

Party competition over democracy

Online supplementary material

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A Operationalisation of social, liberal and direct democracy in the ESS wave 6

Social conception of democracy: The government protects all citizens against poverty; The government takes measures to reduce differences in income levels.

Liberal conception of democracy: The right of minority groups are protected; The courts treat everyone the same; The courts are able to stop the government acting beyond its authority (the latter only available for respondents' conceptions, not for its implementation).

Direct conception of democracy: Citizens have the final say on political issues by voting directly in referenda.

B Parties by party family included in the analyses

Table 1: Parties by party family included in the main regression analyses, 1977-2017

Party family		Parties	N
10	Ecological parties	Die Grünen:	140
		• Bündnis 90/Die Grünen	95
		• Bündnis 90	5
		• Die Grünen	29
		• Others ¹	11
20	Socialist or other left parties	Die Linke	78
		• Die Linke	43
		• PDS	29
		• Die Linke.PDS	1
		• Die Wahlalternative (WASG)	5
30	Social democratic parties	SPD	151
40	Liberal parties	FDP	140
		Neue Liberale	2
50	Christian democratic parties	CDU/CSU	11
		CDU	128
		CSU	9
60	Conservative parties	ALFA	2
		Brandenburger Vereinigte	1
		Bürgerbewegungen/Freie Wähler	
		Freie Wähler	8
70	Nationalist parties	AfD	16
		Bürger in Wut	3
		Deutsche Soziale Union	1
		Deutsche Volksunion	2
		NPD	9
		Republikaner	4
		Schill-Partei	1
90	Ethnic and regionalist parties	Arbeit für Bremen und Bremerhaven	1
		Südschleswigscher Wählerverband	9
95	Special issue parties	Piratenpartei	13
			729 ²

¹ Including Alternative Liste (3), Bremer Grüne Liste (1), Grün-Alternative Liste (5), Grüne Liste – Neues Forum (1), Bündnis 90 GAL Die Grünen (1)

² The number of cases for the regression analyses is lower due to missing data for the change in GDP for first East German state elections.

C Original dictionaries

Dictionaries were created based on insights into the content of democracy sentences by qualitative and quantitative methods; e.g. by reading the sentences as well as by using topic models to see which words were often used together in the democracy sentences and how these different word clusters in the democracy sentences relate to different conceptions of democracy.

C.1 Social democracy

Betrieblich* Mitbestimmung, Chancengleichheit, Gewerkschaft, Genossenschaft, solidarisch, Solidargemeinschaft, sozial, Streik

C.2 Liberal democracy

Gericht, Gleichstellung, Grundgesetz, Grundordnung, Hautfarbe, Justiz, liberal, Menschenrecht, Minderheit, offen* Gesellschaft, öffentlich* Kontrolle, Gewaltenteilung, plural*, Rechtsstaat, Respekt, Toleranz, tolerant, Verfassung, Vielfalt

C.3 Direct democracy

Basisdemokrat*, Beteiligungsquorum, Bürgerbegehren, Bürgerinnenbegehren, Bürgerentscheid, Bürgerinnenentscheid, direkt* Demokratie, Plebiszit, direktdemokrat*, Volksbegehren, Volksabstimmung, Volksentscheid, Referend*

C.4 Negative references to democracy

Antidemokrat*, undemokrat*, Demokratieabbau, Demokratiedefizit, demokratiefeind*, demokratiefrei*, Demokratiekrise, entdemokrat*, Zuschauerdemokrat*, Vordemokrat*, nicht demokrat*, gegen demokrat*'

D Support for direct democracy among German party supporters

Table 2: Preferences for direct democracy among German party voters, Politbarometer, West-Germans in 1992

