage either, which suggests that the absence of a judicial response is not purely mechanical. Differences in accountability and in the conditions under which prosecutors and judges decide may also contribute, as discussed in Section 6.3.

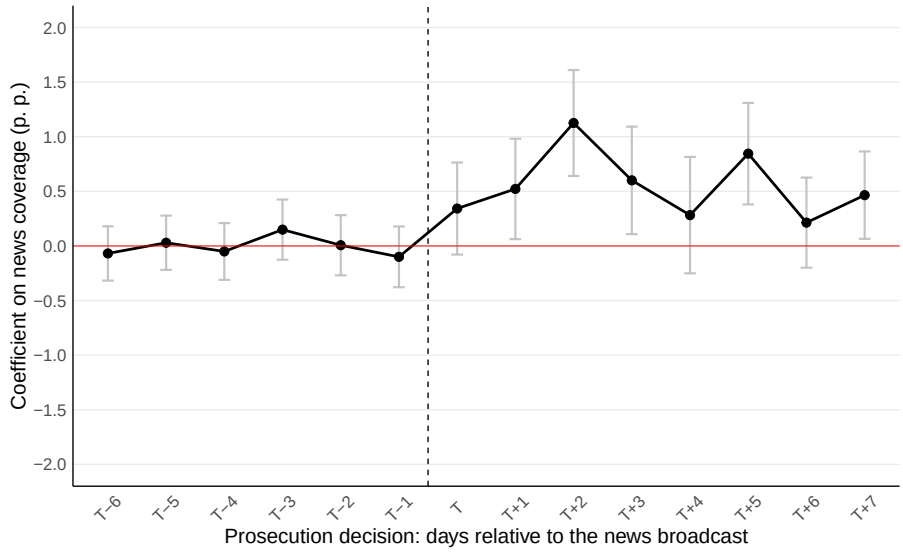
5.4 Long-term effects on conviction

A key question is whether the cases prosecuted after media attention are eventually convicted. If media pressure pushes prosecutors to lower their threshold for prosecution, one might expect the newly prosecuted cases to be of weaker evidentiary quality, potentially leading to lower conviction rates at trial. To assess this long-term effect, I exploit the richness of the criminal justice data, which follow each case from the prosecutorial decision to the final court ruling, and examine the effect of news coverage around the prosecution decision on the final conviction outcome. The analysis includes all cases, setting the conviction outcome to zero for dismissed cases to account for composition effects, since news coverage affects whether a case is prosecuted.

Figure 10 shows that news coverage around the prosecution decision significantly raises the unconditional propensity to convict, by about as much as it raises the prosecution rate. The estimated effect on the propensity to convict (0.53 percentage points; Appendix Table F.3) is nearly identical to the one previously estimated for the propensity to prosecute (0.54 percentage points). As shown in Figure 2, when defendants are prosecuted, they are almost always convicted. The point estimates suggest that about 98% of the cases prosecuted because of the news coverage (0.53/0.54) end in a conviction, close to the

[34] Since trial dates are usually set months in advance, this negative lead is unlikely to reflect anticipation of the news; it calls for caution in interpreting the longer sentences found after news on intimate partner violence or femicides (1.1% per story, significant at the 5% level, whereas news on sexual violence has no significant effect; see columns 20–21 of Appendix Table F.2), but does not affect the conclusion that coverage around the trial does not lengthen sentences.

Figure 10: Long-term effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction for sexual and intimate partner violence cases



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the probability that sexual and intimate partner violence cases eventually result in a conviction (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases whose prosecution decision was made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case eventually resulted in a conviction at trial, and zero otherwise (dismissed cases included), so that the estimates capture the unconditional effect of coverage at the prosecution stage on the final conviction. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 around the prosecution decision. The sample is restricted to cases with at most one day of such news coverage in the week before the prosecution decision. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

94% observed for all prosecuted cases.[35] Conditional on conviction, the prison sentences handed down in these cases are, if anything, longer: by 1.4% on average (significant at the 1% level), or 3.3 days in levels (Appendix Table F.3 and Figure F.8). These conditional estimates should be read with caution, since news coverage also affects which cases end up being convicted, but they are consistent with the marginal cases being at least as serious as other prosecuted cases. Taken together, these findings suggest that the pool of cases prosecuted after news coverage is of similar quality to the rest of the prosecuted caseload.

Alternatively, the stable conviction rates could theoretically imply that judges *also* adjust their behavior by lowering their standards to convict these potentially "weaker" cases, as Marchenko and Pakzad-Hurson (2025) find for adjudicators of sexual harassment complaints after #MeToo. However, this interpretation is unlikely. The average time lag between prosecution and sentencing (130 days for intimate partner violence and 420 days for sexual violence, on average) makes it implausible that judges are responding

[35] I confirm this by analyzing the long-term effect of news coverage around the initial prosecution date on the conviction decision, conditional on prosecution. Although the results are noisier due to the smaller sample size, Appendix Figure F.7 shows no significant decrease in the propensity to convict.

to the specific news coverage that aired months before the trial. Instead, the most plausible explanation for this stability lies in the nature of these additional prosecutions. These "marginal" cases do not appear particularly complex or legally weak. The effect is concentrated in cases involving several types of offense and in cases decided quickly (Section 5.2), and the additional cases do not receive shorter sentences. When media attention prompts prosecutors to prioritize these files, they prove strong enough to meet the evidentiary threshold for conviction without requiring judges to alter their standards.

Overall, these findings suggest that media coverage does not weaken the pool of prosecuted cases, but brings to trial legally viable cases that would have been dismissed absent news coverage. Rather than lowering their evidentiary threshold, prosecutors appear to reprioritize serious cases, as discussed further in Section 6.3.

5.5 Robustness

Appendix Tables E.6 and F.1 report a series of tests to validate the robustness of the results on prosecutors' and judges' decisions, respectively. The absence of an effect on conviction and sentence length is robust to a wide range of alternative specifications, samples, inference methods, and treatment definitions. I discuss the main tests below for the prosecution stage, where the effect is found, and report them in detail in Appendix E.4.

I show that the results on prosecution are robust to alternative estimation methods, such as a probit model or a residualized outcome, and to alternative fixed effects, such as court instead of county fixed effects, a linear time trend, or day-of-the-year fixed effects. The effect is attenuated, however, with year $\times$ quarter fixed effects and is no longer significant with year $\times$ month fixed effects, which leave only within-quarter or within-month variation in coverage. It remains significant when standard errors are clustered by day, the level at which treatment is assigned, or by county, year $\times$ month, case, or court. Moreover, the effect is not driven by seasonality or symbolic dates. It holds when controlling for school vacations and holidays, for periods of heightened visibility of women (e.g., International Women's Day, #MeToo), and for new VAW-related legislation, such as measures easing the handling of complaints, changes to the statute of limitations, or the ratification of the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combating VAW. It also holds when excluding weekend decisions, and when news broadcast on weekends is assigned to the preceding Friday, although the coefficient is then smaller. Moreover, while coverage surges between October 2017 and mid-2018 with the #MeToo movement, the number of dismissals evolves smoothly over the period, with no coinciding break (Appendix Figure E.10).

I also provide evidence that the effect does not stem from the composition of the sample. In particular, it is even larger when alternatives to prosecution are counted as non-dismissals (0.65 percentage points), showing that the decline comes from pure dismissals,

and it holds when excluding rape cases. It also remains significant, though smaller, for cases registered before the day of the decision (0.33 percentage points; Appendix Figure E.11), and is largest for cases registered and decided on the same day (0.66 percentage points). Although these same-day decisions may partly depend on which cases reach prosecutors on those days, case characteristics are stable around coverage (Appendix Table D.1), so this gradient more likely reflects prosecutors responding most strongly to the cases that reach them while coverage is salient (see also Section 6.3).

In addition, the results do not depend on how coverage is measured. Using a dummy for the occurrence of any news yields a per-episode effect of 0.64 percentage points, and the effect is similar when coverage is measured by its duration (Appendix Figure E.12) or for each TV channel separately. Including news on VAW-related trials in the treatment still yields a negative but weaker effect (Appendix Figure E.13). Including decisions preceded by several days of coverage in the past week, rather than restricting the sample to isolated news days, also reduces the per-story coefficient, consistent with the response depending on the presence of coverage rather than on the number of stories (Appendix Figure E.14). Moreover, the effect is not driven by an overlap between the cases studied and the crimes covered in the news. On news days, 91% of the cases decided are handled by a court located neither in the county where the reported crime occurred nor in an adjacent county (Appendix Table C.3), and the estimate is similar whether the story concerns a crime in the court's county, an adjacent county, or a more distant one.

Finally, the effect persists when excluding each of the 76 isolated days with news coverage, each of the 96 months of the analysis period, and each of the 96 French metropolitan counties (Appendix Figure E.15), as well as after correcting for multiple hypothesis testing (Appendix Figure E.16), among additional checks.

6 Discussion

Having established the causal impact of news coverage of crimes against women on prosecutors' and judges' decisions, I now evaluate the scale of these effects, their specificity to VAW, and what they reveal about why prosecutors respond to media coverage.

6.1 Magnitudes

What do these findings imply in terms of magnitude? Media coverage does not appear to affect conviction or sentence-length decisions made by professional judges, and its effects are instead concentrated at the prosecutorial stage. Using a dummy variable for the occurrence of any news coverage of crimes against women over 2012–2019, I find that cases decided by prosecutors after such coverage (20% of the sample) are, on average, 0.64 percentage points less likely to be dismissed than those decided when no stories are aired (column 26 of Appendix Table E.6).

During that period, prosecutors decide an average of 285 cases of sexual or intimate partner violence per day (218 dismissed and 67 prosecuted), i.e., about 2,280 cases over the eight-day window, including the day of the broadcast. Given that news coverage does not affect the overall volume of decisions (Table 3), this estimate implies that about 15 additional cases ($2{,}280 \times 0.0064$) are prosecuted after each day of news coverage. I then extrapolate this estimate by considering the number of days with news on crimes against women over the sample period. There are 162 unique news days between 2012 and 2019 (either on TF1 or France 2), or roughly 20 per year on average. This implies up to about 300 additional cases (15×20) prosecuted per year on average, most of which are then likely to result in conviction.[36]

However, these figures understate the effect in the post-#MeToo era. From October 2017 onward, prosecutors decide about 314 cases per day, and each story reduces the propensity to dismiss by 1.23 percentage points (Appendix Table E.5), i.e., about 31 additional prosecutions per news day with a single story ($314 \times 8 \times 0.0123$). The 71 unique news days between October 2017 and December 2019 (roughly 31 per year) thus imply nearly 1,000 additional prosecutions per year. This is more than three times the full-period figure, partly reflecting a higher volume of cases and more frequent coverage.

Comparison with the literature These average effects are consistent with the literature on media and criminal justice decisions. For prosecutors, evidence is scarce and mixed: after the murder of Theo van Gogh, Amsterdam prosecutors temporarily prosecuted more violent-crime suspects born in Muslim-majority countries (Bielen and Grajzl 2021), whereas Dutch prosecutors did not respond to another high-profile murder (Hanemaaijer et al. 2026). I show that prosecutors also respond to routine coverage, with smaller but recurring effects. For judges, my results align with Lim et al. (2015), Philippe and Ouss (2018), and Ash and Poyker (2024): professional or appointed judges do not respond to news coverage. Dutch judges did respond to the high-profile murder studied by Hanemaaijer et al. (2026), suggesting that routine coverage may be a weaker signal for judges than such a shock. Finally, routine coverage and large-scale movements may interact, since prosecutors respond to everyday news about VAW only after #MeToo.

6.2 Specificity to violence against women

Is the observed prosecutorial response to news coverage specific to VAW? Section 5.1 already showed that the response is not a general reaction to crime news: news on VAW has no systematic effect on the dismissal of other crimes against persons (Figure 7), and

[36] Isolated news days, i.e., news days not preceded by another news day in the previous seven days, provide a more conservative count: there are 76 such days over the 2012–2019 period (on either TF1 or France 2). This corresponds to roughly 9.5 isolated news days per year on average (76/8) and implies around 140 additional cases (15×9.5) prosecuted per year on average.

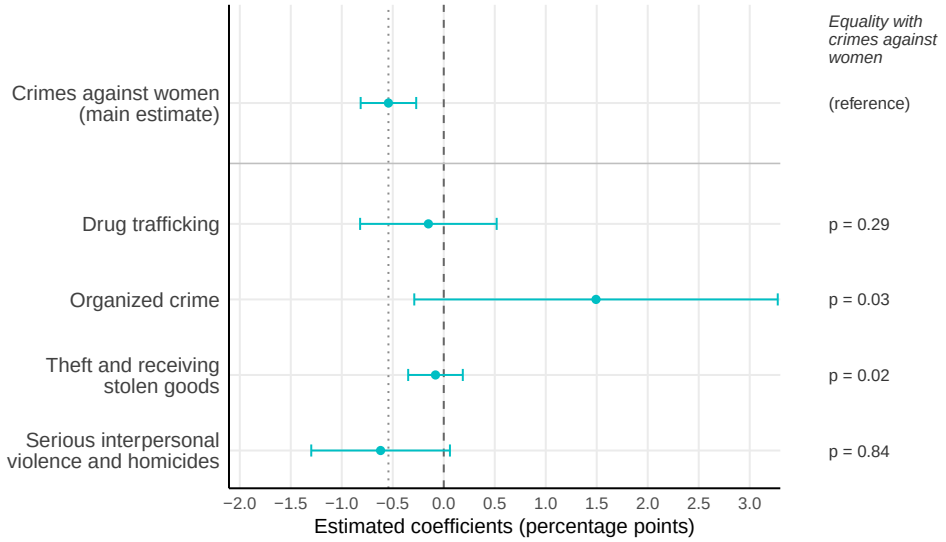
news on other crimes does not affect the propensity to dismiss VAW cases either (Appendix Table E.4). A related question is whether prosecutors respond in the same way to news coverage of other crimes when handling those crimes. The answer helps narrow down the mechanisms. A response to news on any crime would point to a general reaction to crime salience, whereas a response limited to VAW would point to features specific to these cases. VAW cases differ from many other offenses in two respects. Sexual and intimate partner violence cases are more often dismissed because the evidence is deemed insufficient to establish the offense, whereas other offenses are more frequently dismissed because the perpetrator is unidentified (Section 3.2). The former ground rests on the prosecutor's assessment of the evidence and thus leaves more room for discretion. VAW cases are also at the center of a public debate on how the criminal justice system handles them, which #MeToo intensified. Increased media attention may therefore have more scope to shift prosecutorial decisions in VAW cases than in other serious crime categories.

To investigate this question, I apply the same design to four other offense categories—drug trafficking, organized crime, theft and receiving stolen goods, and serious interpersonal violence and homicides—to examine whether news coverage of these offenses triggers similar shifts in their prosecutorial outcomes. For each category, I identify news stories with category-specific keywords and the corresponding cases with their NATAFF offense codes (see Appendix E.5 and Appendix Table E.7). Very few of these stories also mention VAW (7 out of about 2,600 over 2012–2019), so the overlap with the main treatment is negligible. As in the main analysis, the sample is restricted to isolated news days on each category, and I also report estimates on the full sample, which includes periods of repeated coverage. All estimates use standard errors clustered by day.

Figure 11 shows that news on other crimes does not systematically reduce the dismissal of cases in the same category (detailed estimates in Appendix Table E.9). Drug trafficking, organized crime, and theft show no detectable effect, and the coefficients for organized crime and theft differ significantly from the VAW estimate (treating the two as independent). For serious interpersonal violence, the estimate is negative but imprecise and not significant at the 5% level, so a response comparable to that for VAW cannot be ruled out. This category, however, is covered much more frequently than VAW, and the restriction to isolated news days drops more than two-thirds of its cases.[37] In the full sample, which includes periods of repeated coverage, per-story estimates are mechanically smaller for all categories, because the response depends on the occurrence of coverage rather than on the number of stories (Appendix Table E.2). For VAW, the effect per story shrinks from 0.54 to 0.07 percentage points (column 37 of Appendix Table E.6). None of the other categories shows a significant effect (Appendix Table E.10), but because this sample is less informative about magnitudes, the comparison rests mainly on isolated news days.

[37]Depending on the category, this restriction drops between 13% and 69% of the observations and between 51% and 91% of the news days (Appendix Table E.8).

Figure 11: Effect of news coverage of each crime category on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category



Notes: OLS estimates of equation (1) for each crime category, with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points): effect of the number of news stories on the category broadcast in the week before the decision (decision day included) on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category. The first row, also marked by the dotted line, reports the main estimate for crimes against women. The samples consist of cases of the offense category reported on the vertical axis (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019, restricted to isolated news days on the category considered. The specifications include the same controls and fixed effects as the main specification; standard errors are clustered by day. The last column reports the p-value of a test of equality with the estimate for crimes against women, treating the two estimates as independent. Detailed estimates are reported in Appendix Table E.9.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

The absence of a systematic effect for other serious offenses therefore suggests that the prosecutorial response to media coverage is not a universal phenomenon across crime types. Instead, it appears to be specific to VAW, pointing to institutional or behavioral drivers tied to how these cases are handled, which are investigated in the following section.

6.3 Interpretation of mechanisms

Channels of media influence Why do prosecutors respond to news about crimes against women? In the framework outlined in Section 4, prosecutors' decision-making can be modeled as taking place under resource and informational constraints, which require them to weigh the risks of wrongful prosecution (Type I error) and wrongful dismissal (Type II error). News coverage can act on these constraints through different channels.

First, coverage may convey new information about the harm caused by such violence or the risk of recidivism, leading prosecutors to revise the perceived cost of a Type II error (*learning*). Second, even without new information, coverage may make this harm temporarily more salient and raise the weight of Type II relative to Type I errors (*salience*). This shift could move implicit evidentiary thresholds, potentially leading prosecutors to behave suboptimally because of myopia or recency bias (Tversky and Kahneman 1974;

Bordalo et al. 2015), or change which cases receive their limited attention. Third, media attention may alter these evidentiary thresholds through external pressures, such as heightened public scrutiny, reputational risk, or fairness concerns (*reputational concerns*). Fourth, it may lead prosecutors to devote more time and effort to VAW cases, for instance through more thorough investigations or faster judgments (*effort*).

The data do not allow me to isolate a single channel, but they are more consistent with salience and reputational concerns than with learning or increased effort. Appendix E.6 relates each finding to these channels in more detail (summarized in Appendix Table E.11).

Learning and effort Learning is hard to reconcile with the dynamics of the response. Prosecutors handle VAW cases daily, so a short story about a single case elsewhere in France is unlikely to tell them much they do not already know. Consistent with this, the effect fades within about nine days (Appendix Figure E.1) and does not increase with the number of stories broadcast (Appendix Table E.2), whereas new information should have lasting and cumulative effects.

Increased effort is also unlikely. If coverage led prosecutors to devote more time or resources to VAW cases, this should either change the pace at which these cases are processed or, with fixed resources, crowd out other cases, which would then be handled less thoroughly or dismissed more often. However, I find that the total number of decisions and processing times for sexual and intimate partner violence cases show no significant change (Appendix Tables E.3 and E.12), nor does the handling of other crimes against persons, although small displacement effects cannot be ruled out (Appendix Table E.13).

Salience The remaining evidence points to a short-run shift in the attention that prosecutors give to VAW cases. With about 3 prosecutors per 100,000 inhabitants, roughly a third of the European median and of the US level (CEPEJ 2024; Bureau of Justice Statistics 2024), French prosecutors decide on a large flow of cases, which they must prioritize through triage. Prior research also shows that prosecutors are usually reluctant to pursue cases whose outcome at trial is uncertain, especially for VAW (Frohmann 1991). Limited resources can thus explain why some viable cases are dismissed at baseline, and salience why news coverage brings some of them to trial.

Three patterns support this reading. First, the short-lived and non-cumulative response that argues against learning is what a temporary shift in attention would produce. Second, the response is larger when exposure to the news is higher (Section 5.2). Third, it operates where attention can tip the decision. The effect is larger for factual dismissals, which leave the most room for discretion, and for cases involving several types of offense, which are typically more serious and provide more tangible evidence on which to build a prosecution. It is also larger for cases decided quickly, such as those handled in real time on the day they are registered (Appendix Table E.6). By contrast, the effect is

smaller, but still significant, for cases already pending before the decision day (Appendix Figure E.11), so coverage mainly affects how prosecutors handle newly arriving cases, and to a lesser extent their backlog. These additionally prosecuted cases appear as likely to be convicted as other cases (Section 5.4). The boundary between dismissed and prosecuted cases is therefore not set by evidentiary strength alone, but also reflects the limited time and attention prosecutors can devote to each case.

Reputational concerns Salience is unlikely to be the only mechanism at work. First, the same kind of story had no detectable effect before October 2017 (Figure 8). Second, news on other serious crimes, such as drug trafficking or theft, does not trigger a similar response for those offenses (Figure 11), unlike the general increase in severity after crime coverage that Philippe and Ouss (2018) document for lay jurors. Both patterns are hard to reconcile with a pure attention effect and instead point to channels specific to the normative stakes of VAW. Reputational concerns offer the most plausible explanation: by shifting social norms and reframing VAW as a systemic issue rather than a series of isolated incidents, the #MeToo movement likely heightened public scrutiny of how the justice system handles these cases, which may have made prosecutors more concerned about wrongly dismissing them (see also Marchenko and Pakzad-Hurson 2025).

Unlike independent judges, who do not respond to news coverage (Figure 9), prosecutors operate within a hierarchical structure and are more exposed to this heightened scrutiny and accountability (Section 2). They may also have internalized the new norms. Either way, news coverage brings the cost of a wrongful dismissal back to mind for a few days, and this reminder matters more once that cost has risen. The data contain no information on individual prosecutors and cannot separate a direct response to the news from pressure exerted by superiors. However, the response emerges immediately and is strongest for decisions made in real time (Appendix Table E.6), which seems hard to reconcile with formal instructions passed down the hierarchy. Rising caseloads and new policies on VAW after #MeToo may also have made prosecutors more responsive to coverage, and the timing of the response alone cannot separate their role from that of the movement. Part of the institutional effect of the post-#MeToo period may therefore operate by changing how everyday news about VAW is received and acted upon, making routine coverage more consequential after 2017.

Taken together, these results suggest that news coverage changes which cases prosecutors focus on, in line with evidence that media attention shapes what public officials act upon (Eisensee and Strömberg 2007). Salience and reputational concerns are thus likely to be complementary: tight resource constraints lead prosecutors to dismiss some viable cases, news coverage temporarily draws their attention to these cases, and the shift in norms brought about by #MeToo may have raised the cost of wrongly dismissing them.

7 Conclusion

This paper provides evidence that public attention shapes the criminal justice response to violence against women, mainly through prosecutors. Using administrative data that follow nearly 800,000 cases of sexual and intimate partner violence from registration to sentencing, I find that TV news coverage of unrelated VAW cases increases prosecution rates in the following week but does not make judges more stringent. The results underscore the central role of prosecutors, who dismiss about three-quarters of cases, whereas most prosecuted cases result in conviction. Media coverage operates precisely on this margin: it allows more cases to proceed to trial, and these additional cases are just as likely to result in conviction. The response appears specific to VAW, as news on other crimes does not systematically affect their prosecution. It also emerges only after the #MeToo movement. Together, these patterns suggest that coverage leads prosecutors to prioritize VAW cases, and that large-scale movements can amplify this response by raising the cost of wrongly dismissing them. While I find no evidence that this shift crowds out the handling of other crimes against persons, small displacement effects cannot be ruled out.

From a policy perspective, these findings indicate that prosecutorial decisions are malleable. But is it a good thing that news coverage can shift them? The additionally prosecuted cases appear legally viable, which suggests that, with limited resources and broad discretion, prosecutors dismiss some cases despite their merit, and that coverage helps some of them reach trial. However, otherwise similar cases are then handled differently depending on whether an unrelated story aired in the previous days, and the response is short-lived. A lasting reduction in the dismissal of viable cases may therefore require greater prosecutorial capacity and clearer priorities for handling VAW cases, rather than more media attention.

These results have several limitations. First, because identification targets short-run responses to isolated news coverage, generalizing to longer horizons requires caution. Second, the media measure focuses on national evening TV news, whereas effects may differ for regional TV, print, or social media. Third, I do not observe police behavior directly, which may introduce bias if changes in police practices also affect which cases are recorded and forwarded to the justice system or how they are investigated. Finally, external validity is limited by the institutional context: France's civil-law system, in which prosecutors are appointed, may respond differently from systems with elected prosecutors.

Future work could examine how the narratives used to portray victims and offenders in the news or in other media formats shape criminal justice responses. Another promising research avenue lies in examining whether these additional prosecutions deter future violence and encourage victims to report in the longer run, which are two critical questions that are beyond the scope of this paper.

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A Additional details on the French criminal justice system

This appendix provides further details on the French criminal justice system described in Section 2. Appendix A.1 presents the main actors and courts involved in criminal proceedings, Appendix A.2 defines the procedural terms used in the paper, and Appendix A.3 describes the legal classification of the offenses studied.

A.1 Judicial actors and courts

Judicial actors There are two main categories of magistrates tasked with applying and upholding the law in France: judicial magistrates *(magistrats du siège)*, also known as judges, who apply the law by ruling on criminal cases and issuing impartial decisions in accordance with legal standards; and prosecutorial magistrates *(magistrats du parquet)*, or prosecutors, who advocate for the enforcement of the law and lead criminal proceedings on behalf of society's interest.

Judicial magistrates enjoy guarantees of independence and security of tenure, meaning they cannot be reassigned without their consent. The government cannot intervene in their careers, which further protects their independence. **Prosecutorial magistrates**, on the other hand, do not issue rulings. They are appointed by the President of the Republic, on the proposal of the Minister of Justice and after consultation with the High Council for the Judiciary (*Conseil supérieur de la magistrature*).

Prosecutors operate under the authority of the Minister of Justice and are subject to a principle of hierarchical subordination. While they may receive general policy instructions from the Minister of Justice, they cannot be directed in specific cases. Their freedom to speak during court hearings is fully protected. Unlike judges, prosecutors do not benefit from security of tenure and may be reassigned without their consent.

Each judicial court (*tribunal judiciaire*) has a **public prosecutor's office** led by a **chief public prosecutor** (*procureur de la République*), supported by deputy prosecutors, vice-prosecutors, and assistant prosecutors (*substituts*). They represent the state before the correctional court, juvenile court, investigating judges, and civil chambers. All members of the same prosecutor's office form an **indivisible and interchangeable body**, meaning any member can represent the prosecution at any stage of the legal proceedings.

Courts. In France, different types of courts handle criminal cases, trying both individuals and legal entities accused of an offense. The appropriate court depends on the severity of the alleged offense.

The **correctional court** (*tribunal correctionnel*) is the lower criminal court responsible for trying adults accused of misdemeanors (*délits*) such as theft or serious assault. It may impose prison sentences of up to 10 years—or up to 20 years for repeat offenders—as well as fines and alternative or additional penalties. Proceedings are handled either by a single judge or by a panel of three professional judges.

The **criminal court** *(cour d'assises)* is the higher criminal court responsible for trying felonies (*crimes*) punishable by 15 years of imprisonment or more (e.g., murder, rape, armed robbery), committed by adults (felonies committed at age 16 or 17 are tried by the juvenile criminal court,

cour d'assises des mineurs). It is composed of three professional judges and a jury of six randomly selected citizens. Cases reach this court after a judicial investigation.

The **departmental criminal court** (*cour criminelle départementale*), extended nationwide in 2023, tries adults accused of felonies punishable by between 15 and 20 years of imprisonment, such as rape or armed robbery, excluding repeat offenders. It is composed solely of five professional judges and handles cases referred by an investigating judge.

Juvenile courts (*juridictions pour mineurs*, including the juvenile judge, the juvenile court, and the juvenile correctional court) rule on the guilt of minors charged with criminal offenses and, if applicable, impose appropriate educational or punitive measures.

This study includes only first-instance rulings delivered by correctional or juvenile courts. The dataset excludes judgments of the *cours d'assises* and *cours criminelles*, which, however, account for only a small share of criminal proceedings: in 2019, 84% of prosecuted cases went to correctional courts and 8% to juvenile courts (SDSE 2019).

A.2 Legal concepts and procedures

This subsection defines the procedural terms used in the paper, from the prosecutor's choice between dismissal and prosecution to judicial dismissals.

Case orientation is the public prosecutor's decision on how to proceed with a case, usually either prosecution or dismissal. **Prosecution** means initiating criminal proceedings to bring the alleged offender before a criminal court. To do so, the prosecutor chooses among several **modes of prosecution**, which differ in speed and formality: most often a summons delivered by a judicial police officer (*convocation par OPJ*) or by the prosecutor (*convocation par procès-verbal*), which sets a hearing date; immediate appearance (*comparution immédiate*), in which the defendant is tried directly after police custody; a penal order (*ordonnance pénale*), a simplified written procedure without a hearing for minor offenses; or a referral to an investigating judge (see below). Plea bargaining plays only a limited role in this setting. A **guilty-plea procedure** (*comparution sur reconnaissance préalable de culpabilité*, CRPC) was introduced only in 2004: the prosecutor can propose a sentence to an adult defendant who admits the facts as charged, and the defendant, who must be assisted by a lawyer, may accept or refuse it. An accepted proposal must then be approved by a judge in a public hearing; if the judge refuses, the case returns to a standard procedure. Unlike plea bargaining in the United States, this procedure does not allow negotiation over charges, and over most of the study period the proposed prison sentence could not exceed one year or half of the maximum penalty. It remains rarely used for the cases studied here, accounting for only 10% of prosecuted intimate partner violence cases and 3% of sexual violence cases over 2012–2019 (Figure B.1), whereas the vast majority of criminal convictions in the United States result from guilty pleas.

Dismissal (*classement sans suite*) is the prosecutor's decision not to prosecute the alleged offender. Dismissal occurs in three situations: non-prosecutable cases, failure to prosecute, and successful alternatives to prosecution. **Non-prosecutable cases** are dismissed because prosecution is impossible, either for factual reasons (e.g., unknown offender, insufficiently established offense) or for legal reasons

(e.g., statute of limitations). **Failure to prosecute** refers to cases that could be prosecuted but are dismissed on grounds of public interest, legal principle, justice, or fairness. An **alternative to prosecution** is a measure that the prosecutor imposes instead of formal prosecution, to repair the harm done to the victim, end the disturbance caused by the offense, or help rehabilitate the offender. If the measure is successfully completed, the case is dismissed. Alternatives to prosecution do not appear on the offender's criminal record—except for a **penal composition**, which is considered a more formalized type of alternative.

Unlike prosecutorial dismissals, a **judicial dismissal** (*ordonnance de non-lieu*) is issued by an investigating judge. The judge issues it when the facts are not established or do not constitute an offense, when prosecution is no longer possible, or when the perpetrator cannot be identified. The dataset excludes judicial dismissals, which typically concern serious crimes referred to an investigating judge, but these dismissals are a small share of prosecuted cases. For instance, in 2019, only 3% of all prosecuted cases were referred to investigating judges (SDSE 2019). This route matters more for sexual violence: 24% of prosecuted sexual violence cases in the data were referred to court by an investigating judge, compared with less than 1% of intimate partner violence cases (Figure B.1). These shares understate the use of this route, since cases dropped by an investigating judge or sent to criminal courts are not observed. For the same reason, the conviction analysis covers only cases that reached trial in correctional or juvenile courts.

A.3 Legal classification of offenses

Sexual violence refers to situations in which a person imposes sexual behavior or comments on another person. In this paper, it covers three offenses: rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment. **Rape** is defined as any act of sexual penetration, of any kind, or any oral-genital act committed on another person or on the perpetrator by means of violence, coercion, threat, or surprise. **Sexual assault** is a sexual act committed with violence, coercion, threat, or surprise. It also requires physical contact but excludes penetration, which characterizes rape. **Sexual harassment** consists of repeatedly imposing on a person sexual remarks or behaviors that either violate the victim's dignity because they are degrading or humiliating, or create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment. Rape is classified as a **felony** (*crime*), the most serious category of offense, punishable by 15 years of imprisonment or more. Sexual assault and sexual harassment are classified as **misdemeanors** (*délits*), i.e., acts prohibited by law and punishable by a fine, imprisonment of up to 10 years (20 years for repeat offenders), or both.

Intimate partner violence refers to all forms of violence (physical, sexual, psychological, and economic) committed within couples, whether married, in civil unions, cohabiting, or separated. Intimate partner violence is generally classified as a misdemeanor, except in cases of voluntary homicide or rape, which are felonies.

Downgrading of charges (*correctionnalisation*) refers to the process by which an offense initially classified as a felony is reclassified as a misdemeanor (for instance, from rape to sexual assault). The public prosecutor can downgrade charges at the end of the preliminary investigation, and so can the

investigating judge. Such reclassification may reflect a justified **legal reassessment** of the facts when the investigation does not sufficiently establish the elements of rape; such reassessment is inherent to the functioning of the criminal justice system. In contrast, **undercharging** or **declassification** refers to cases recognized as rape but still sent to the correctional court (*tribunal correctionnel*) rather than to the higher criminal court (*cour d'assises*). Prosecutors or investigating judges may do so to reduce the court backlog, or when they believe that the victim is unlikely to succeed before a jury. Several studies based on reviews of court files estimate that nearly half of the sexual assaults prosecuted in correctional courts are in fact rapes that were downgraded, although no reliable official statistics are available on this matter (Le Goaziou 2019).

B Additional details on the criminal justice data

This appendix complements the description of the criminal justice data in Sections 3.1 and 3.2. Appendix B.1 describes the data source, the identification of sexual and intimate partner violence cases, and the construction of the estimation samples. Appendix B.2 presents additional descriptive statistics on how these cases are handled.

B.1 Data source and sample construction

The data used in this study come from the management software *Cassiopée*. French courts use this system to process all criminal offenses, including fifth-class petty offenses (*contraventions*), misdemeanors (*délits*), and felonies (*crimes*), involving either individuals (adults and minors) or legal entities. Court clerks enter most of the information, and the French Ministry of Justice extracted the dataset from this software. The dataset includes all criminal cases received by public prosecutors and either dismissed or prosecuted in first instance before correctional or juvenile courts between 2012 and 2023.

While this database is primarily used by the Ministry of Justice for official statistical publications, it has only recently been made accessible to researchers through the Secure Data Access Center (CASD). This paper is among the first to use these data. However, because the data cover only closed cases, not those still under investigation, trends for the most recent years should be interpreted with caution; I therefore end the analysis in 2019. In addition, the dataset excludes cases dismissed after a judicial investigation and cases tried in the higher criminal courts (*cours d'assises* and *cours criminelles*), which represent a small share of the criminal caseload (Appendix A).

Each case is classified using an official coding system (NATAFF), which assigns one to three main offense types to each case based on the case file received by the prosecutor. The code gives a broad classification of the case (among 350 codes at the most detailed level). The NATAFF code is case-level and shared across all suspects involved. It is less detailed than the offense-level NATINF code, which is assigned to each suspect. However, NATINF is often missing, especially for dismissed cases (43% missing in this dataset), whereas NATAFF is recorded for all cases.

Because the legal classification of an offense can change during the criminal justice process (as new evidence emerges or depending on who classifies the offense), I rely primarily on the NATAFF

code as recorded when the case enters the prosecutor's office. This choice ensures that all cases are classified in the same way, whether they were dismissed or prosecuted. Judicial outcome statistics (e.g., convictions and sentencing) are based on the NATAFF recorded at the time of the decision—that is, the final classification assigned by the prosecutor.

I use this classification (NATAFF at entry or at decision) to restrict the sample to sexual violence and intimate partner violence cases. Sexual violence covers rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment; intimate partner violence covers violence committed by a spouse, partner, or ex-partner. These two categories may overlap, for instance, in cases of marital rape.

Rape is legally classified as a felony in France and should in principle be adjudicated in criminal courts (*cours d'assises*). However, a large share of rape cases are reclassified either at the prosecutor's office or after an investigation. The study therefore covers cases recorded as rape at entry that were either dismissed or downgraded to a lesser charge (*correctionnalisation*; see Appendix A.3). Some downgraded rape cases are reclassified as misdemeanors (e.g., sexual assault) because they do not meet the legal definition of rape. Others meet this definition but are deliberately prosecuted as lesser offenses.

Appendix Table B.1 reports the number of observations at each step of the construction of the estimation samples.

