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While it has long been observed by students of western European politics that deputies from the same party caucus generally take identical positions when votes are cast in legislatures there, the explanation for this commonly occurring party voting agreement is more controversial. Scholars taking a sociological approach have argued that MPs hold together for normative reasons including party solidarity, socialisation in proper behaviour by caucus leaders, or simply because members of the same party families hold the same ideological convictions. In contrast, scholars from the rational choice or institutionalist tradition have argued that discipline emerges as rational actors discover self-interested reasons to vote en bloc. The study of well-established western European legislatures has not enabled political scientists to resolve this debate.

The creation of democratic legislatures after the fall of communism in eastern Germany, however, provides a unique opportunity to investigate the origins of party voting agreement. In this setting, established political institutions that produced highly disciplined legislatures in the past were extended to an area of the world where political elites did not share norms conducive to party cohesion. If sociological factors are indeed responsible for party voting agreement, it would follow that these new legislatures would have low levels of such agreement. If, however, institutional factors shape MPs’ voting
behaviour, it would follow that party discipline would be high in these new legislatures.

This article examines whether and how elite norms and political institutions have influenced the development of legislative voting in the eastern part of the country in the decade since the two Germanies unified. Because eastern deputies are a minority of delegates to the Bundestag and because federal caucuses are dominated by westerners, it is difficult to conclude much about easterners’ legislative behaviour by studying the national parliament. It is only when one reaches the level of state parliaments, or *Landtage*, that one can find legislatures where virtually all politicians are eastern Germans. The Federal Republic is divided into 16 states: 11 original western ones, five new eastern *Länder*, and reunited Berlin. Each of these new parliaments and their electoral systems were modelled on a western partner state’s parliament.

Here we focus on the development of party discipline in the five eastern German states between 1990 and 2000 by comparing legislative voting in these states to their western partner states’ parliaments. I find that, while anti-party sentiment may initially have complicated the task of developing cohesive parliamentary parties in eastern Germany, over the past three legislative periods institutional incentives for partisan politics have created highly disciplined legislatures akin to those in the west. Examined below are both the sociological characteristics of eastern elites and the incentives present in the German political system for strong legislative parties. Legislative decision-making over the three electoral periods that spanned the 1990s is then investigated in order empirically to document the growing strength of parliamentary parties in eastern Germany and to show the reasons for this increase. The conclusion discusses the theoretical significance of these results.

SOCIOLOGICAL FACTORS AND INSTITUTIONAL INCENTIVES FOR PARTY VOTING AGREEMENT

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the disintegration of Soviet hegemony provided political scientists with unprecedented opportunities to investigate the attitudes and values of those socialised under communism. Extensive mass and elite opinion studies have documented that, after decades of rule by an all-encompassing political party imposing iron discipline, eastern Germans, both at the mass and elite levels, distrust political parties. Moreover, qualitative studies of the eastern political elites during the collapse of communism indicated that many were reluctant to form political parties and questioned why the latter should play an important role. Eastern German elites thus joined the Federal Republic with sceptical attitudes towards political parties.
and representative democracy. Such norms are obviously not conducive to the creation of cohesive legislative parties.

Those elites who were elected to eastern German state legislatures in 1990 were usually outsiders to party politics. Instead, they had generally been apolitical professionals including doctors, teachers, veterinarians and engineers. These professionals had been trained to seek pragmatic, technical solutions to problems rather than to engage in partisan debates. Those who had been politically involved had been only low-level party members. Some other new parliamentarians had joined non-partisan Roundtables as communism crumbled. None of these backgrounds prepared eastern Germany’s new politicians for western-style party politics or confrontations between government and opposition. At the grass-roots level, scepticism of political parties has translated into lower party membership in eastern Germany and less developed inner party organisations than in the west. Because they were unlikely to have had much experience in active party organisations, eastern parliamentarians were unlikely to enter parliament with strong partisan identities or loyalties.