Vote intention	Referendum	By politicians	N
CDU	44.3	55.7	219
SPD	14.5	85.5	289
FDP	32.7	67.3	49
GRÜNEN	8.6	91.4	81
Republicans	32.8	67.2	64
PDS / Linke	-	-	0
ÖDP	100.0	0.0	1
NPD	0.0	100.0	1
DVU	-	-	0
Grey panthers	50.0	50.0	4
Other party	27.3	72.7	11
Total	26.3	73.7	719

Table 3: Preferences for direct democracy by party identification, Politbarometer, West Germans in 1992

Party identification	Referendum	By politicians	N
SPD	14.0	86.0	279
CDU	41.7	58.3	187
CDU/CSU	45.0	55.0	20
CSU	43.2	56.8	44
FDP	43.9	56.1	41
GRÜNEN	12.2	87.8	41
Republicans	36.4	63.6	11
others	0.0	100.0	5
Not identifying with a party	20.2	79.8	297
Total	25.1	74.9	925

Source: Politbarometer West Germany 1992, <https://zocat.gesis.org/webview/index.jsp>.

Differences in categories across tables due to differences in the original data.

Question regarding vote intention (Politbarometer), in case the respondents indicated he or she would participate in a Bundestag election taking place on the following Sunday (v10, Politbarometer): ‘Which party would you vote for?’ (v11)

Question regarding party identification (Politbarometer): ‘In the Federal Republic, many people tend to lean toward a particular political party for a long time, although they also vote for another party from time to time. What about you? Do you - generally speaking - lean toward a particular party? If so, which one?’ (v345)

Question regarding referendum vs. politicians (Politbarometer): ‘Should the most important political questions be decided in a referendum, or should, as in the past, elected politicians alone decide these issues?’ (v270)

E Additional analyses: direct and social democracy

Table 4: Linear regression results for German parties' emphasis on direct democracy in election campaigns

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	0.10* (0.05)	0.04 (0.04)
Challenger party	2.33 (1.82)	
Challenger strength		0.06 (0.06)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	-1.61 (2.09)	-2.35 (2.16)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	-6.48** (2.09)	-4.81* (2.37)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	-5.70*** (1.73)	-5.54*** (1.72)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	-6.45*** (1.68)	-6.66*** (1.68)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-3.32 (7.09)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	10.01 (5.91)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	-2.48 (5.82)	NA
Prev. GDP change	-0.32* (0.15)	-0.15
Years since regime change	0.18*** (0.04)	0.22*** (0.04)
National (vs. East)	-9.98*** (2.51)	-12.11*** (2.61)
West (vs. East)	-6.42** (2.35)	-8.17*** (2.49)
Democratic quality	-30.56 (28.96)	12.74 (28.12)
Intercept	31.15 (24.97)	-11.63 (23.37)
N	653	544
R ²	0.20	0.12
Adj. R ²	0.18	0.10

Notes: Linear regression results with clustered standard errors for parties in territories over time that are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across territorial party branches. Standard errors in parenthesis. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of democracy sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the direct democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Only including manifestos with democracy sentences.

Table 5: Linear regression results for German parties' emphasis on social democracy in election campaigns

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	-0.02 (0.07)	-0.03 (0.08)
Challenger party	4.53 (2.97)	
Challenger strength		0.14 (0.09)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	4.49* (1.80)	4.52** (1.68)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	21.57*** (3.01)	20.77*** (2.99)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	14.83*** (2.15)	14.84*** (2.16)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	1.53 (2.00)	1.60 (2.01)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-5.54 (3.34)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	-2.05 (3.82)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	1.83 (3.66)	NA
Prev. GDP change	0.09 (0.25)	-0.21 (0.25)
Years since regime change	-0.41*** (0.06)	-0.39*** (0.06)
National (vs. East)	22.26*** (3.53)	21.53*** (3.96)
West (vs. East)	15.75*** (2.59)	15.30*** (2.81)
Democratic quality	12.26 (0.06)	4.88 (42.65)
Intercept	1.03 (34.30)	-4.19 (39.04)
N	653	544
R ²	0.26	0.24
Adj. R ²	0.24	0.22

Notes: Linear regression results with clustered standard errors for parties in territories over time that are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across territorial party branches. Standard errors in parenthesis. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of democracy sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the social democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Only including manifestos with democracy sentences.