Table B.1: Construction of the estimation samples

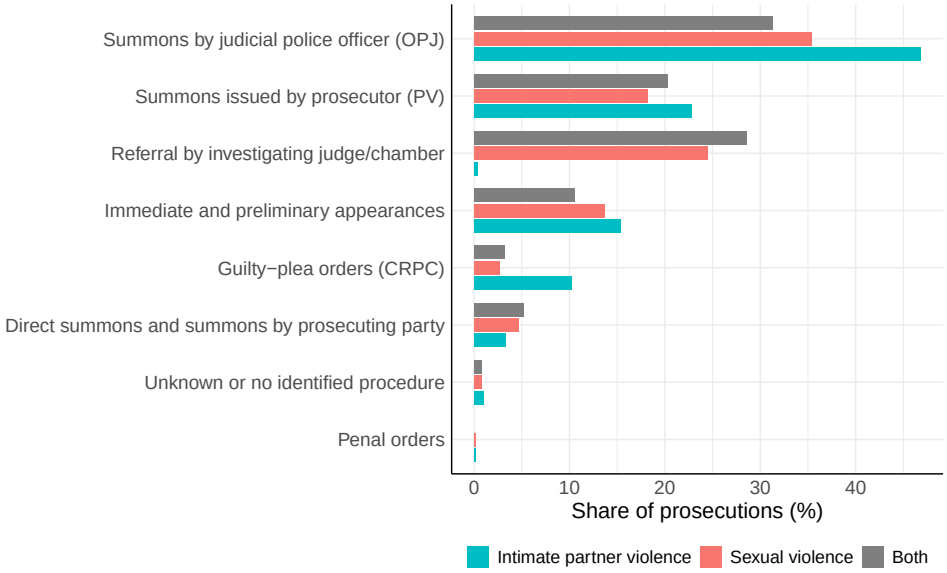
	Number
A. Criminal cases (prosecution stage)	
All charge-level observations dismissed or prosecuted, 2012–2019	22,232,441
Sexual and intimate partner violence (charge-level observations)	792,802
Metropolitan France, excluding female suspects, non-missing controls	758,305
Isolated news days (main estimation sample)	687,198
B. Days (reporting stage)	
Calendar days, 2012–2019	2,922
Isolated news days (reporting estimation sample)	2,647
C. News stories on crimes against women (TF1 and France 2, 2012–2019)	
News stories	252
Days with at least one story	162
Isolated news days	76

Notes: Number of observations at each step of the construction of the estimation samples. Panel A: criminal cases (one observation per suspect and offense), from all cases dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts between 2012 and 2019 to the main estimation sample of prosecutorial decisions (Table 3, column 2). The third row corresponds to the sample of column 37 of Appendix Table E.6, which includes periods with multiple days of news coverage; the last row restricts it to decisions with at most one day of news coverage of crimes against women in the past week. Panel B: days used in the daily analyses of reporting and of the number of prosecutorial decisions (Table 3, columns 1 and 3). Panel C: news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2; here, isolated news days are news days not preceded by another news day in the previous seven days.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

B.2 Further descriptive results on criminal justice data

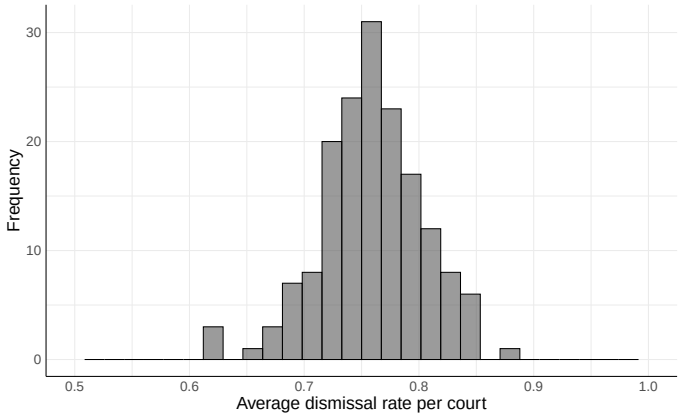
This subsection presents the additional descriptive statistics referred to in Section 3.2: the mode of referral of prosecuted cases to court (Figure B.1), the variation in dismissal rates across courts (Figure B.2), the handling of all other offenses (Figure B.3), and trends in registered cases, reporting delays, survey-based victimization and complaint rates, and dismissal rates by type of offense (Figures B.4 to B.7).

Figure B.1: Prosecuted sexual and intimate partner violence cases by mode of referral to court (2012–2019)

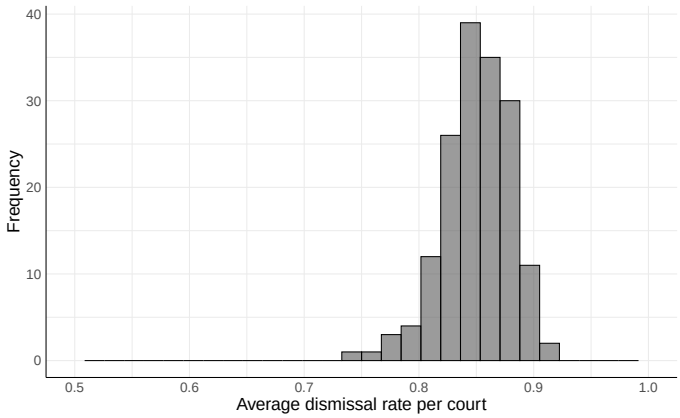


Notes: Distribution of sexual violence and intimate partner violence cases by mode of referral to court, among cases that arrived in the justice system from 2012 onward and were prosecuted and tried in correctional courts in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019. Shares are computed within each type of case; "Both" refers to cases involving both sexual and intimate partner violence.
Reading: Over 2012–2019, 47% of prosecuted intimate partner violence cases were referred to court through a summons issued by a judicial police officer, and 15% through immediate or preliminary appearances.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

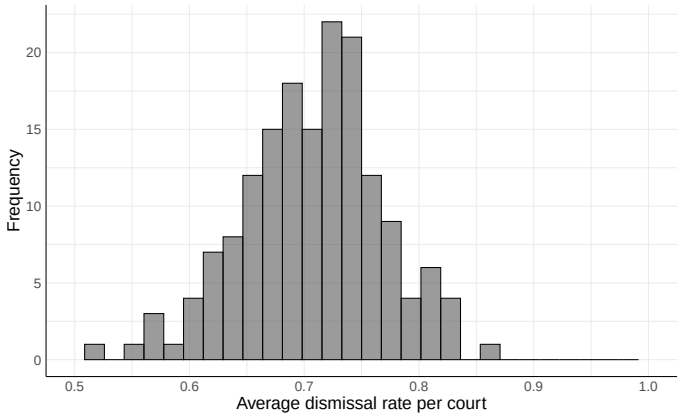
Figure B.2: Distribution of dismissal rates for sexual and intimate partner violence cases across courts (2012–2019)



(a) Sexual and intimate partner violence



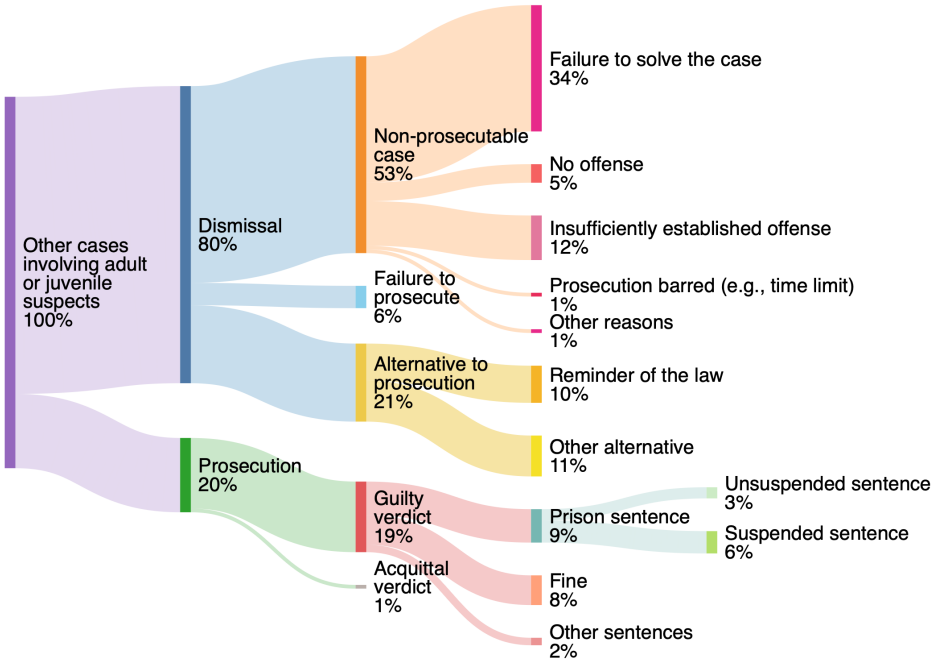
(b) Sexual violence



(c) Intimate partner violence

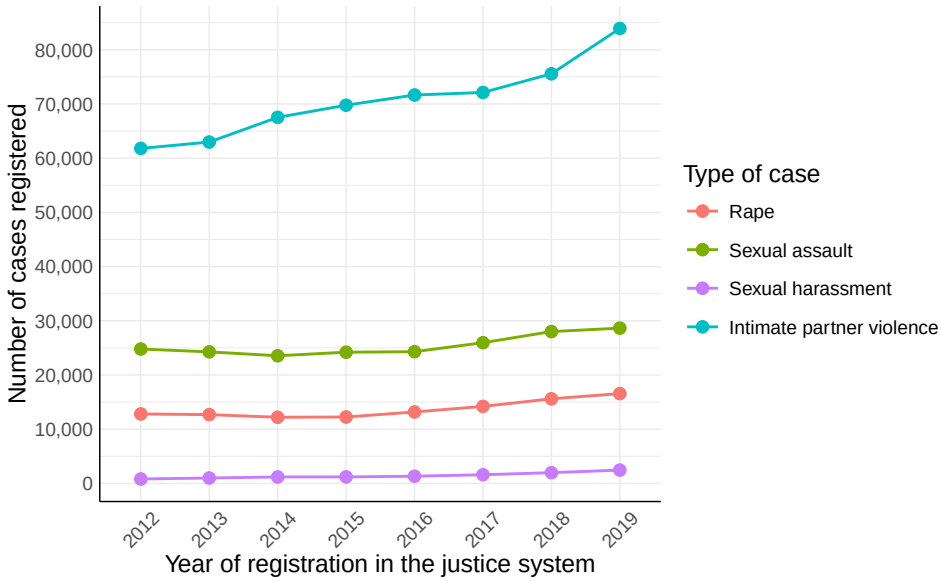
Notes: Distribution across the 164 courts of the dismissal rate for sexual and intimate partner violence cases over 2012–2019, for all such cases in panel (a), sexual violence cases only in panel (b), and intimate partner violence cases only in panel (c). The dismissal rate is the number of cases dismissed divided by the number of cases dismissed or prosecuted in the court. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases that arrived in the justice system from 2012 onward and were dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts between 2012 and 2019, in metropolitan and overseas France. In panel (a), the mean court-level dismissal rate is 0.76, with a standard deviation of 0.05, a minimum of 0.61, and a maximum of 0.88; the first and third quartiles are 0.73 and 0.79.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

Figure B.3: Criminal justice handling of all other cases involving adult or juvenile suspects (2012–2019)



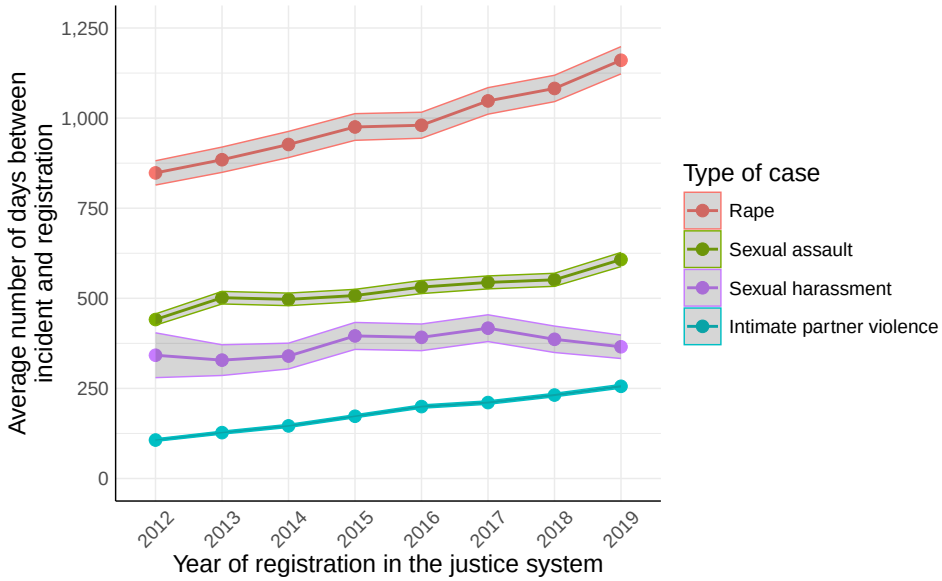
Notes: Share of cases at each stage of the criminal justice process. The sample consists of all cases other than sexual and intimate partner violence that involve adult or juvenile suspects (excluding legal entities) and arrived in the justice system from 2012 onward. These cases were dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 20{,}887{,}801$). The most common offenses are theft or burglary (28.62%), traffic offenses such as driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (8.76%), physical violence (8.40%), and property damage (8.34%).
Reading: Of all cases other than sexual and intimate partner violence completed between 2012 and 2019, 80% were dismissed, with 53% of all cases dismissed because they were deemed non-prosecutable. Overall, 20% of cases were prosecuted and 19% ended in a guilty verdict, with a prison sentence imposed in 9% of all cases.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

Figure B.4: Number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system, by type of case (2012–2019)



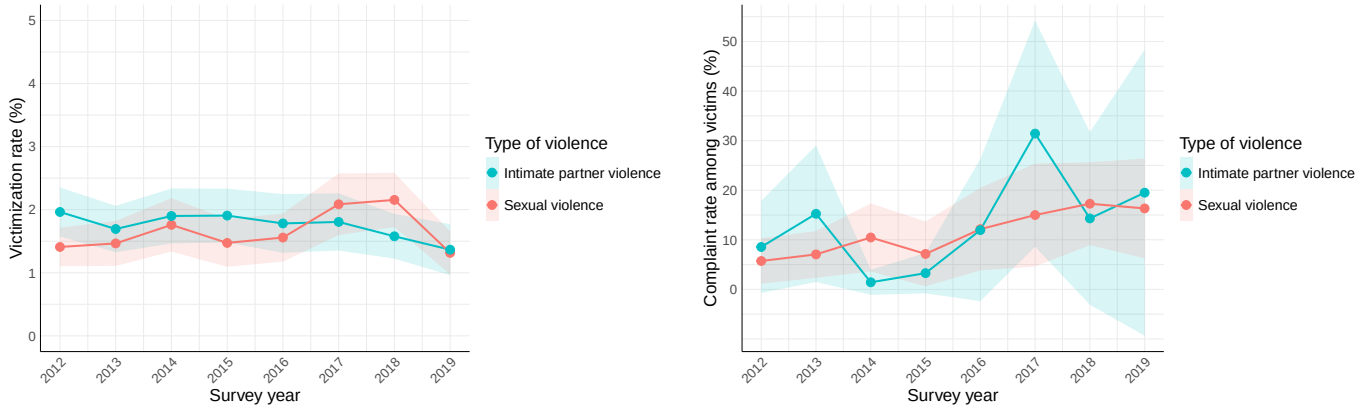
Notes: Number of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system each year between 2012 and 2019 in metropolitan and overseas France. The count includes only cases later dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts. Cases are classified by their main offense.
Reading: The number of new intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system grew from around 62,000 in 2012 to around 84,000 in 2019.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

Figure B.5: Average time from incident to registration in the justice system, by type of case (2012–2019)



Notes: Average number of days between the start of the incident and the registration of the case in the justice system, by year of registration. The sample consists of rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019 and later dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts. Cases are classified by their main offense. Shaded areas are 95% confidence intervals.
Reading: The average time between a rape and the registration of the case in the justice system increased from around 2.3 years (848 days) in 2012 to 3.2 years (1,161 days) in 2019.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

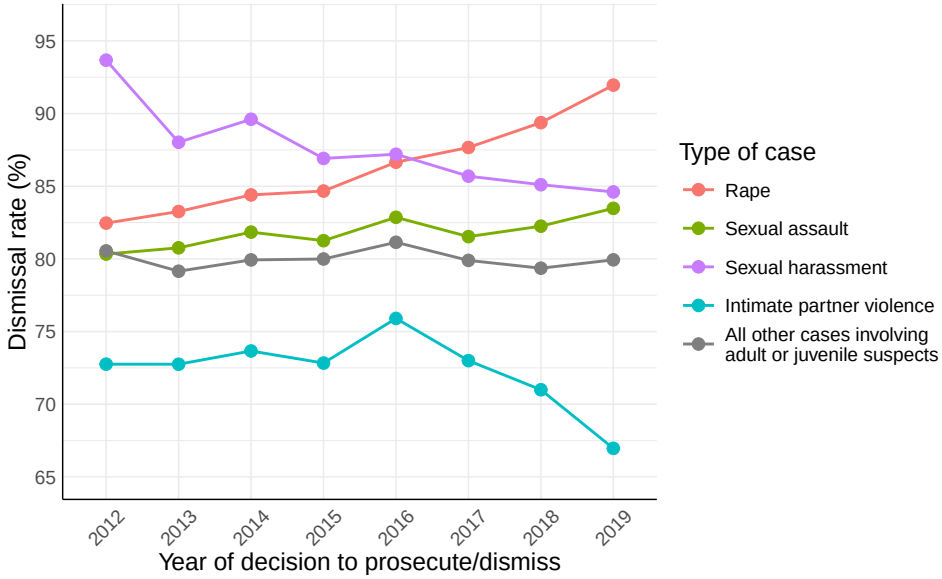
Figure B.6: Victimization and complaint rates for sexual and intimate partner violence among women (2012–2019)



(a) Victimization rate **(b)** Complaint rate

Notes: Both panels are computed on the same sample of women aged 18–75 interviewed in the 2012–2019 waves of the French victimization survey ($N = 51{,}301$ respondents). Panel (a): share of women stating in the survey of year t that they had been victims of sexual violence, or of physical or sexual violence by a partner or ex-partner, during the two preceding years. Panel (b): share of these female victims who filed a complaint with the police for the most recent incident. It is computed on 822 victims of sexual violence and 256 victims of intimate partner violence with a non-missing answer (between 14 and 43 victims of intimate partner violence per survey year). Rates are weighted with the survey weights; shaded areas are 95% confidence intervals.
Reading: The victimization rate of women is fairly stable over the period, between 1.3% and 2.2% for sexual violence and between 1.4% and 2.0% for intimate partner violence. By contrast, the complaint rate among female victims rises sharply from 2016 onward: it roughly doubles for sexual violence (from 8% on average over 2012–2015 to 15% over 2016–2019) and nearly triples for intimate partner violence (from 7% to 19%).
Source: Author's calculations based on the French victimization survey *Cadre de vie et sécurité* conducted by the French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies and the National Observatory of Crime and Criminal Justice, 2012–2019 waves.

Figure B.7: Dismissal rate by type of case, with sexual violence broken down by offense (2012–2019)



Notes: Share of cases dismissed by public prosecutors, by year, among rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence, and all other cases involving adult or juvenile suspects (excluding legal entities). The sample consists of cases dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan and overseas France between 2012 and 2019. Sexual violence cases are classified by their main offense.
Reading: The dismissal rate for rape cases increased from 82% in 2012 to 92% in 2019, while the dismissal rate for intimate partner violence cases decreased from 73% to 67%.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

C Additional details on the television news data

This appendix complements the description of the TV news data in Sections 3.3 and 3.4. Appendix C.1 describes the INA archives and how news stories on VAW are identified and classified. Appendix C.2 compares coverage on TF1 and France 2 with coverage in other media and describes the audience of their 8 p.m. news using the ELIPSS survey. Appendix C.3 presents additional descriptive statistics on the coverage of VAW, and Appendix C.4 describes the news stories on crimes against women used as the treatment in the analysis.

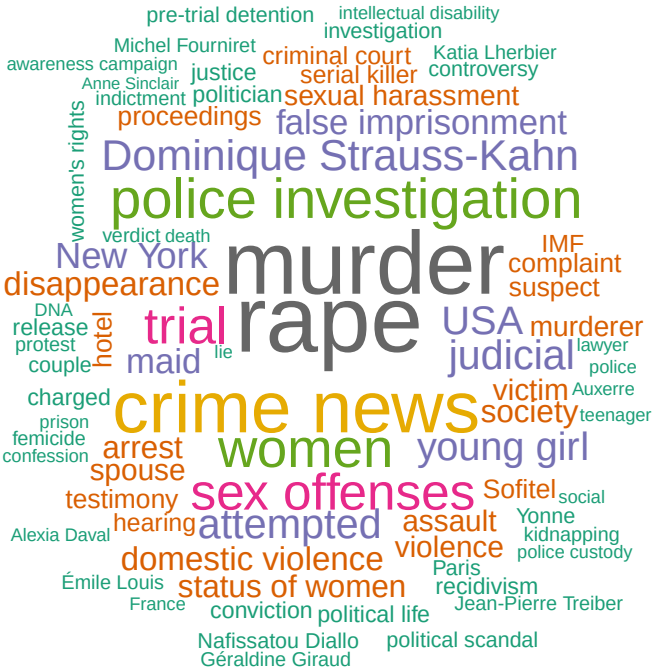
C.1 Data source and classification of news stories

Table C.1: Example of the TV news data structure

Channel	Date	Time	Duration (s)	Title	Summary	Keywords
TF1	2012-01-13	20:15:20	78	[Serial Rapist in Paris: Police Launch Witness Appeal]	Report in Paris, where a serial rapist has been active since December. The Paris judicial police launch a witness appeal to find him. Interview with a witness. Excerpts from statements by Christian Flaesch, director of the judicial police at the Paris Prefecture of Police, alternating with factual images.	Paris region, crime news, rape, witness appeal, judicial police
France 2	2013-11-22	20:12:02	82	[Analysis Segment: Plan Against Violence Against Women]	In-studio analysis by Perrine Bonnet of the plan against violence against women recently launched by Najat Vallaud-Belkacem. She reviews the statistics on violence and the measures set out in the plan. Her comments are illustrated with factual images and infographics.	society, status of women, women's rights, women, violence (domestic violence), couple, plan, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem
France 2	2014-01-23	20:30:03	15	[Brief News Segment: Alain Penin Sentenced to Life Imprisonment]	Brief. The Nord criminal court sentenced Alain Penin to life imprisonment, with a minimum term of 22 years, for the murder of Natacha Mougel. Commentary over factual images.	trial, verdict, murder, young girl, conviction, Alain Penin (life imprisonment)

Notes: Extract of the INA database showing three news stories from three different 8 p.m. news broadcasts. Each row is a news story; the columns give the channel, the date and time of broadcast, the duration of the story (in seconds), its title, a short summary, and the list of standardized keywords assigned by INA staff (translated from French).
Source: TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.1: Word cloud of the keywords describing stories on violence against women in national 8 p.m. TV news (2000–2021)



Notes: Most frequent terms in the standardized keywords assigned by INA staff to the 6,217 news stories on violence against women broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of the six main French national TV channels (TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte) between 2000 and 2021. The 78 terms displayed (translated from French) each appear at least 115 times; multi-word keywords (e.g., "police investigation," "serial killer") and person names count as single terms; their font size is proportional to their frequency.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Keywords used to classify news stories on violence against women The list below gives the words, translated from French, that define the measures of media coverage of VAW for each content category. Categories are assigned in the order listed: a story enters a later category only if it does not fit an earlier one, except for certain word combinations.

1. **Trial reports**: trial, lawsuit, court, appeal, assizes, criminal, Cassation, courthouse, judge, justice, recourse, procedure, prosecutor's closing argument, court transcript, hearing, judicial hearing, verdict, conviction, indictment, convicted, guilty, criminal confinement, dismissal, without prosecution, acquitted, acquittal, release, released, freedom, defamation, appealed, judicial supervision, compensation, civil procedure, clemency measure, imprisonment, pardoned, commutation of sentence, parole, rejection of parole.
2. **Law and society reports**, subdivided into:
    - **Preventive campaigns, protective measures, associations**: campaign, advertising campaign, toll-free number, hotline, helpline, 119, 3919, information campaign, communication campaign, advertising, information, security device, association, support group, SOS Solidarité Femmes, collective, training, prevention, care, reception center, medical treatment, phone call, reception, course, self-defense, advertising message, screening, platform, emergency police, medical check-up, medical aid, human relations, legal aid, dog, BLAST, surveillance system.
    - **Laws, government, criminal policy**: criminal procedure, criminal justice, criminal

law, reform, law, jurisprudence, experimentation, experiment, political program, Grenelle, plan, budget, device, bracelet, emergency phone, mobile phone, serious-danger device, virtual reality, restorative justice, report, Council of Ministers, Matignon, minister, brigade, domestic policy, public policy, measure, Raffarin, circular, Ministry of Education, State Secretariat, constitution, constitutional, Macron, President of the Republic.

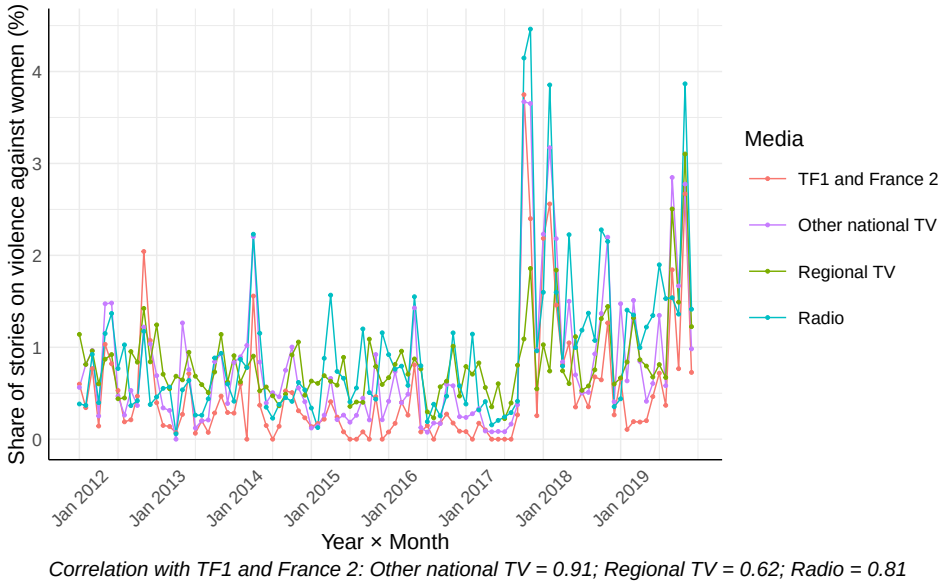
- **Society, women's rights, events, arts**: women's rights, international day, thematic day, World Day, tribute, march, observatory, society, opinion poll, demonstration, protest, op-ed, white march, gathering, social network, social phenomenon, film, documentary, music video, book, play, exhibition, TV series, novel, short film, sexism, testimony, status of women, condition of women, figure, insecurity, numerical data, journalism, media.

3. **Crime reports** (usually referred to as *faits divers*): disappearance, abduction, kidnapping, body, blood, dead, miscellaneous facts, news item, serial killer, police investigation, arrest, custody, indicted, police sketch, false testimony, public prosecutor's office, judicial inquiry, accusation, accused, complaint, rape, rapist, serial rapist, murder, death, suspected, assault, harassment, judicial procedure, immolation, genetic fingerprint, DNA, confession, actively sought, lifted.

C.2 Coverage in other media and news audiences

Other media. Figure C.2 compares the coverage of violence against women on TF1 and France 2 with that of the other national channels, regional TV news, and national radio stations. Coverage also moves together at the daily level, although less closely than at the monthly level, as each outlet selects partly different stories: the daily correlation in the number of stories on crimes against women is 0.59 with the other national channels, 0.35 with morning radio bulletins, and 0.26 with France 3 regional editions, which mostly cover local events. Isolated news days on TF1 and France 2 thus tend to coincide with broader media attention: on these days, the other national channels also covered such a crime on the same day or the day before three times as often as on days without such a story (50% vs. 16%). Stories on crimes against women also did not become longer after #MeToo (78 seconds on average before October 2017 and 81 seconds after), so the rise in coverage reflects more stories rather than longer ones.

Figure C.2: Correlation between coverage of violence against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 and in other media (2012–2019)



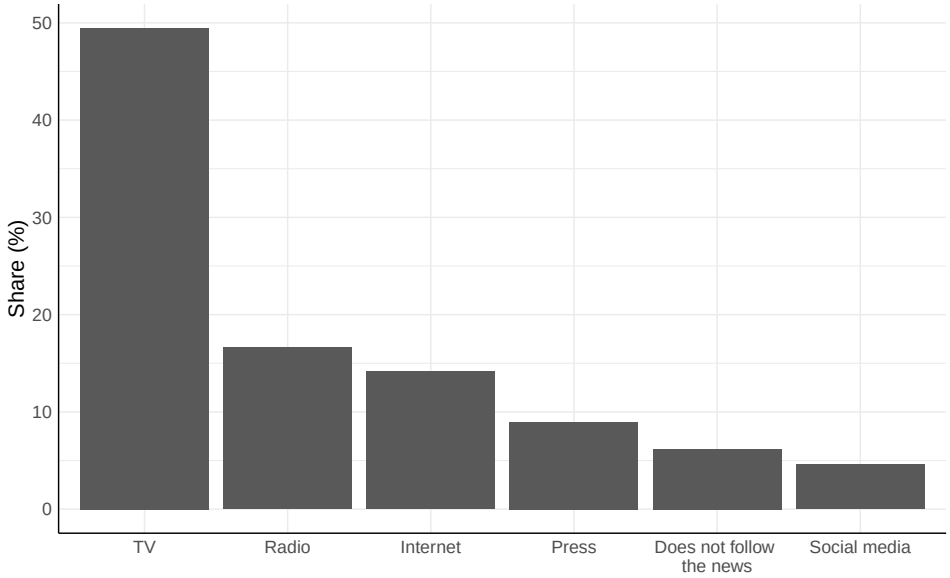
Notes: Monthly share of news stories about violence against women (VAW) among all stories, from January 2012 to December 2019, in four sets of news programs: the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2; the 8 p.m. news of the other national channels (France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte); the regional evening news of France 3 (24 regional editions); and the news bulletins of seven national radio stations (France Inter, France Info, France Culture, RTL, Europe 1, RMC, BFM Business). VAW stories are identified with the same keyword search in each source. The coefficients below the figure are the Pearson correlations between the monthly series of TF1 and France 2 and each of the other series.
Reading: The monthly share of VAW stories on TF1 and France 2 is strongly correlated with that of the other national channels (0.91) and of radio stations (0.81), and more moderately with that of the regional news (0.62).
Source: Author's calculations based on TV and radio news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Survey data. To document television as a source of news, I use the ELIPSS panel (*Étude Longitudinale par Internet pour les Sciences Sociales*) (Tiberj and Gougou 2020). ELIPSS is a probability-based longitudinal panel of adults aged 18–79 who live in private households in metropolitan France, excluding Corsica. ELIPSS questionnaires are fielded regularly and self-administered online on a tablet (with an internet connection) provided to respondents. The analyses draw on the DYNAMOB module (wave 13; September–October 2016; $N = 2{,}687$ respondents). The survey includes questions on respondents' main sources of news (e.g., television vs. other media) and the TV channel most

often watched for news. It also provides survey weights and detailed sociodemographic characteristics, which I use to build audience profiles.

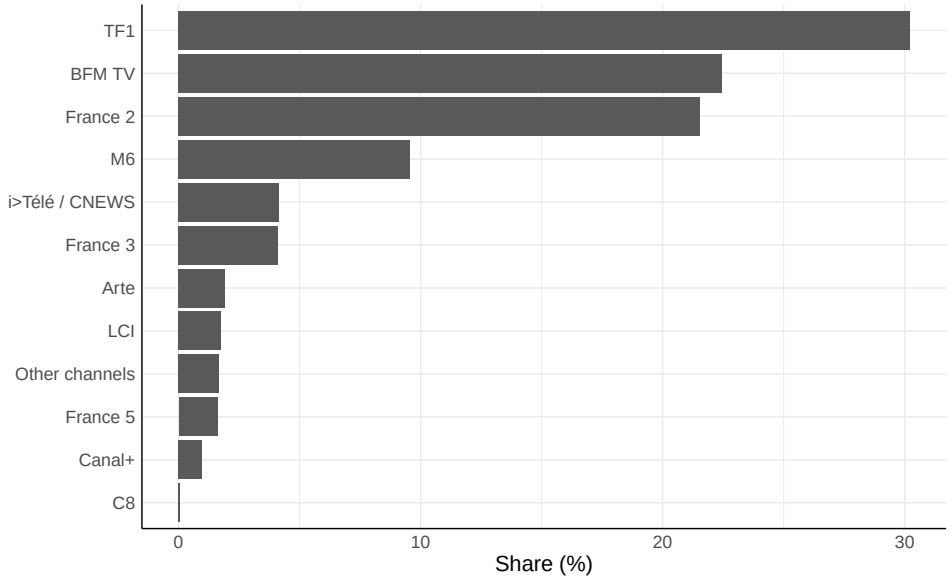
Figure C.3 shows that television was the main source of news for about half of respondents in 2016. Figure C.4 shows that TF1 and France 2 are, with BFM TV, the three channels most often watched for news. TF1 and France 2 news viewers resemble the adult population on most observable characteristics (Figure C.5). They are overrepresented among people with little education and people aged 50 and above (including retirees), and slightly underrepresented among the employed. Their occupational-class composition is close overall to that of the adult population (Figure C.6). Finally, Figure C.7 shows that, in the occupational class that includes magistrates (senior civil servants, intellectual and artistic professions), 97% of respondents follow the news and more than half rely primarily on television or radio.

Figure C.3: Main source of news



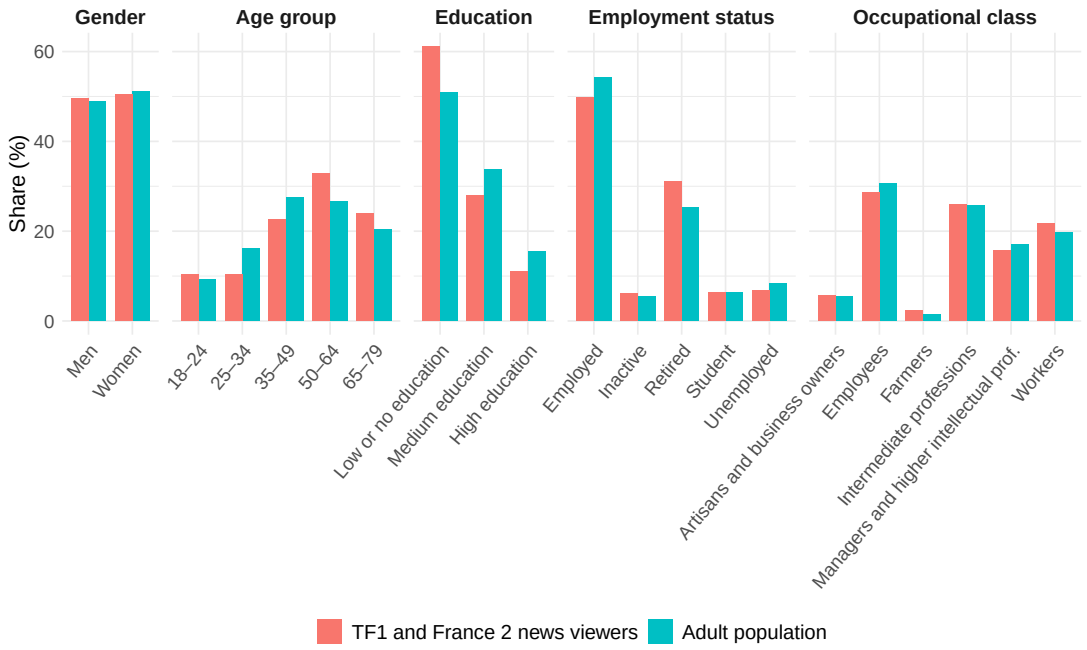
Notes: Share of respondents naming each medium as their main source of news. ELIPSS panel, DYNAMOB module, wave 13 (September–October 2016), $N = 2{,}684$ respondents aged 18–79 living in metropolitan France who answered the question; weighted with the survey weights.
Reading: In 2016, television was the main source of news for 49.5% of respondents, followed by radio (16.6%) and the internet (14.1%).
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELIPSS panel (DYNAMOB module, 2016).

Figure C.4: Main TV channel used for news



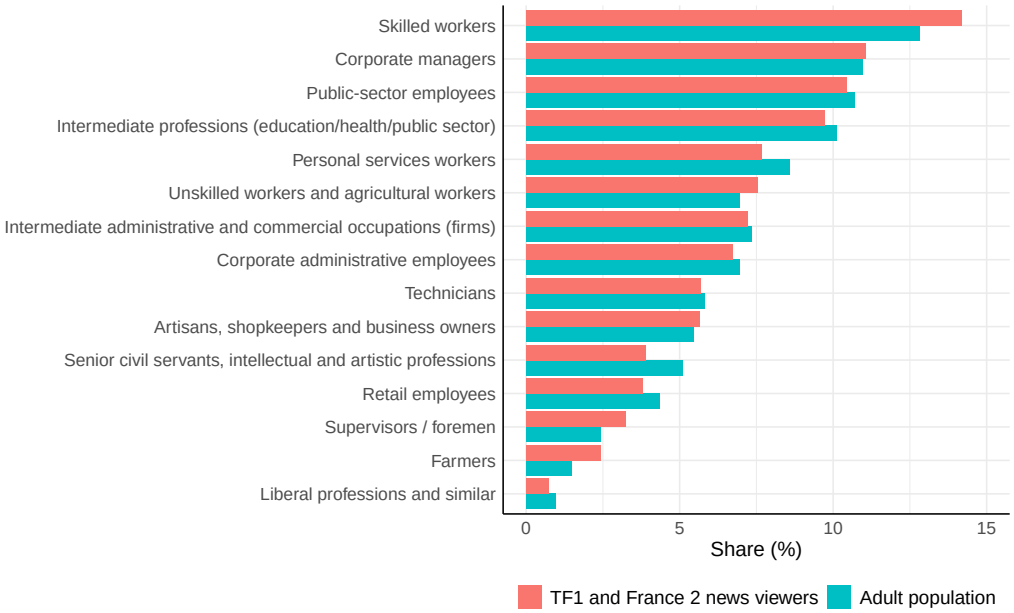
Notes: Share of respondents naming each channel as the one they watch most often for news, among respondents who watch TV news at least one day a week. ELIPSS panel, DYNAMOB module, wave 13 (September–October 2016), $N = 1{,}838$ TV news viewers; weighted with the survey weights. "Other channels" groups the answers outside the eleven listed channels.
Reading: TF1, BFM TV, and France 2 are the three channels most often watched for news, named by 30.2%, 22.5%, and 21.5% of TV news viewers, respectively.
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELIPSS panel (DYNAMOB module, 2016).

