

# Party Unity in the Swiss Parliament The Electoral Connection\*

Denise Traber<sup>†</sup>, Simon Hug<sup>‡</sup> and Pascal Sciarini<sup>§</sup>  
Département de science politique et relations internationales,  
Université de Genève

First version: August 2008, this version: March 30, 2012

## Abstract

This study investigates the connection between legislative and electoral politics in Switzerland. We postulate that party unity is higher in the election year, and more specifically in votes on issues that are important for the party platform and that are of greater visibility to voters. We analyze the entire voting record of the Swiss parliament (lower house) on legislative acts between 1996 and 2007, which consists of roll call votes as well as unpublished votes. We find a strong effect of elections on voting unity among certain parties, and we also find encouraging support for our hypotheses that this effect is mediated by the importance of the vote.

---

\* This paper is part of larger research projects supported by the Swiss National Science Foundation (Grants No 100012-111909, 100012-129737, and 00012-113964).

<sup>†</sup> Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Affolternstrasse 56, 8050 Zürich, phone ++41 44 634 40 18; email: traber@ipz.uzh.ch.

<sup>‡</sup> Département de science politique et relations internationales, Faculté des sciences économiques et sociales; Université de Genève; 40 Bd du Pont d'Arve; 1211 Genève 4; Switzerland; phone ++41 22 379 89 47; email: simon.hug@unige.ch.

<sup>§</sup> Département de science politique et relations internationales, Faculté des sciences économiques et sociales; Université de Genève; 40 Bd du Pont d'Arve; 1211 Genève 4; Switzerland; phone ++41 22 379 83 86; email: pascal.sciarini@unige.ch.

# 1 Introduction

In representative democracies voting unity is of intrinsic interest.<sup>1</sup> It is an indication of the ability of parties to realize the policy goals they had promised in their platforms. Parties need to act cohesively in order to win votes and shape policy (Carey, 2007), and without a certain degree of organized action, it is difficult for voters to observe the behavior of their representatives (Müller, 2000). In parliamentary systems, where the government does ultimately depend on parliamentary support, voting unity is often seen as a central normative requirement, as an important condition for the existence of responsible party government (Bowler, Farrell and Katz, 1999). In systems where the executive does not depend on parliament, party unity is in general lower, but parties still have means to maintain a certain degree of coordinated behavior among their members (Cox and McCubbins, 1993).

Seen from the perspective of individual MPs, the issue of party unity has a different flavor. Why would MPs vote along party lines? Many explanations point either to the benefits of office within parliamentary parties (e.g. access to committees, Cox and McCubbins, 1993) or to the reelection goal (Mayhew, 1974; Aldrich, 1995; Cox, 1997). The desire for reelection can have, however, very different consequences for party unity, depending on the electoral system, or more broadly on whether “accountability” is individual or collective, to use Carey’s (2009) terms.<sup>2</sup> If voters hold MPs individually to account, by voting in favor of a specific MP, party unity is likely to be reduced. On the other hand, if voters hold MPs collectively as parties to account, party unity is likely to be higher. Independent of this, elections are likely to play an important role in the quest for party unity. Several authors have surmised (see Diermeier and Feddersen, 1998; Owens, 2003) or empirically assessed whether party unity varies across the electoral cycle (see Levitt, 1996; Skjaeveland, 1999; Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen, 2011), thus exploring a crucial link between the electoral and parliamentary arena.

The aim of the present study is to examine the relationship between electoral and legislative politics in a context that combines elements of both individual and

---

<sup>1</sup>We use the terms “unity,” “cohesion” and “discipline” as discussed in Sieberer (2006).