F Robustness checks for regression analyses

I would like to thank an anonymous reviewer for the suggestion to use lagged dependent variables instead of an absolute measurement of salience. The panel data is highly unbalanced and includes many small parties that participated only in few elections. Models with lagged dependent variables would show how far the change in the salience of democracy between two elections differs across party families. I am however interested in how far party families differ concerning the absolute salience of democracy in their election manifestos. Thus, I decided not to do so.

See the following Tables for results of the robustness checks mentioned in the main study, and for additional analyses concerning social and direct democracy.

Table 6: Replication of Models in Table 2, main analysis, with state fixed effects and clustered standard errors for the salience of democracy per se

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)
Challenger party	1.72** (0.51)	
Challenger strength		-0.01 (0.01)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	0.98*** (0.21)	1.21*** (0.12)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	4.00*** (0.40)	3.52*** (0.26)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	0.72 (0.13)	0.7*** (0.12)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	-0.20 (0.11)	-0.18 (0.10)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	0.15 (0.70)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	0.16 (0.49)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	0.21 (0.55)	NA
Prev. GDP change	0.08 (0.04)	0.01 (0.02)
Years since regime change	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.00)
National (vs. East)	2.15*** (0.33)	1.93*** (0.31)
West (vs. East)	1.42*** (0.49)	1.16*** (0.36)
Democratic quality	1.58 (4.01)	-1.08 (2.60)
Intercept	-0.46 (3.53)	2.48*** (2.30)
N	677	566
R ²	0.5315	0.5634
Adj. R ²	0.5113	0.5431

Notes: Linear regression results with territory fixed effects (not shown) and clustered standard errors for parties in time. Standard errors in parenthesis are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across parties. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of sentences in election manifestos containing the term ‘*demokrat*’. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977.

Table 7: Replication of Models in Table 3, main analysis, with state fixed effects and clustered standard errors for the emphasis on liberal democracy

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	-0.16 (0.09)	-0.11 (0.11)
Challenger party	1.24 (3.33)	
Challenger strength		-0.20 (0.14)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	-19.52*** (2.85)	-17.45*** (2.85)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	-15.87*** (4.27)	-18.93*** (4.40)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	-18.54*** (2.72)	-18.69*** (2.74)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	-5.09 (3.46)	-4.92 (3.50)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-28.64*** (6.08)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	-11.70* (5.60)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	-17.14** (5.98)	NA
Prev. GDP change	0.30 (0.33)	-0.05 (0.37)
Years since regime change	0.03 (0.09)	-0.02 (0.09)
National (vs. East)	0.70 (7.04)	2.59 (8.11)
West (vs. East)	-9.79 (7.22)	-5.59 (8.35)
Democratic quality	-41.29 (58.13)	-55.14 (67.02)
Intercept	77.82 (51.88)	106.91 (58.59)
N	653	544
R ²	0.20	0.18
Adj. R ²	0.16	0.14

Notes: Linear regression results with territory fixed effects (not shown) and clustered standard errors for parties in time. Standard errors in parenthesis are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across parties. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of democracy sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the liberal democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Only including manifestos with democracy sentences.