Figure C.5: Sociodemographic profile of TF1 and France 2 news viewers compared with the adult population



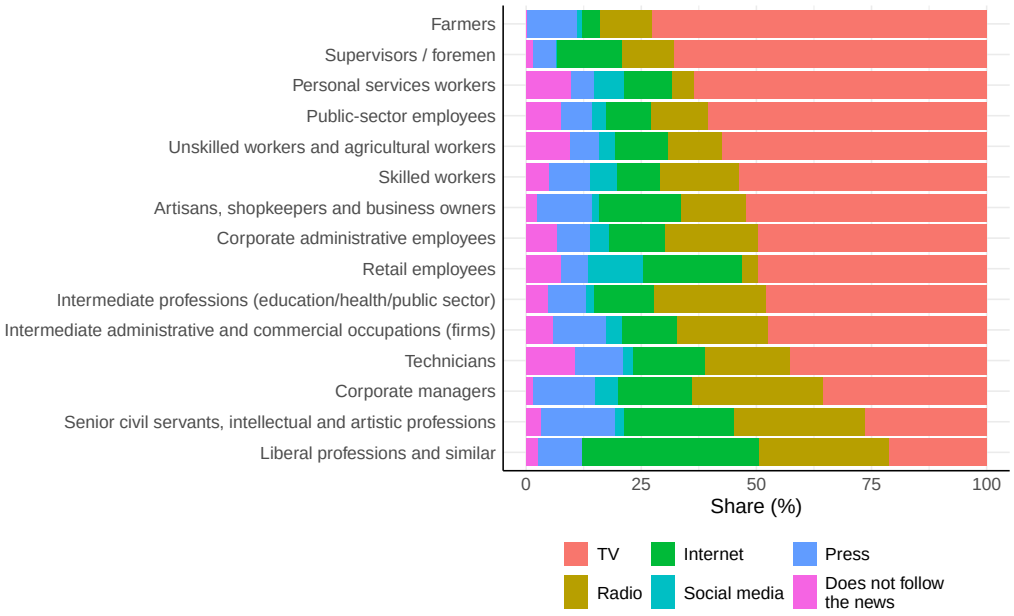
Notes: Sociodemographic profile of the respondents who watch TF1 or France 2 most often for news ($N = 955$) compared with the whole sample, representative of the population aged 18–79 living in metropolitan France ($N = 2{,}686$ respondents with a survey weight, viewers included). ELIPSS panel, DYNAMOB module, wave 13 (September–October 2016); shares weighted with the survey weights.
Reading: Individuals aged 50 and above (57% of viewers vs. 47% of the population), retirees (31% vs. 25%), and those with little or no education (61% vs. 51%) are overrepresented among TF1 and France 2 news viewers, while employed individuals are slightly underrepresented.
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELIPSS panel (DYNAMOB module, 2016).

Figure C.6: Detailed occupational profile of TF1 and France 2 news viewers compared with the adult population



Notes: Distribution by occupational class of the respondents who watch TF1 or France 2 most often for news ($N = 922$) compared with the whole sample, representative of the population aged 18–79 living in metropolitan France ($N = 2{,}584$ respondents with a known occupational class, viewers included). ELIPSS panel, DYNAMOB module, wave 13 (September–October 2016); shares weighted with the survey weights; classes sorted by their share among TF1 and France 2 news viewers.
Reading: The occupational composition of TF1 and France 2 news viewers is very close to that of the population.
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELIPSS panel (DYNAMOB module, 2016).

Figure C.7: Main source of news, by occupational class

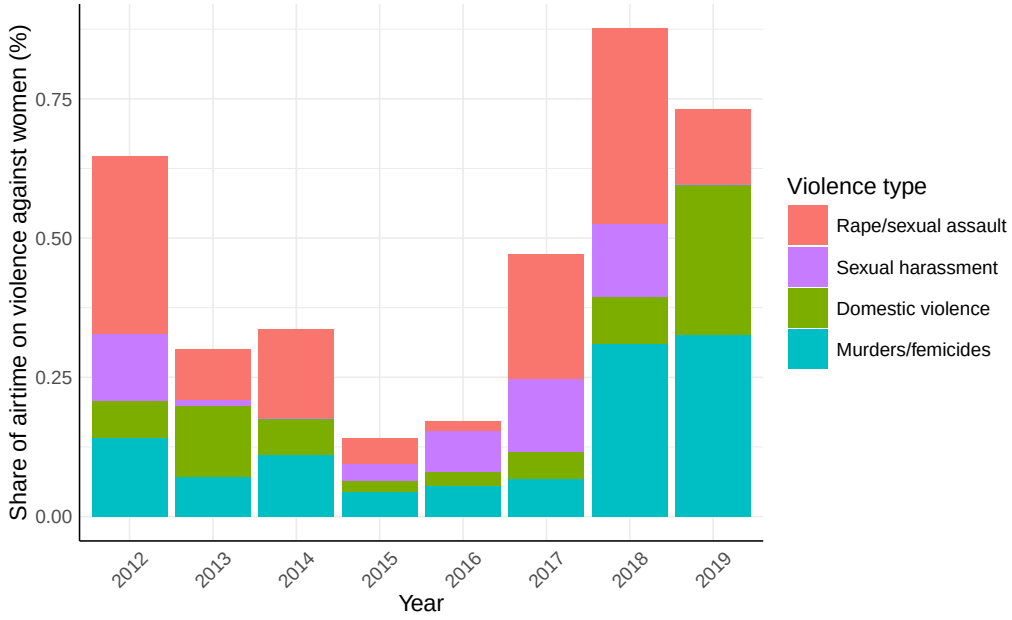


Notes: Main source of news reported by respondents, by occupational class. ELIPSS panel, DYNAMOB module, wave 13 (September–October 2016), $N = 2{,}584$ respondents with a known occupational class; weighted with the survey weights. Occupational classes are sorted by the share of respondents whose main source is television.
Reading: Among senior civil servants, intellectual and artistic professions, 97% of respondents follow the news and 55% rely primarily on television (26%) or radio (29%).
Source: Author's calculations based on the ELIPSS panel (DYNAMOB module, 2016).

C.3 Further descriptive statistics on TV news data

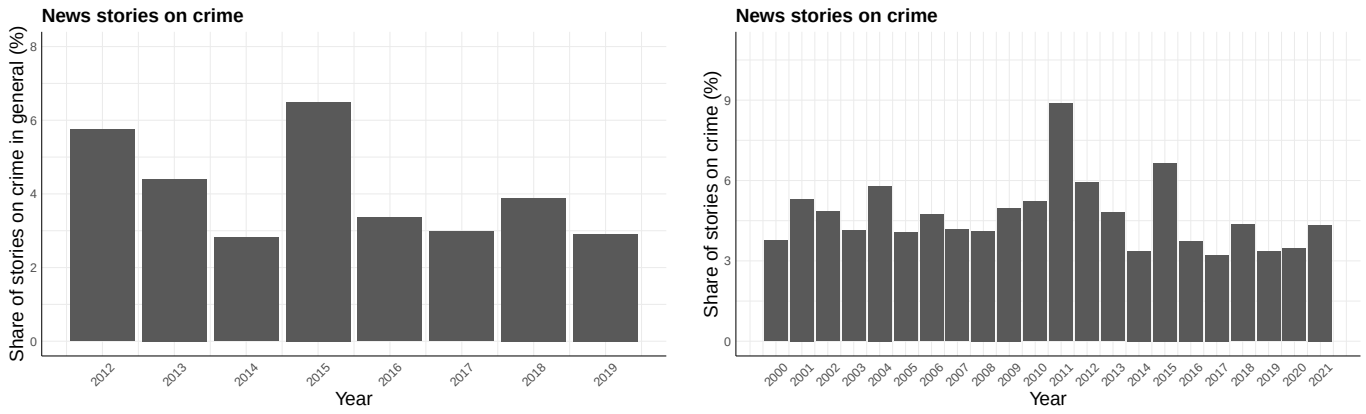
This subsection complements Section 3.4. It reports the share of airtime devoted to VAW on TF1 and France 2 (Figure C.8) and the share of stories on crime in general (Figure C.9), and extends the descriptive statistics to the six main national channels over 2000–2021: overall coverage (Figure C.10), content of the stories (Figure C.11), and terms used to describe the violence (Figure C.12).

Figure C.8: Share of airtime devoted to violence against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2, by type of violence (2012–2019)



Notes: Yearly share of the airtime devoted to news stories about violence against women (VAW) in the total duration of the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2. VAW stories are identified by keyword search in the title, summary, and keywords of each story and assigned to one of four mutually exclusive types of violence, in this order of priority: murders and femicides, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic violence.
Reading: Over 2012–2019, VAW stories accounted on average for 0.46% of the airtime of the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2. Their share of airtime peaked at 0.88% in 2018.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.9: Share of stories on any crime in the 8 p.m. news

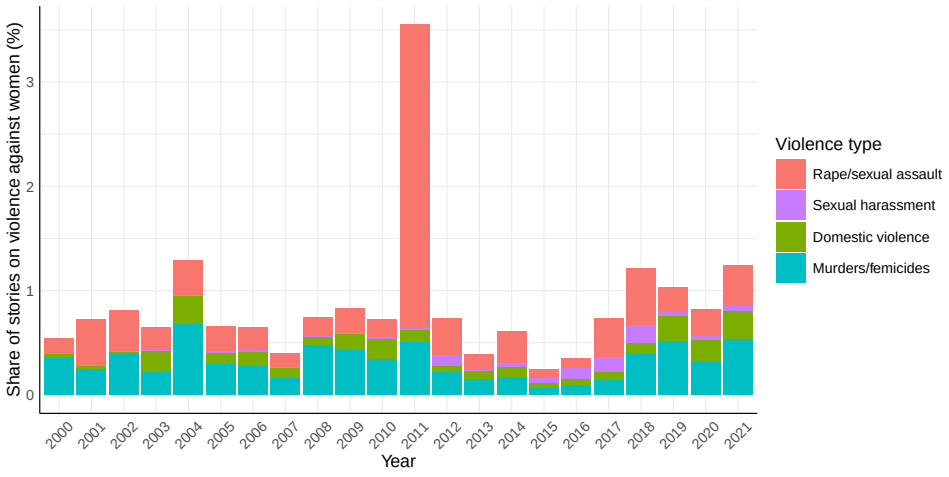


(a) TF1 and France 2 (2012–2019)

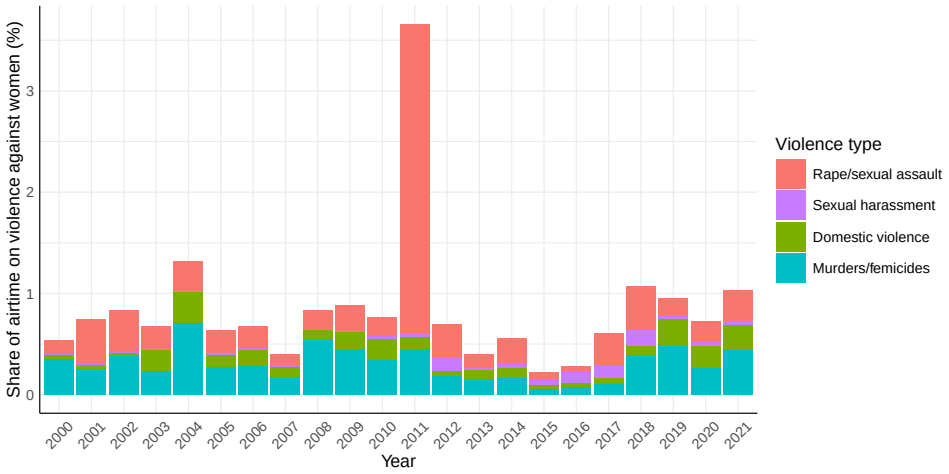
(b) Six main national channels (2000–2021)

Notes: Yearly share of news stories about crime among all stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019 (panel (a)) and of the six main French national TV channels (TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte) between 2000 and 2021 (panel (b)). Crime stories are identified by keyword search in the title, summary, and keywords of each story (murders, assaults, robberies, kidnappings, drug trafficking, etc.); they include the stories on violence against women.
Reading: Over 2012–2019, crime stories account for an average of 4.1% of all stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2, ranging from 2.8% in 2014 to 6.5% in 2015 (panel (a)). Over 2000–2021, on the six channels, this share averages 4.7%, ranging from 3.2% in 2017 to 8.9% in 2011 (panel (b)).
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.10: Share of stories and airtime devoted to violence against women in the 8 p.m. news of the six main national channels, by type of violence (2000–2021)



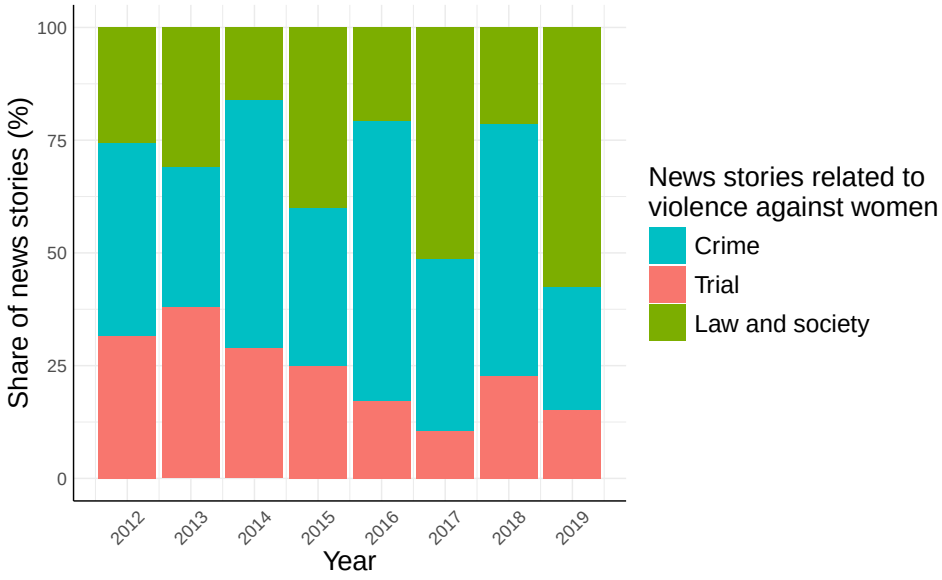
(a) Share of stories



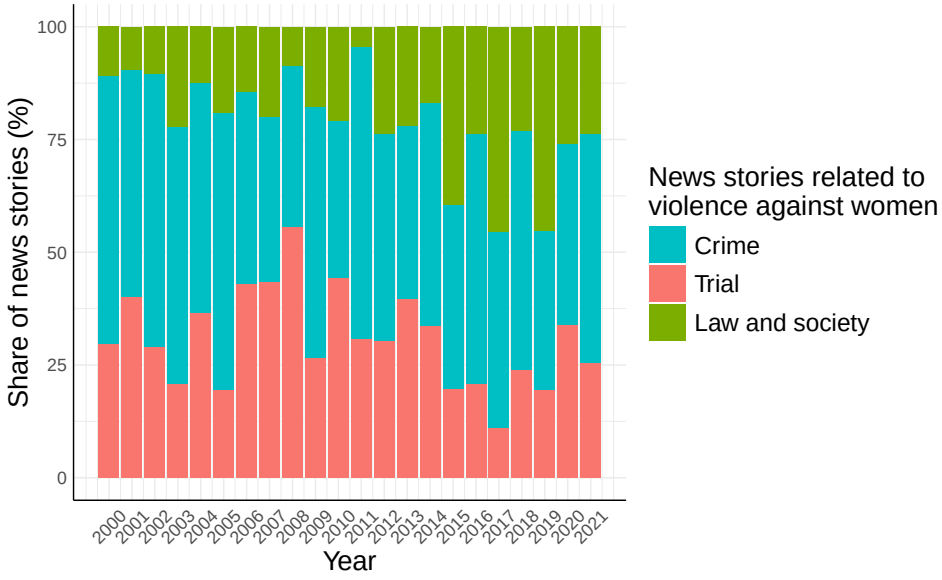
(b) Share of airtime

Notes: Yearly share of news stories about violence against women (VAW) in the number of stories (panel (a)) and in the airtime (panel (b)) of the 8 p.m. news of the six main French national TV channels (TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte) between 2000 and 2021. VAW stories are identified by keyword search in the title, summary, and keywords of each story and assigned to one of four mutually exclusive types of violence, in this order of priority: murders and femicides, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. The 2011 peak corresponds to the case of Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a French economist and politician, who was accused in May 2011 of sexual assault and attempted rape by Nafissatou Diallo, a hotel maid in New York. At the time, Strauss-Kahn was a leading contender for the 2012 French presidential election, which contributed to the unusually extensive media attention the case received in France. This case predates the analysis period. It still appears in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 on 65 days during 2012–2019, but most of these stories are not about VAW (for instance, those on the 2015 Carlton de Lille trial).
Reading: Over 2000–2021, VAW stories represent on average 0.9% of all stories broadcast in the 8 p.m. news and accounted for an average of 0.8% of the airtime; 46% of them concern rape or sexual assault, 36% murders or femicides, 14% domestic violence, and 4% sexual harassment. The 2011 peak (3.6% of all stories) corresponds to the Dominique Strauss-Kahn case.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.11: Content of stories on violence against women in the 8 p.m. news, by news category



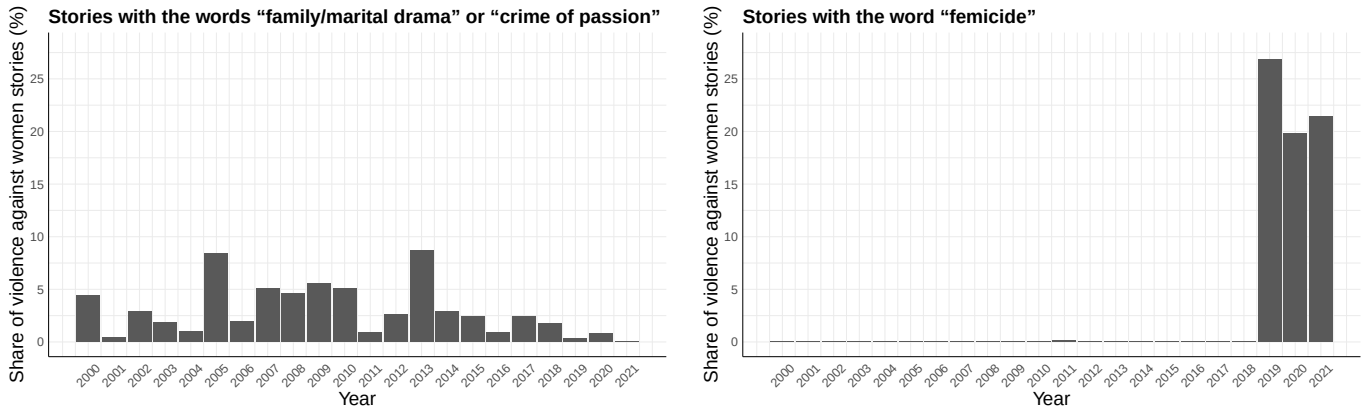
(a) TF1 and France 2 (2012–2019)



(b) Six main national channels (2000–2021)

Notes: Yearly distribution of the news stories about violence against women (VAW) across three mutually exclusive content categories: (i) crime reports, (ii) trials, and (iii) law and society (prevention campaigns, legislation and policies, societal issues). Panel (a) covers the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 574$ VAW stories); panel (b) covers the 8 p.m. news of the six main French national TV channels (TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte) between 2000 and 2021 ($N = 6{,}098$ VAW stories). Categories are assigned by keyword search, following the priority order of the keyword lists (see Appendix C.1); stories on miscarriages of justice are excluded.
Reading: Over 2012–2019, 43% of the VAW stories broadcast on TF1 and France 2 covered crime reports, 24% trials, and 33% law and society (panel (a), average of the yearly shares). Over 2000–2021, on the six channels, these shares are 48%, 31%, and 21% (panel (b)). In both panels, the share of trial stories declines over time and that of law and society stories rises.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.12: Terms used in news stories on violence against women in national 8 p.m. TV news (2000–2021)



(a) "Family drama," "marital drama," "crime of passion"

(b) "Femicide"

Notes: Share of the news stories on violence against women (VAW) broadcast each year in the 8 p.m. news of the six main French national TV channels (TF1, France 2, France 3, Canal+, M6, Arte) whose title, summary, or keywords use the expressions "family drama," "marital drama," or "crime of passion" (panel (a)) or the word "femicide" (panel (b)).
Reading: The word "femicide" was virtually absent from TV news before 2019 and was used in 27% of VAW stories in 2019 and 21% in 2021.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

C.4 News stories on crimes against women used in the analysis

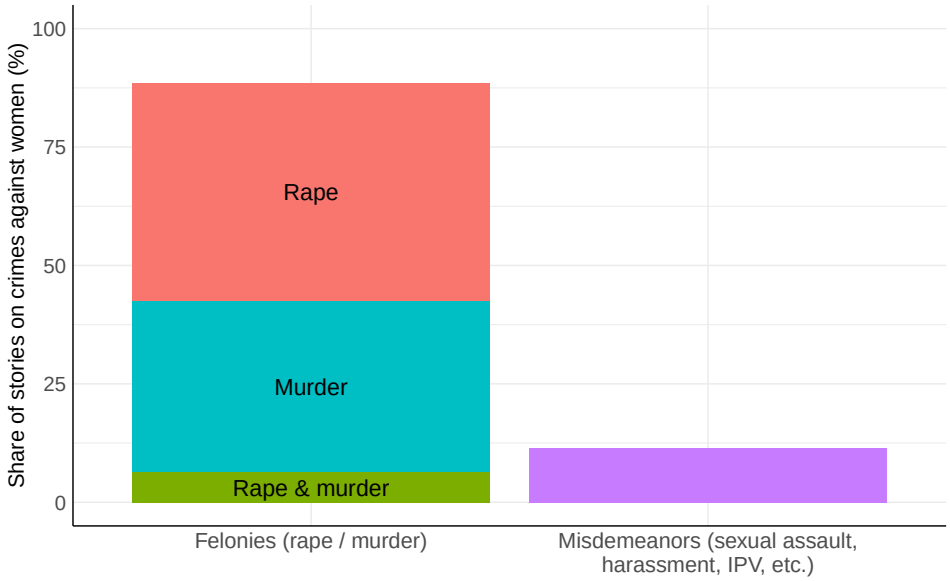
This subsection describes the news stories on crimes against women that define the treatment: examples of such stories (Table C.2), their breakdown by type of crime (Figure C.13), the correlation between VAW coverage and coverage of other topics (Figure C.14), and the location of the crimes covered relative to the courts deciding cases on the same day (Table C.3).

Table C.2: Examples of news stories on crimes against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 (2012–2019)

Title	Date	Summary
[Serial Rapist in Paris]	2012-01-13	In Paris, the police have issued a wanted notice for a dangerous man suspected of being a serial rapist, after the rape of three women, two of them on December 23, one of whom was attacked with a knife.
[Investigation: Marie-Jeanne Meyer, Jogger Found Dead]	2012-01-21	Report in Tournon-sur-Rhône on the ongoing investigation into the murder of Marie-Jeanne Meyer, a jogger found dead in Ardèche last June. Update on a lead involving a suspected drifter.
[Discovery of Marion Bouchard's Body in Dijon]	2012-03-01	Crime news in Dijon. The body of a 21-year-old woman, Marion Bouchard, has been found. Her partner confessed to strangling and dismembering her after a violent argument.
[Chloé's Kidnapping: Opening of a Judicial Investigation for Rape]	2012-11-19	Chloé's kidnapping: announcement of the opening of a judicial investigation for rape.
[A Woman Found Dead in Nîmes]	2013-01-25	A 33-year-old woman was killed while jogging on a path in Nîmes.
[Double Assault in Colombes]	2013-08-13	A man has been arrested for two extremely violent sexual assaults committed in Colombes. The suspect was caught on surveillance cameras. He is a repeat offender. Convicted in 2009 of rape and in 2012 of several misdemeanors, he was on day release. The mother of one of the victims, who is currently in a coma, is filing a complaint against the justice system for endangering the lives of others. The suspect faces 20 years in prison.
[DNA Tests on High School Students]	2014-04-12	At a private high school in La Rochelle, DNA samples will be collected from male students and staff members to identify the man who raped a female student at the school last September.
[Rape Case in the Police Force]	2014-04-25	Extended custody of the three police officers charged with the rape of a Canadian tourist on the premises of the Paris judicial police.
[Worrying Disappearance in Haute-Saône]	2017-10-29	Haute-Saône, crime news: the worrying disappearance of a 29-year-old jogger, Alexia Daval, near Gray-la-Ville.
[Nord: Arrest of a Rapist]	2018-02-28	Report on the arrest of a serial rapist in the Nord county.
[Femicide: Woman's Body Found in a Parking Lot]	2019-09-01	The body of a 21-year-old woman was found in the parking lot of a landfill in Cagnes-sur-Mer, and her partner was arrested. She is the hundredth woman killed by her partner since the beginning of the year.

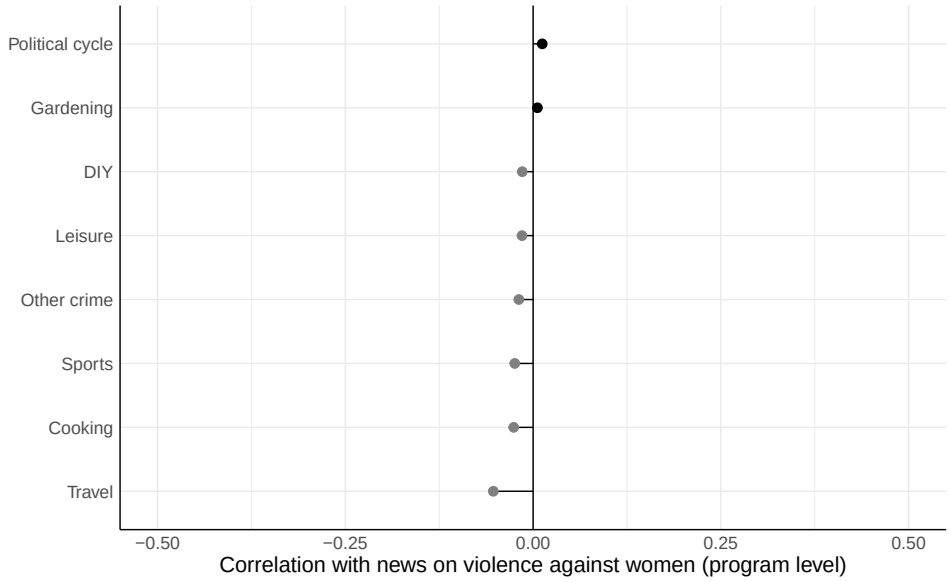
Notes: Examples of news stories on crimes against women broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019 (title, date, and summary as documented by INA staff, translated from French).
Source: TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.13: Breakdown of news stories on crimes against women in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2, by offense severity (2012–2019)



Notes: Breakdown of the news stories on crimes against women broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019, i.e., the stories used as treatment in the main analysis ($N = 252$ stories). A story is classified as covering a felony when its title, summary, or keywords mention rape or murder (including femicide). The remaining stories concern misdemeanors (sexual assault, sexual harassment, intimate partner violence [IPV], etc.).
Reading: Of the news stories on crimes against women, 88% concern felonies: 46% mention a rape, 36% a murder, and 6% both.
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure C.14: Correlation between coverage of violence against women and coverage of other news topics in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 (2012–2019)



Notes: Pearson correlation, across the 8 p.m. news broadcasts of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019, between the share of stories about violence against women (VAW) in the broadcast and the share of stories about each of the topics listed on the vertical axis. Topics are identified by keyword search in the title, summary, and keywords of each story: sports, cooking, leisure (cinema, festivals, concerts), travel, DIY, gardening, political cycle (government, elections, parliament, laws), and other crime (crime stories unrelated to VAW). Black (gray) dots denote positive (negative) correlations.
Reading: No correlation exceeds 0.06 in absolute value: broadcasts with more VAW stories are neither more nor less likely to cover the other topics, including other crimes (−0.02) and the political cycle (0.01).
Source: Author's calculations based on TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table C.3: Breakdown of cases decided on the day of a crime news story, by location of the crime relative to the court (2012–2019)

Location of the crime	Share of cases
Same county as the jurisdiction	2.3%
Adjacent county	6.7%
Other counties	91.0%

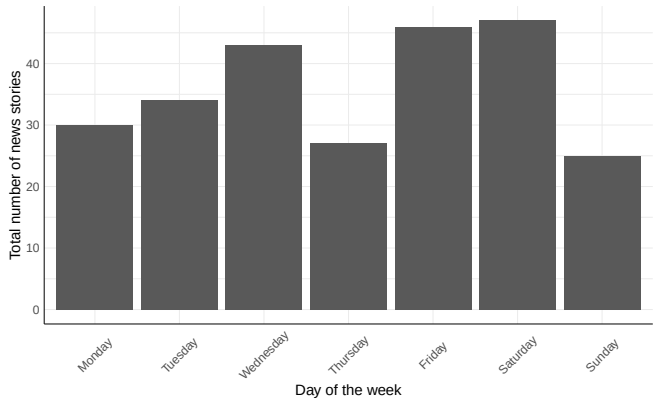
Notes: Distribution of the sexual and intimate partner violence cases decided by prosecutors in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 on a day when a TV news story on a crime against women committed in metropolitan France was broadcast, by the location of the crime covered in the story relative to the county of the court handling the case. Shares are computed over cases, not over news stories. News stories are the 206 stories on crimes against women broadcast in the 8 p.m. news of TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019 for which a transcript is available (out of the 252 stories used as treatment in the main analysis). The location of the crime was coded manually from the transcripts (first crime location coded). Only stories broadcast on the decision day are used, and the sample is restricted to isolated news days (computed on these 206 stories). Adjacent counties are counties whose boundaries touch (county boundaries as of January 2018).
Reading: For 2.3% of the cases decided on the day of a news story on a crime against women committed in metropolitan France, the crime occurred in the same county as the court handling the case, and for 6.7% in an adjacent county.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

D Additional elements on the empirical strategy

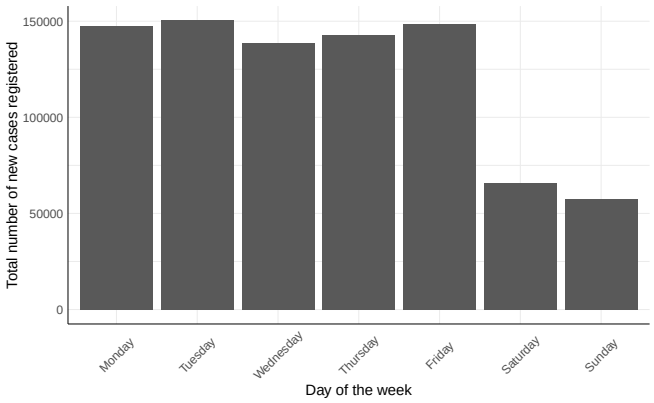
This appendix complements the empirical framework of Section 4. Appendix D.1 documents the seasonality of news coverage and of criminal justice activity and reports covariate balance tests for the cases examined by prosecutors and by judges. Appendix D.2 illustrates the empirical design and the definition of treated and control decision days.