Moreover, eastern German party caucuses are much less ideologically cohesive than their western German counterparts. Because eastern parties either were established at the time of unification, or were suddenly thrust into a completely different political environment, these parties did not have much time to establish clear stances on the issues confronting the new Länder. As a result, people with quite different political views entered the same party group. This makes it unlikely that eastern party caucuses will be highly cohesive as a result of caucus members’ similar ideological beliefs.

In short, the sociological factors conducive to party cohesion were not present in eastern Germany following unification. Nonetheless, as will be shown below, highly unified parliamentary parties emerged in eastern Germany’s new state legislatures. This unity is a testament to Germany’s strong institutional incentives for discipline.

The literature on parliamentary systems in general, and the German system in particular, clearly establishes many institutional incentives for disciplined legislative parties. The first is the fact that in a parliamentary system the governing party or parties in the legislature must stand behind their chief executive and cabinet or the government can fall. In order for opposition parties to provide voters with a clear-cut alternative, they too must vote coherently. Were legislative parties not united, cycling majorities could lead to great political instability.

Even scholars studying presidential systems where such executive branch instability is not a problem, find that in the absence of legislative parties, new majorities would have to be cobbled together to pass each bill – a highly inefficient practice. Particularly in modern legislatures responsible for many complex issues, it is difficult for an individual deputy to evaluate all the
pieces of legislation on which she is to vote. By joining a parliamentary party, she can rely on the expertise of other caucus members or to guide her voting on issues about which she knows little and simultaneously find allies who will support her position on issues of importance to her. Without coherent legislative parties, then, parliamentary work would be inefficient and uncertain.

Moreover, the German system contains a number of resources that enable such efficiency to occur. State legislatures provide caucuses with public funding to finance their parliamentary activities. This spending means that the party caucuses have considerable resources to devote to drafting legislation. Independent members of state parliaments do not enjoy these resources. Seats on parliamentary committees, committee voting rights, agenda-setting powers, and time to speak in a plenary session are all allocated on the basis of party caucus membership. Thus if individual members of a German state parliament want to have access to the resources needed to influence policy, they are best associated with a party caucus. Further, if a party group hopes to pass the legislation it drafts, it must stand together when votes are taken.

The German political system also includes electoral factors promoting united legislative parties. Depending on the state, between 50 per cent and 100 per cent of parliamentarians are elected via the list PR electoral system. Voters must vote for parties and, in many states, cannot alter the rank ordering of candidates on the ballot. Party members nominate candidates for places on electoral lists and are unlikely to select someone who has consistently gone against his own party. Further, voters have little incentive to vote for a party whose caucus does not stand together when in government because they cannot predict what that party will do in office.

Thus, even the legislators who win constituency seats may find their electoral chances dimmed if their caucus is divided amongst itself. While it is possible to run as an independent candidate for a direct seat, such candidates face stiff competition from party members. The latter enjoy the ‘brand’ recognition that the party label offers them. Further, public party financing allows parties to provide their candidates with financial support. Finally, and most importantly, in Germany’s parliamentary system, independent candidates are unlikely to be included in the executive branch of government, which in practice dominates policy-making. As a result, independent candidates are less able to translate constituent wishes into public policy, reducing their attractiveness to voters. All state legislators, then, have incentives to run on a party ticket and vote with their party if they are elected.

These institutional incentives for disciplined voting have been strong enough to withstand a number of challenges in western Germany. For example, in 1984 over 150 members of the Bundestag called for reforms giving individual members of the legislature more independence from their parties.12 Outside the federal legislature, the rise in post-materialist values
among western Germans in recent decades has led to the widely documented phenomenon of Parteiverdrossenheit or dissatisfaction with political parties. The electoral success of the Greens, who promised to make deputies independent from the party’s leadership and not to practise party discipline, illustrates attempts even in western Germany to move away from powerful legislative parties. Opinion polls show that a majority of German citizens would prefer to see parliamentary deputies vote on their own views rather than the party line.\(^\text{13}\) Despite mounting opposition to party discipline in western German society, parliamentary parties there remain highly disciplined.