<sup>2</sup>Carey’s (2009, 3) definition of “accountability” emphasizes an agent’s “responsiveness” to his or her principal’s preferences. See Przeworski, Stokes and Manin (1999) and Maskin and Tirole (2004) for more standard definitions.

collective “accountability”, namely Switzerland. On the one hand, some aspects of the electoral system for the Swiss lower house,<sup>3</sup> in particular its proportional character (only a few seats in small districts are allocated in majoritarian elections) with lists established by the cantonal parties (cantons correspond to the electoral districts), favor collective accountability. On the other hand, another aspect of the electoral system, namely its open ballot structure, and a government not depending on the confidence of a parliamentary majority, clearly favor individual accountability. Consequently, we follow Levitt’s (1996), Skjaeveland’s (1999) and Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen’s (2011) lead and assess whether in the wake of elections parties become more unified. While Skjaeveland’s (1999) study on Denmark deals with a system where collective “accountability” dominates, Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen’s (2011) study on the European parliament focuses on a system having rather similar characteristics as those of our empirical case.<sup>4</sup> Their study is, however, limited as it can only assess the effect of the electoral cycle in roll call votes, which cover approximately a quarter of all votes in the European parliament. In our study, covering all parliamentary votes almost exhaustively over twelve years, we find that party unity does indeed increase for some parties before elections, but that this depends on the type of vote both in terms of its substantive importance for the parties and in terms of its institutional type and thus visibility to (in- and) outside observers (Carey, 2009).

In the next section we discuss explanations of party unity presented in the literature. In section 3 we offer some background information on the empirical case we analyze before presenting the hypotheses we wish to evaluate. Section 4 discusses the data and operationalization of our various explanatory factors. Our empirical tests rely on an almost exhaustive data-set of all parliamentary votes on legislative acts of the 1996-2007 period (three legislatures, see below for details) in the Swiss lower house. The final section presents a discussion of our results as well as future avenues for research on party unity.

---

<sup>3</sup>Given data availability, we need to focus on the lower house of the bicameral parliament (see below for more details).

<sup>4</sup>Levitt’s (1996) study on the US Senate suggests that as elections approach Senators follow more closely the preferences of their constituency, which is not surprising in a system where individual accountability dominates.

## 2 Determinants of Party Unity

In the literature one finds three types of factors that supposedly influence the cohesiveness of parties in parliament: the institutional context, party-level factors and situation-specific characteristics of the vote. The institutional features that might influence party unity are the structure of executive-legislative relations, characteristics of the electoral system, and federalism (Carey and Shugart, 1995; Owens, 2003; Hix, 2004; Uslander and Zittel, 2006; Carey, 2009). They all structure the incentives an individual MP might have to cultivate a personal vote, and, therefore, they all potentially affect party unity. The first institutional feature that affects party unity to a considerable degree is the structure of executive-legislative relations. In systems where presidents have substantial legislative powers, legislators have incentives to promote themselves in individual votes, which disrupts the unity of their party or coalition. Even more importantly, the survival of the executive in office is not dependent on having a majority support in parliament. In parliamentary systems, on the other hand, party unity is needed to ensure the realization of the party program and sustain the government. Empirical evidence, however, is mixed. Legislators in some parliamentary systems are apparently able to cultivate and sustain a personalized electoral connection, which resembles clearly those found in many presidential systems (Owens, 2003, 23f).

Election rules also determine whether it is reasonable for a candidate to pursue individual or collective electoral strategies. As discussed by Hix (2004), in closed-list proportional representation (PR) systems, where parties present a list of candidates, and voters cannot change the order of candidates, it is reasonable for legislators to follow closely the party line. On the other hand, in fully open-list PR systems and single-transferable-vote systems the candidates' ranking is determined by the number of personal votes she receives. In such systems, there are incentives for legislators to cultivate a personal identification among the constituents. In mixed systems, such as semi-open, ordered-list PR systems or single-member-simple-plurality (SMSP) systems, where voters have some possibilities to express preferences for individual candidates, legislators are still better off to support their parties' positions, because parties either control their place on the list or, as it is the case in SMSP systems, even if single candidates are

presented, voters in fact choose between parties (Hix, 2004, 197).<sup>5</sup>

Finally, an important distinction of state organization is between federal and unitary systems. In federal states parties are often organized at the sub-national level. Politicians are accountable to competing principals at the national and sub-national level, which can lead to low party unity, especially when the heterogeneity across the subnational units is high (Carey, 2007, 2009). Similar tendencies are observable in the European parliament (Hix, 2002; Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen, 2011).