D.1 Seasonality and balance tests

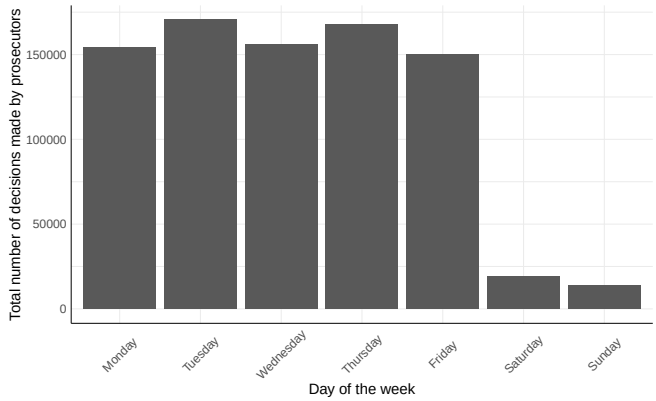
Figure D.1: Seasonality of the number of news stories, registered cases, and criminal justice decisions, by day of the week (2012–2019)



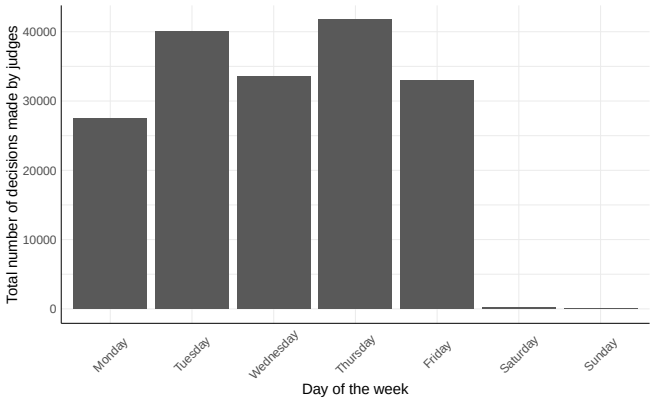
(a) Number of news stories



(b) Number of cases registered



(c) Number of decisions by prosecutors



(d) Number of decisions by judges

Notes: Panel (a) shows the total number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 between 2012 and 2019, by day of the week of the broadcast. Panels (b) to (d) show, by day of the week of registration or decision, the total number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (b), of decisions to dismiss or prosecute made by prosecutors (c), and of trial decisions made by judges (d). The sample consists of cases registered, dismissed or prosecuted, or tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table D.1: Covariate balance: characteristics of cases examined by prosecutors, by news coverage in the days before the prosecutorial decision

	Socio-demographics			Case origin			Type of offense				Other case characteristics			
Dependent variables:	Male	French-born	Age	Police	Justice	Other	Rape	Sexual assault	Sexual harassment	IPV	Number of victims	Incident duration (days)	Time to report (days)	Time to prosecutorial decision (days)
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)
News on crimes against women														
Number of news stories in the past week	0.0014*	-0.0003	-0.0050	-0.0003	0.0000	0.0002	0.0002	0.0000	-0.0002	0.0023**	-0.0021	-3.4833	-1.9933	-0.0762
	(0.0007)	(0.0011)	(0.0340)	(0.0008)	(0.0003)	(0.0007)	(0.0018)	(0.0018)	(0.0007)	(0.0011)	(0.0019)	(3.4769)	(2.5639)	(0.7669)
Fit statistics														
Observations	672,085	579,460	605,586	753,759	753,759	753,759	274,370	274,370	274,370	753,759	753,759	283,119	749,888	752,008
R^2	0.0022	0.0954	0.0046	0.0189	0.0045	0.0184	0.0058	0.0062	0.0047	0.0159	0.0063	0.0035	0.0072	0.0220
News on crimes against women and VAW trials														
Number of news stories in the past week	0.0005	-0.0009	0.0235	-0.0006	-0.0001	0.0007	-0.0015	0.0016	-0.0001	0.0017*	0.0004	-0.3759	-3.0634	0.4921
	(0.0006)	(0.0009)	(0.0282)	(0.0006)	(0.0002)	(0.0006)	(0.0014)	(0.0015)	(0.0006)	(0.0009)	(0.0017)	(2.8771)	(2.1128)	(0.6245)
Fit statistics														
Observations	626,363	540,164	564,491	702,384	702,384	702,384	255,312	255,312	255,312	702,384	702,384	264,001	698,887	700,770
R^2	0.0022	0.0955	0.0046	0.0190	0.0043	0.0184	0.0058	0.0062	0.0047	0.0159	0.0064	0.0035	0.0073	0.0220
Fixed effects														
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of the dependent variable	0.9010	0.7513	36.3508	0.8704	0.0153	0.1128	0.3329	0.6340	0.0331	0.6437	1.2768	359.5541	345.2505	210.3127

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of violence against women (VAW) on the characteristics of cases examined by prosecutors. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (including those involving female suspects) dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variables are the case characteristics listed in the column headers (IPV: intimate partner violence). News coverage is measured as the total number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 in the week before the decision (decision day included). The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The first panel uses news on crimes against women, while the second panel also includes news on VAW-related trials.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table D.2: Covariate balance: characteristics of cases examined by judges, by news coverage in the days before the trial decision

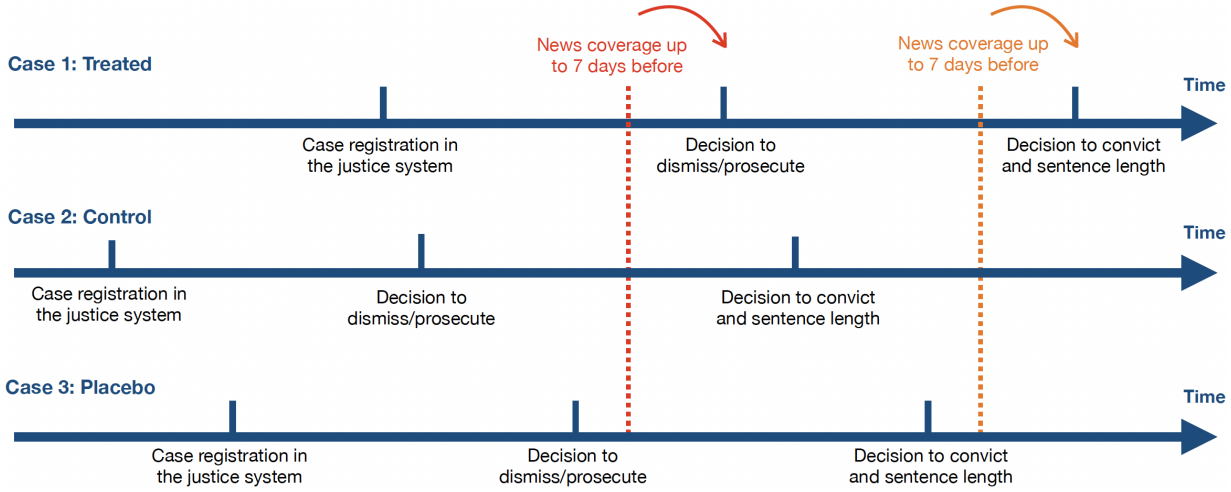
	Socio-demographics			Case origin			Type of offense				Other case characteristics				
Dependent variables:	Male	French-born	Age	Police	Justice	Other	Rape	Sexual assault	Sexual harassment	IPV	Number of victims	Incident duration (days)	Time to report (days)	Time to prosecutorial decision (days)	Time from incident to trial decision (days)
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)
News on crimes against women															
Number of news stories in the past week	0.0002	-0.0001	0.0303	-0.0024**	0.0020***	-0.0000	0.0003	0.0002	-0.0006	-0.0019	0.0104*	-0.9425	2.1039	-0.2447	7.5082
	(0.0009)	(0.0020)	(0.0636)	(0.0012)	(0.0006)	(0.0010)	(0.0020)	(0.0024)	(0.0014)	(0.0021)	(0.0059)	(6.3129)	(4.0828)	(1.1555)	(5.0559)
Fit statistics															
Observations	158,099	157,921	157,374	158,099	158,099	158,099	39,669	39,669	39,669	158,099	158,099	58,832	156,561	155,090	157,675
R^2	0.0046	0.1037	0.0073	0.0141	0.0068	0.0143	0.0134	0.0125	0.0131	0.0205	0.0143	0.0089	0.0087	0.0210	0.0152
News on crimes against women and VAW trials															
Number of news stories in the past week	0.0008	0.0014	0.0379	-0.0003	0.0004	-0.0003	-0.0018	0.0022	-0.0004	-0.0038**	0.0001	-3.8694	1.0839	-0.7604	4.5846
	(0.0007)	(0.0016)	(0.0519)	(0.0010)	(0.0004)	(0.0008)	(0.0016)	(0.0019)	(0.0012)	(0.0017)	(0.0045)	(4.9120)	(3.3165)	(0.9563)	(4.1248)
Fit statistics															
Observations	146,424	146,261	145,782	146,424	146,424	146,424	36,610	36,610	36,610	146,424	146,424	54,583	145,034	143,657	146,053
R^2	0.0049	0.1040	0.0074	0.0142	0.0068	0.0144	0.0140	0.0125	0.0134	0.0208	0.0146	0.0087	0.0089	0.0210	0.0155
Fixed effects															
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean of the dependent variable	0.9664	0.7521	35.8258	0.9370	0.0126	0.0462	0.0433	0.9372	0.0196	0.7491	1.4905	319.0778	245.7185	100.1572	584.3749

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of violence against women (VAW) on the characteristics of cases examined by judges. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (including those involving female defendants) tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variables are the case characteristics listed in the column headers (IPV: intimate partner violence). News coverage is measured as the total number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 in the week before the judgment (judgment day included). The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The first panel uses news on crimes against women, while the second panel also includes news on VAW-related trials.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

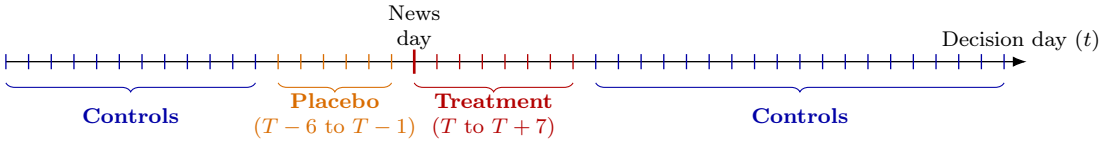
D.2 Illustrations of the empirical design

Figure D.2: Illustration of the empirical design



Notes: Each timeline represents a case, from its registration in the justice system to the prosecutor's decision to dismiss or prosecute and, if prosecuted, to the trial decision (conviction and sentence length). In the prosecution analysis, each case enters on a single date, the day of the prosecutor's decision, and every case is either dismissed or prosecuted. Dotted vertical lines mark the broadcast of a TV news story on violence against women (VAW); the arrows indicate the window over which news coverage is measured for each decision (the week before the decision, decision day included). All cases in the analysis sample enter the regression, whether or not they are exposed to coverage. Case 1 is "treated": its decisions are made within seven days after a VAW news story (in red for the prosecutor's decision, in orange for the trial decision). Case 2 is a "control": its decisions are made away from any such coverage. The identification strategy compares these otherwise similar cases (conditional on case characteristics and seasonality) that differ only in whether they were decided shortly after relatively more coverage of VAW. In practice, the treatment is the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast in the week before the decision (decision day included), so that cases are treated with varying intensity rather than in a binary way. Case 3 illustrates the placebo test: its decisions are made up to six days *before* a VAW news story; comparing them with control cases (the leads in equation (1)) checks that cases decided just before a coverage episode do not differ from those decided away from any coverage.

Figure D.3: Defining treated and control decision days



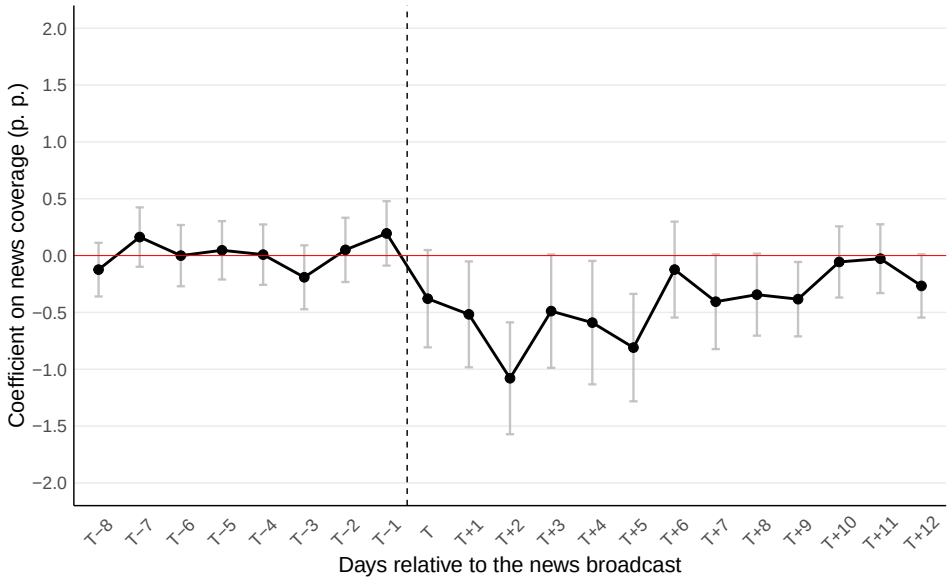
Notes: This figure illustrates the event-time design around a day of TV news coverage of violence against women (VAW). Each observation is a criminal justice decision (outcome Y) made on day t. Day T is the day of the news broadcast. The treatment window (in red) includes decisions made on the day of the news and in the seven following days (T to $T+7$), while decisions made in the six days preceding the news ($T-6$ to $T-1$, in orange) serve as placebo leads to test for pre-trends. All other decision days (in blue) constitute the control group. News coverage occurs on many days over the 2012–2019 period, so that treatment, placebo, and control windows are defined relative to each news day, and the treatment is measured by the number of news stories broadcast rather than by a binary indicator. In the preferred specification, the sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of news coverage of crimes against women in the past week; results are robust to including all periods (Appendix Table E.6).

E Additional results on prosecution

This appendix reports additional results on prosecutorial decisions. Appendix E.1 complements Section 5.1 with the individual lead and lag estimates, a longer event window, cumulative effects, effects by number of stories, and effects on the number of decisions. Appendix E.2 presents placebo tests on other offenses, on news about other topics, and on randomly assigned treatment dates. Appendix E.3 details the heterogeneity analysis of Section 5.2, and Appendix E.4 the robustness checks summarized in Section 5.5. Appendix E.5 applies the design to other crime categories (Section 6.2), and Appendix E.6 details the evidence on mechanisms discussed in Section 6.3.

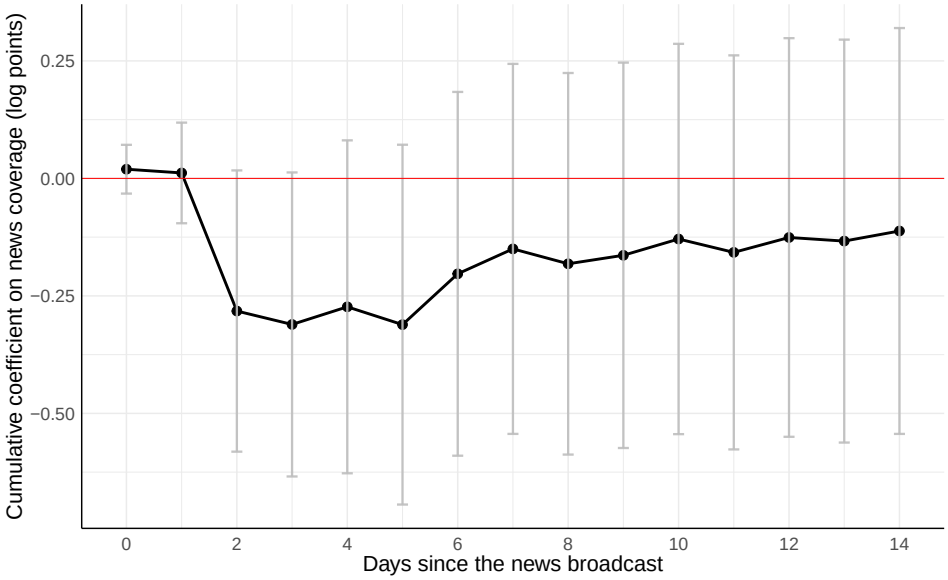
E.1 Decision to dismiss

Figure E.1: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, with a longer event window

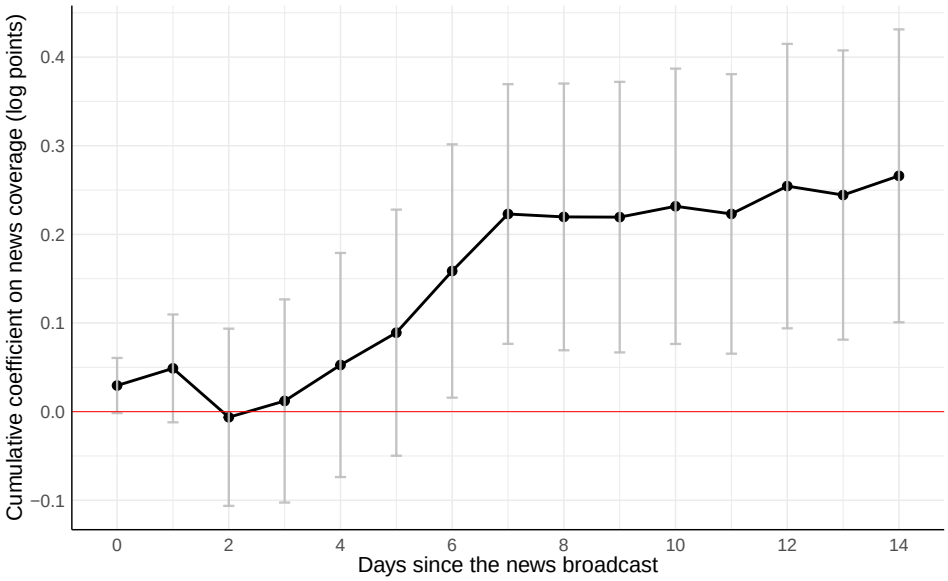


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated with 12 lags and 8 leads instead of 7 and 6, with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.2: Cumulative effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases dismissed or prosecuted over a two-week horizon



(a) Log number of cases dismissed



(b) Log number of cases prosecuted

Notes: Cumulative effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the daily number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases dismissed (panel (a)) or prosecuted (panel (b)), with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Each panel comes from a single OLS regression based on equation (1), estimated at the daily level with 14 lags and 6 leads. The point at horizon h is the sum of the coefficients from day T (the day of the news broadcast) to day $T + h$; the corresponding standard error is the square root of the sum of the variances of these coefficients, an approximation that ignores their covariances. The curve is normalized by subtracting the average cumulative sum of the lead coefficients, so that it can be read relative to the pre-coverage trend. The unit of observation is the day. The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) dismissed (panel (a)) or prosecuted (panel (b)) on that day, among cases dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decision days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.1: OLS results for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, by day relative to the news

	Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)		
Sample:	All SV/IPV cases	SV cases	IPV cases
	(1)	(2)	(3)
7 days after the news	-0.0055***	-0.0042	-0.0052*
	(0.0021)	(0.0028)	(0.0028)
6 days after the news	-0.0017	0.0004	-0.0032
	(0.0021)	(0.0029)	(0.0029)
5 days after the news	-0.0080***	-0.0057*	-0.0092***
	(0.0024)	(0.0032)	(0.0033)
4 days after the news	-0.0055**	-0.0053	-0.0057
	(0.0028)	(0.0038)	(0.0037)
3 days after the news	-0.0051**	-0.0043	-0.0046
	(0.0025)	(0.0035)	(0.0034)
2 days after the news	-0.0109***	-0.0038	-0.0147***
	(0.0025)	(0.0034)	(0.0034)
1 day after the news	-0.0051**	-0.0075**	-0.0032
	(0.0024)	(0.0033)	(0.0032)
Same day as the news	-0.0040*	-0.0070**	-0.0021
	(0.0022)	(0.0031)	(0.0029)
1 day before the news	0.0017	-0.0021	0.0041**
	(0.0014)	(0.0020)	(0.0019)
2 days before the news	-4.39×10^{-5}	-0.0004	0.0010
	(0.0014)	(0.0020)	(0.0020)
3 days before the news	-0.0020	-0.0038*	-0.0016
	(0.0014)	(0.0020)	(0.0019)
4 days before the news	-4.65×10^{-5}	0.0005	0.0009
	(0.0013)	(0.0018)	(0.0018)
5 days before the news	3.73×10^{-5}	-0.0010	0.0006
	(0.0013)	(0.0018)	(0.0018)
6 days before the news	0.0003	-0.0028	0.0020
	(0.0013)	(0.0018)	(0.0017)
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	687,198	262,684	430,096
R^2	0.18650	0.21285	0.16314
Within R^2	0.12850	0.17953	0.08852

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with each lead and lag coefficient reported separately. Column 1 uses all sexual violence (SV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) cases; columns 2 and 3 restrict the sample to SV cases and IPV cases, respectively. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 around the decision. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.2: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, by maximum number of news stories broadcast in the past week

Dependent variable:	**Dismissal (0/1)**			
Maximum number of news stories in the past week:	Only one	Two	Three	Four
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Variables				
Any news on crimes against women	-0.0054***	-0.0062***	-0.0064***	-0.0064***
in the past week	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)
Any news on crimes against women	-0.0016**	-0.0014**	-0.0016**	-0.0016**
in the next six days (placebo)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	668,792	683,452	686,869	687,198
R^2	0.18584	0.18611	0.18650	0.18648
Within R^2	0.12813	0.12837	0.12847	0.12848

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of any TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (pooled leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured by a dummy equal to one if at least one news story on crimes against women was broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 in the week before the decision (decision day included) and in the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week; each column further restricts it to periods with at most one, two, three, or four news stories on crimes against women broadcast in the past 7 days. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.3: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of decisions made by prosecutors

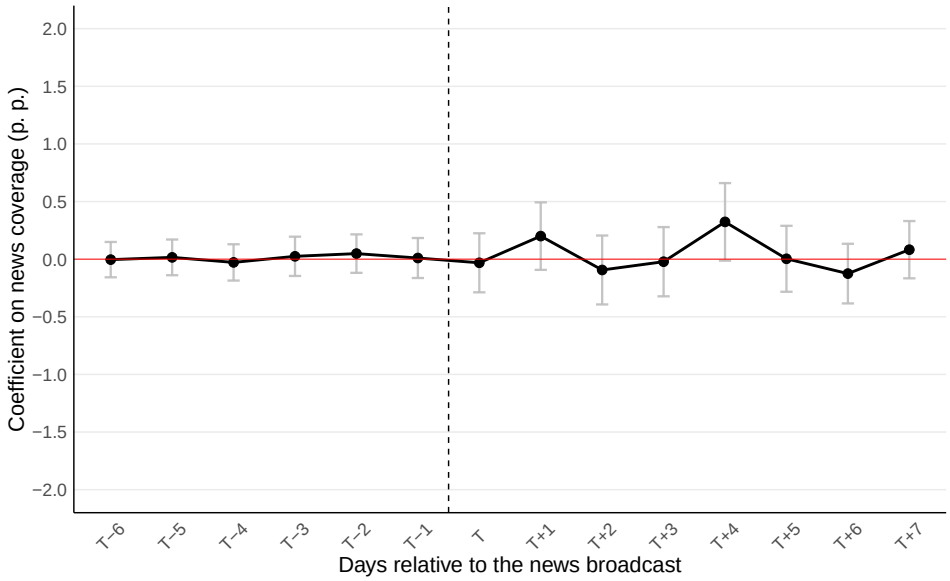
	Number of decisions made (logs)		
Dependent variables:	Any decision	Dismissal	Prosecution
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0081	-0.0183	0.0277**
	(0.0189)	(0.0311)	(0.0110)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0015	0.0003	0.0015
	(0.0032)	(0.0069)	(0.0031)
Fixed effects			
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics			
Observations	2,647	2,644	2,647
R^2	0.86295	0.85240	0.78962

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of decisions made by prosecutors (leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is the log number of decisions of any type in column 1, of dismissal decisions in column 2, and of prosecution decisions in column 3. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. Each observation is a decision day. The sample is restricted to decision days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

E.2 Placebos

Figure E.3: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss cases of homicide and intentional bodily harm to adults



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss cases of homicide and intentional bodily harm to adults (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of cases of homicide and intentional bodily harm to adults unrelated to sexual and intimate partner violence (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 1{,}575{,}774$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.4: Effect of news coverage of other crimes on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases

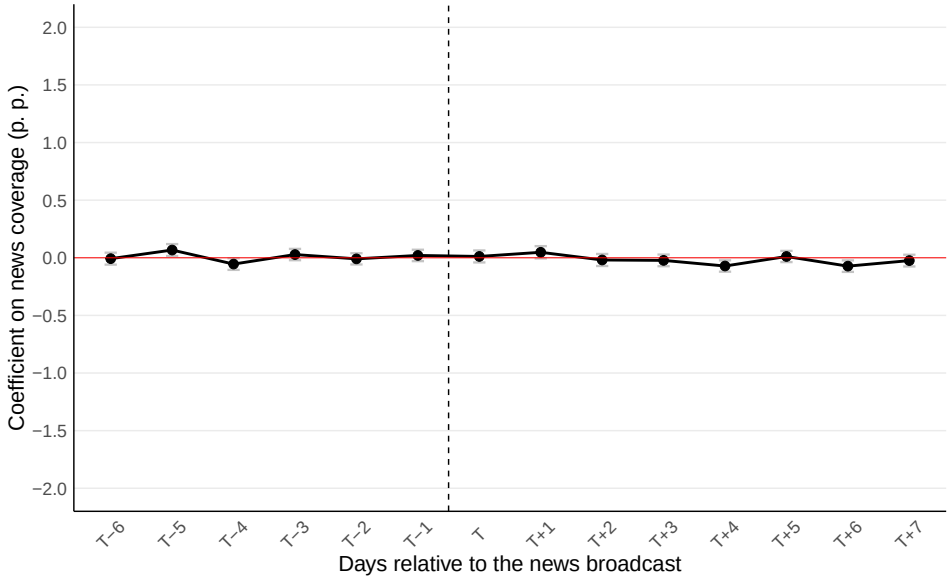
Dependent variable:	Dismissal (0/1)			
News category	Drug trafficking	Organized crime	Theft and receiving stolen goods	Serious interpersonal violence and homicides
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Variables				
Number of news stories on other crimes in the past week	0.0005	-0.0002	-0.0004	-0.0010
	(0.0011)	(0.0009)	(0.0010)	(0.0016)
Number of news stories on other crimes in the next six days (placebo)	0.0002	-0.0002	0.0007*	-0.0014***
	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
Controls and fixed effects				
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	650,211	605,451	602,955	238,722
R^2	0.18723	0.18647	0.18807	0.17737
Within R^2	0.12845	0.12657	0.12876	0.12025

Standard errors clustered by day in parentheses

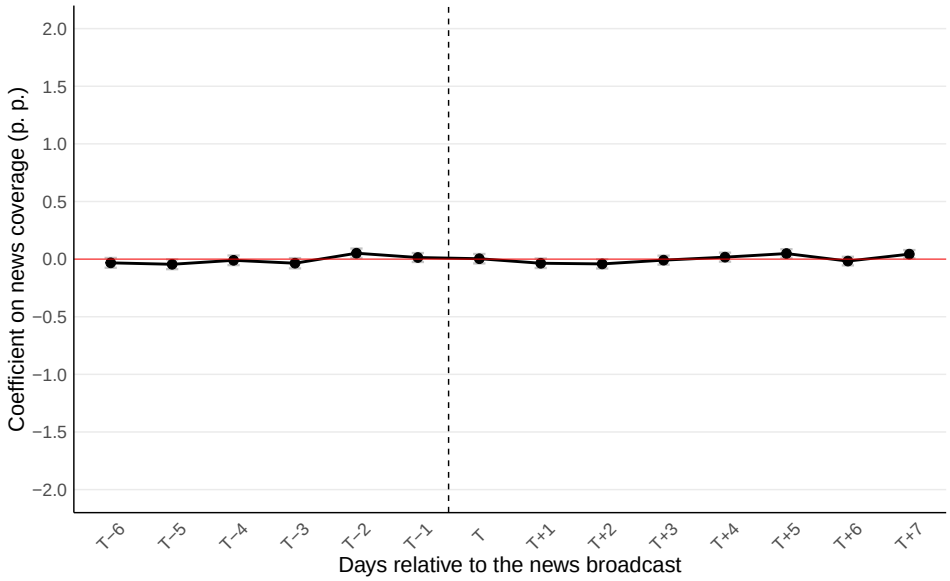
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of other crimes (drug trafficking, organized crime, theft and receiving stolen goods, and serious interpersonal violence and homicides) on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on the corresponding other-crime category broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Standard errors are clustered by day. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type. *Source:* Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.4: Effect of news coverage of other topics on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases



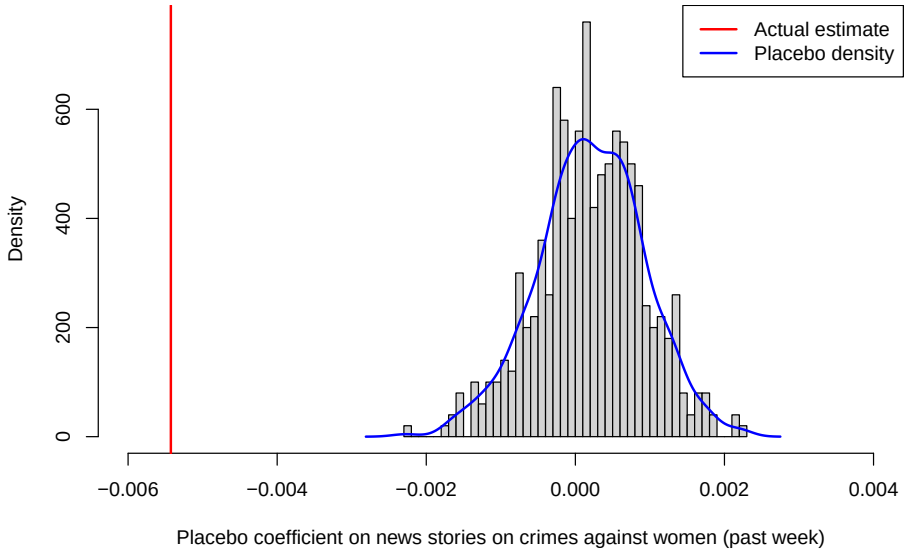
(a) News on unrelated topics



(b) News on crimes other than violence against women

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of topics unrelated to violence against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. In panel (a), news coverage is the number of news stories on topics unrelated to violence against women (gardening, crafts, leisure, and travel). In panel (b), it is the number of news stories on crimes other than violence against women. Both are broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. Unlike in the main specification, the sample is not restricted to isolated news days (N = 758,305), since such stories are broadcast almost every day. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

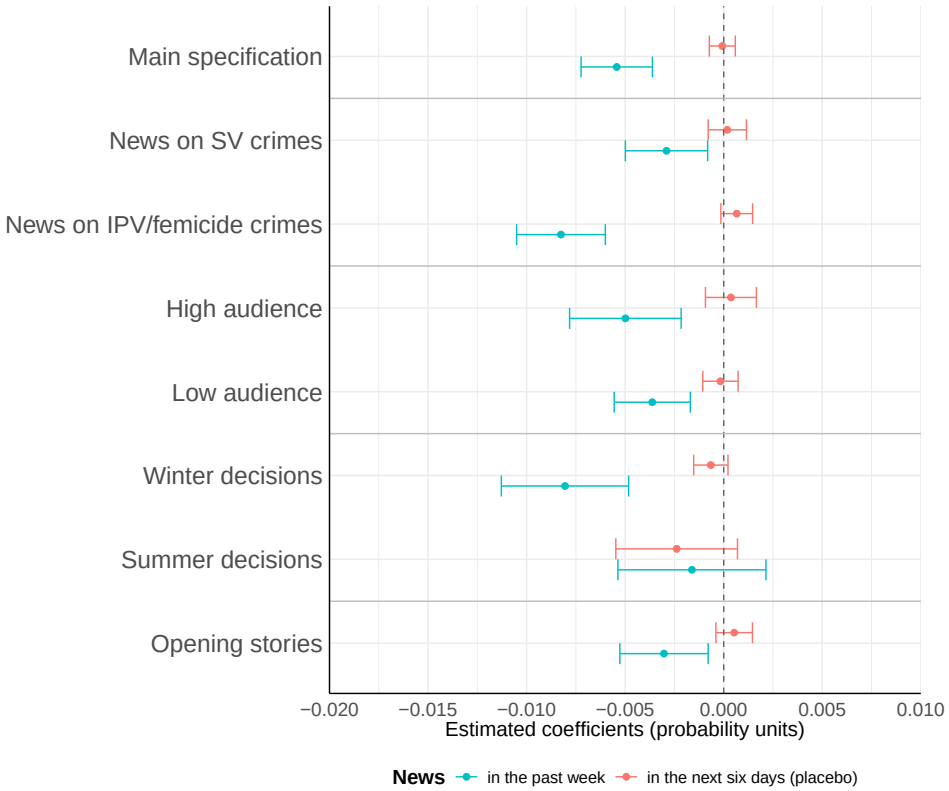
Figure E.5: Falsification test for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases



Notes: Distribution of 500 placebo estimates of the pooled effect on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases of TV news coverage of crimes against women broadcast in the week before the decision (decision day included) (in probability units), compared with the actual estimate (red vertical line); the blue curve is a kernel density estimate of the placebo coefficients. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. In each of the 500 iterations, I randomly reshuffle the calendar dates of the news series and recompute the news lags and leads and the isolated-news-day restriction on this placebo calendar. I then re-estimate equation (1) with the same sample, controls, and fixed effects as in the main specification, pooling the news broadcast in the week before the decision (decision day included) into a single coefficient. The placebo coefficients are centered on zero (mean 0.0002, standard deviation 0.0007); none of the 500 placebo estimates is as large in absolute value as the actual estimate of −0.0054, which corresponds to a randomization-inference p-value below 0.002.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

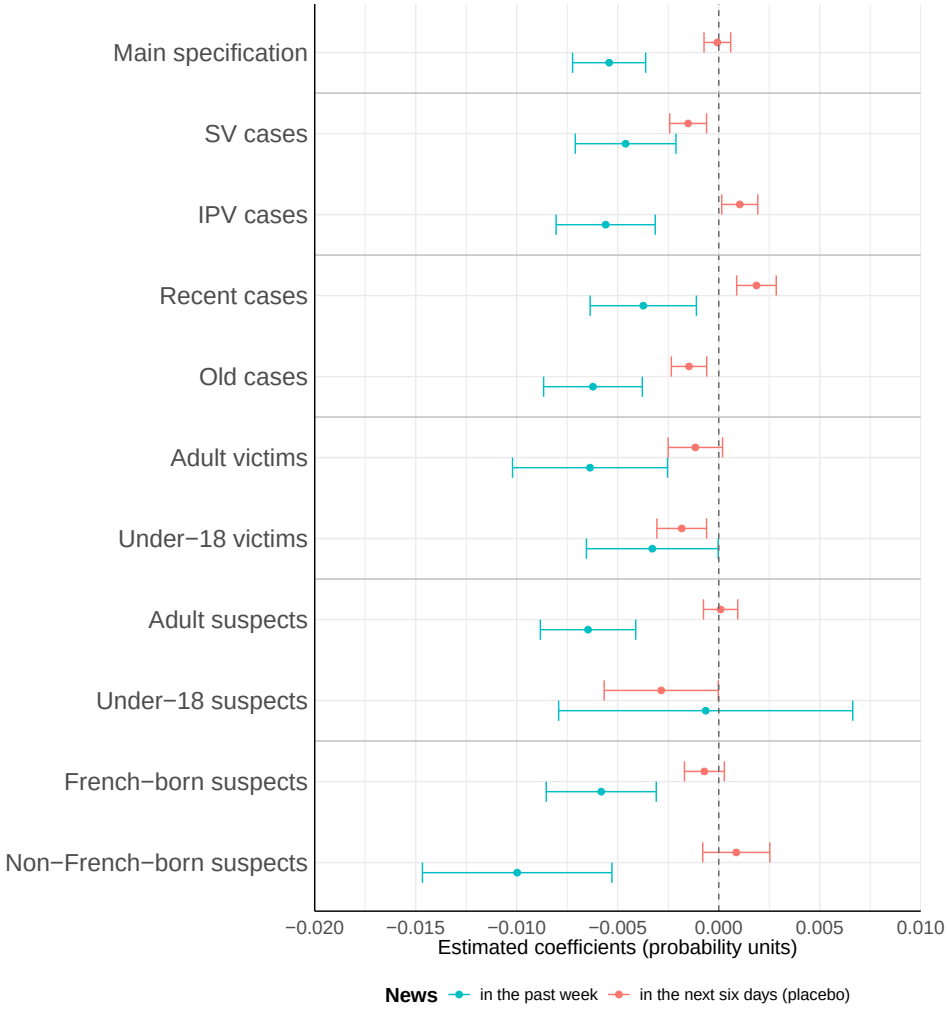
E.3 Heterogeneity analysis

Figure E.6: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by news characteristics



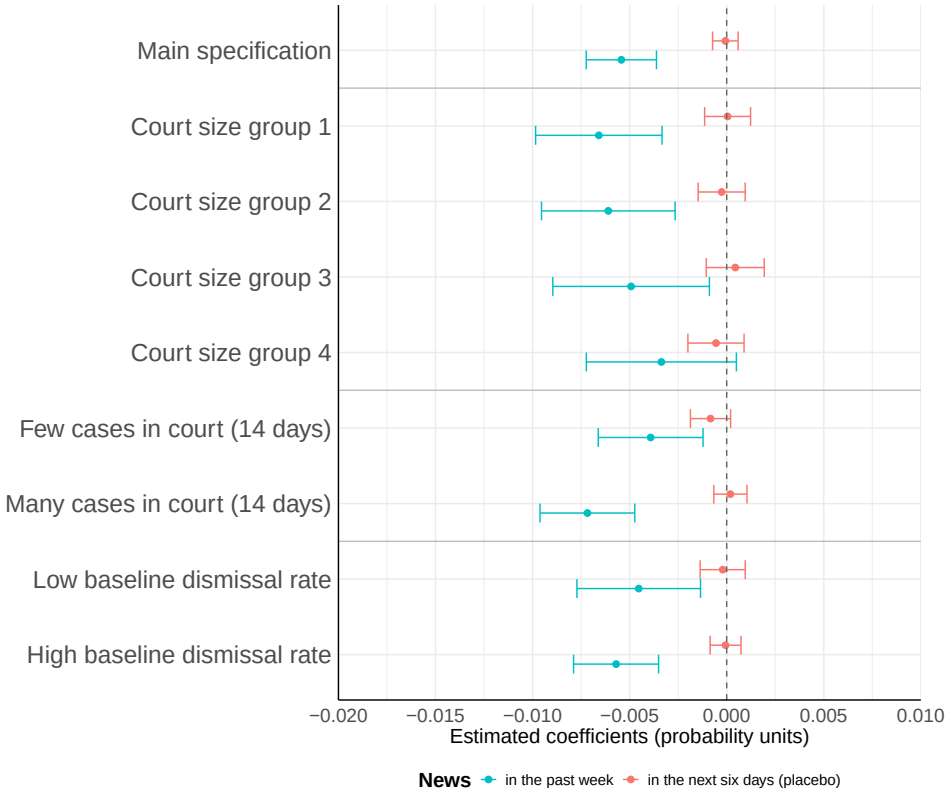
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately for each definition of news coverage reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$ in the main specification). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The "News on SV crimes" (sexual violence) and "News on IPV/femicide crimes" (intimate partner violence and femicides) rows use the number of news stories of that type as treatment. The audience and opening-story rows count only stories broadcast on high- or low-audience days (above or below the channel's median audience) or opening the newscast. The winter and summer rows keep only decisions made in those seasons (winter: November to March; summer: June to August). The isolated-news-day restriction (at most one day with news stories of the type considered in the week before the decision (decision day included)) is applied to the news series used in each row, hence the varying number of observations. The specifications include case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table E.5.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.7: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by other case characteristics



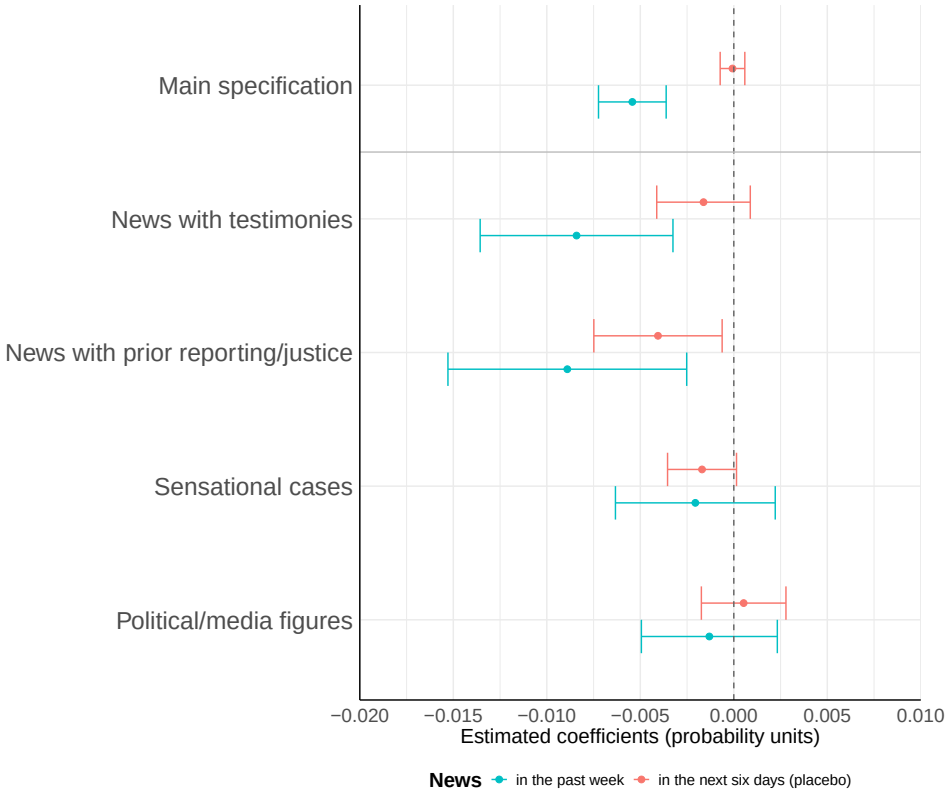
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately on each subsample reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). Recent (old) cases are those registered in the justice system less (more) than the median delay after the incident; the victim-age split is defined on sexual violence cases only; the suspect's age is measured at the time of the offense. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$ in the main specification; the number of observations varies across rows; see Appendix Table E.5). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type; each control is dropped from the subsamples defined by it) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table E.5.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.8: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by court characteristics