In sum, the logic of Germany’s parliamentary, legislative and electoral institutions has combined to create enduringly strong party caucuses in western German state legislatures. Because identical institutions were transferred to eastern Germany, similarly high discipline is expected in the east despite the different sociological background of legislators there.

**EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE**

Studies of legislative voting often rely on the use of roll call votes. Because party voting agreement in western Germany is so strong, however, roll call votes are generally not taken in German legislatures.\(^\text{14}\) In 2000, only two per cent of the substantive\(^\text{15}\) votes taken in the state parliaments under examination were roll call votes; such votes can only occur if a minimum number of deputies request one. Thus, while we examine roll call votes below, additional evidence is also drawn from the transcripts of eastern plenary sessions from the second year of each of the electoral periods since unification: 1991, 1996 and 2000. To see how eastern voting compares to that in the west, the transcripts were also read of plenary sessions from the western partner states’ legislatures in 2000.\(^\text{16}\) Eighty per cent of legislative votes were prefaced with a statement from each party caucus, declaring its position on the issue at hand. When votes were taken, the stenographer noted the outcome of the vote and/or how each caucus voted; sometimes MPs also gave statements justifying their votes. This information allowed classification of 92.1 per cent of the 9,383 substantive votes. Each vote taken was categorised first according to who proposed it: the executive, legislative majority, legislative minority, party tolerating a minority government, an individual, or a combination thereof. Second, what kind of a measure being voted on was examined: a law (Gesetz), motion (Antrag), amendment (Änderungsantrag), a motion to send a proposal to a committee, or a procedural question. Third, it was recorded whether a measure was accepted, rejected, or sent to a committee. Finally, it was determined how such decisions were made: unanimously, by united majority parties over united opposition caucuses, by divided party caucuses, or by coalitions divided amongst themselves. While this method is less
precise than using roll call votes, it clearly is a much more representative sample and increases the number of cases examined.

*The First Electoral Period*

The first elections to the newly formed eastern state legislatures were held in October 1990. Despite easterners’ professed scepticism of parties, no candidates without a party affiliation were elected and all deputies initially joined their party’s caucus rather than remaining independents. The parties winning seats included – as in western legislatures – the Christian Democrats (CDU), the Social Democrats (SPD), the Free Democrats (FDP), and Alliance 90/Greens. In addition, the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) won representation in all eastern legislatures. In the east, Sachsen’s legislature contained a single-party majority as did Niedersachsen in the west; all other states under consideration formed coalition governments.

The initial strength of party caucuses is illustrated when the 35 roll call votes taken in eastern Germany in 1991 are compared with the 13 such votes taken in western legislatures in 2000. Table 1 shows the average Rice Index of cohesion score for all party families. Western parties were highly united. Both the Christian and Free Democrats had perfect party voting agreement and the Social Democrats and Greens rarely split while the far-right Republicans were the least united. Party voting agreement in roll call votes in eastern legislatures was lower than in the west. The Christian Democrats were the most united and the Social Democrats scored slightly above 90 per cent; the other parties scored in the 80 per cent range. All of these scores, however, are quite high and attest to the initial strength of parliamentary parties in the eastern German legislatures, at least in terms of highly controversial roll call legislation. They are also similar to the rates of party voting agreement in the Bundestag during the first legislative session. Clearly, however, this is a very small sample of the overall votes taken in 1991. The evidence from floor debates and non-roll call votes paints a more nuanced picture.