Scholars generally acknowledge that legislators' voting behavior is influenced by policy-related factors or the benefits of office, or a mix of both (McElroy, 2008). More specifically, legislators may strive for reelection, higher status within the legislature and/or wish to pursue their policy preferences. These goals can be congruent or conflicting, depending on various factors. In any case, voting with the party might be favorable, and it will be more so if the party is cohesive (homogeneous preferences) and strong (in terms of resources or majority status). From the perspective of party leaders, party unity is easier to maintain when a party is cohesive, that is, legislators have similar policy positions or represent a homogeneous electorate than in situations where the party group is internally divided. One central debate in research on the U.S. Congress evolved around the role of parties in parliament. Based on this question, Mayhew (1974) draws a caricature of an individualistic legislator motivated with the desire for reelection. In Mayhew's (1974, 100) account, parties play only a marginal role, and

“the best service a party can supply to its congressmen is a negative one; it can leave them alone. And this in general is what parties do. Party leaders are chosen not to be program salesmen or vote mobilizers, but to be brokers, favordoers, agenda-setters, and protectors of established institutional routines.”

Later, Krehbiel (1993, 2000), advanced the same argument but with a slightly different explanation. In his view, MPs are essentially concerned with policy and it is empirically often almost impossible to distinguish individual policy preferences from party votes. Where researchers supposedly detect voting along

---

<sup>5</sup>For a more detailed, though largely atheoretical, description of the effect of various electoral systems on voting behavior, see Carey and Shugart (1995). For theoretically derived assessments, see Denzau and Munger (1986) and Bawn and Thies (2003).

party lines, all they see is a cohesive group of MPs pursuing personal policy goals. A different position is advocated by Cox and McCubbins (1993, 2009), who see a very important role for parties, due to the legislative organization and especially agenda control. Thus, parties also perform important functions for individual legislators. In a similar vein, Aldrich (1995, 4) defends the importance of parties, but puts more emphasis on the ambitions of politicians, who create, manipulate, “use or abuse” political parties to serve their desire for reelection and office. In this view, parties are “endogenous institutions” formed by political actors. Due to this debate, researchers have since then proposed various methods to distinguish MPs’ personal preferences from party votes (Levitt, 1996; Snyder and Groseclose, 2000; Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart, 2001; Kam, 2001; Cox and Poole, 2002; Wright and Schaffner, 2002; Bailer, Bütikofer, Hug and Schulz, 2007; Kam, 2008).<sup>6</sup>

The recent literature on parties in parliament often makes use of a “principal-agent” framework. Especially in the context of parliamentary democracies, the functioning of the representative system is depicted as a chain of delegation from voters to elected representatives, from legislators to the executive branch, from the head of government to the heads of executive departments and from executive departments to civil servants. In this model of democracy, cohesive political parties are needed to reduce the “moral hazard” problem that arises when principals are not able to fully observe the actions of their agents, and agents have incentives to act against the interests of the principal (Strøm, 2000). Parties appearing as unitary actors improve the principal’s opportunities to observe the agent’s behavior and thus “make the democratic accountability of MPs meaningful” (Müller, 2000, 311). Problems arise, however, when legislators are accountable to different principals, for example to their national party leaders as well as to their states or districts, or, as it is the case in the European Parliament (EP), to their national party and the political groups in the EP (Hix, 2002; Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen, 2011). Voting unity can then only be maintained in situations where the claims of both principals do not contradict each other. Whether MPs vote according to their preferences or support the party line, and whether it is in the parties’ interest to discipline the rank-and-file also depends on various vote-related aspects, such as the policy field or the procedure (Ansolabehere, Snyder

---

<sup>6</sup>Some of the chosen approaches are, however, vulnerable to the pointed, and unfortunately often forgotten, critique of Fiorina (1975) and Jackson and Kingdon (1992).

and Stewart, 2001).

Most recently, several authors have also explored whether party unity might be linked to the electoral cycle. Levitt (1996) assess the impact of the “party link” over time and finds that it decreases for Senators when elections are approaching. Diermeier and Feddersen (1998) present a model linking party unity to the vote of confidence procedure in parliamentary democracies. As party unity is required for the survival of government, and thus in most cases also linked to the survival of parliament, their model suggests that as the date for an election approaches, party unity is much harder to maintain for party leaders in parliament (Diermeier and Feddersen, 1998, 616). Existing empirical studies do, however, not support this theoretical implication, most likely because other factors play a role as well. Thus, Skjaeveland (1999) shows that parties in the Danish Folketing become more unified in the run-up to an election.<sup>7</sup> Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen (2011), on the other hand, argue that both in pre- and post-election periods, party discipline is affected. More precisely, their argument for the European parliament is that before elections the national parties impose a stronger discipline among their members of the European parliament (MEPs), as the parties want to present a unified front in the (still) national election campaigns.<sup>8</sup> Between the pre- and post-election periods, the party groups in the EP should become more unified and, as Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen (2011) demonstrate, they empirically do so.<sup>9</sup>