Table 8: Replication of Models Table 4, Appendix E, with state fixed effects and clustered standard errors for the emphasis on direct democracy

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	0.11* (0.05)	0.05 (0.05)
Challenger party	1.96 (1.81)	
Challenger strength		0.10 (0.07)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	-1.52 (2.07)	-2.34 (2.14)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	-6.87** (2.55)	-5.42* (2.50)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	-5.67** (1.75)	-5.53** (1.74)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	-6.28*** (1.66)	-6.45*** (1.66)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-4.07 (9.07)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	9.58 (6.01)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	-2.25 (5.93)	NA
Prev. GDP change	-0.34* (0.16)	-0.20 (0.16)
Years since regime change	0.18*** (0.04)	0.23*** (0.04)
National (vs. East)	-16.12** (5.23)	-18.12** (6.04)
West (vs. East)	-11.52* (5.78)	-14.34* (6.34)
Democratic quality	-44.94 (29.25)	-6.54 (29.27)
Intercept	49.36 (26.13)	6.74 (26.51)
N	650	544
R ²	0.23	0.17
Adj. R ²	0.19	0.12

Notes: Linear regression results with territory fixed effects (not shown) and clustered standard errors for parties in time. Standard errors in parenthesis are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across parties. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of democracy sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the direct democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Only including manifestos with democracy sentences. Not showing results for states.

Table 9: Replication of Models Table 6, Appendix E, with state fixed effects and clustered standard errors for the emphasis on social democracy

	All parties	Established Parties
Dissatisfied respondents	-0.04 (0.07)	-0.04 (0.08)
Challenger party	4.93 (2.92)	
Challenger strength		0.15 (0.09)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	4.28* (1.85)	4.31* (1.74)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	21.81*** (3.01)	20.98*** (2.97)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	14.73*** (2.15)	14.76*** (2.16)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	1.33 (2.04)	1.44 (2.05)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-4.33 (3.61)	NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	-1.44 (3.83)	NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)	2.12 (4.03)	NA
Prev. GDP change	0.14 (0.26)	-0.21 (0.28)
Years since regime change	-0.42*** (0.06)	-0.40*** (0.06)
National (vs. East)	23.46*** (4.06)	22.36*** (4.49)
West (vs. East)	25.48*** (4.98)	23.23*** (5.30)
Democratic quality	29.81 (40.28)	19.59 (44.31)
Intercept	-14.80 (36.08)	-17.74 (39.87)
N	653	544
R ²	0.29	0.26
Adj. R ²	0.25	0.23

Notes: Linear regression results with territory fixed effects (not shown) and clustered standard errors for parties in time. Standard errors in parenthesis are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across parties. Significance levels: ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Dependent variable: Percentage of democracy sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the social democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Only including manifestos with democracy sentences.

Table 10: Replication of Model All parties in Table 2, main analysis, excluding the outlier

	All parties
Dissatisfied respondents	0.00 (0.01)
Challenger party	1.28*** (0.31)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	1.13*** (0.15)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	3.69*** (0.29)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	0.71*** (0.13)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	-0.19 (0.10)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	0.62 (0.73)
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	0.39 (0.44)
Special issue (vs. liberals)	0.50 (0.45)
Prev. GDP change	0.05 (0.03)
Years since regime change	-0.03*** (0.01)
National (vs. East)	1.52*** (0.27)
West (vs. East)	0.52* (0.22)
Democratic quality	-1.00 (3.13)
Intercept	2.48 (2.67)
N	676
R ²	0.54
Adj. R ²	0.53

Notes: Linear regression results with clustered standard errors for parties in territories (state and national level) over time that are additionally corrected for heteroscedasticity across territorial party branches. Outlier excluded. No robustness check for established parties shown since the outlier is not an established party. Standard errors are shown in parentheses. Significance levels: ***p>0.001, **p>0.01, *p>0.05.

Dependent variable: Percentage of sentences in election manifestos containing the term ‘*demokrat*’. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977. Not showing results for states.