Of the 3,115 substantive votes taken in the eastern legislatures during 1991, only 12.4 per cent involved a united majority outvoting a united opposition, compared to 47.7 per cent of the votes taken in western legislatures in the year 2000. Instead, in 21.8 per cent of the eastern votes, individual deputies defected from their caucuses – compared to only four per cent of the votes in the west. Similarly, in the eastern states with coalition governments, the partners split in 2.4 per cent of the votes while this happened less than one per cent of the time in the west. It is likely that the lapses in discipline were far greater than these figures indicate because the lines division for one-third of the votes in eastern parliaments were not clear in the transcripts. The confusion in reporting results most probably was due to a lack of clear-cut party stances. In the west, only 0.4 per cent of the votes were ambiguous.
## Table 1
### RICE INDICES

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<td>0.96</td>
<td>0.97 (1987–90)</td>
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*Notes and Sources: Empty cells indicate years when parties were not represented.*


**Author’s data.

***Republicans in west, DVU in east.

NA = not available.
However, dissenting caucus members in eastern parliaments were kept at least somewhat in check. From the start, the majority parties and coalitions were consistently able to pass their legislative agendas. Of the laws drafted by the government or majority caucus(es) in 1991, an average of 76.3 per cent passed while only 0.72 per cent were rejected on the floor. The remaining laws had not emerged from committee before the end of the year. Given the fact that 98.9 per cent of the decisions made by parliamentary committees in 1991 were upheld in floor votes, it seems likely that the majority’s remaining legislation eventually passed as well. The governing parties enjoyed similar success, passing 92.5 per cent of their amendments and 78.2 per cent of their motions; only 2.2 per cent of their motions and 1.6 per cent of amendments were rejected. Again, the remaining proposals had not yet emerged from committees. These figures, while high, were slightly lower than success rates for western majority parties, who saw none of their laws, committee recommendations, or amendments lose and only 1.7 per cent of their motions defeated. Coalition and party voting agreement did not always hold, however. In western states individual coalition members rarely made proposals without their coalition partners but eastern coalition members did so much more often. In the average eastern legislature in 1991, there were five motions and four amendments proposed by a coalition partner alone whereas in the west there was only an average of three such motions and no amendments.

Opposition parties were also more successful in eastern than in western parliaments in terms of realising their legislative agenda. Eastern chambers passed 11.6 per cent of the laws drafted by the opposition compared to only 3.8 per cent in the west. Similarly, 29.5 per cent of the opposition’s motions passed in eastern state legislatures compared to only 11.8 per cent in the west. The difference in opposition amendments’ success was even more marked: while 15.7 per cent were passed in the east only 1.8 per cent succeeded in the west.

Thus in the first electoral period eastern majorities were united enough to hold together in key roll call votes and to pass most legislation. Government majorities remained stable throughout the first electoral period as well. Nonetheless, on a day-to-day basis parties were less united than their western counterparts, eastern coalition partners were more likely to act on their own than western ones, and opposition parties were more likely to get their way. Clearly, sociological factors did exert a degree of influence on eastern MPs immediately following unification. This influence has diminished steadily since then, however.

The Second Electoral Period

The 1994 elections returned the major parties (CDU, SPD, PDS) to eastern legislatures while the FDP failed to meet the five per cent hurdle in all
eastern states and the Greens did so only in Sachsen-Anhalt. Sachsen continued to have a single party government, as did Niedersachsen in 2000; in Sachsen-Anhalt a minority SPD/Green government was tolerated by the PDS, a pattern not replicated anywhere else in Germany in the 1990s; elsewhere coalition governments formed.

The Rice Index for all parties represented either increased or remained the same (see Table 1). The CDU and SPD continued to score above 0.9 as did the Greens for the first time; the PDS approached this figure as well. Similar developments occurred in the Bundestag during its second electoral period.

In non-roll call votes, party voting agreement rose dramatically, from only 12.4 per cent of the votes taken to 30.5 per cent, while the occurrence of divided caucuses dropped slightly from 21.8 per cent of the votes to 21.6 per cent. As caucuses voted together, the percentage of unclear votes decreased by half to 14.5 per cent. Perhaps because the patterns of voting became more identifiable, the number of votes in which coalition partners split jumped to 8.6 per cent from only 2.4 per cent. Rather than indicating a decline in coalition unity, this figure may actually represent its increase. During the first period, in one-third of the votes, caucuses were so divided that it was not clear how coalition partners voted. In the second legislative session, these differences of opinion occurred more rarely and merited more comment on the floor of parliament. Thus, breaks in the coalition were easier to identify in 1996 than they were in 1991.