### 3 Party Unity in the Swiss Parliament

The Swiss parliament presents an interesting case to study determinants of party unity. Considered as the only “hybrid” case between presidential and parliamentary democracy in Lijphart’s (1999) classification of 36 democracies, and as an “assembly-independent system” by Shugart and Carey (1992, 26), Switzer-

---

<sup>7</sup>Interestingly Owens (2003) refers to Skjaeveland’s (1999) study to argue that parties are typically more unified after an election than at the end of a legislative period, when future benefits that might result from supporting the party positions lose their importance (following in part the logic of Diermeier and Feddersen’s (1998) model). The other cited references either offer no empirical support for the claim or are of atheoretical nature.

<sup>8</sup>Their argument for why party unity in the national delegations of EP party groups should also be higher after elections is theoretically much less convincing.

<sup>9</sup>As the European parliament does not have a simple vote of confidence procedure, the implications derived by Diermeier and Feddersen (1998) do not directly apply.

land is often excluded from comparative studies. While the collegial executive is elected by the parliament, it stays in office for a fixed time-period (i.e., until the next parliamentary election), during which it cannot be dismissed by parliament. In addition, given that executive power is shared by a “grand coalition”, the parties forming the government are not dependent on the support of all their MPs to succeed in parliament. Finally, the open-list PR system at work for the election of the National Council (the lower house), with the exception of a few small electoral districts, also affects party unity: In this system parties propose pre-ordered lists, and voters can either vote for the party list as a whole or for individual politicians, modify the list as they wish or even use an empty list to be filled by themselves, all within a set of rules (Lutz, 2009).

Owing to both its specific government type and the open-list PR system for parliamentary elections, the Swiss government is an “in-between case” as far as party unity is concerned (Lüthi, Meyer and Hirter, 1991; Bailer, Bütikofer, Hug and Schulz, 2007; Hug and Sciarini, 2009; Hug, 2010). Despite the independence of parliament and executive, party unity is relatively high in Switzerland (between 70% and 90% as measured by the Rice (1925) index). Studies found that the Social Democrats (SP) and the Green Party display the highest unity, followed by the Swiss People’s Party (Lüthi, Meyer and Hirter, 1991; Bailer, Bütikofer, Hug and Schulz, 2007; Schwarz, 2009; Hug, 2010). The Christian Democrats (CVP) and the Liberals (FDP) are slightly less cohesive, which is ascribed to their more heterogeneous electorate. In an analysis of roll call votes between 1920 and 1991 Lüthi, Meyer and Hirter (1991) concluded that voting unity among members of interest groups is equally high as unity within party groups. This result could not be confirmed in the most recent study on party behavior. Schwarz (2009) found little evidence for the importance of regional or interest-group related voting. His study concludes that individual policy goals are the strongest determinants of voting behavior in the Swiss parliament. Even if competing pulls (constituency, interest groups, regional parties) exist, legislators’ behavior in parliament is only affected to a limited degree. However, it appears that party groups are in certain situations able to enforce discipline. Schwarz (2009) found that voting unity increases significantly with the formal importance of a vote: While there are some differences across parties, party unity tends to increase as one moves from the beginning to the end of the legislative process,



and it also tends to be higher on automatic roll call votes than on non-automatic (requested) roll call votes (Hug, 2010). Schwarz (2009) also tested whether legislators deviate less often from the party line before elections. The results are mixed and partially contradictory. He found limited evidence for more cohesive behavior among the Social Democrats and the Swiss People’s Party (SVP). Most recently, Hug and Sciarini (2009) distinguished votes according to their intrinsic characteristics. They found that voting unity among the FDP and the Evangelical Parties (EVP/EDU) slightly decreases with the importance of a vote, and that the degree of internationalization of a legislative project matters for voting unity.