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately on each subsample of courts reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). Courts are grouped by size according to the Ministry of Justice's classification (from the largest courts, group 1, to the smallest, group 4), by the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases decided by the court's prosecutors over the 14 days preceding the decision (below or above the court's own median over 2012–2019), and by their average dismissal rate over the period (bottom or top half of the distribution). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$ in the main specification; the number of observations varies across rows; see Appendix Table E.5). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table E.5.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.9: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by news content



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately for each type of news content reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). News content is identified through a keyword analysis of the transcripts of the news stories: in each row, the treatment is the number of news stories on crimes against women involving the content indicated: victims' testimonies, prior reporting by the victim or prior justice involvement of the perpetrator, sensational cases (serial killers or rapists, particularly gruesome crimes), and political or media figures. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. All rows are estimated on the same sample, restricted to decisions with at most one day of news coverage of crimes against women, whatever its content, in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across categories are reported in Appendix Table E.5.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.5: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by case, court, period, and news characteristics

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Case characteristics										
	Main specification (1)	SV cases (2)	IPV cases (3)	Factual reason dismissal (4)	Legal reason dismissal (5)	One type of offense (6)	Several types of offense (7)	Fast decision (8)	Slow decision (9)	Short cases (10)	Long cases (11)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0054***	-0.0046***	-0.0056***	-0.0055***	2.8×10^{-5}	-0.0038***	-0.0113***	-0.0062***	-0.0025**	-0.0058***	-0.0079***
	(0.0009)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0010)	(0.0006)	(0.0010)	(0.0021)	(0.0014)	(0.0010)	(0.0022)	(0.0022)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-7.01×10^{-5}	-0.0015***	0.0010**	0.0002	-0.0002	0.0006	-0.0015**	-0.0005	-6.87×10^{-5}	0.0011	-0.0027***
	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0002)	(0.0004)	(0.0008)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0008)	(0.0008)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)											
in the past week			0.904		0.002		0.001		0.032		
in the next six days (placebo)			0.018		0.997		0.013		0.469		
Controls and fixed effects											
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics											
Observations	687,198	262,684	430,096	687,198	687,198	537,656	149,542	342,160	343,341	127,955	130,254
R^2	0.18648	0.21283	0.16310	0.10977	0.03224	0.17423	0.21451	0.23144	0.09803	0.16814	0.19183
Within R^2	0.12848	0.17950	0.08849	0.06691	0.02403	0.11885	0.13982	0.15707	0.07867	0.09868	0.14910

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.5 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Case characteristics (continued)									
	Recent cases (12)	Old cases (13)	Adult victims (14)	Under-18 victims (15)	Adult suspects (age at offense) (16)	Under-18 suspects (age at offense) (17)	Adult suspects (adult court) (18)	Under-18 suspects (juvenile court) (19)	French-born suspects (20)	Non-French-born suspects (21)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0037*** (0.0013)	-0.0062*** (0.0012)	-0.0064*** (0.0020)	-0.0033** (0.0017)	-0.0065*** (0.0012)	-0.0006 (0.0037)	-0.0064*** (0.0011)	-0.0015 (0.0031)	-0.0058*** (0.0014)	-0.0100*** (0.0024)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0019*** (0.0005)	-0.0015*** (0.0004)	-0.0012* (0.0007)	-0.0018*** (0.0006)	9.11×10^{-5} (0.0004)	-0.0028** (0.0014)	0.0002 (0.0004)	-0.0020 (0.0012)	-0.0007 (0.0005)	0.0009 (0.0008)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)										
in the past week	0.174		0.230		0.136				0.132	
in the next six days (placebo)	<0.001		0.468		0.051				0.109	
Controls and fixed effects										
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics										
Observations	338,533	344,964	113,440	149,244	499,777	45,453	551,256	54,268	391,413	130,644
R^2	0.22585	0.14271	0.20417	0.23535	0.12868	0.13135	0.15616	0.16139	0.10565	0.12510
Within R^2	0.14768	0.10966	0.15498	0.21001	0.06091	0.09236	0.09128	0.12618	0.04472	0.04437

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.5 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Court characteristics and period									
	Few cases in court (14 days) (22)	Many cases in court (14 days) (23)	Court size group 1 (24)	Court size group 2 (25)	Court size group 3 (26)	Court size group 4 (27)	Low baseline dismissal rate (28)	High baseline dismissal rate (29)	Before Oct. 2017 (30)	Since Oct. 2017 (31)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0039***	-0.0072***	-0.0066***	-0.0061***	-0.0049**	-0.0034*	-0.0045***	-0.0057***	-0.0015	-0.0123***
	(0.0014)	(0.0012)	(0.0017)	(0.0018)	(0.0021)	(0.0020)	(0.0016)	(0.0011)	(0.0012)	(0.0016)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0008	0.0002	4.77×10^{-5}	-0.0003	0.0004	-0.0006	-0.0002	-5.8×10^{-5}	4.04×10^{-5}	-0.0002
	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0008)	(0.0007)	(0.0006)	(0.0004)	(0.0006)	(0.0004)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)										
in the past week	0.079			0.618			0.554		<0.001	
in the next six days (placebo)	0.135			0.800			0.837		0.733	
Controls and fixed effects										
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics										
Observations	327,959	359,239	202,966	189,441	136,999	157,792	238,515	448,683	486,555	200,643
R^2	0.18420	0.19422	0.20124	0.17733	0.19523	0.19892	0.21203	0.16998	0.18087	0.21095
Within R^2	0.13582	0.12384	0.12135	0.11892	0.14584	0.15541	0.16041	0.11302	0.12406	0.14710

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.5 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—News characteristics										
	High audience (32)	Low audience (33)	Winter decisions (34)	Summer decisions (35)	Opening stories (36)	News on SV crimes (37)	News on IPV/ femicide crimes (38)	News with testimonies (39)	News with prior reporting/justice (40)	Sensational cases (41)	Political/ media figures (42)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0050*** (0.0014)	-0.0036*** (0.0010)	-0.0081*** (0.0016)	-0.0016 (0.0019)	-0.0030*** (0.0011)	-0.0029*** (0.0011)	-0.0083*** (0.0011)	-0.0084*** (0.0026)	-0.0089*** (0.0033)	-0.0021 (0.0022)	-0.0013 (0.0019)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0004 (0.0007)	-0.0002 (0.0005)	-0.0007 (0.0004)	-0.0024 (0.0016)	0.0005 (0.0005)	0.0002 (0.0005)	0.0007 (0.0004)	-0.0016 (0.0013)	-0.0041** (0.0018)	-0.0017* (0.0009)	0.0005 (0.0012)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)											
in the past week	<0.001		0.011			0.001			0.181		
in the next six days (placebo)	0.712		0.289			0.547			0.235		
Controls and fixed effects											
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics											
Observations	740,954	697,233	291,435	168,198	732,145	721,884	722,788	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198
R^2	0.18767	0.18698	0.17977	0.19235	0.18752	0.18719	0.18697	0.18646	0.18646	0.18645	0.18644
Within R^2	0.12897	0.12876	0.12270	0.13161	0.12923	0.12887	0.12898	0.12845	0.12845	0.12844	0.12844

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual violence (SV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately for each subsample or treatment definition reported in the column header. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors (in the factual-reason column, a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed on factual grounds or after an alternative to prosecution; in the legal-reason column, a dummy equal to one if it was dismissed on legal grounds). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week; for the audience, opening-story, and SV/IPV news columns, the restriction is applied to the news stories of the type considered, hence the varying number of observations. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type (each control is dropped from the subsamples defined by it). The *p*-values reported under pairs (or groups) of columns test the equality of the coefficient across these columns: a chi-squared homogeneity test for disjoint subsamples and a Wald test in a joint model for splits that share cases (SV/IPV cases, dismissal reason, audience, SV/IPV news, and news content). For the audience, SV/IPV news, and news-content columns, this joint model includes the corresponding news series simultaneously and is estimated on the main-specification sample. The coefficients it tests therefore differ from those reported in the columns, which are estimated one series at a time.
Columns: Each column corresponds to a different subsample, outcome, or treatment definition: (1) main specification; (2)–(3) sexual violence (2) and intimate partner violence (3) cases; (4)–(5) dismissals on factual (4) or legal (5) grounds as the dependent variable; (6)–(7) cases involving one (6) or several (7) types of offense; (8)–(9) decisions made after a processing time below (8) or above (9) the median; (10)–(11) cases whose offense period is shorter (10) or longer (11) than the median; (12)–(13) cases registered less (12) or more (13) than the median delay after the incident; (14)–(15) cases with adult (14) or under-18 (15) victims; (16)–(17) suspects aged 18 or older (16) or under 18 (17) at the time of the offense; (18)–(19) suspects under the jurisdiction of adult (18) or juvenile (19) courts; (20)–(21) French-born (20) or non-French-born (21) suspects; (22)–(23) courts whose prosecutors decided fewer (22) or more (23) sexual and intimate partner violence cases than their own median over the past 14 days; (24)–(27) courts grouped by size according to the Ministry of Justice's classification, from the largest courts (group 1) to the smallest ones (group 4); (28)–(29) courts in the bottom (28) or top (29) half of the distribution of average dismissal rates; (30)–(31) decisions made before (30) or since (31) October 2017 (#MeToo); (32)–(33) news stories broadcast on high- (32) or low- (33) audience days; (34)–(35) decisions made in winter (November to March) (34) or summer (June to August) (35); (36) news stories opening the newscast; (37)–(38) news stories on sexual violence (37) or intimate partner violence and femicides (38); (39)–(42) news stories involving victim testimonies (39), prior reporting by the victim or prior justice involvement of the perpetrator (40), sensational cases (41), or political/media figures (42).
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

E.4 Robustness checks

This subsection details the robustness checks summarized in Section 5.5. The results are robust across a wide range of alternative specifications, samples, and definitions of media coverage, as reported in Table E.6 for prosecutorial decision-making and Table F.1 for conviction and sentencing outcomes. I discuss these checks below for the prosecution stage, where the main effect is found, together with the related figures (Figures E.10 to E.16).

Alternative modeling strategies and fixed effects Column 1 of Table E.6 displays the main result for prosecutors' decisions, estimated from equation (1). Column 2 replicates the analysis using a probit model. In column 3, I replace the baseline regression with a two-step procedure: first, I residualize the outcome to eliminate the overall time trend and the day-of-the-week pattern, using the following specification:

$$Y_{i,t,j} = dow_t + month_t + year_t + u_{i,t,j} \tag{2}$$

where dow_t, $month_t$, and $year_t$ are day-of-the-week, calendar month, and year fixed effects. I then compute the residuals from this regression, $\widetilde{Y}_{i,t,j}$, and use this residualized outcome as the dependent variable in equation (1), without the calendar fixed effects X_t. In both cases, the estimated effect remains negative and significant.

Columns 4 to 6 introduce alternative time fixed effects: year interacted with month (4) and with quarter (5), and year together with day-of-the-year fixed effects (6). Column 7 replaces county with court fixed effects, and column 8 adds a linear time trend. The effect remains robust and comparable in magnitude under court fixed effects and a linear time trend, and is larger with day-of-the-year fixed effects, which absorb any seasonal pattern at the daily level. It is attenuated with year $\times$ quarter fixed effects and is no longer significant with year $\times$ month fixed effects, which leave only within-quarter or within-month variation in coverage to identify the effect and in which the coefficient on the leads also turns significant. Figure E.10 shows that, while news coverage of crimes against women surges between October 2017 and mid-2018 with the #MeToo movement, the number of dismissals evolves smoothly over the period, with no coinciding break that could artificially generate the main results.

Controlling for time-varying confounders To address potential seasonality or symbolic calendar effects, columns 9 and 10 further control for school vacations and public holidays. Column 11 accounts for periods of heightened female visibility (e.g., International Women's Day, #MeToo). Column 12 controls for new VAW-related legislation enacted during the study period (e.g., measures and circulars to ease the handling of gender-based violence complaints, changes to the statute of limitations, the ratification of the Istanbul Convention). To test whether unusual patterns on weekends might bias the results, column 13 excludes weekend decisions, and column 14 assigns news stories broadcast on weekends to the preceding Friday. The results remain similar across these variations, with a smaller coefficient when merging Friday and weekend coverage into a single news day.

Inference and clustering Because news coverage varies only across days, all cases decided on the same day share the same exposure. Column 15 therefore clusters standard errors by day, the level at which treatment is assigned, showing that the estimate remains statistically significant (standard error of 0.0014). Columns 16 to 19 cluster by county, year × month, individual case, and court, with the same conclusion.

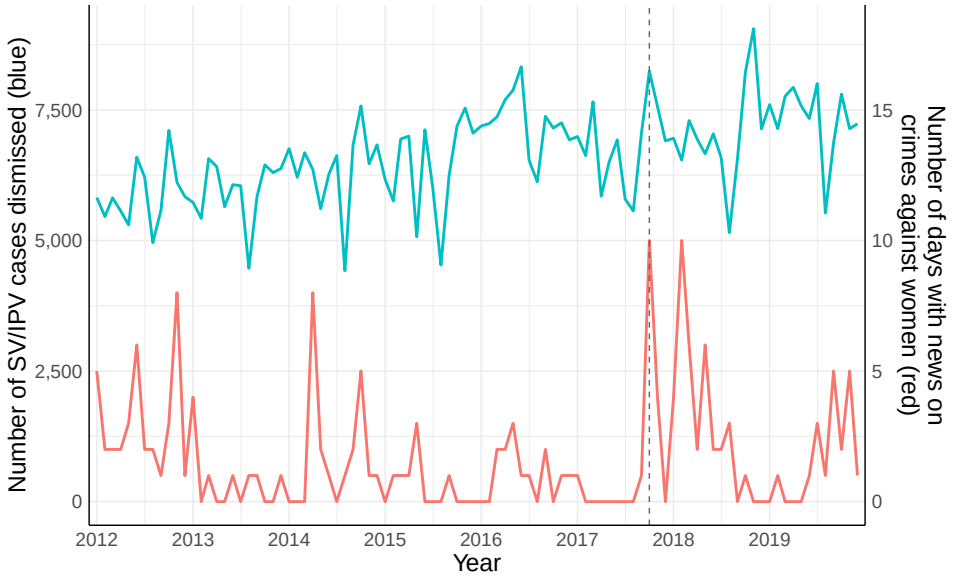
Alternative samples and outcomes Columns 20 to 23 test the sensitivity of the results to the sample and outcome definition: keeping only identified suspects (20), removing duplicate suspect records within a case (21), counting alternatives to prosecution as non-dismissals (22), and excluding rape cases (23). The estimated effect remains negative and significant in all cases. It is even larger when alternatives to prosecution are counted as non-dismissals (0.65 percentage points), showing that the decline comes from pure dismissals. Column 24 restricts the sample to cases registered before the day of the prosecutorial decision, thereby excluding cases registered and decided on the same day (Figure E.11 shows the dynamic effects). Column 25, conversely, keeps only cases registered on the decision day. The effect is smaller for cases already in the system (0.33 percentage points) but remains significant. It is largest for cases registered on the day of the decision, which are often handled in real time while the suspect is in police custody (*traitement en temps réel*).

Alternative measures of media exposure Columns 26 and 27 replace the main measure of media coverage with (i) a dummy indicating the occurrence of any news and (ii) the total duration of news stories in minutes. Both yield qualitatively similar effects, as shown in Figure E.12. The dummy specification gives a negative per-episode effect of 0.64 percentage points, which does not vary with the number of stories broadcast on the news day (Table E.2). Column 28 includes news on VAW-related trials, showing a similar but markedly weaker negative effect (Figure E.13). Columns 29 and 30 address the high-profile Dominique Strauss-Kahn affair, which predates the analysis period (May 2011; see the coverage peak in 2011 in Figure C.10) but generated recurring coverage during 2012–2019 that might disproportionately affect the results: Column 29 removes the decisions whose event window includes a day with news on the affair, and column 30 keeps these decisions but excludes the stories from the news count. Columns 31 and 32 examine each TV channel separately (TF1 and France 2, respectively), with similar coefficients across channels that are not significantly different from each other ($p = 0.21$, treating the two estimates as independent). Columns 33 to 35 check that the results do not stem from an overlap between the cases studied and the news stories. Among cases decided on the day of a news story about a located crime, they keep only those for which the crime took place in the same county as the court (33), an adjacent county (34), or neither (35), together with all cases decided on days without such a story. Courts located neither in the county of the crime nor in an adjacent county account for 91% of the cases decided on the day of a news story on a located crime. The estimates are significant and of similar magnitude across the three columns, indicating that the results are not driven by cases decided on the same day as a story about a crime in the same or a neighboring county.

Addressing exposure overlap and news absence Column 36 excludes periods without any news coverage, while column 37 lifts the isolated-news-day restriction, thereby including periods with several days of news coverage. The per-story coefficient is much smaller in this broader sample, consistent with the response depending on the presence of coverage rather than on the number of stories. The drop in the propensity to dismiss still peaks two days after the news (0.50 percentage points per story), but the estimates for the other days are not significant (Figure E.14).

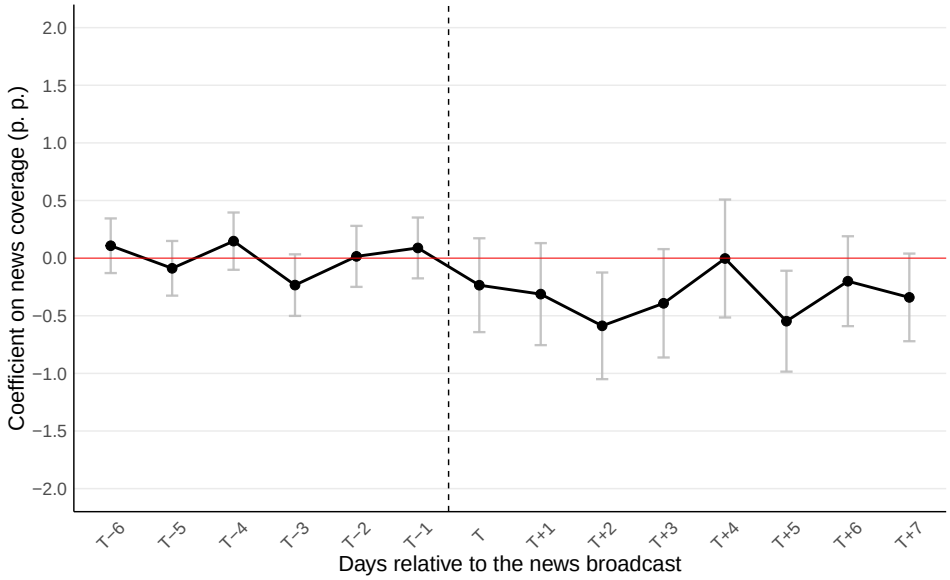
Additional tests To further verify that no specific period or location drives the findings, I perform leave-one-out exercises by removing each isolated news day, month, or county individually from the dataset. The main effect persists even after excluding each of the 76 isolated days with news coverage, each of the 96 months of the 2012–2019 analysis period, and each of the 96 French metropolitan counties (Figure E.15). Moreover, correcting for multiple hypothesis testing using several approaches still yields a statistically significant effect (Figure E.16).

Figure E.10: Monthly number of days with news on crimes against women and of dismissed sexual and intimate partner violence cases (2012–2019)



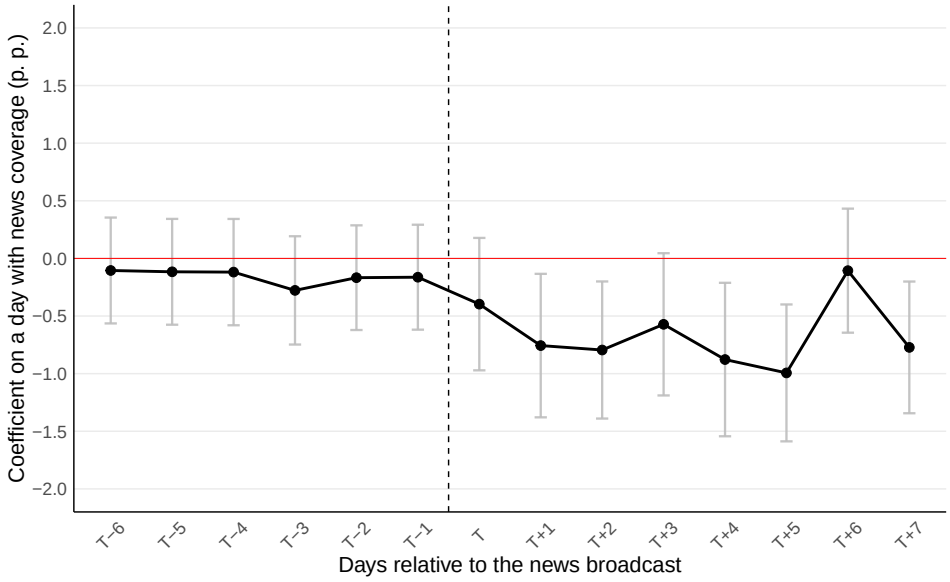
Notes: Monthly series from January 2012 to December 2019. The first series (red line, right axis) is the number of days with at least one news story on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The second (blue line, left axis) is the number of sexual and intimate partner violence (SV/IPV) cases dismissed by prosecutors in metropolitan France, by month of the dismissal decision. The dashed vertical line marks October 2017, the start of the #MeToo movement.
Reading: Between October 2017 and September 2018, at least one news story on crimes against women was broadcast on 49 days, compared with 4 days over the previous twelve months, whereas the average monthly number of dismissed cases barely changed (6,871 versus 6,691).
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.11: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, restricted to cases registered before the decision day

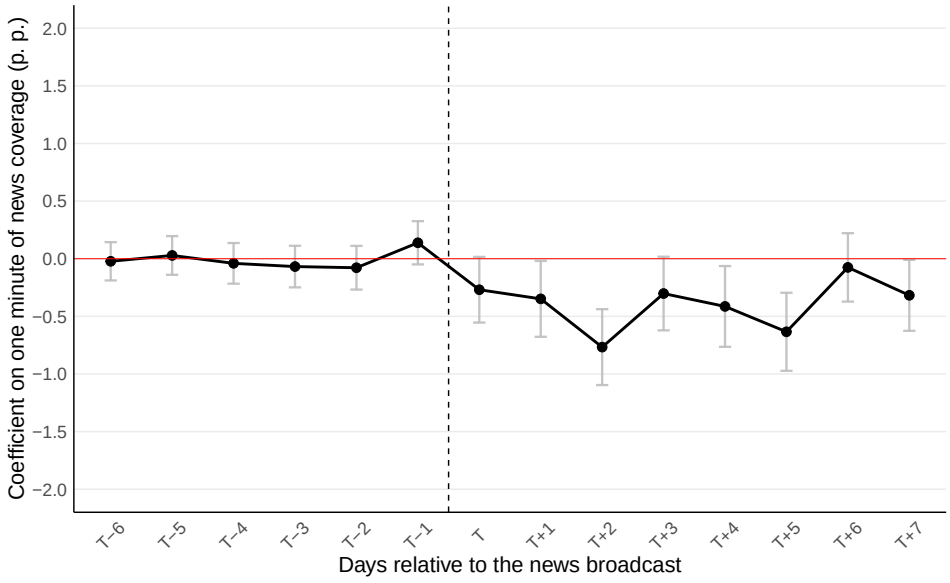


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The sample is further restricted to cases registered in the justice system strictly before the day of the prosecutor's decision ($N = 594{,}071$, 86% of the main sample), thereby excluding cases registered and decided on the same day. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.12: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, using alternative measures of news coverage



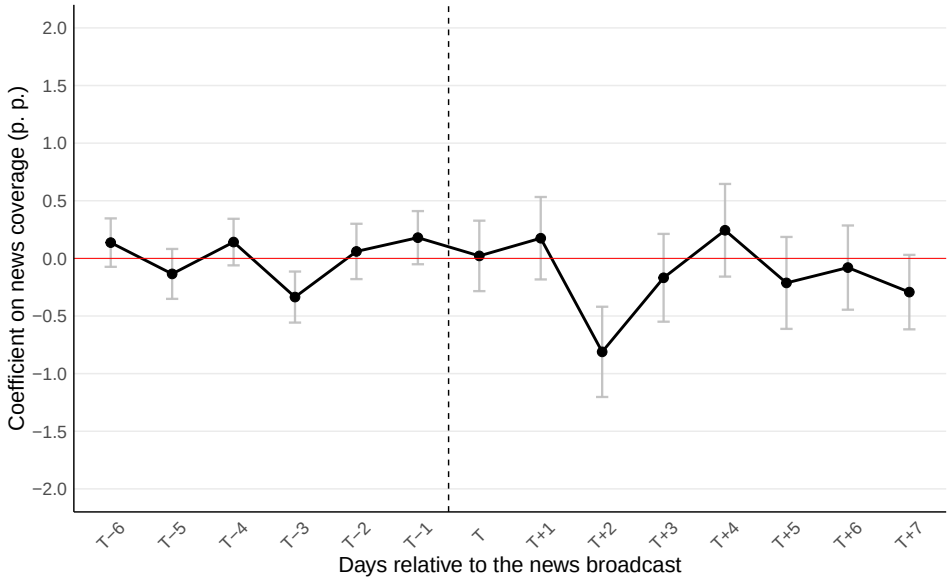
(a) Using occurrence of news stories (0/1)



(b) Using duration of news stories (minutes)

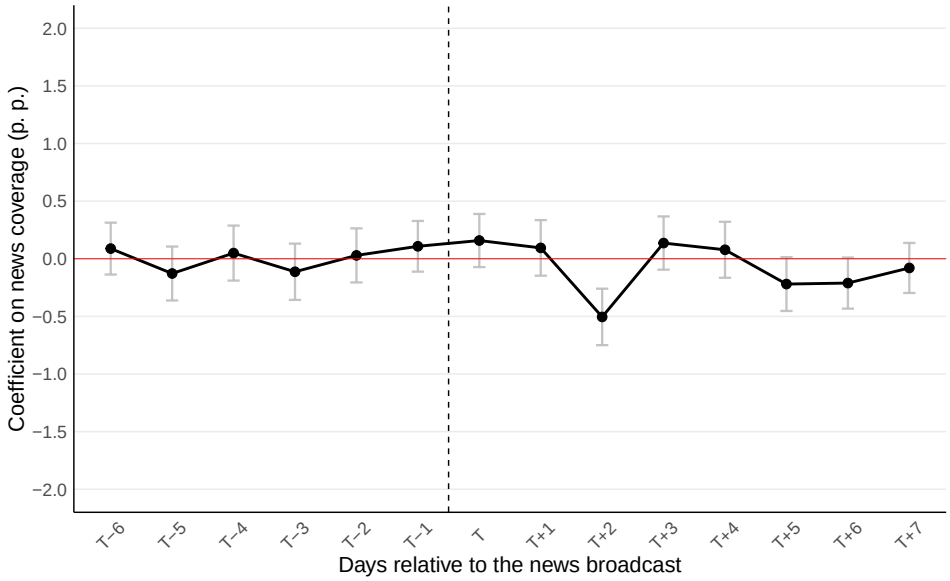
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), using alternative measures of news coverage, with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. In panel (a), news coverage is measured with a dummy equal to one if at least one news story on crimes against women was broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2; in panel (b), with the total duration (in minutes) of such stories. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.13: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, including news on trials



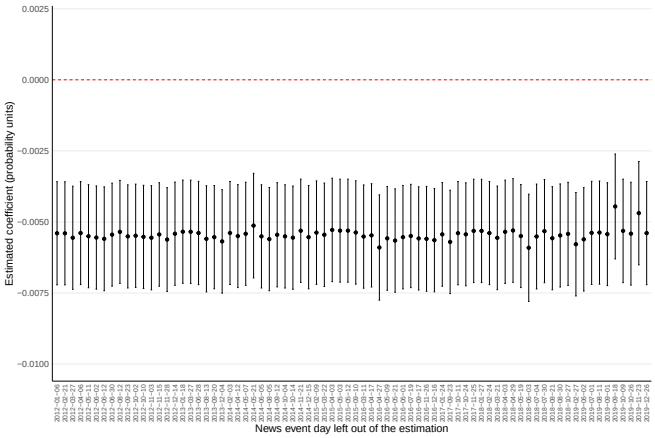
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women or of related trials on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women or on related trials broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week ($N = 640{,}220$). The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.14: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, including periods with multiple days of news coverage

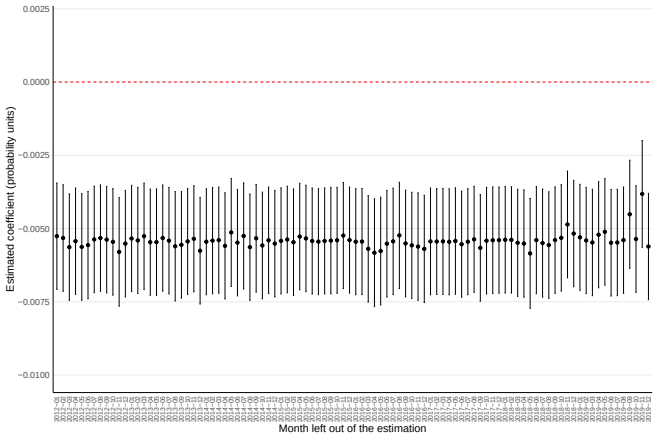


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. Unlike in the main specification, the sample is not restricted to isolated news days: it also includes decisions with more than one day of news coverage of crimes against women in the week before the decision ($N = 758{,}305$). The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

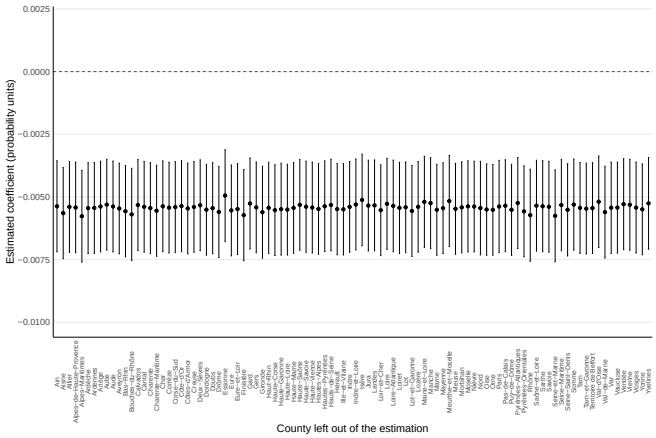
Figure E.15: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, leaving out each news event day, month, and county



(a) Leaving out each news event day



(b) Leaving out each month

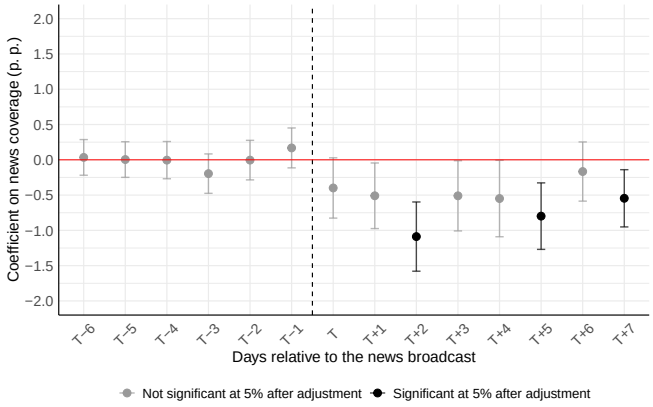


(c) Leaving out each county

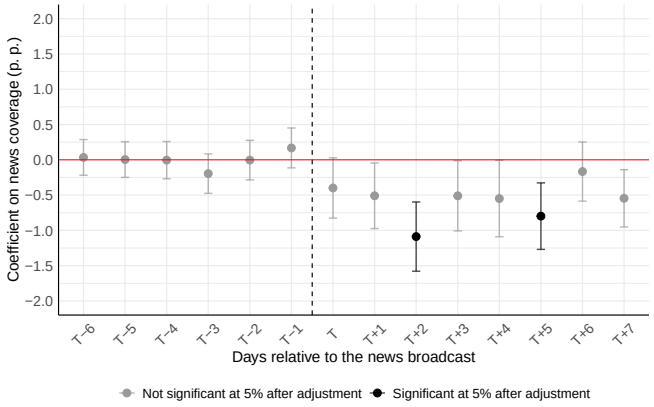
Notes: Estimates of the pooled effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units). The model is equation (1) with news coverage pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it; the figure reports the coefficient on the pooled lags, re-estimated while leaving out one unit at a time. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$ before exclusion). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Panel (a) sequentially removes each of the 76 isolated days with news coverage together with the 7 days before and after it; panel (b) removes each of the 96 months of the 2012–2019 period; panel (c) removes each of the 96 metropolitan counties (*départements*).

Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

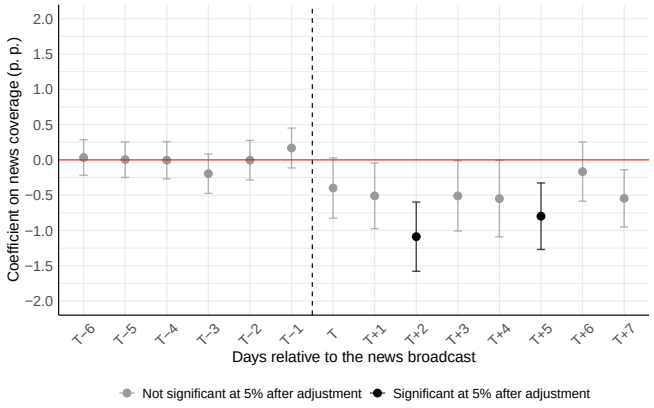
Figure E.16: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases, adjusting for multiple hypothesis testing



(a) Benjamini–Hochberg method



(b) Bonferroni method



(c) Holm method

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The 14 p-values of the leads and lags are adjusted for multiple hypothesis testing using the Benjamini–Hochberg method in panel (a), the Bonferroni method in panel (b), and the Holm method in panel (c); coefficients that remain significant at the 5% level after adjustment are displayed in black, the others in gray. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 687{,}198$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.6: Robustness checks for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Specification, fixed effects, and calendar controls									
	Main specification	Probit model	Residualized outcome	Year × month fixed effects	Year × quarter fixed effects	Year and day-of-the-year fixed effects	Court fixed effects	Linear time trend	Controlling for school vacations	Controlling for public holidays
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0054*** (0.0009)	-0.0222*** (0.0037)	-0.0058*** (0.0009)	-0.0013 (0.0011)	-0.0026*** (0.0010)	-0.0085*** (0.0010)	-0.0054*** (0.0009)	-0.0055*** (0.0009)	-0.0054*** (0.0009)	-0.0057*** (0.0009)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-7.01×10^{-5} (0.0003)	0.0002 (0.0013)	-0.0002 (0.0003)	0.0013*** (0.0004)	0.0009** (0.0004)	-0.0007* (0.0004)	-4.27×10^{-5} (0.0003)	-0.0001 (0.0003)	-6.86×10^{-5} (0.0003)	-7.61×10^{-5} (0.0003)
Controls and fixed effects										
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓
Outcome residualized on year, month, and day of the week			✓							
Year × month, day-of-the-week fixed effects				✓						
Year × quarter, day-of-the-week fixed effects					✓					
Year, day-of-the-year fixed effects						✓				
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
Court fixed effects							✓			
Linear time trend								✓		
Fit statistics										
Observations	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198
R^2	0.18648		0.13301	0.18733	0.18696	0.14701	0.18851	0.18649	0.18648	0.18906
Within R^2	0.12848		0.12706	0.12837	0.12837	0.13671	0.12778	0.12849	0.12848	0.13124
Log-likelihood		-298,797.435								
RMSE		0.382								

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.6 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Additional controls, weekends, and inference								
	Controlling for periods of high female visibility	Controlling for VAW-related laws	Removing weekends	Grouping weekends	SE clustered by day	SE clustered by county	SE clustered by year × month	SE clustered by case	SE clustered by court
	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0054***	-0.0054***	-0.0050***	-0.0032***	-0.0054***	-0.0054***	-0.0054***	-0.0054***	-0.0054***
	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0009)	(0.0007)	(0.0014)	(0.0013)	(0.0020)	(0.0010)	(0.0013)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-6.44×10^{-5}	-6.44×10^{-5}	-9.12×10^{-5}	-6.59×10^{-5}	-7.01×10^{-5}	-7.01×10^{-5}	-7.01×10^{-5}	-7.01×10^{-5}	-7.01×10^{-5}
	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0006)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)
Controls and fixed effects									
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustering									
Standard errors clustered by day					✓				
Standard errors clustered by county						✓			
Standard errors clustered by year × month							✓		
Standard errors clustered by case								✓	
Standard errors clustered by court									✓
Fit statistics									
Observations	687,198	687,198	659,022	692,334	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198	687,198
R^2	0.18649	0.18649	0.13522	0.18798	0.18648	0.18648	0.18648	0.18648	0.18648
Within R^2	0.12849	0.12848	0.12734	0.12855	0.12848	0.12848	0.12848	0.12848	0.12848

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.6 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—Sample, outcome, and treatment definition								
	Identified suspects only	Removing duplicated suspect records	Alternatives counted as non-dismissals	Excluding rape cases	Cases registered before the decision	Cases registered on the decision day	Treatment: any news (0/1)	Treatment: news duration (minutes)	Including news on VAW trials
	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)	(27)	(28)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0061***	-0.0054***	-0.0065***	-0.0052***	-0.0033***	-0.0066***	-0.0064***	-0.0037***	-0.0013*
	(0.0010)	(0.0009)	(0.0010)	(0.0010)	(0.0009)	(0.0019)	(0.0012)	(0.0006)	(0.0008)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-5.56×10^{-5}	-7.39×10^{-5}	-0.0014***	0.0002	3.58×10^{-5}	-0.0005	-0.0016**	-0.0001	-5.93×10^{-5}
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0007)	(0.0007)	(0.0002)	(0.0003)
Controls and fixed effects									
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics									
Observations	605,524	686,414	687,198	598,930	594,071	93,127	687,198	687,198	640,220
R^2	0.15522	0.18708	0.25630	0.17937	0.14010	0.37267	0.18648	0.18649	0.18594
Within R^2	0.09470	0.12910	0.23034	0.11787	0.09386	0.17110	0.12848	0.12848	0.12772

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table E.6 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Dismissal (0/1)*—News selection, channels, location, and windows								
	Removing DSK news days	Excluding DSK stories from the count	TF1 news only	France 2 news only	News in the same county	News in adjacent counties	News in other counties	Removing periods with no news stories	Including multiple news days before
	(29)	(30)	(31)	(32)	(33)	(34)	(35)	(36)	(37)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0057***	-0.0054***	-0.0042***	-0.0065***	-0.0041***	-0.0042***	-0.0037***	-0.0026**	-0.0007***
	(0.0010)	(0.0009)	(0.0014)	(0.0012)	(0.0011)	(0.0011)	(0.0010)	(0.0012)	(0.0002)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0003	-9.68×10^{-5}	-0.0005	0.0005	0.0001	9.11×10^{-5}	1.07×10^{-5}	0.0008**	0.0002
	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0007)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0003)
Controls and fixed effects									
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics									
Observations	558,827	689,644	710,650	713,391	681,513	682,143	694,049	236,566	758,305
R^2	0.18621	0.18637	0.18687	0.18680	0.18655	0.18658	0.18688	0.19311	0.18766
Within R^2	0.12737	0.12841	0.12880	0.12881	0.12832	0.12836	0.12851	0.13431	0.12922

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Notes: Robustness checks for the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to dismiss sexual and intimate partner violence cases. Each column re-estimates the pooled event-time specification of equation (1) under an alternative specification, sample, inference, or treatment definition, as indicated in the column header. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week, unless otherwise indicated. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses, unless otherwise indicated (model-based standard errors for the probit model).
Columns: Each column corresponds to a different robustness check: (1) main specification; (2) probit model (maximum-likelihood index coefficient and model-based standard error; evaluated at the mean dismissal rate of about 77%, it corresponds to a marginal effect of about −0.0068); (3) outcome residualized on year, month, and day-of-the-week effects before estimation; (4)–(6) year × month (4), year × quarter (5), and year and day-of-the-year (6) fixed effects; (7) court fixed effects instead of county fixed effects; (8) linear time trend added; (9)–(10) controlling for school vacations (9) and public holidays (10); (11) controlling for periods when women are more visible (International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, and the outbreak of #MeToo in October 2017); (12) controlling for laws, case law, and circulars related to violence against women (VAW); (13) excluding weekend decisions; (14) assigning news stories broadcast on weekends to the preceding Friday (treatment and isolated-news-day restriction recomputed accordingly); (15)–(19) standard errors clustered by day (15), county (16), year × month (17), case (18), and court (19); (20) restricting to cases with an identified suspect; (21) removing duplicated suspect records within a case; (22) excluding alternatives to prosecution from the dismissal outcome; (23) excluding rape cases; (24)–(25) restricting to cases registered before the decision day (24) or on the decision day (25); (26) treatment measured as the occurrence (0/1) of news stories; (27) treatment measured as the duration of news stories, in minutes; (28) including news stories on VAW-related trials in the treatment; (29)–(30) removing the days with news on the Dominique Strauss-Kahn (DSK) case (29) or excluding the DSK stories from the news count (30); (31)–(32) using TF1 (31) or France 2 (32) news stories only; (33)–(35) restricting the sample to cases decided on days when the crime covered in the news occurred in the same county as the court (33), in an adjacent county (34), or in neither (35), together with cases decided on days without such news, with news coverage and isolated news days measured on the 206 stories with a transcript (Appendix Table C.3) and the location restriction applied to the decision-day story only; (36) removing periods with no news stories; (37) including periods with multiple news days before the decision.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

E.5 Specificity to violence against women versus other crimes

This subsection details the comparison with other crime categories in Section 6.2: the keywords used to identify news stories on each category, the definitions of the corresponding cases in the justice data (Table E.7), the attrition due to the restriction to isolated news days (Table E.8), and the estimates on isolated news days and on the full sample (Tables E.9 and E.10).

Keywords used to classify news stories on other crimes Below is the list of words used to measure media coverage of the other crime categories in the placebo and specificity analyses (Section 6.2). For all categories, I exclude stories on events abroad. For serious interpersonal violence and homicides, I also exclude stories on trials or judicial procedures, on wars or terrorism, or on violence against children, as well as stories that also mention VAW.

1. **Drug Trafficking**: drug trafficking, trafficker, dismantling of a network, drug network, dealer, drug-dealing spot, drug sales point, go-fast (high-speed drug convoy), narcotics trafficking, clandestine laboratory, drug pipeline, cocaine seizure, cannabis seizure, heroin seizure.
2. **Organized Crime**: criminal conspiracy, organized gang, criminal organization, major organized crime, crime syndicate, mafia, underworld, gang, cartel.
3. **Theft and Receiving Stolen Goods**:
    - **Organized Robbery**: organized theft, armed robbery, heist, robber, holdup, jewelry store heist, bank heist, armored truck attack, home invasion.
    - **Aggravated Receiving**: receiving stolen goods, aggravated receiving, fence, harboring criminals, stolen merchandise, stolen jewelry.
4. **Serious Interpersonal Violence and Homicides**:
    - **Homicide**: murder, intentional homicide, assassination, killer, criminal, killed, stabbed, knife wound, gunshot, shot dead, executed, found body/corpse, killing, fatal brawl/fight, fatal assault, fatal violence, fatal dispute between neighbors, dispute resulting in death.
    - **Fatal Assault**: fatal blows, beaten to death, lynching, fatal beating, fatal assault and battery.
    - **Serious Physical Violence**: seriously injured, critical condition, total incapacity for work (ITT), hospitalized following assault, life-threatening condition, severely beaten, assault with a knife/bladed weapon, assault and battery.
    - **Violent Extortion**: racket, extortion, threat for money, threat of violence, threat with a weapon, intimidation, under threat, coercion through violence.

Note: All keywords were searched in French, together with their morphological variants (e.g., plurals, feminine forms, and conjugated forms). The list above gives the closest English equivalents of the French keywords used to identify news content in the INA database.

Table E.7: Legal definitions and shares of other crime categories in the justice data

Crime category	Legal definition (NATAFF labels)	Count	Share of total cases (%)
Drug trafficking	Drug trafficking (excluding possession, transport, or simple supply)	122,561	0.55
Organized crime	Criminal conspiracy and harboring of criminals	14,346	0.06
Criminal robbery and heists	Armed robbery and theft by an organized gang	61,914	0.28
Receiving stolen goods	Receiving stolen goods, receiving the proceeds of other offenses, and aggravated receiving	350,612	1.58
Homicides	Intentional homicide and intentional violence resulting in death	9,827	0.04
Serious physical violence	Intentional violence resulting in total incapacity for work (ITT) exceeding 8 days	132,684	0.60

Notes: Legal definitions (NATAFF codes) and relative weight of each category among all cases processed by the French criminal justice system during the sample period (2012–2019; by decision date). In the analysis, robbery and receiving stolen goods form the theft and receiving stolen goods category, and homicides and serious physical violence the serious interpersonal violence and homicides category. The shares represent the proportion of each category relative to all charge-level observations dismissed or prosecuted over 2012–2019 (N = 22,232,441; see Appendix Table B.1).
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice.

Table E.8: Attrition analysis: comparison between the full and restricted samples

Crime category	Observations		News days	
	Dropped	Kept	Dropped	Kept
Drug trafficking	13%	87%	51%	49%
Organized crime	15%	85%	58%	42%
Theft and receiving stolen goods	21%	79%	59%	41%
Serious interpersonal violence and homicides	69%	31%	91%	9%

Notes: The sample consists of cases in each crime category (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. This table shows the percentage of observations and news days lost when restricting the sample to decisions with at most one day of news coverage on the crime category considered in the past week. High-frequency categories, such as serious interpersonal violence and homicides, experience the largest attrition.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.9: Effect of news coverage of other crimes on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category, estimated on the restricted sample

Dependent variable:	Dismissal of other crimes (0/1)			
Crime category:	Drug trafficking	Organized crime	Theft and receiving stolen goods	Violence and homicides
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Number of stories on other crimes in the past week	-0.0015	0.0149	-0.0008	-0.0062*
	(0.0034)	(0.0091)	(0.0014)	(0.0035)
Number of stories on other crimes in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0002	-0.0019	0.0013**	-0.0014
	(0.0017)	(0.0068)	(0.0006)	(0.0012)
Controls and fixed effects				
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	105,984	15,436	314,013	42,683
R^2	0.34335	0.36557	0.22455	0.31963
Within R^2	0.28300	0.25399	0.17377	0.28144

Standard errors clustered by day in parentheses

*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of specific crime categories on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category (leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample includes cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 across four categories: (1) drug trafficking, (2) organized crime, (3) theft and receiving stolen goods, and (4) serious interpersonal violence and homicides. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on the corresponding crime category broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. Results are presented for the "restricted sample," which isolates short-run shocks by keeping only decisions with at most one day of news coverage on the corresponding crime category in the past week. Standard errors are clustered by day. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table E.10: Effect of news coverage of other crimes on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category, estimated on the full sample

Dependent variable:	Dismissal of other crimes (0/1)			
Crime category:	Drug trafficking	Organized crime	Theft and receiving stolen goods	Violence and homicides
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Number of stories on other crimes in the past week	-0.0021	0.0011	-0.0004	-0.0002
	(0.0015)	(0.0050)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Number of stories on other crimes in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0004	-0.0005	0.0005	0.0000
	(0.0015)	(0.0059)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)
Controls and fixed effects				
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics				
Observations	121,172	18,101	396,407	137,348
R^2	0.34111	0.36270	0.22757	0.32384
Within R^2	0.28162	0.25707	0.17700	0.28679

Standard errors clustered by day in parentheses

Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of specific crime categories on the propensity to dismiss cases of the same category (leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample includes cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 across four categories: (1) drug trafficking, (2) organized crime, (3) theft and receiving stolen goods, and (4) serious interpersonal violence and homicides. The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was dismissed by prosecutors. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on the corresponding crime category broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. Because some offenses, such as serious interpersonal violence, are covered very frequently, restricting the analysis to isolated news days reduces the number of observations for these categories; results for the full sample are provided here for completeness. In this sample, per-story estimates are small for all categories, including violence against women (column 37 of Appendix Table E.6), consistent with the response depending on the occurrence of coverage rather than on its intensity. Standard errors are clustered by day. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

E.6 Additional evidence on mechanisms

This section details the evidence discussed in Section 6.3 and reports additional results on the decision to prosecute and on case processing time. Appendix Table E.11 summarizes how the main findings relate to each channel.

Table E.11: Consistency of the main findings with the candidate channels

Finding	Learning	Salience	Reputational concerns	Effort
Short-lived effect, not amplified by additional stories	×	✓	✓	–
Larger effect with higher audiences and in winter	✓	✓	✓	–
Larger effect for discretionary decisions and cases easier to pursue; smaller for pending cases	–	✓	✓	×
No change in the number of decisions, processing times, or other offenses	–	✓	✓	×
Larger effect after stories on IPV and femicides	✓	✓	✓	–
No systematic response for other serious crimes	–	×	✓	–
No effect on independent judges	×	–	✓	–
Effect only after #MeToo	–	–	✓	–

Notes: ✓: the finding is consistent with the channel; ×: the finding is hard to reconcile with the channel; –: the finding is not informative about the channel.

Learning A first possibility is that news coverage conveys information that leads prosecutors to update their assessment of VAW cases. This explanation is unlikely on prior grounds. Prosecutors handle such cases daily and see hundreds of them each year. A short television segment about a single case elsewhere in France is unlikely to tell them anything new about this type of violence. Occasional jurors differ: media coverage may be a substantial share of their information about crime. Empirically, the effect fades within about nine days (Figure E.1). Additional stories broadcast on the same news day do not amplify it (Table E.2). In periods with several days of coverage, the per-story effect is much smaller than on isolated news days (column 37 of Table E.6). This weak intensive-margin response is hard to reconcile with Bayesian updating, in which more information should lead prosecutors to revise their beliefs further. These comparisons, however, are not a formal test. The response is also similar for sexual violence cases and intimate partner violence cases (Appendix Table E.5), which points to a general shift in priority rather than to a revised assessment of the risks specific to each type of case.

Increased effort and crowding out If media coverage prompted prosecutors to examine cases more carefully and at greater length, or to reallocate resources toward VAW cases, one would expect longer processing times or a change in the total volume of decisions. With fixed resources, such a reallocation should also crowd out other cases: prosecutors would devote less time to other offenses, whose dismissal rate or processing time would then rise. However, I find no significant effect on

either the total number of decisions regarding sexual and intimate partner violence cases or the time elapsed between case registration and the prosecutor's decision (Appendix Tables E.3 and E.12). Baseline processing times are long (210 days on average: 242 days for dismissals and 98 days for prosecutions). Closer attention to a few marginal files would therefore barely show in such averages. But there is no sign of a systemic slowdown in case processing. I observe a 10% relative increase in the use of immediate appearance (*comparution immédiate*; Figure E.17), a fast-track procedure that brings the defendant to court immediately after police custody. At baseline, this procedure accounts for only about 3% of all prosecutorial decisions in VAW cases, or about 13% of prosecutions (Figure B.1). While this increase could suggest a targeted effort to secure swift convictions in specific cases, it does not appear to reflect a broader systemic shift. Finally, to test for crowding out, I estimate the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on other crimes against persons, which the same prosecutors' offices handle. The number of decisions, the propensity to dismiss, and the processing time of these cases do not change significantly (Table E.13). The additional prosecutions, about 15 nationwide per news day (computed in Section 6.1), are however too few for this test to detect a displacement: even a one-for-one displacement would raise the dismissal rate of these offenses by only about 0.1 percentage point per story, so small displacement effects cannot be ruled out.

Salience and news content As in Philippe and Ouss (2018), news coverage may temporarily make VAW more salient in decision-makers' minds. Salience can operate either through psychological priming, which elicits emotional or cognitive reactions, or through the way decision-makers allocate limited attention across cases. Three patterns discussed in Section 6.3 support this channel. First, the response is short-lived and does not increase with the number of stories, as discussed above. Second, it is larger when exposure to the news is higher: when stories reach audiences above the median for each channel, and in winter rather than in summer (Appendix Figure E.6 and Table E.5). Headline stories that open the broadcast, however, do not yield a stronger effect. Third, the response is concentrated where attention can tip the decision. It is larger for factual dismissals, which leave prosecutors more discretion, and for cases that they can more readily pursue, such as those involving several types of offense or handled in real time on the day they are registered (column 25 of Table E.6). It is smaller, but still significant, for cases already pending before the decision day (Figure E.11). These additionally prosecuted cases are as likely to be convicted as other cases (Section 5.4), which suggests that coverage draws attention to viable cases rather than lowering evidentiary standards.

However, a purely unconscious priming effect appears less likely for professionals than for occasional jurors. First, processing VAW cases is a core part of prosecutors' daily workload, so the temporary salience of a single broadcast is less likely to alter their decisions. Second, I find no effect on professional judges, who should be just as susceptible to such cognitive biases if the mechanism were purely psychological. Judges, however, have little margin to respond, since 94% of prosecuted cases end in a conviction (Table 1). Salience may nevertheless operate through how prosecutors allocate limited attention across cases. Judges do not face this choice, because they must rule on every case referred to them. The content of the news also suggests that emotional reactions may play a role. I apply a basic keyword analysis to a subsample of TV transcripts. The effect on prosecutorial

decisions is larger after news stories that feature victims' testimonies ($N = 24$ isolated news days) than after crime news on sensational cases ($N = 25$) or on political and media figures ($N = 19$) (Figure E.9 and Table E.5). The estimate is of similar size for stories that mention that the victim had previously reported violence or that the perpetrator had prior contact with the justice system. The small number of news days calls for caution, and the estimates are not jointly significantly different from each other ($p = 0.18$). Still, the pattern suggests that stories that evoke stronger empathy or emotion, or that question institutional responses, may influence decision-makers more than other news.

Reputational concerns and the #MeToo break Two findings are hard to reconcile with a pure attention effect. First, the response emerges only after October 2017 (Section 5.2). Second, news on other serious crimes does not systematically trigger a similar response for those crimes (Appendix E.5). Both point to channels specific to the normative stakes of VAW. By shifting social norms and reframing VAW as a systemic issue rather than a series of isolated incidents, the #MeToo movement likely heightened public scrutiny of how the justice system handles these cases, which may have made prosecutors more concerned about wrongly dismissing them.

Prosecutors are particularly exposed to this scrutiny. In the French criminal justice system, they work within a hierarchy and may be reassigned without their consent. This exposure makes them sensitive to institutional expectations and to their reputation among peers and superiors, and hence responsive to shifts in public scrutiny such as those created by news coverage of VAW. They may also have internalized the new norms. Judges, by contrast, enjoy full independence and are not subject to direct accountability mechanisms or public approval. Consistent with these differences in accountability, judges do not respond to news coverage in their conviction and sentencing decisions (Table 3), even after #MeToo (Table F.2). This result also fits the fact, noted above, that judges do not triage cases. A ceiling effect, given the high conviction rate at baseline, may partly explain the null on conviction, but not the null on sentence length. The data contain no information on individual prosecutors and cannot separate a direct response to the news from pressure exerted by superiors. However, the response emerges within days and is strongest for decisions made in real time (column 25 of Table E.6), which seems hard to reconcile with formal instructions passed down the hierarchy.

The concentration of the effect after October 2017 (Section 5.2) is also consistent with a rise in the reputational cost of dismissing VAW cases, although other changes occurred over the same period. The post-#MeToo period saw new policy initiatives on VAW, such as the August 2018 law on sexual and gender-based violence and the 2019 *Grenelle des violences conjugales*. It also saw more stories on intimate partner violence and femicides (Section 3.4), which elicit a larger response than stories on sexual violence (Section 5.2). Yet policy changes alone can hardly generate a response concentrated in the few days following isolated news stories. Moreover, although stories on intimate partner violence and femicides became more numerous, their share among isolated news days changed little after October 2017 (from 49% to 56%, a difference that is not statistically significant). Caseloads also rose after 2017 (Section 6.1), which may have made prosecutors' triage more selective and widened the margin on which salience acts. These changes are thus better seen as complements to reputational concerns than as alternatives: they may have raised the priority of VAW cases or widened the margin

of triage, but the short-run response to isolated news stories still requires a channel through which coverage brings the cost of a wrongful dismissal back to mind. Because they coincided with #MeToo, however, their role cannot be separated from that of the movement.

Table E.12: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on prosecutors' case processing time (days between case registration and decision)

	Days between registration and decision		
Dependent variables:	Any decision	Dismissal	Prosecution
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0351	1.238	-1.618
	(0.7961)	(0.9873)	(1.065)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.3758	0.5889*	-0.5518
	(0.2761)	(0.3407)	(0.3600)
Controls and fixed effects			
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics			
Observations	685,501	517,517	167,984
R^2	0.06766	0.05274	0.08856

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the time elapsed between the registration of the case and the prosecutor's decision (leads and lags from equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. The dependent variable is the time until any prosecutorial decision in column 1, until dismissal in column 2, and until prosecution in column 3. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

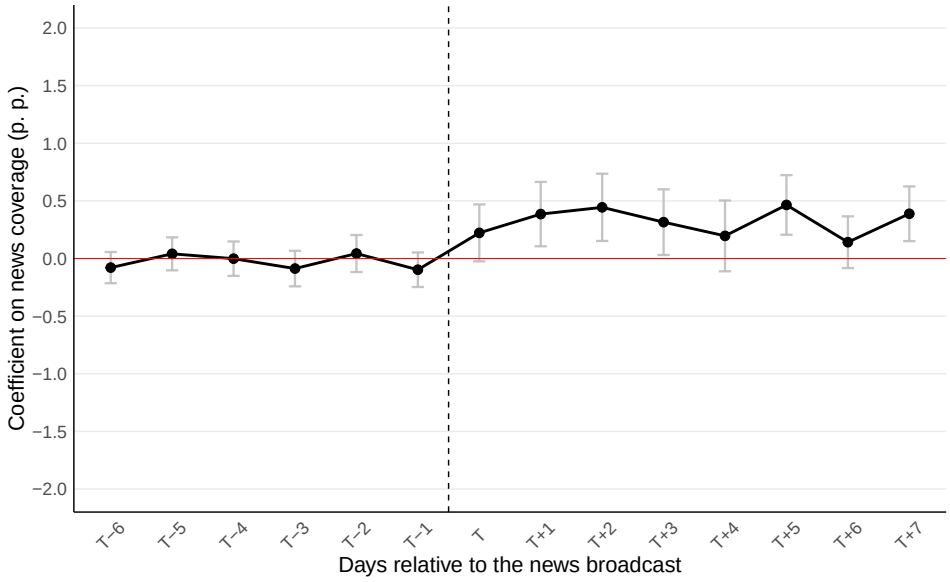
Table E.13: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on prosecutorial decisions in cases of other crimes against persons

Dependent variables:	**Number of decisions made** (logs)		**Dismissal decision (0/1)**		**Time to decide** (days)	
	Other crimes against persons	Other intentional bodily harm	Other crimes against persons	Other intentional bodily harm	Other crimes against persons	Other intentional bodily harm
Model:	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0026	0.0069	-0.0003	0.0003	-0.3379	-0.4183
	(0.0172)	(0.0195)	(0.0003)	(0.0006)	(0.3247)	(1.170)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0029	0.0016	-4.92×10^{-5}	-4.88×10^{-5}	0.1814	0.6880
	(0.0029)	(0.0032)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.1151)	(0.4196)
Controls and fixed effects						
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics						
Observations	2,647	2,647	3,476,088	1,382,374	3,470,543	1,378,896
R^2	0.85826	0.86799	0.24654	0.27406	0.06729	0.06399
Within R^2	0.00017	0.00013	0.20521	0.21840	0.03233	0.02586

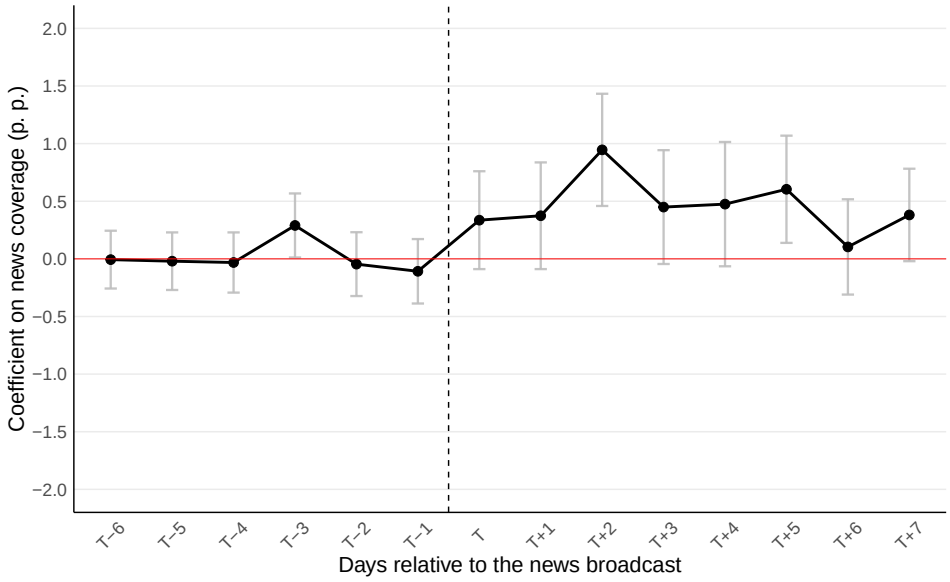
Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the log number of decisions, dismissal rate, and time to decide (in days) for other crimes against persons (leads and lags from equation (1)); in columns 1 and 2, each observation is a day. The sample includes all cases of other crimes against persons (columns 1, 3, and 5) or other intentional bodily harm, i.e., homicides and intentional bodily harm to adults (columns 2, 4, and 6), excluding sexual and intimate partner violence cases and cases involving female suspects. All these cases were dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure E.17: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to prosecute sexual and intimate partner violence cases, by mode of prosecution



(a) Prosecution through immediate appearance



(b) Prosecution through other modes

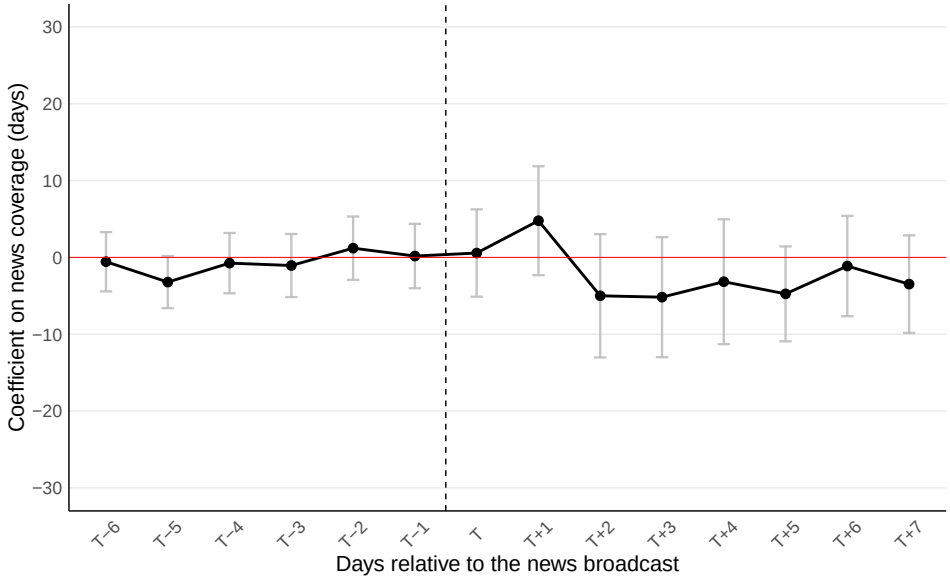
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to prosecute sexual and intimate partner violence cases through a given mode of prosecution (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. In panel (a), the sample is restricted to cases either dismissed or prosecuted through immediate appearance (*comparution immédiate*; $N = 540{,}035$), and the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was prosecuted through immediate appearance and zero if it was dismissed. In panel (b), the sample is restricted to cases either dismissed or prosecuted through any other mode (penal orders, guilty-plea orders, summonses, and referrals to an investigating judge; $N = 664{,}877$), and the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case was prosecuted through one of these modes and zero if it was dismissed. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to decisions with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

F Additional results on conviction and sentencing

This appendix reports additional results on judges' decisions. Appendix F.1 complements Section 5.3 with sentence length in days, alternative samples and treatment definitions, heterogeneity analyses, effects on the time to judgment, and robustness checks. Appendix F.2 complements Section 5.4 with the long-term effects of coverage around the prosecution decision on conviction among prosecuted cases and on sentence length.

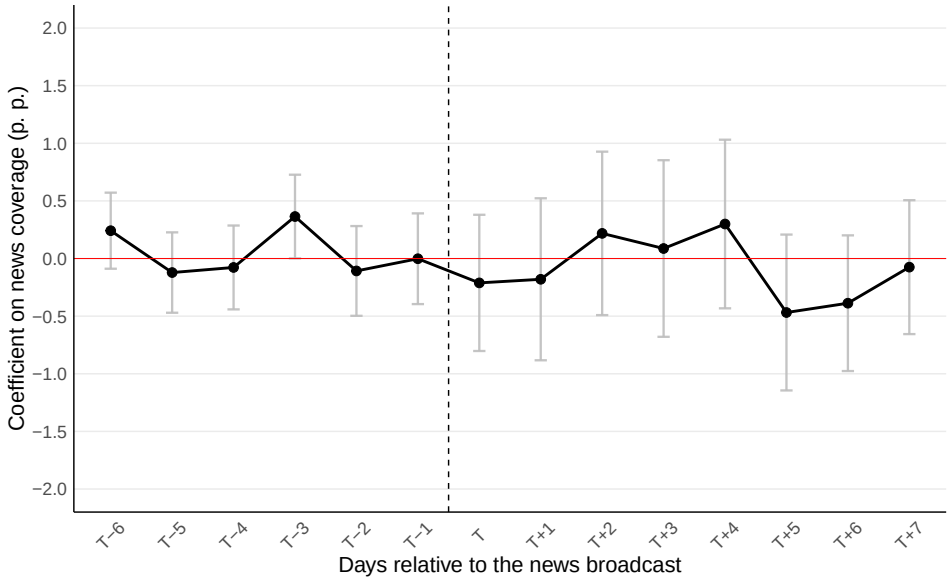
F.1 Conviction and sentence length

Figure F.1: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on sentence length in days for sexual and intimate partner violence cases

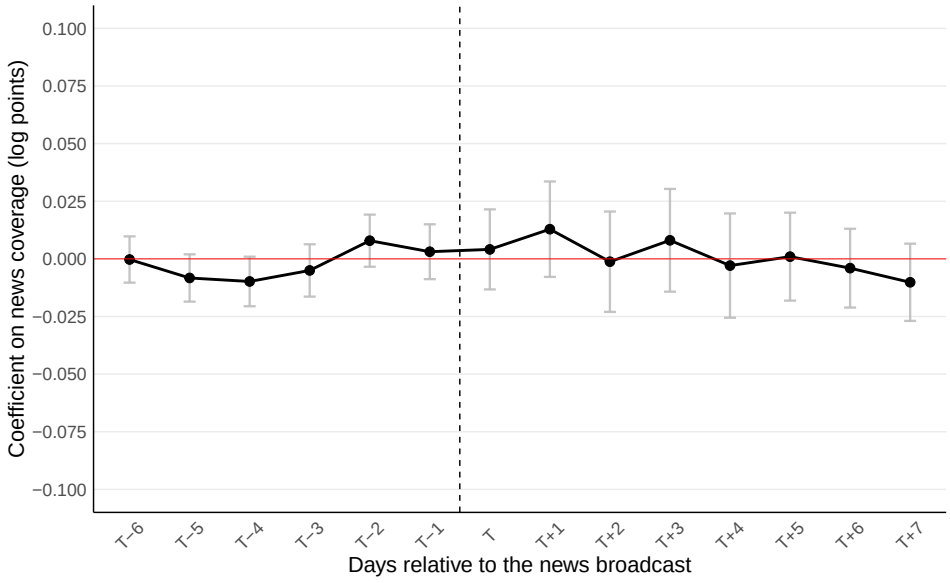


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the length of the prison sentence handed down in sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in days). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019, restricted to convicted defendants sentenced to prison ($N = 123{,}523$). The dependent variable is the length (in days) of the prison sentence; this figure replicates panel (b) of Figure 9 with the sentence length in levels rather than in logs. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.2: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases, restricted to cases prosecuted before the judgment day



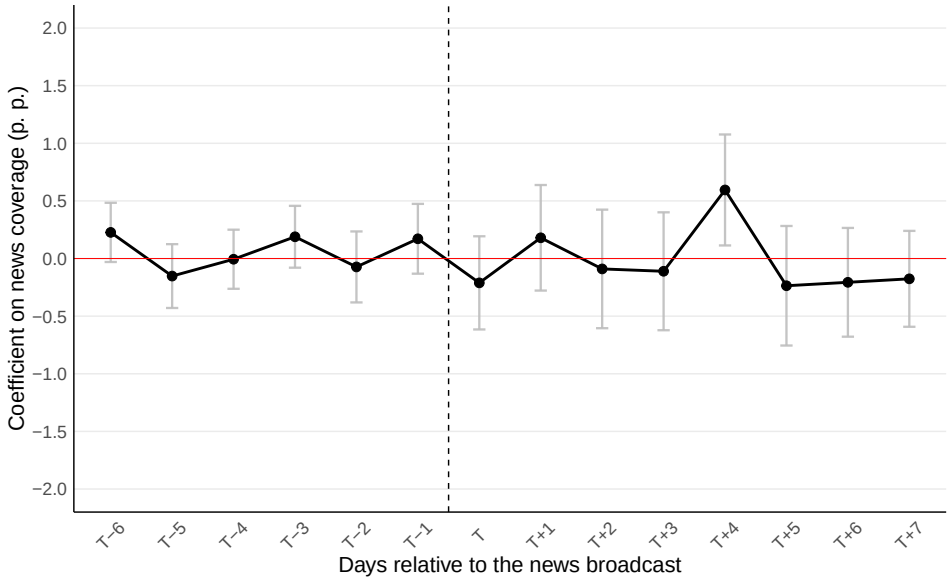
(a) Conviction



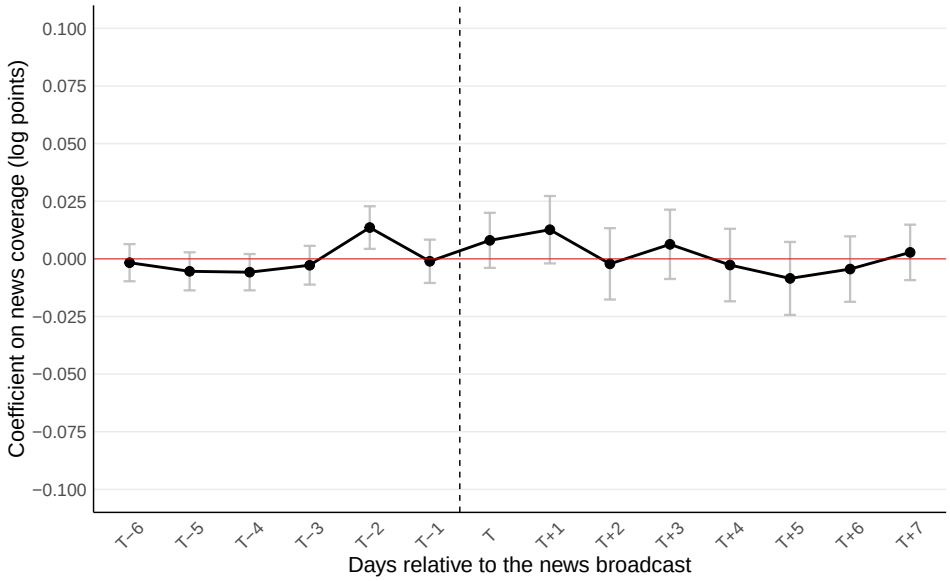
(b) Sentence length (log days)

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases and on sentence length (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals. Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. It is restricted to cases whose prosecution decision was made strictly before the day of the judgment ($N = 136{,}402$, 91% of the main sample). This excludes cases whose prosecution and judgment could both respond to the same news. In panel (a), the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial, with the estimated coefficients expressed in percentage points (p. p.). In panel (b), the dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the length (in days) of the prison sentence, among convicted defendants sentenced to prison ($N = 110{,}897$), with the estimated coefficients expressed in log points. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. *Source:* Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.3: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases, including news on trials



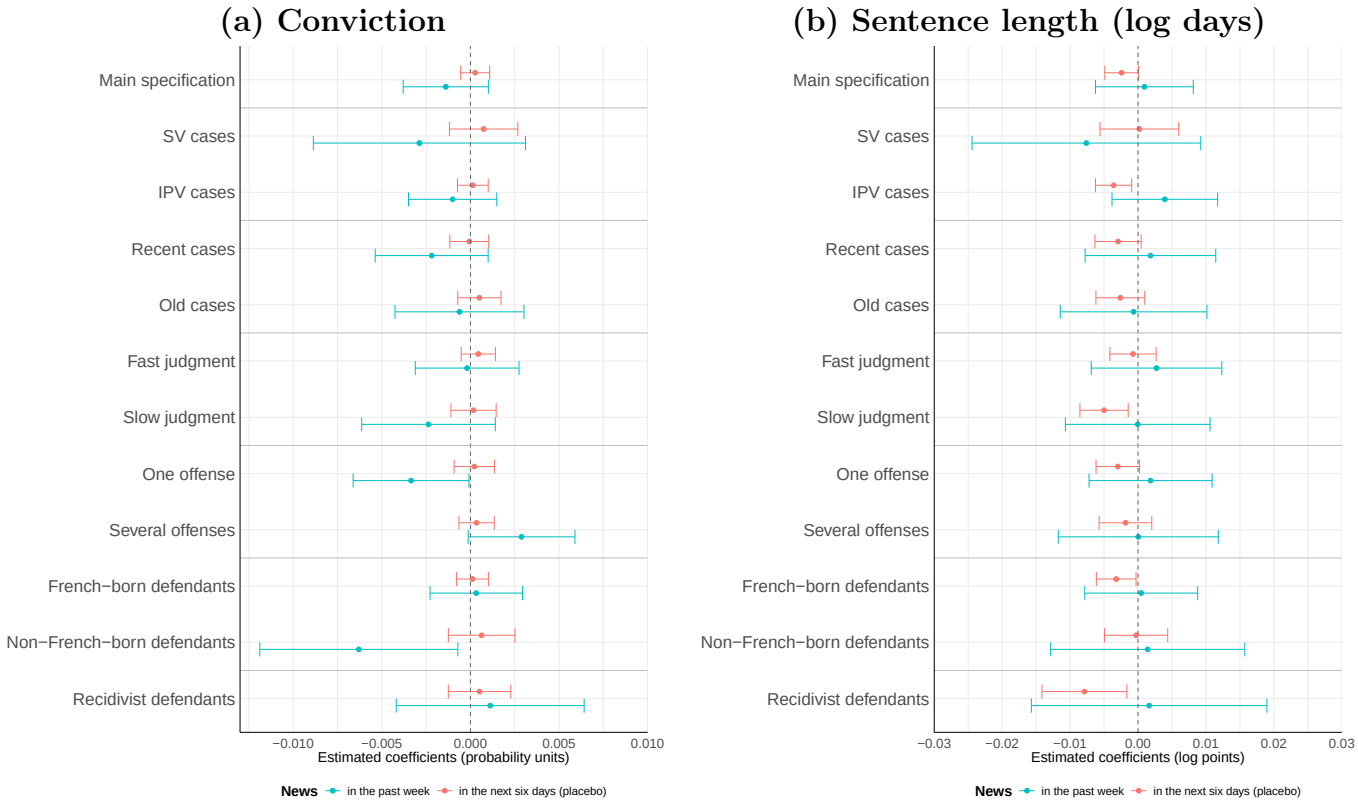
(a) Conviction



(b) Sentence length (log days)