Majority parties – and the minority government in Sachsen-Anhalt – continued to be able to pass their legislative agendas in 1996. Of the laws proposed by the government and/or majority caucus, 72.6 per cent passed and the failure rate dropped from 0.72 per cent to 0.64 per cent, closer to the western level of 0 per cent. The remaining laws were not defeated but had not emerged from committee by the end of the year. Given the fact that 77.9 per cent of the decisions made by parliamentary committees in 1996 were upheld in floor votes and a mere 0.4 per cent rejected, it seems likely that the majority’s remaining legislation would eventually have passed as well.

Coalition partners’ cooperation actually exceeded western levels – no laws, motions, or amendments were proposed by a coalition partner on its own compared to the western average of three motions.20 Majorities became more willing to use their weight not only to pass their own legislation but also to defeat an increasing percentage of the proposals made by opposition parties. Opposition laws passed fell from 11.6 per cent to 7.1 per cent and the rejection rate increased from 27 per cent to 39.3 per cent. The share of the opposition’s motions passed fell from almost 30 per cent to only 18.1 per cent, and the success rate for amendments fell to 14.2 per cent while the rejection rate rose from 58.8 per cent to 84.1 per cent.
All of these trends indicate that eastern legislatures were moving closer to the patterns exhibited in their western counterparts. Still, however, discipline and majorities’ successes were less frequent than in the west while opposition victories remained higher. All of these indicators converged on western patterns during the third electoral period.

The Third Electoral Period

The CDU, SPD, and PDS again won seats in eastern state legislatures in 1998/99 while the Greens and Free Democrats did not. The far-right German People’s Union (DVU) entered two eastern legislatures. Sachsen and Niedersachsen remained single-party governments while Sachsen-Anhalt kept its unique minority government; all other states had coalition governments.

For the veteran parties, the Rice Index of Cohesion for roll call votes inched ever closer to the 1.0 mark (see Table 1). The DVU’s 0.84 score resembled other eastern parties when they first entered parliament. The CDU’s Rice score was actually higher than that of the western Christian Democrats ten years after the founding of the Bundestag, while the SPD’s was close.

Moreover, in contrast to the previous legislative periods, this roll call pattern was replicated in non-roll call votes. In fact, a higher percentage of eastern (53.4 per cent) than western (47.7 per cent) votes featured a united majority voting against a united minority. Votes in which individual MPs defected from their party caucus fell from 21.6 per cent to 10.6 per cent of all votes and incidents in which coalition partners split fell from 8.6 per cent to 1.85 per cent. The number of votes that had unclear lines of division was halved, to 7.3 per cent. These figures remain higher than in the west (four per cent, 0.9 per cent, and 0.4 per cent respectively) but the ten-year trend is clearly towards greater party voting agreement.

As a result, in all states examined, the majority party or parties were very successful in realising their legislative agenda. In eastern states, just as in western ones, the government and majority caucus saw none of their laws defeated; 72.4 per cent (east) and 52.5 per cent (west) of laws were passed during the year. The remaining laws simply had not emerged from committee by the end of the year. Given the fact that all of the decisions made by eastern parliamentary committees and 95.8 per cent of western committees’ decisions were upheld in floor votes, it seems likely that the majority’s remaining legislation eventually passed. Eastern majorities had a 6.9 per cent failure rate with their motions, somewhat higher than 1.7 per cent in the west. Eastern majorities also continued to have a slightly higher failure rate of their amendments – 1.8 per cent – compared to western ones where all majority amendments were passed. These failure rates are minimal, however.

Coalition voting agreement continued to be strong. No eastern coalition member proposed a law without its partner and the number of motions and
amendments proposed by a coalition partner acting on its own fell to 0.33 when averaged across eastern Germany. The figure for motions was actually below the western figure that year while the number of amendments was practically the same – none in the west and an average of 0.33 in the east.