Table 11: Replication of Models in Tables 3, main analysis, Table 4, Appendix E and Table 5, Appendix E, excluding the outlier

	All parties Social democracy	All parties Liberal democracy	All parties Direct democracy
Dissatisfied respondents	-0.01 (0.07)	-0.14 (0.09)	0.10* (0.05)
Challenger party	3.07 (2.63)	-1.20 (2.67)	2.43 (1.85)
Ecological (vs. liberals)	5.01** (1.73)	-18.70*** (2.73)	-1.65 (2.10)
Socialists (vs. liberals)	20.57*** (2.84)	-17.44*** (3.88)	-6.41* (2.47)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)	14.80*** (2.15)	-18.66*** (2.70)	-5.70** (1.73)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)	1.59 (2.00)	-4.99 (3.42)	-6.45*** (1.68)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)	-4.14 (3.05)	-25.49 (5.53)	-3.42 (7.90)
Nationalists (vs. liberals)	-1.04 (3.70)	-10.48 (5.53)	9.94 (5.92)
Special issue (vs. liberals)	2.88 (3.53)	-15.62* (5.91)	-2.56 (5.82)
Prev. GDP change	-0.04 (0.22)	0.12 (0.27)	-0.32* (0.15)
Years since regime change	-0.41*** (0.06)	0.01 (0.09)	0.18*** (0.04)
National (vs. East)	22.75*** (3.49)	2.30 (4.35)	-10.02*** (2.51)
West (vs. East)	16.23*** (2.55)	-3.38 (3.77)	-6.46** (2.36)
Democratic quality	6.05 (38.17)	-45.72 (54.24)	-30.14 (28.94)
Intercept	6.19 (22.95)	81.05 (47.64)	30.80 (24.95)
N	652	652	652
R ²	0.25	0.18	0.20
Adj. R ²	0.24	0.17	0.18

Notes: Linear regression results with clustered standard errors for parties in territories (state and national level) over time that are additionally corrected for heteroscedasticity across territorial party branches. Outlier excluded. No robustness check for established parties shown since the outlier is not an established party. Standard errors are shown in parentheses. Significance levels: ***p>0.001, **p>0.01, *p>0.05.

Table 12: Replication of Models in Table 3, main analysis, using the percentage of all sentences (instead of democracy sentences only) that contain liberal keywords as dependent variable

	All parties	All parties	Established parties	Established parties
Dissatisfied voters	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.03* (0.01)
Challenger	-0.63** (0.30)	0.13 (0.57)		
Challenger strength			-0.02 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
Ecological (vs. liberals)		-4.08*** (0.34)		-3.62*** (0.30)
Socialist (vs. liberals)		-1.90*** (0.51)		-2.61*** (0.43)
Social dem. (vs. liberals)		-4.12*** (0.35)		-4.14*** (0.35)
Christian dem. (vs. liberals)		-4.71** (0.38)		-4.70*** (0.38)
Conservatives (vs. liberals)		-3.21** (0.97)		NA
Nationalists (vs. liberals)		-1.66 (0.90)		NA
Special issue (vs. liberals)		-2.82*** (0.59)		NA
Prev. GDP change	0.20*** (0.07)	0.20** (0.06)	0.12 (0.08)	0.12* (0.06)
Dem. experience	-0.04*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)	-0.06*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)
National (vs. east)	2.37*** (0.59)	2.46*** (0.53)	2.97*** (0.72)	2.67*** (0.51)
West (vs. east)	1.02** (0.43)	1.15* (0.48)	1.73** (0.53)	1.47*** (0.42)
Dem. quality	-3.03 (6.75)	4.06 (5.64)	-1.89 (7.32)	0.03 (5.74)
Intercept	7.77 (6.14)	5.76 (5.09)	9.39 (6.28)	11.16* (4.95)
N	677	677	566	566
R ²	0.08	0.41	0.08	0.45
Adj. R ²	0.07	0.40	0.07	0.44

Notes: Linear regression results with clustered standard errors for parties in territories over time that are additionally corrected for heteroskedasticity across territorial party branches. Standard errors shown in parentheses. Significance levels: *** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$. A list of included parties by party families is shown in Appendix B.

Dependent variable: Percentage of all sentences in election manifestos containing terms from the liberal democracy dictionary. The analysis is restricted to elections between 1977 and 2018 due to missing data for the elections before 1977.