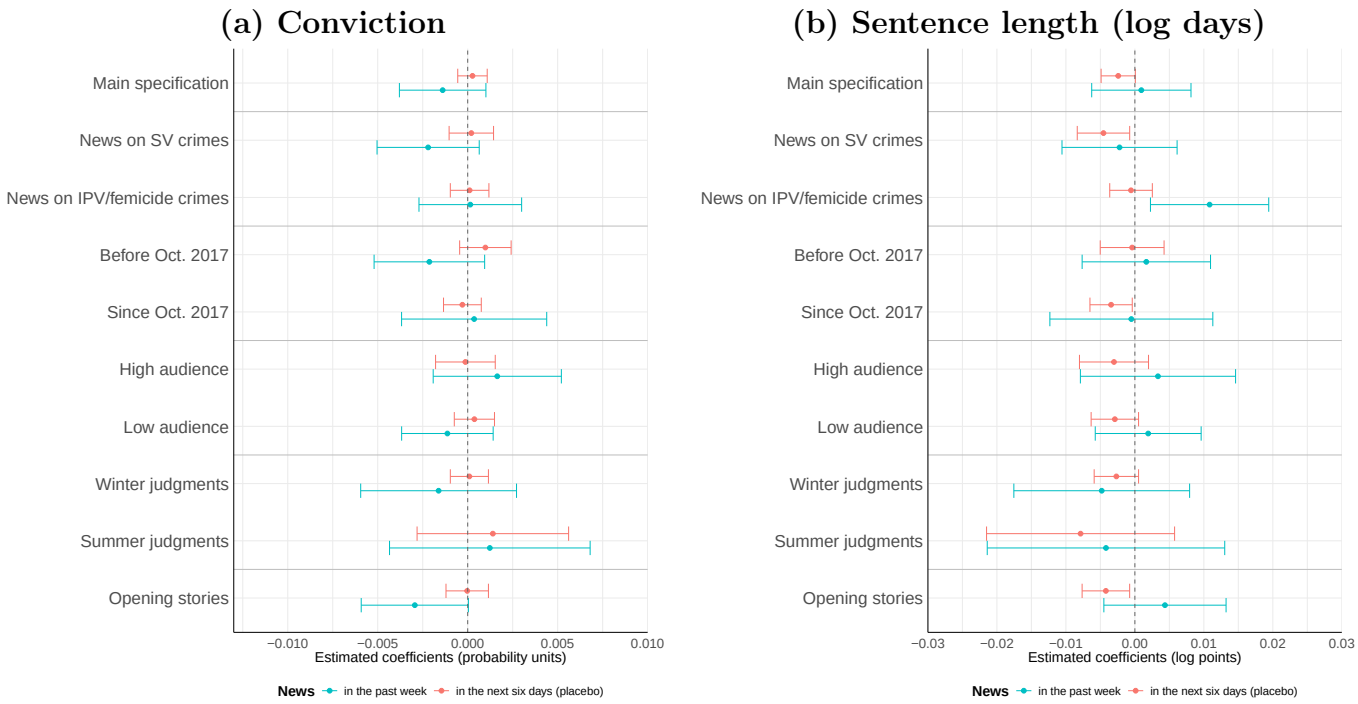
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women or of related trials on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases and on sentence length (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals. Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 139{,}276$). In panel (a), the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial, with the estimated coefficients expressed in percentage points (p. p.). In panel (b), the dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the length (in days) of the prison sentence, among convicted defendants sentenced to prison ($N = 114{,}408$), with the estimated coefficients expressed in log points. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women or on related trials broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specifications include case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.4: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by case characteristics



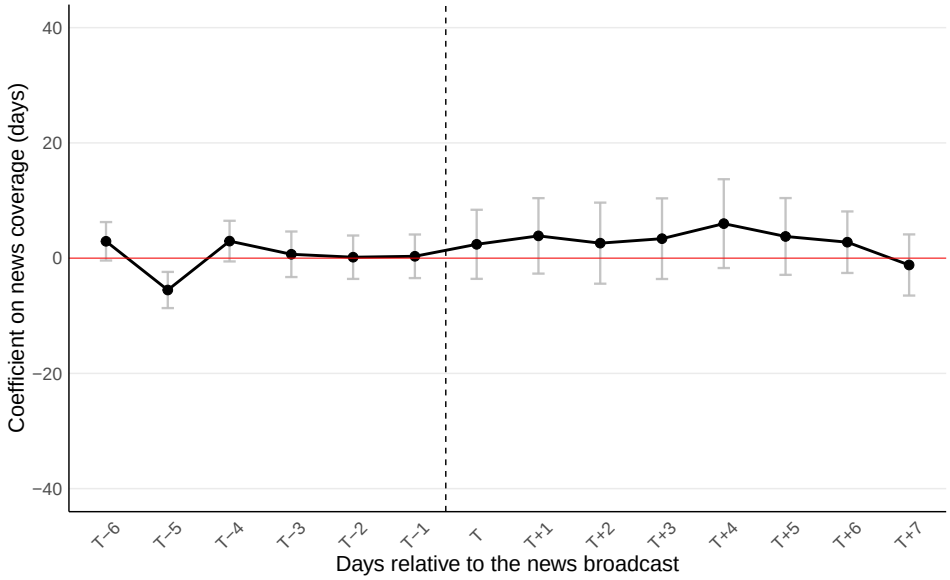
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases and on sentence length (panels (a) and (b), respectively; leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately on each subsample reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units in panel (a) and in log points in panel (b)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 (N = 150,351); in panel (b), it is restricted to convicted defendants sentenced to prison (N = 123,523). Cases are split by type of violence ("SV cases" for sexual violence and "IPV cases" for intimate partner violence), by the time elapsed between the incident and the arrival of the case in the justice system (below or above the median), by the time elapsed between the prosecution decision and the judgment (below or above the median), by the number of offenses recorded, and by the defendant's place of birth; the last row is restricted to recidivist defendants. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. Case-level controls include the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision (each control is dropped from the subsamples defined by it). All specifications include year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects, and standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table F.2.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.5: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by news characteristics



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases and on sentence length (panels (a) and (b), respectively; leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately for each definition of news coverage reported on the vertical axis, with 95% confidence intervals (in probability units in panel (a) and in log points in panel (b)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 (N = 150,351); in panel (b), it is restricted to convicted defendants sentenced to prison (N = 123,523). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the decision (decision day included) and the six days after it. The "News on SV crimes" (sexual violence) and "News on IPV/femicide crimes" (intimate partner violence and femicides) rows use news stories of that type as treatment. The audience and opening-story rows count only stories broadcast on high- or low-audience days (above or below the channel's median audience) or opening the newscast. The period and season rows keep only judgments handed down in those periods (winter: November to March; summer: June to August). The isolated-news-day restriction is applied to the news series used in each row, hence the varying number of observations. Case-level controls include the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision. All specifications include year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects, and standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table F.2.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.6: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of days elapsed between prosecution and the final court decision for sexual and intimate partner violence cases



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the time elapsed between the prosecution decision and the final court decision in sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in days). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on decisions made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 ($N = 150{,}351$). The dependent variable is the number of days elapsed between the prosecutor's decision to prosecute and the final court decision. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table F.1: Robustness checks for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases

Model:	Specification, fixed effects, and calendar controls									
	Main specification	Residualized outcome	Year × month fixed effects	Year × quarter fixed effects	Year × day-of-the-week fixed effects	Year × day-of-the-month fixed effects	Linear time trend	Controlling for school vacations	Controlling for public holidays	Controlling for periods of high female visibility
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
A. Dependent variable: Conviction (0/1)										
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0014	-0.0011	-0.0020	-0.0011	-0.0014	-0.0013	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014
	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0014)	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0003	0.0003	-0.0001	0.0002	0.0003	0.0002	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0005)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Observations	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351
R^2	0.03081	0.02998	0.03132	0.03092	0.03102	0.03243	0.03081	0.03081	0.03081	0.03082
Within R^2	0.02544	0.02524	0.02542	0.02544	0.02542	0.02535	0.02544	0.02544	0.02544	0.02546
B. Dependent variable: Sentence length (log days)										
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0009	-0.0011	0.0010	0.0011	0.0013	-0.0027	0.0007	0.0012	0.0009	0.0011
	(0.0037)	(0.0035)	(0.0043)	(0.0039)	(0.0037)	(0.0040)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0024*	-0.0020*	-0.0024	-0.0023*	-0.0023*	-0.0015	-0.0026**	-0.0026**	-0.0024*	-0.0025*
	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0016)	(0.0014)	(0.0013)	(0.0014)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)
Observations	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523
R^2	0.48889	0.47877	0.48935	0.48912	0.48916	0.49027	0.48893	0.48892	0.48889	0.48889
Within R^2	0.47497	0.47180	0.47492	0.47495	0.47489	0.47469	0.47502	0.47500	0.47498	0.47498
Controls and fixed effects (Panels A and B)										
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Outcome residualized on year, month, and day of the week		✓								
Year × month fixed effects			✓							
Year × quarter fixed effects				✓						
Year × day-of-the-week fixed effects					✓					
Year × day-of-the-month fixed effects						✓				
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Linear time trend							✓			

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table F.1 (continued)

Model:	Weekends, inference, and sample								
	Removing weekends	SE clustered by day	SE clustered by county	SE clustered by year × month	SE clustered by case	Identified defendants only	Removing duplicated defendant records	Excluding rape cases	Cases prosecuted before the judgment day
	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)
A. Dependent variable: Conviction (0/1)									
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0014	-0.0016	-0.0013
	(0.0012)	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0011)	(0.0013)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0012)	(0.0013)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0003	0.0002	0.0004
	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0003)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)	(0.0004)
Observations	150,199	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	150,351	148,744	136,402
R^2	0.03086	0.03081	0.03081	0.03081	0.03081	0.03081	0.03081	0.03076	0.02869
Within R^2	0.02550	0.02544	0.02544	0.02544	0.02544	0.02544	0.02544	0.02530	0.02321
B. Dependent variable: Sentence length (log days)									
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0008	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009	0.0009
	(0.0037)	(0.0038)	(0.0048)	(0.0041)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)	(0.0037)	(0.0039)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0025*	-0.0024*	-0.0024	-0.0024**	-0.0024*	-0.0024*	-0.0024*	-0.0022*	-0.0031**
	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0016)	(0.0010)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)	(0.0013)
Observations	123,385	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	123,523	122,245	110,897
R^2	0.48923	0.48889	0.48889	0.48889	0.48889	0.48889	0.48889	0.48047	0.49302
Within R^2	0.47532	0.47497	0.47497	0.47497	0.47497	0.47497	0.47497	0.46586	0.47790
Controls and fixed effects (Panels A and B)									
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustering									
Standard errors clustered by day		✓							
Standard errors clustered by county			✓						
Standard errors clustered by year × month				✓					
Standard errors clustered by case					✓				

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

(Table continued on next page)

Table F.1 (continued)

Model:	Treatment definition and news selection					
	Treatment: any news (0/1) (20)	Treatment: news duration (minutes) (21)	Including news on VAW trials (22)	Isolated news days before and after (23)	Removing periods with no news stories (24)	Including multiple news days before (25)
A. Dependent variable: Conviction (0/1)						
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0013	-6.61×10^{-6}	-0.0006	-0.0008	-0.0035	-0.0003
	(0.0016)	(1.35×10^{-5})	(0.0010)	(0.0015)	(0.0031)	(0.0003)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0009	3.87×10^{-6}	0.0005	0.0033**	0.0002	-4×10^{-5}
	(0.0009)	(4.73×10^{-6})	(0.0004)	(0.0016)	(0.0008)	(0.0004)
Observations	150,351	150,351	139,276	136,307	31,953	167,199
R^2	0.03081	0.03080	0.03047	0.03071	0.03652	0.03059
Within R^2	0.02544	0.02544	0.02512	0.02536	0.02766	0.02529
B. Dependent variable: Sentence length (log days)						
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0043	1.7×10^{-5}	0.0024	0.0022	0.0230**	6.98×10^{-5}
	(0.0048)	(4.12×10^{-5})	(0.0030)	(0.0045)	(0.0091)	(0.0009)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0018	-2.43×10^{-5}*	-0.0012	-0.0006	-0.0027	-0.0013
	(0.0029)	(1.44×10^{-5})	(0.0012)	(0.0048)	(0.0025)	(0.0011)
Observations	123,523	123,523	114,408	111,912	26,255	137,445
R^2	0.48888	0.48889	0.48891	0.48855	0.48811	0.48867
Within R^2	0.47497	0.47497	0.47463	0.47445	0.47050	0.47489
Controls and fixed effects (Panels A and B)						
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses (unless otherwise specified)
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: Robustness checks for the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases (Panel A) and on the length of the prison sentence handed down (Panel B). Each column re-estimates the pooled event-time specification of equation (1) under the alternative specification, sample, inference method, or treatment definition indicated in the column header. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. In Panel A, the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial. In Panel B, the sample is restricted to convicted defendants sentenced to prison, and the dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the sentence length (in days). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the judgment (judgment day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week, unless otherwise indicated. Case-level controls include the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision. Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses, unless otherwise indicated.
Columns: Each column corresponds to a different robustness check: (1) main specification; (2) outcome residualized on year, month, and day-of-the-week effects before estimation; (3)–(6) year × month (3), year × quarter (4), year × day-of-the-week (5), and year × day-of-the-month (6) fixed effects added to the baseline fixed effects; (7) linear time trend added; (8)–(10) controlling for school vacations (8), public holidays (9), and periods when women are more visible (International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) (10); (11) excluding weekend judgments; (12)–(15) standard errors clustered by day (12), county (13), year × month (14), and case (15); (16) restricting to cases with an identified defendant and (17) removing duplicated defendant records within a case (both identical to the main specification, as all tried defendants are identified and no duplicate records remain in the trial sample); (18) excluding rape cases; (19) restricting to cases prosecuted before the judgment day; (20) treatment measured as the occurrence (0/1) of news stories; (21) treatment measured as the duration of news stories, in minutes; (22) including news stories on trials related to violence against women (VAW) in the treatment; (23) restricting to news days isolated in both the seven days before and the six days after; (24) removing periods with no news stories; (25) including periods with multiple news days before the judgment (no isolated-days restriction).
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table F.2: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases: heterogeneity by case, period, and news characteristics

Model:	Case characteristics											
	Main specification (1)	SV cases (2)	IPV cases (3)	Recent cases (4)	Old cases (5)	Fast judgment (6)	Slow judgment (7)	One offense (8)	Several offenses (9)	French-born defendants (10)	Non-French-born defendants (11)	Recidivist defendants (12)
A. Dependent variable: Conviction (0/1)												
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0014	-0.0029	-0.0010	-0.0022	-0.0006	-0.0002	-0.0024	-0.0034**	0.0029*	0.0003	-0.0063**	0.0011
	(0.0012)	(0.0031)	(0.0013)	(0.0016)	(0.0019)	(0.0015)	(0.0019)	(0.0017)	(0.0015)	(0.0013)	(0.0029)	(0.0027)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0003	0.0007	0.0001	-6.66×10^{-5}	0.0005	0.0004	0.0002	0.0002	0.0003	0.0001	0.0006	0.0005
	(0.0004)	(0.0010)	(0.0004)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0005)	(0.0007)	(0.0006)	(0.0005)	(0.0005)	(0.0010)	(0.0009)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)												
in the past week		0.571		0.525		0.370		0.006		0.035		
in the next six days (placebo)		0.573		0.494		0.740		0.866		0.627		
Observations	150,351	38,163	112,188	74,341	74,915	75,200	75,151	100,437	49,914	112,921	37,282	20,555
R^2	0.03081	0.02870	0.02470	0.03060	0.03370	0.03109	0.02761	0.02817	0.02543	0.03163	0.03201	0.02566
Within R^2	0.02544	0.02043	0.01733	0.02265	0.02711	0.02285	0.02188	0.02218	0.02008	0.02671	0.02420	0.01534
B. Dependent variable: Sentence length (log days)												
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0009	-0.0076	0.0039	0.0018	-0.0007	0.0027	-4.34×10^{-5}	0.0018	3.26×10^{-5}	0.0005	0.0014	0.0016
	(0.0037)	(0.0086)	(0.0040)	(0.0049)	(0.0055)	(0.0049)	(0.0054)	(0.0046)	(0.0060)	(0.0042)	(0.0073)	(0.0088)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0024*	0.0002	-0.0036***	-0.0029*	-0.0026	-0.0007	-0.0050***	-0.0030*	-0.0018	-0.0032**	-0.0003	-0.0079**
	(0.0013)	(0.0030)	(0.0014)	(0.0017)	(0.0018)	(0.0017)	(0.0018)	(0.0016)	(0.0020)	(0.0015)	(0.0024)	(0.0032)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)												
in the past week		0.222		0.736		0.706		0.811		0.910		
in the next six days (placebo)		0.244		0.896		0.090		0.660		0.296		
Observations	123,523	28,884	94,639	62,757	59,753	65,930	57,593	79,021	44,502	92,386	31,046	18,649
R^2	0.48889	0.41755	0.31245	0.45327	0.51463	0.40063	0.56324	0.43534	0.52556	0.49500	0.47276	0.33653
Within R^2	0.47497	0.39673	0.27213	0.43372	0.49917	0.36367	0.55139	0.41823	0.51413	0.48217	0.44925	0.31563
Controls and fixed effects (Panels A and B)												
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

(Table continued on next page)

Table F.2 (continued)

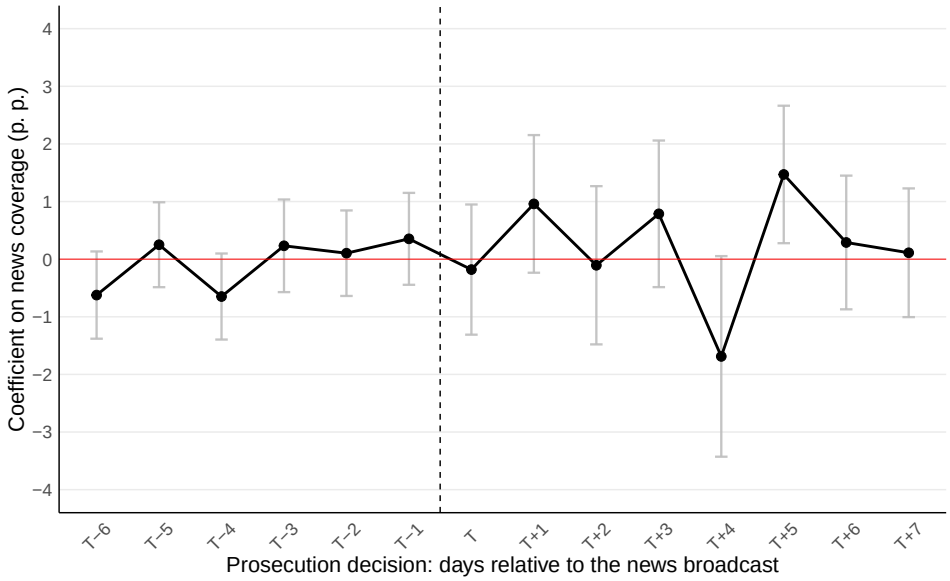
Model:	Period and news characteristics								
	Before Oct. 2017 (13)	Since Oct. 2017 (14)	High audience (15)	Low audience (16)	Winter judgments (17)	Summer judgments (18)	Opening stories (19)	News on SV crimes (20)	News on IPV/ femicide crimes (21)
A. Dependent variable: Conviction (0/1)									
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	-0.0021	0.0004	0.0016	-0.0011	-0.0016	0.0012	-0.0029*	-0.0022	0.0001
	(0.0016)	(0.0021)	(0.0018)	(0.0013)	(0.0022)	(0.0028)	(0.0015)	(0.0014)	(0.0015)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0010	-0.0003	-0.0001	0.0004	9.41×10^{-5}	0.0014	-2.61×10^{-5}	0.0002	0.0001
	(0.0007)	(0.0005)	(0.0008)	(0.0006)	(0.0005)	(0.0021)	(0.0006)	(0.0006)	(0.0005)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)									
in the past week	0.336		0.787		0.429			0.231	
in the next six days (placebo)	0.158		0.850		0.556			0.819	
Observations	107,848	42,503	162,866	152,688	68,001	28,547	161,102	158,816	158,747
R^2	0.03109	0.03529	0.03075	0.03069	0.03181	0.03399	0.03053	0.03095	0.03050
Within R^2	0.02525	0.02701	0.02537	0.02536	0.02640	0.02407	0.02515	0.02567	0.02511
B. Dependent variable: Sentence length (log days)									
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0017	-0.0005	0.0034	0.0019	-0.0048	-0.0042	0.0044	-0.0022	0.0108**
	(0.0047)	(0.0060)	(0.0057)	(0.0039)	(0.0065)	(0.0088)	(0.0045)	(0.0043)	(0.0044)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0004	-0.0034**	-0.0030	-0.0029*	-0.0027	-0.0079	-0.0042**	-0.0046**	-0.0006
	(0.0024)	(0.0016)	(0.0026)	(0.0018)	(0.0016)	(0.0070)	(0.0018)	(0.0019)	(0.0016)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)									
in the past week	0.777		0.898		0.955			0.016	
in the next six days (placebo)	0.281		0.941		0.468			0.054	
Observations	87,913	35,610	133,876	125,447	55,504	23,887	132,404	130,538	130,443
R^2	0.49704	0.47106	0.48910	0.48911	0.49128	0.48683	0.48897	0.48927	0.48886
Within R^2	0.48381	0.45670	0.47525	0.47515	0.47801	0.46791	0.47493	0.47543	0.47504
Controls and fixed effects (Panels A and B)									
Case-level controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual violence (SV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) cases (Panel A) and on the length of the prison sentence handed down (Panel B) (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated separately on each subsample or treatment definition reported in the column header. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. In Panel A, the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial. In Panel B, the sample is restricted to convicted defendants sentenced to prison, and the dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the sentence length (in days). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the judgment (judgment day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to judgments with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week; for the audience, opening-story, and SV/IPV news columns, the restriction is applied to the news stories of the type considered, hence the varying number of observations. Case-level controls include the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision (each control is dropped from the subsamples defined by it). The p-values reported under pairs of columns test the equality of the coefficient across these columns: a chi-squared homogeneity test for disjoint subsamples and a Wald test in a joint model for splits sharing the same cases (news series, audience).
Columns: Each column corresponds to a different subsample or treatment definition: (1) main specification; (2)–(3) sexual violence (2) and intimate partner violence (3) cases; (4)–(5) cases registered less (4) or more (5) than the median delay after the incident; (6)–(7) cases in which the time between the prosecution decision and the judgment is below (6) or above (7) the median; (8)–(9) cases involving one (8) or several (9) offenses; (10)–(11) French-born (10) or non-French-born (11) defendants; (12) recidivist defendants; (13)–(14) judgments handed down before (13) or since (14) October 2017 (#MeToo); (15)–(16) news stories broadcast on high- (15) or low- (16) audience days (above or below the channel's median audience); (17)–(18) judgments handed down in winter (November to March) (17) or summer (June to August) (18); (19) news stories opening the newscast; (20)–(21) news stories on sexual violence (20) or intimate partner violence and femicides (21).
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

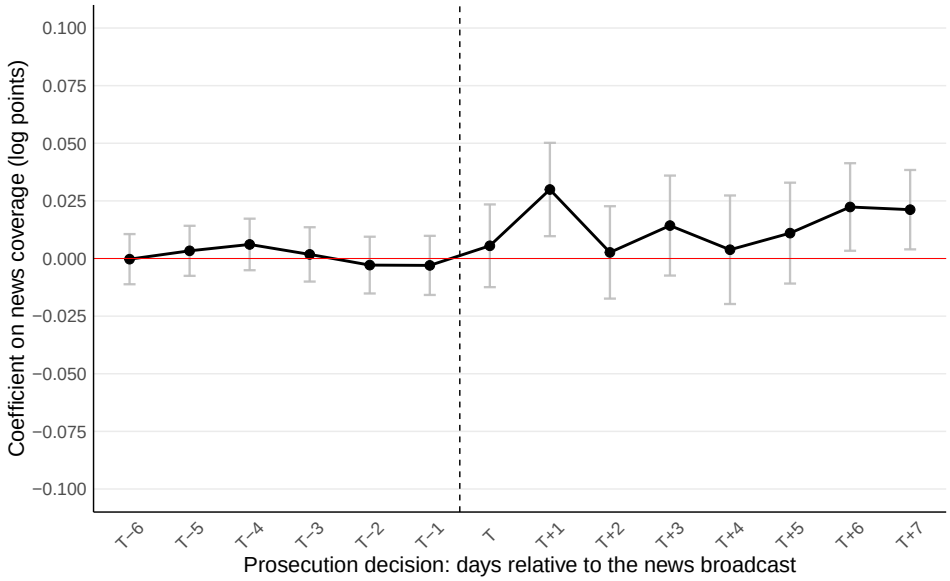
F.2 Long-term effects

Figure F.7: Long-term effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction for sexual and intimate partner violence cases, restricted to cases with nonimmediate prosecution and judgment



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women around the prosecutor's decision on the propensity to convict defendants in sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in percentage points, p. p.). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases whose prosecution decision was made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), prosecuted and tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019, restricted to cases prosecuted more than three days after their registration and judged more than seven days after the prosecution decision, so that the news coverage around the prosecution decision is unlikely to coincide with the registration and cannot coincide with the judgment ($N = 46{,}130$). The dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the defendant was convicted at trial. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 around the prosecution decision. The sample is restricted to cases with at most one day of such news coverage in the week before the prosecution decision. The specification includes case-level controls (the defendant's French-born status and age; the number of offenses and of victims; the offense type; dummies for attempt, complicity, and recidivism; the mode of prosecution; the nature of the judgment; and the time elapsed between the offense and the prosecution decision) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure F.8: Long-term effect of news coverage of crimes against women on sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases, conditional on conviction



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women around the prosecutor's decision on the length of the sentence eventually handed down in sexual and intimate partner violence cases (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases whose prosecution decision was made k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female defendants), prosecuted and tried in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019, restricted to convicted defendants with a positive sentence length ($N = 142{,}693$). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the length (in days) of the prison sentence. Because the sample is conditional on conviction, and because news coverage also affects the propensity to be convicted (Figure 10), the estimates may partly reflect changes in the composition of convicted cases. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2 around the prosecution decision. The sample is restricted to cases with at most one day of such news coverage in the week before the prosecution decision. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born defendant, defendant's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table F.3: OLS results for the long-term effect of news coverage of crimes against women on conviction and sentence length for sexual and intimate partner violence cases

Dependent variables:	Conviction (0/1)	Sentence length (days)	Log sentence length (log days)
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0053***	3.289**	0.0141***
	(0.0009)	(1.426)	(0.0040)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-3.38×10^{-5}	0.3798	0.0015
	(0.0003)	(0.5132)	(0.0014)
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
County of jurisdiction fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes
Case-level controls	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fit statistics			
Observations	687,198	159,182	142,693
R^2	0.17652	0.31962	0.27609
Within R^2	0.12065	0.31089	0.26112

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women around the prosecutor's decision on the propensity of sexual and intimate partner violence cases to eventually result in a conviction and on the sentence length (equation (1)). The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019. In column 1, the sample includes all cases and the dependent variable is a dummy equal to one if the case eventually resulted in a conviction at trial, and zero otherwise (dismissed cases included). In columns 2 and 3, the sample is restricted to convicted defendants and the dependent variable is the sentence length (in days), in levels in column 2 and in logs in column 3, which excludes zero-length sentences. These conditional estimates may partly reflect changes in the composition of convicted cases. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before the prosecution decision (prosecution decision day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to cases with at most one day of such news coverage in the week before the prosecution decision. Case-level controls include French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, and offense type.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

G Effects on reporting and recording

This appendix analyzes the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of cases registered in the justice system, summarized in Section 5.1. Appendix G.1 presents the main estimates and examines whether the composition of registered cases changes after coverage. Appendix G.2 presents placebo tests on other crimes against persons and estimates over a longer event window. Appendix G.3 examines heterogeneity by period, case characteristics, and news characteristics, as well as reporting delays, and Appendix G.4 assesses whether the increase in registrations reflects more reporting or more violence.

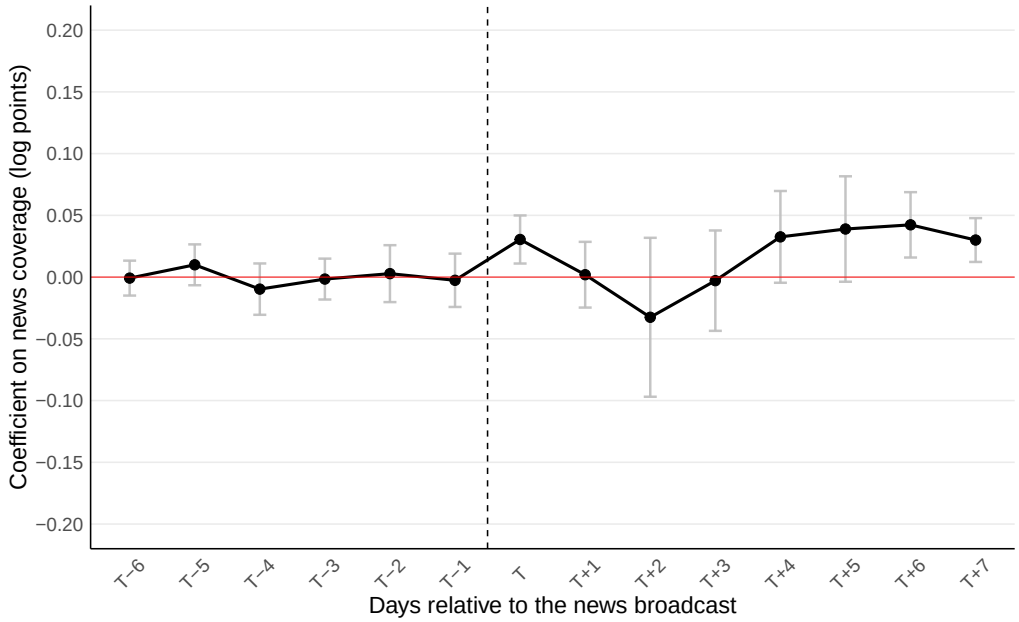
G.1 Main estimates and composition of registered cases

The composition of cases reaching the justice system could change after media coverage, which could bias the estimated effects on prosecutorial decisions. Such changes could arise at the reporting stage, either because victims become more likely to report incidents or because the police become more likely to record and transmit complaints. In principle, the police have no discretion at this stage: officers are legally required to register any complaint filed by a victim (Article 15-3 of the French Code of Criminal Procedure) and to forward it to the public prosecutor (Section 2). In practice, however, many testimonies report that officers discouraged victims from filing or refused to register their complaint, specifically in cases of sexual and intimate partner violence (Pérona 2017). The data do not allow me to separate these two channels: they contain no information on police handling, and the date on which a case is registered in the justice system reflects both the victim's decision to report and the police's decision to record and forward the complaint. I therefore analyze the effect of news coverage on the (log) number of cases registered with the justice system as a combined reporting and recording response.

Figure G.1 shows an increase in the number of cases registered in the justice system at time T, followed by an almost symmetrical (though not statistically significant) decrease at $T+2$ and by a renewed increase afterward (see Table G.1 for the estimates). On average, each additional news story on crimes against women is associated with a 1.7% increase in daily registrations on the day of coverage and on each of the following seven days (column 1 of Table 3), statistically significant at the 5% level. Placebo tests using other crimes against persons show that the immediate increase at time T is specific to VAW, whereas other offenses also increase on some later days (Figure G.3), making the later increases in VAW registrations less robust. News coverage thus causes a modest but immediate reporting or recording response, with about 5.5 additional cases on the day of the broadcast and about 36 over the eight-day window (column 4 of Table G.1), with no additional effect beyond it (Figure G.2). As the 8 p.m. news airs at the end of the working day, this same-day increase likely reflects that day's wider coverage of crimes against women rather than the broadcast itself.

Despite this short-lived increase in volume, the overall composition of registered cases appears largely unaffected. First, formal equality tests reported in Table G.2 do not reject the hypothesis that the effect is the same across case characteristics—type of violence, time elapsed since the incident, victims' and suspects' ages, and suspects' country of birth—or over time. In particular, the response

Figure G.1: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on cases registered k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

to daily news is not significantly different before and after the #MeToo movement. If anything, it is stronger before #MeToo, a difference driven by sexual violence cases (Figure G.4). This pattern is the mirror image of the prosecution response, which emerges only after #MeToo (Section 5.2), making news-induced registrations unlikely to drive the prosecution response. Second, if this increase were driven by higher-quality reports—as explored by Marchenko and Pakzad-Hurson (2025) in the context of #MeToo—one might expect a shift in the nature of the cases arriving at the prosecutor's desk. However, I find no major differences in the profiles of cases registered after news coverage, except for minor variations in their administrative origin (see Table G.2 and Figures G.5 and G.6).

Finally, I find no effect on the time elapsed between the incident and the case's arrival at the public prosecutor's office (Figure G.7). This stability in reporting delays (averaging 678 days for sexual violence and 194 days for intimate partner violence) suggests that the flow of cases reaching the justice system remains similar in nature despite the short-run increase in their number. Even though TV news coverage slightly increases registrations on the day it airs, selection is unlikely to bias the results on criminal justice decisions, given the long delay between registration and case outcomes. On average, cases take 210 days to reach a dismissal or prosecution decision and 255 days to reach a final sentencing decision. Consistent with this, the effect on the propensity to dismiss remains significant when the sample is restricted to cases registered before the day of the

Table G.1: OLS results for the effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system, by day relative to the news

	Log number of new cases registered			*Number of new cases registered*		
Model:	SV/IPV	IPV only	SV only	SV/IPV	IPV only	SV only
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
7 days after the news	0.0300***	0.0128	0.0619***	6.169**	1.307	4.687***
	(0.0091)	(0.0086)	(0.0148)	(2.517)	(1.487)	(1.465)
6 days after the news	0.0423***	0.0317**	0.0608***	11.120***	5.342**	5.899**
	(0.0135)	(0.0132)	(0.0202)	(4.165)	(2.586)	(2.518)
5 days after the news	0.0389*	0.0407**	0.0384	13.190**	8.713***	4.578*
	(0.0218)	(0.0193)	(0.0314)	(5.503)	(3.262)	(2.697)
4 days after the news	0.0326*	0.0371**	0.0262	8.161	5.434*	2.975
	(0.0190)	(0.0163)	(0.0281)	(5.159)	(2.844)	(2.638)
3 days after the news	-0.0029	0.0065	-0.0225	-1.237	0.539	-1.553
	(0.0207)	(0.0191)	(0.0290)	(4.888)	(2.950)	(2.309)
2 days after the news	-0.0326	-0.0199	-0.0604	-7.146	-2.549	-4.922
	(0.0328)	(0.0256)	(0.0514)	(7.945)	(4.221)	(4.012)
1 day after the news	0.0019	-0.0012	0.0082	0.174	-0.315	0.623
	(0.0136)	(0.0139)	(0.0198)	(3.563)	(2.276)	(1.905)
Same day as the news	0.0305***	0.0228**	0.0478***	5.478**	2.486	3.295**
	(0.0099)	(0.0104)	(0.0150)	(2.503)	(1.649)	(1.310)
1 day before the news	-0.0026	-0.0083	0.0003	-1.038	-1.892	0.759
	(0.0110)	(0.0095)	(0.0186)	(2.836)	(1.580)	(1.649)
2 days before the news	0.0028	0.0063	0.0015	1.734	1.961	-0.150
	(0.0118)	(0.0108)	(0.0156)	(2.644)	(1.565)	(1.358)
3 days before the news	-0.0016	0.0022	-0.0040	-1.262	0.051	-1.315
	(0.0084)	(0.0080)	(0.0125)	(2.016)	(1.239)	(1.060)
4 days before the news	-0.0097	-0.0079	-0.0156	-2.910	-1.692	-1.291
	(0.0106)	(0.0093)	(0.0155)	(2.670)	(1.524)	(1.371)
5 days before the news	0.0099	0.0078	0.0178	2.785	1.606	1.317
	(0.0084)	(0.0077)	(0.0127)	(2.085)	(1.286)	(1.086)
6 days before the news	-0.0008	-0.0026	0.0018	-0.574	-0.526	-0.137
	(0.0072)	(0.0071)	(0.0106)	(1.763)	(1.120)	(0.953)
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Observations	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647
R^2	0.80859	0.76701	0.79795	0.77813	0.73398	0.76218
Within R^2	0.00797	0.00653	0.00925	0.00892	0.00784	0.00963

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases newly registered in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), with each lead and lag coefficient reported separately. Columns 1 to 3 use the log daily number of cases as the dependent variable, so that coefficients read as relative changes; columns 4 to 6 use the daily count itself, so that coefficients read as additional cases per news story. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), registered in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 and subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts; columns 1 and 4 pool both types of violence (SV/IPV), columns 2 and 5 restrict the outcome to intimate partner violence (IPV), and columns 3 and 6 restrict it to sexual violence (SV). All regressions are estimated at the daily level ($N = 2{,}647$ days). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

prosecutorial decision (column 24 of Table E.6 and Figure E.11).