Eastern majorities also showed a greater willingness than ever before to reject proposals made by the opposition. In the case of laws, the eastern rejection rate (49.1 per cent) was even higher than the western one (33.1 per cent). In terms of motions and amendments, eastern majorities rejected opposition proposals only slightly less often than western ones: Eastern majorities rejected 27.9 per cent of opposition motions and approved 15.4 per cent whereas western legislatures turned down 48.8 per cent of opposition motions and passed 11.8 per cent. Similarly, opposition parties in the east saw their amendments accepted 6.6 per cent of the time while this figure fell to 1.8 per cent in the west. Overall, opposition caucuses’ chances of passing legislation in either part of Germany are low and the chances in the east have decreased over time.

Despite the remaining differences, parliamentary parties in eastern Germany have become almost as strong as those in their western partner legislatures: party voting agreement occurs not only in key roll call votes but also in most day-to-day decision-making. While the opposition still gets its way more often than in the west, this tendency has declined significantly since the first electoral period.

CAUSES OF CONVERGENCE

The beginning of this article outlined a number of institutional incentives and argued that these were likely to lead to the emergence of disciplined party caucuses in eastern Germany despite the presence of sociological factors non-conducive to party cohesion. Parliamentary transcripts and interviews with deputies suggest that they do indeed recognise these incentives, which have outweighed the influence of the consensual, anti-party attitudes that eastern MPs brought with them to parliament.

Eastern MPs clearly recognise the logic of a parliamentary form of government. Were his caucus not disciplined, the Social Democratic whip in Brandenburg mused, ‘we could just pack up and leave’. Similarly, the PDS whip in Sachen-Anhalt observed the difference in his caucus’ attitude towards party discipline when it was initially in the opposition and later when it supported a minority government. He attributed his caucus’ initial low discipline to the fact that it ‘didn’t make much of a difference’ the way his opposition caucus voted whereas it was a ‘difficult process’ to get his party group to vote together. In the next electoral period, however, when his party supported a minority government ‘it did make a difference’ the way
they voted and they had ‘a pistol at [their] breast’ to unite around a party position.

In addition, plenary transcripts indicate that deputies quickly learned the efficiency incentives for disciplined party groups. The initial low degree of party voting made itself apparent in the lack of coordination between caucuses and their committee representatives. For example, during committee discussions about Sachsen’s police law, CDU delegates agreed with the Greens to require that all policemen wear nametags while on duty. By the time the bill was debated on the floor, the CDU party group as a whole had added an amendment striking this requirement. Because party groups often changed their minds after committee meetings, specific parts of laws that in the west (and today in the east) are determined by committees were re-opened for debate on the floor. As a result a number of plenary sessions lasted from 10 am to 11 pm during 1991. The inefficiencies of these sessions taught the majority the importance of consistent voting agreement. In April 1991, one deputy declared, ‘It is . . . doubtless the case that we cannot continue with the style of work we have cultivated so far’. The stenographer recorded applause from all caucuses.

Electoral incentives were the reason most frequently mentioned by eastern interviewees for increasingly strong party caucuses. The Christian Democratic whip in Sachsen-Anhalt recalled that the members of his caucus elected in 1990 had very different visions for the party group; this led to fights among CDU deputies and subsequently some members left the caucus. He argued that this prompted voters to question the CDU: ‘what’s wrong with your caucus that people want to leave it?’ The SPD’s whip in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern agreed that while there ‘needed to be’ disagreements within the caucus and that such differences of opinion were ‘constructive, the voters don’t like it’. Another Social Democratic whip, this time in Sachsen-Anhalt, agreed, claiming that voters also objected to tensions between the government and the caucus, preferring ‘strong leadership’.

Interviewees did not mention sociological factors such as party solidarity or ideological cohesion as reasons why their party groups voted together. Whips did not view their jobs as socialising caucus members into appropriate norms of unity but rather as pointing out the hard logic of parliamentary realities to their compatriots.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus the emergence of united eastern party groups in the decade after German unification provides strong support for the institutional, rather than the sociological, view of the origins of party voting agreement in democratic legislatures. In a setting where sociological factors – including anti-party norms, low ideological cohesion, and both weak party organisation and
identification – all suggest that party groups will not be cohesive when votes are taken, the opposite occurs. The emergence of united party caucuses is consistent with the parliamentary and electoral institutions in place and interviews with MPs suggest they are fully aware of the incentives built into these institutions. Moreover, the eastern German case is far from unique. Party discipline also quickly emerged in post-war western Germany and has withstood the change to a post-materialist society, increasingly sceptical of political parties. Studies of other, attitudinally similar, areas of post-communist eastern Europe indicate that discipline is on the rise there as well. These findings suggest that causes of party voting in democratic legislatures can be found not by examining the sociology of MPs but rather by studying the nature of the arenas in which they legislate. Even where cohesion is low, discipline may still be high if electoral and parliamentary institutions are conducive to party voting agreement.

For Germany, these findings suggest that the Federal Republic’s parliamentary institutions have been successfully transferred to the states of the former East Germany. While eastern political elites initially did not share the pro-party norms of their western counterparts, ten years’ experience in western political institutions has been enough to cause their legislative voting behaviour to resemble westerners’. Moreover, this party voting agreement in German state parliaments causes substantive policy outcomes to vary across the Länder according to the partisanship of the legislative majority rather than along east–west lines, even on issues where MPs’ values differ greatly in east and west.25

The results presented here also contribute to a wider debate in the discipline of political science. Literature on ‘Leninist Legacies’ and opinion surveys of eastern Europeans often find very different attitudes and values on the part of those socialised under communism. This research is often taken as an indication that eastern Europeans’ political behaviour will be at odds with that of western Europeans. The rise of discipline in eastern German parliaments suggests that, despite their different pre-1989 experiences, eastern Europeans are just as capable of recognising the incentives embodied in democratic political institutions as their western counterparts. In this vein, the findings presented here can be interpreted as offering evidence that individual political actors are rational ones who respond strategically to their surroundings, whatever their prior socialisation.

NOTES


2. Berlin’s parliament is excluded from the analysis here because it contains both eastern and western MPs.


8. Linnemann, *Die Parteien in den neuen Bundesländern*.


10. Linnemann, *Die Parteien in den neuen Bundesländern*.

11. See also Patzelt’s contribution to this volume.


13. See Patzelt’s contribution to this volume.

14. See also Patzelt’s contribution to this volume.

15. I define ‘substantive’ as whether or not an item should be added to the agenda, which voting rule to use, whether to send something to committee, and whether to approve a bill, amendment, committee decision or motion.

16. Transcripts are available at www.parlamentsspiegel.de. Data from the years 1991 and 1996 do not include the state of Thuringia as it had the same coalition patterns as Mecklenburg-Vorpommern.

17. In some parts of the west, the far right was represented by the Republicans.

18. Scores were calculated by taking the absolute value of the number of yea minus the number of nays and abstentions, divided by the total number of yea, nays, and abstentions. Deputies not voting were excluded from the analysis because it was not always possible to determine why they were not present. Abstentions were counted as defections because interviews with whips indicated they are so interpreted.

19. Committee seats are allotted in the same proportion as seats in the legislature, so the majority party or coalition always has a committee majority.

20. This figure excludes proposals made by PDS, the party that tolerated a minority government in Sachsen-Anhalt.

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22. In 2001, I interviewed the parliamentary whip from each party represented in six state legislatures. A list of interviewees is available from the author.

23. Parliamentary transcript from Sachsen’s 1st legislative session, the 23rd meeting, agenda item number 5, subsequently abbreviated SX-01-23-05, p.1405.

24. SX-01-17-04, p.945.