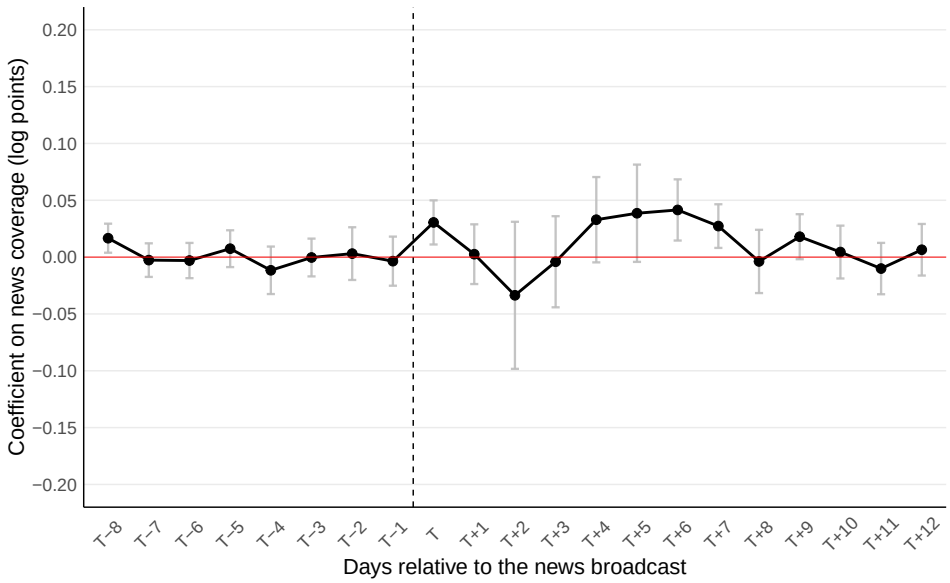
Drivers of the reporting response Several factors likely explain this modest effect. Unlike criminal justice actors, who decide on cases every day, victims face a fundamentally different process when deciding whether to report to the police. Because reporting is likely a high-stakes and costly decision, media coverage may exert less influence on it compared with other factors, such as economic and material conditions or the direct consequences of the assault (Stricot 2025). Moreover, it is not

clear that media exposure would always encourage victims to report. Hearing about crimes against women could increase fear and discourage victims from coming forward. News stories may also show a dysfunctional justice system, which could offset any incentive to report. Finally, although the police are expected to transmit complaints to the justice system almost immediately, the registration date may still measure the timing of the reporting decision with some noise.

Comparison with the literature These effects are smaller than those found for other outcomes and larger shocks. Colagrossi et al. (2023) find that calls to the Italian helpline against gender-based violence rise by 11% in the week after news of a femicide in the province, an outcome with lower barriers than reporting to the police, and Levy and Mattsson (2026) find that #MeToo increased reported sex crimes by about 10%. Daily news coverage thus has smaller effects on reporting than such a large-scale movement. Relatedly, Rodríguez-Planas (2026) finds suggestive evidence that reported sexual offenses in Spain tend to rise after milestones in high-profile sexual misconduct cases, though gradually rather than immediately, whereas the reporting response to daily news documented here is immediate and short-lived.

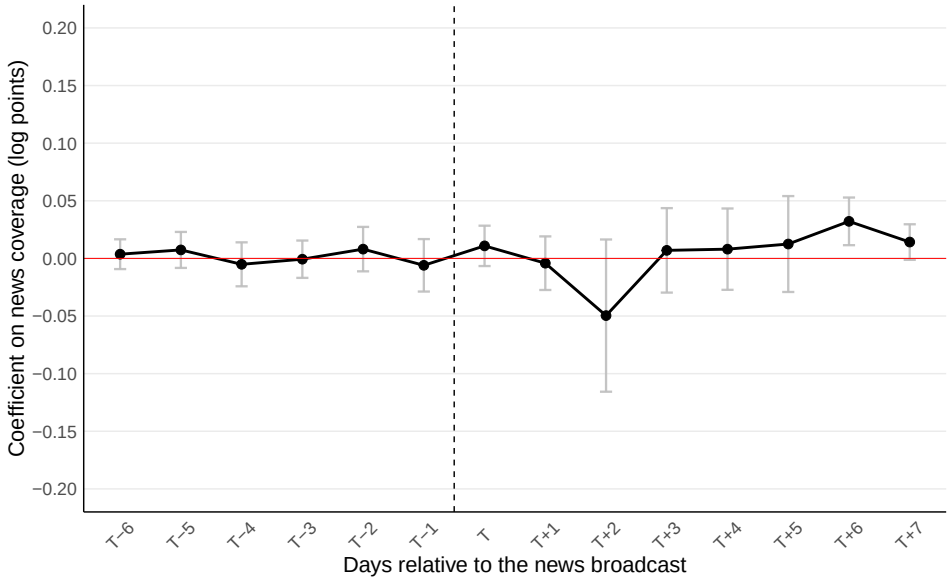
G.2 Longer event window and placebos

Figure G.2: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system, with a longer event window

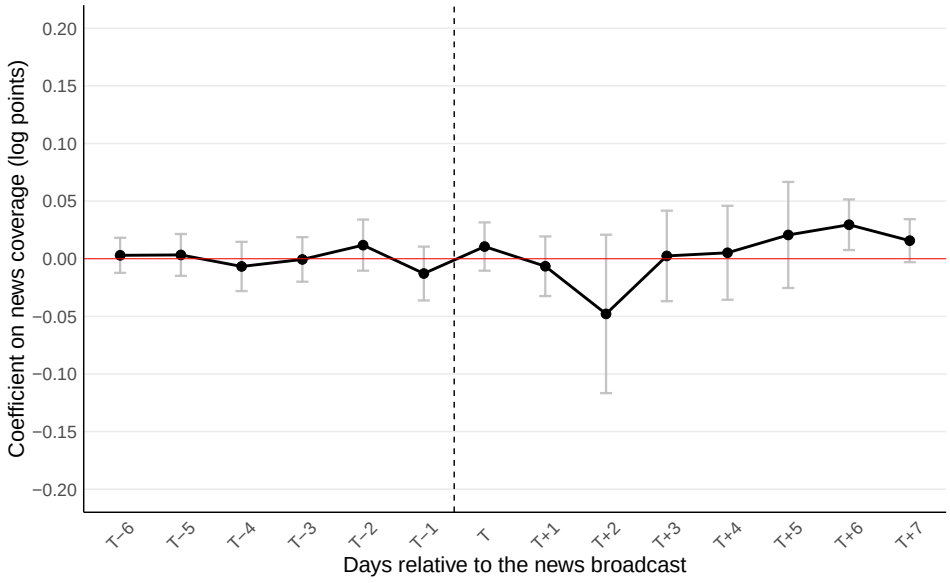


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level with 12 lags and 8 leads instead of 7 and 6, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T+k$ ($T-k$) is the effect on cases registered k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.3: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of other crimes against persons registered in the justice system



(a) Other crimes against persons

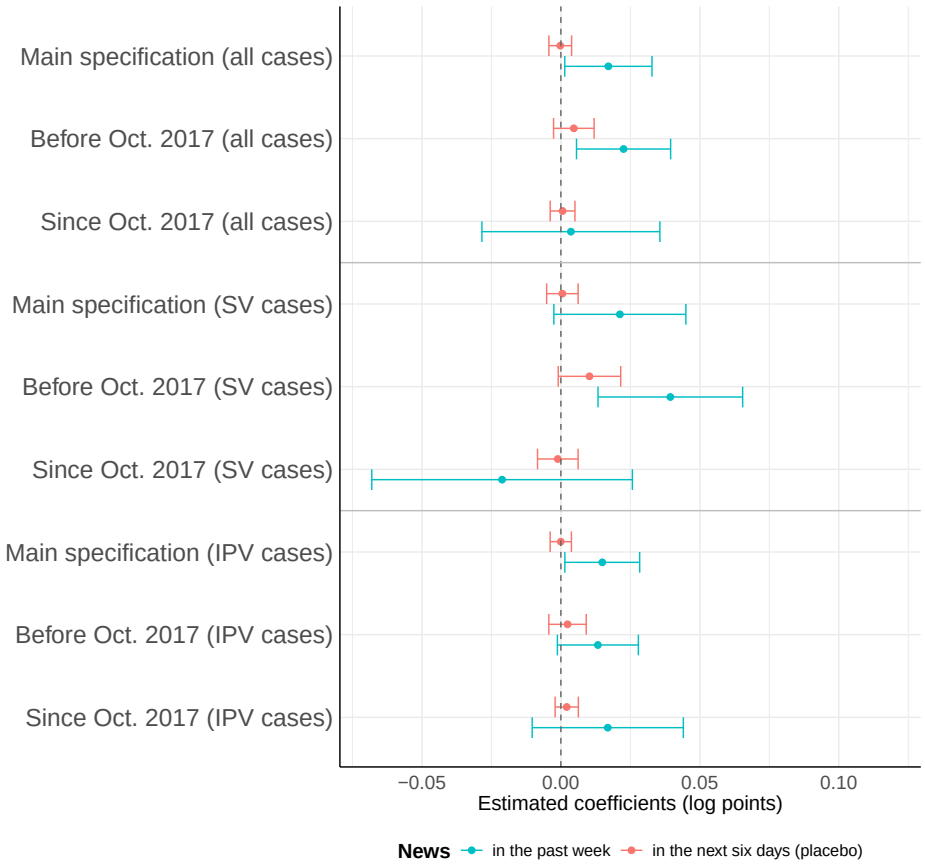


(b) Homicides and intentional bodily harm to adults

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of other crimes against persons registered in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases registered k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$ in each panel). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France: all crimes against persons unrelated to sexual and intimate partner violence in panel (a), and homicides and intentional bodily harm to adults unrelated to sexual and intimate partner violence in panel (b). News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

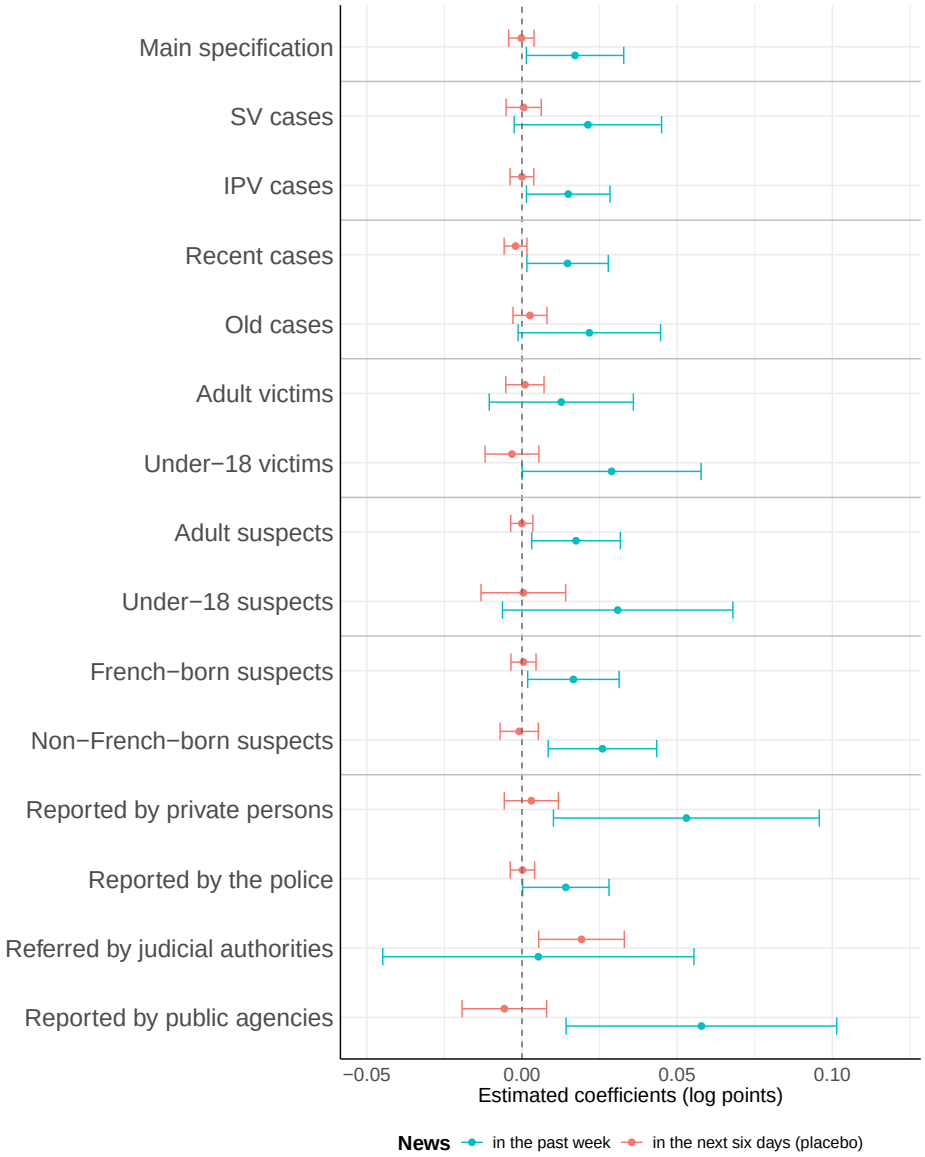
G.3 Heterogeneity and reporting delays

Figure G.4: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system: heterogeneity by period



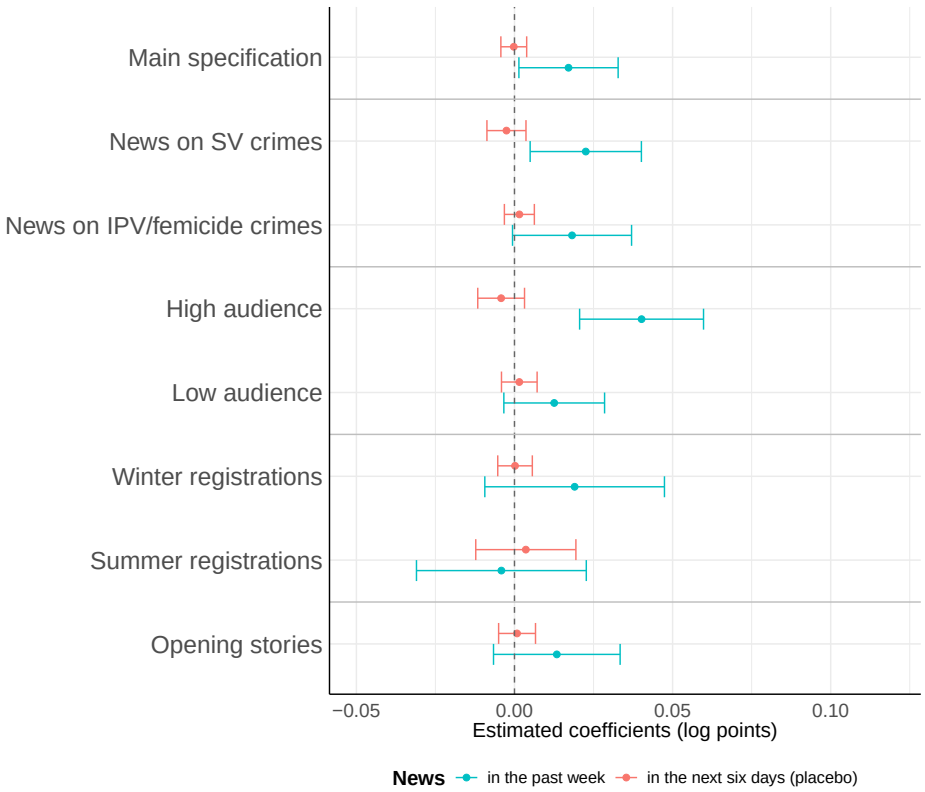
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points, i.e., approximate percentage changes in the daily number of cases). Effects are estimated separately on days before and since October 2017 (#MeToo), for all cases, sexual violence (SV) cases only, and intimate partner violence (IPV) cases only. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$ in the main specification). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before registration (registration day included) and the six days after it. Days are split according to the date of registration ($N = 1{,}948$ before and 699 since October 2017). The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. All specifications include year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and the test of equality of the coefficients before and since October 2017 (for all cases) are reported in Appendix Table G.2.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.5: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system: heterogeneity by case characteristics



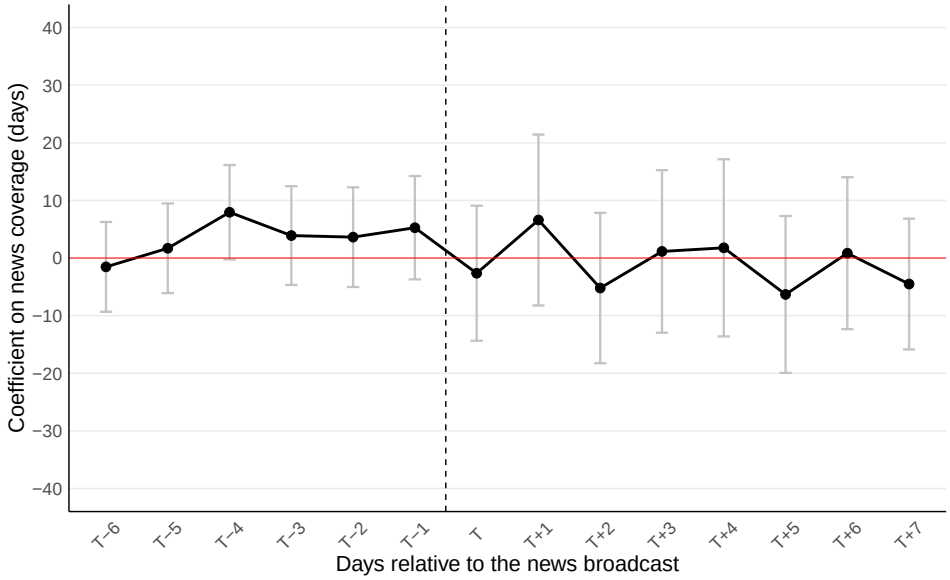
Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points, i.e., approximate percentage changes in the daily number of cases). The unit of observation is the day (N = 2,647 in the main specification). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. In each row, only cases with the indicated characteristic are counted (type of violence, i.e., sexual violence [SV] or intimate partner violence [IPV]; time elapsed since the incident, with recent and old cases registered less or more than the median delay after the incident, respectively; age of victims and of suspects; French-born suspect; origin of the report); days with no such case drop out because the logarithm of zero is undefined. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before registration (registration day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. All specifications include year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across subsamples are reported in Appendix Table G.2.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.6: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system: heterogeneity by news characteristics



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points, i.e., approximate percentage changes in the daily number of cases). Each row uses the definition of news coverage indicated on the vertical axis. The unit of observation is the day (N = 2,647 in the main specification). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before registration (registration day included) and the six days after it. The "News on SV crimes" and "News on IPV/femicide crimes" rows use the number of news stories on sexual violence (SV) or on intimate partner violence (IPV) and femicides, respectively, as treatment; the audience and opening-story rows restrict the count to stories broadcast on high- or low-audience days (above or below the channel's median audience) or opening the newscast; the winter and summer rows restrict the days of registration to those seasons (winter: November to March; summer: June to August). The isolated-news-day restriction is applied to the news series used in each row, hence the varying number of days. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. All specifications include year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust. Detailed estimates and tests of equality across series are reported in Appendix Table G.2.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.7: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of days between the incident and the registration of the case in the justice system, for sexual and intimate partner violence cases



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the time elapsed between the incident and the registration of the case in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), with 95% confidence intervals (in days). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases registered k days after (before) the news. The sample consists of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects), registered in the justice system in metropolitan France between 2012 and 2019 and subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts ($N = 699{,}810$). The dependent variable is the number of days elapsed between the start of the incident and the registration of the case in the justice system. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to cases with at most one day of such news coverage in the week before registration. The specification includes case-level controls (French-born suspect, suspect's age, number of victims, offense type) and year, month, day-of-the-week, and county of jurisdiction fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Table G.2: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system: heterogeneity by case, period, and news characteristics

Model:	*Dependent variable: Log number of cases registered (daily)*—Case characteristics								
	Main specification (1)	SV cases (2)	IPV cases (3)	Recent cases (4)	Old cases (5)	Adult victims (6)	Under-18 victims (7)	Adult suspects (8)	Under-18 suspects (9)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0171**	0.0212*	0.0149**	0.0147**	0.0217*	0.0127	0.0289**	0.0174**	0.0308
	(0.0080)	(0.0121)	(0.0069)	(0.0067)	(0.0117)	(0.0118)	(0.0147)	(0.0073)	(0.0189)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0002	0.0005	-3.12×10^{-5}	-0.0021	0.0026	0.0009	-0.0032	-5.85×10^{-5}	0.0004
	(0.0021)	(0.0029)	(0.0019)	(0.0019)	(0.0028)	(0.0031)	(0.0044)	(0.0018)	(0.0070)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)									
in the past week			0.445		0.453		0.147		0.388
in the next six days (placebo)			0.821		0.097		0.353		0.937
Fixed effects									
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics									
Observations (days)	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,647	2,639
R^2	0.80745	0.79638	0.76593	0.72447	0.81886	0.71783	0.79186	0.79540	0.68032
Within R^2	0.00206	0.00153	0.00191	0.00243	0.00177	0.00059	0.00172	0.00247	0.00110

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

(Table continued on next page)

Table G.2 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Log number of cases registered (daily)*—Case characteristics (continued), case origin, and period							
	French-born suspects	Non-French-born suspects	Reported by private persons	Reported by the police	Referred by judicial authorities	Reported by public agencies	Before Oct. 2017	Since Oct. 2017
	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0166**	0.0259***	0.0530**	0.0141**	0.0053	0.0578***	0.0226***	0.0036
	(0.0075)	(0.0089)	(0.0219)	(0.0071)	(0.0256)	(0.0222)	(0.0086)	(0.0163)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	0.0005	-0.0009	0.0030	0.0001	0.0192***	-0.0057	0.0047	0.0006
	(0.0021)	(0.0031)	(0.0044)	(0.0020)	(0.0070)	(0.0070)	(0.0037)	(0.0023)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)								
in the past week		0.163			0.035			0.305
in the next six days (placebo)		0.637			0.027			0.352
Fixed effects								
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics								
Observations (days)	2,647	2,647	2,583	2,647	2,028	2,206	1,948	699
R^2	0.78490	0.71076	0.70957	0.78333	0.36265	0.80308	0.80184	0.82932
Within R^2	0.00209	0.00330	0.00334	0.00169	0.00224	0.00319	0.00404	0.00020

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
*Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$*

(Table continued on next page)

Table G.2 (continued)

Model:	*Dependent variable: Log number of cases registered (daily)*—News characteristics						
	News on SV crimes	News on IPV/femicide crimes	High audience	Low audience	Winter registrations	Summer registrations	Opening stories
	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the past week	0.0226**	0.0182*	0.0402***	0.0126	0.0190	-0.0041	0.0134
	(0.0090)	(0.0096)	(0.0100)	(0.0081)	(0.0145)	(0.0137)	(0.0102)
Number of news stories on crimes against women in the next six days (placebo)	-0.0025	0.0015	-0.0042	0.0015	0.0002	0.0036	0.0008
	(0.0032)	(0.0024)	(0.0038)	(0.0029)	(0.0028)	(0.0081)	(0.0030)
Test of equality of the coefficients across columns (p-value)							
in the past week		0.871		0.080		0.245	
in the next six days (placebo)		0.281		0.194		0.690	
Fixed effects							
Year, month, day-of-the-week fixed effects	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fit statistics							
Observations (days)	2,773	2,790	2,861	2,692	1,091	695	2,825
R^2	0.81017	0.80548	0.80437	0.80801	0.79557	0.85884	0.80390
Within R^2	0.00254	0.00152	0.00387	0.00112	0.00185	0.00039	0.00079

Heteroskedasticity-robust standard errors in parentheses
Significance levels: *** $p < 0.01$, ** $p < 0.05$, * $p < 0.1$

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual violence (SV) and intimate partner violence (IPV) cases registered in the justice system at the daily level (equation (1)), estimated separately for each subsample, outcome, or treatment definition reported in the column header (coefficients in log points, i.e., approximate percentage changes in the daily number of cases). The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$ in the main specification). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. In the case-characteristics and case-origin columns, only cases with the indicated characteristic are counted (days with no such case drop out because the logarithm of zero is undefined). In the period and season columns, days are split by registration date. The news-type, audience, and opening-story columns use the corresponding news series as the treatment and apply the isolated-news-day restriction to that series, hence the varying number of days. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2, pooled over the week before registration (registration day included) and the six days after it. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The p-values reported under pairs (or groups) of columns test the equality of the coefficient across these columns: a chi-squared homogeneity test for the day-based splits (period, season) and a Wald test in a joint model otherwise—a stacked model with day-clustered standard errors for the case-characteristics and case-origin columns, which count different cases on the same days, and a joint model on the common sample for the news-type and audience columns.
Columns: Each column corresponds to a different subsample, outcome, or treatment definition: (1) main specification; (2)–(3) sexual violence (2) and intimate partner violence (3) cases; (4)–(5) cases registered less (4) or more (5) than the median delay after the incident; (6)–(7) cases with adult (6) or under-18 (7) victims; (8)–(9) cases with adult (8) or under-18 (9) suspects; (10)–(11) French-born (10) or non-French-born (11) suspects; (12)–(15) cases reported by private persons (12), by the police (13), referred by another judicial authority (14), or reported by public agencies (15); (16)–(17) days before (16) or since (17) October 2017 (#MeToo); (18)–(19) news stories on sexual violence (18) or intimate partner violence and femicides (19); (20)–(21) news stories broadcast on high- (20) or low- (21) audience days; (22)–(23) registrations in winter (November to March) (22) or summer (June to August) (23); (24) news stories opening the newscast.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

G.4 Reporting or incidence?

In the literature on the determinants of reporting VAW, a recurring question is whether observed effects reflect increased reporting per se or changes in incidence. This section uses three strategies to assess whether the increase in reported cases could reflect an actual rise in violence.

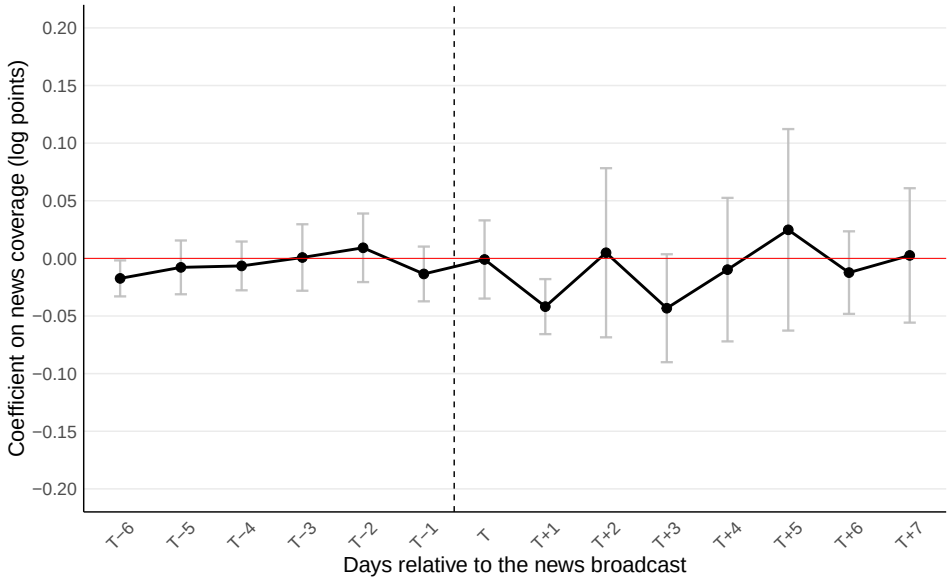
First, I repeat the analysis of Appendix G.1 using the date on which each incident started instead of the date on which the case was registered. This approach cannot measure the true prevalence of VAW, because I observe only cases that were reported to the justice system. Still, Figure G.8 suggests no increase in violence around the time of news coverage. If anything, the number of recorded incidents starting the day after the coverage decreases by about 4% (significant at the 1% level), an isolated estimate that could reflect short-run deterrence or noise in the recorded start dates of incidents.

Second, I focus on female homicides, which are arguably less subject to under-reporting. Figure G.9 shows no increase in the number of female homicides after news coverage, whether the news concerns crimes against women in general or female homicides specifically.

Third, I use the incident start date to keep only cases whose incident began before the day of registration. For cases registered on the day of the broadcast, news coverage cannot have caused these offenses. The results are indistinguishable from those in the full sample (Figure G.10).

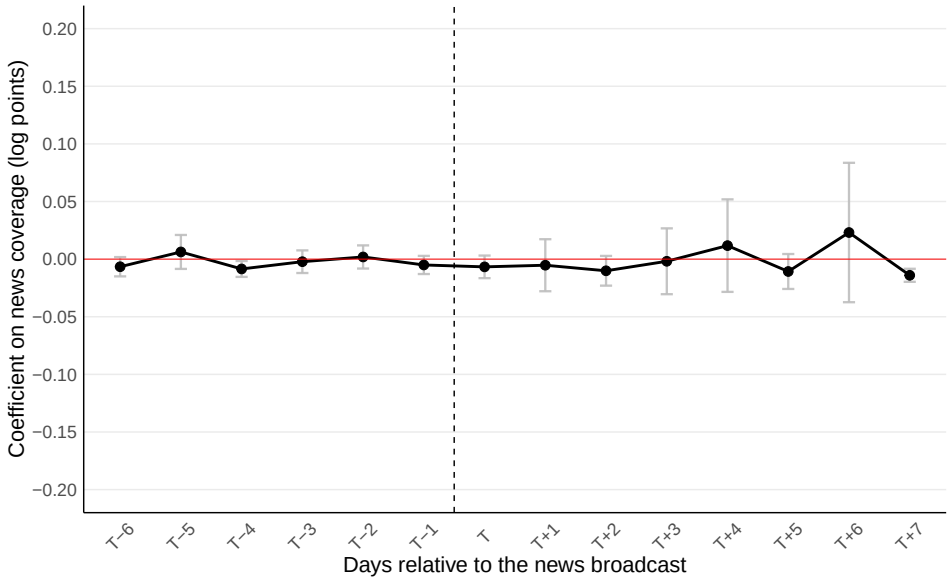
Taken together, these analyses suggest that the effect stems from a greater willingness to report or record complaints rather than from a rise in the underlying incidence of violence: neither recorded incidents nor female homicides increase after coverage, and the response holds for cases whose incident began before registration.

Figure G.8: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of recorded sexual and intimate partner violence incidents, by incident start date

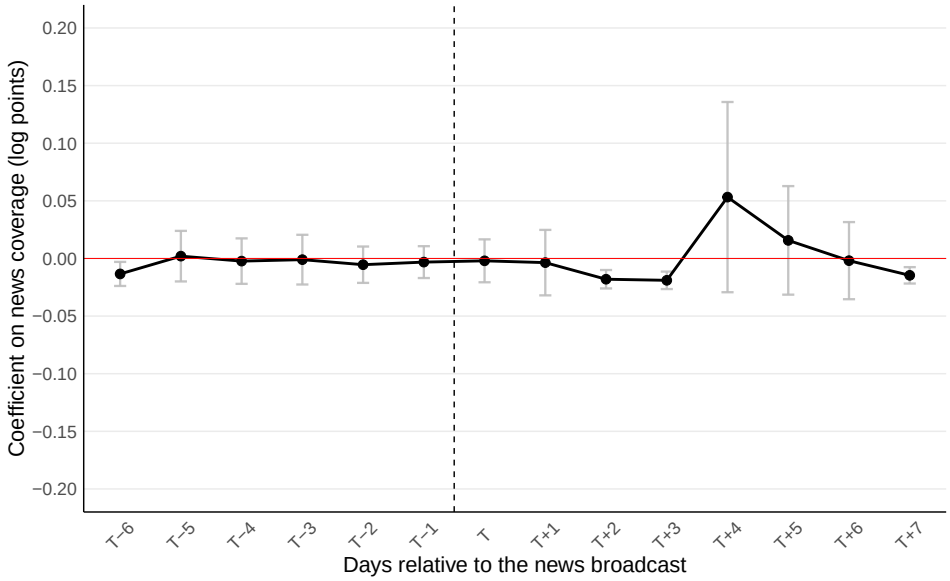


Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence incidents occurring each day (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on incidents starting k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) whose incident started on that day, as recorded in criminal justice data, among cases registered in the justice system between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.9: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of recorded female homicides, by date of the homicide



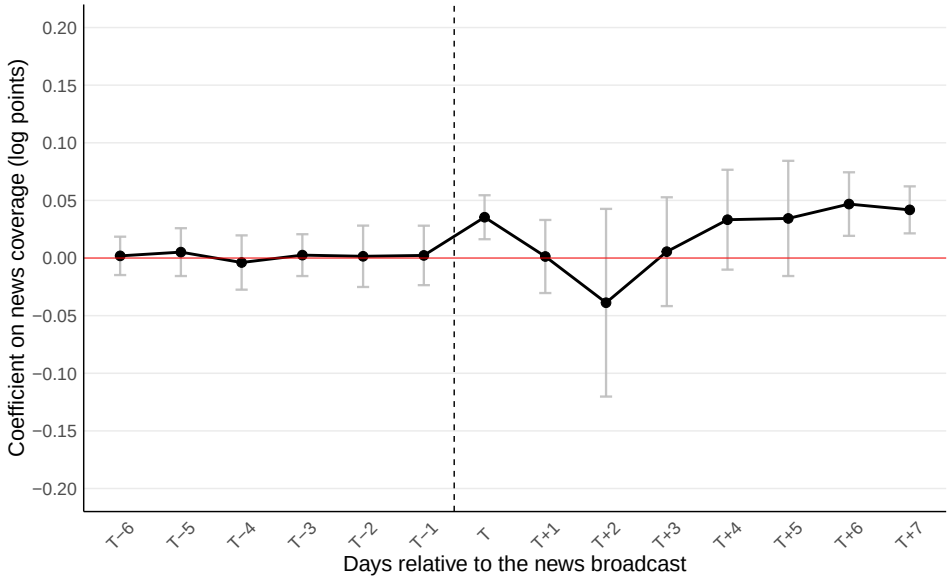
(a) News on crimes against women



(b) News on female homicides

Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women (panel (a)) or of female homicides (panel (b)) on the number of female homicides occurring each day (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on homicides committed k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$ in panel (a) and 2,820 in panel (b)). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of one plus the number of female homicides committed on that day (excluding those involving female suspects), as recorded in criminal justice data, among cases registered in the justice system between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. Female homicides are defined as cases of *"homicide volontaire"* or *"coups mortels ou atteintes volontaires à la personne ayant entraîné la mort"* with at least one female victim and no male victim. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women (panel (a)) or on female homicides (panel (b)) broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to days with at most one day of news coverage of the type considered in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.

Figure G.10: Effect of news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system, restricted to incidents that began before the day of registration



Notes: OLS estimates of the effect of TV news coverage of crimes against women on the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases registered in the justice system (leads and lags from equation (1)), estimated at the daily level, with 95% confidence intervals (in log points). Day T is the day of the news broadcast: the coefficient at $T + k$ ($T - k$) is the effect on cases registered k days after (before) the news. The unit of observation is the day ($N = 2{,}647$). The dependent variable is the natural logarithm of the number of sexual and intimate partner violence cases (excluding those involving female suspects) registered in the justice system on that day, restricted to cases whose incident began before the day of registration, among cases registered between 2012 and 2019 that were subsequently dismissed or prosecuted in correctional or juvenile courts in metropolitan France. News coverage is measured using the number of news stories on crimes against women broadcast during the 8 p.m. national TV news on TF1 and France 2. The sample is restricted to registration days with at most one day of such news coverage in the past week. The specification includes year, month, and day-of-the-week fixed effects; standard errors are heteroskedasticity-robust.
Source: Author's calculations based on administrative data extracted from the management software *Cassiopée*, provided by the French Ministry of Justice, and TV news data collected from the National Audiovisual Institute.