With the increasing importance of election campaigns, the parties’ vote-seeking strategies (e.g., Kriesi and Trechsel, 2008) and party politics in general, we can assume that voting unity is higher than it used to be. In particular, before elections voting unity is important to support the message of an election campaign. Very little is known, however, about the electoral connection of legislative politics in Switzerland (though see Hug and Leemann, 2010).

### 3.1 Hypotheses

This study investigates the connection between legislative and electoral politics in Switzerland. It is based on two main assumptions. First, politicians in the Swiss parliament are concerned with reelection. Second, electoral politics has become more important in Switzerland in recent years and now to a considerable degree influences legislative behavior.

Following Skjaveland (1999) and Lindstädt, Slapin and Wielen (2011) we postulate that the impact of electoral politics will be most visible in the time before elections.<sup>10</sup> As elections are approaching, parties have an incentive to close their ranks to send clear signals to voters, while MPs, especially those who are struggling for reelection, have an incentive to stick to the party line. As some votes are, however, more “visible” to voters, and some issues are more important for a party’s brand name (Ansolabehere, Snyder and Stewart, 2001), the effect of election times should be more pronounced in these votes. More specifically, we

---

<sup>10</sup>We discard Diermeier and Feddersen’s (1998) theoretically derived implication, as it presumes a vote of confidence, which is absent in the Swiss parliament. Similarly, we do not consider Levitt’s (1996) finding showing a decline of the importance of the “party line” as elections approach, since it deals with Senators in a presidential system.

assume that election times are likely to influence party unity in interaction with the formal importance of the vote, and the substantive importance of the policy domain at stake.

We conceive the formal importance of votes as related to the way in which information on the MPs voting decision is made available. Since the introduction of an electronic voting system in the lower house of the Swiss parliament (and until 2007, see below), all final passage and ensemble votes, as well as some residual categories, are automatically published in the minutes of the lower house. For all remaining votes (almost exclusively votes on amendments and individual articles) publication as roll call votes has to be requested by at least 30 MPs. We consider these latter requested roll call votes to be the most “visible” for voters and thus the most important. The automatic roll call votes, while still being “visible” for voters, are formally less important than requested roll call votes, and finally, the votes not published in the minutes are assumed to be the least important.

By substantive importance we mean the policy fields that are important for a party’s brand name. These issues figure prominently in the party platform and are at the center of a party’s election campaign. To underline their competence in these issue areas, parties need a certain degree of voting unity. Consequently, we assume that parties will vote more cohesively on political issues that are important to them. Finally, we assume that formal importance and substantive importance reinforce each other, and thus that votes that are important on both dimensions should display the highest level of party unity at election time.

We will thus test the three following hypotheses:

*H1: (substantive importance)* The voting unity of parties is higher before an election than in the remainder of the legislative period in votes on policy issues that are important to them.

*H2: (formal importance)* The increase in parties’ voting unity in the pre-election period is higher in requested roll call votes than in automatic roll call votes, and it is higher in automatic roll call votes than in unpublished votes.

*H3: (formal and substantive importance)* The voting unity of parties is highest before an election in requested roll call votes on policy issues that are important to parties.

## 4 Data and Measurement

The four parties represented in the Swiss coalition government, the Social Democrats (SP), the Christian Democrats (CVP), the Radicals (FDP) and the Swiss People's Party (SVP), form the largest party groups in the Swiss parliament. The largest non-governmental party, the Green Party, has formed a party group since 1987. We will analyze the voting unity of these five parties in the lower house of the Swiss parliament between 1996 and 2007 (45th to 47th legislature). To this end, we use a data-set that includes all parliamentary votes on legislative acts introduced by the government since 1996.<sup>11</sup> Voting unity is calculated by the following formula proposed by Stuart Rice (1925):

$$RICE_{ij} = \frac{|aye\ votes_{ij} - nay\ votes_{ij}|}{aye\ votes_{ij} + nay\ votes_{ij}} \text{ for party group } i \text{ on vote } j. \quad (1)$$

Using only the aye and nay votes implies that abstentions are not considered. The values of the Rice index can range from zero (equal numbers of aye and nay) to one (those who cast votes vote in unison).

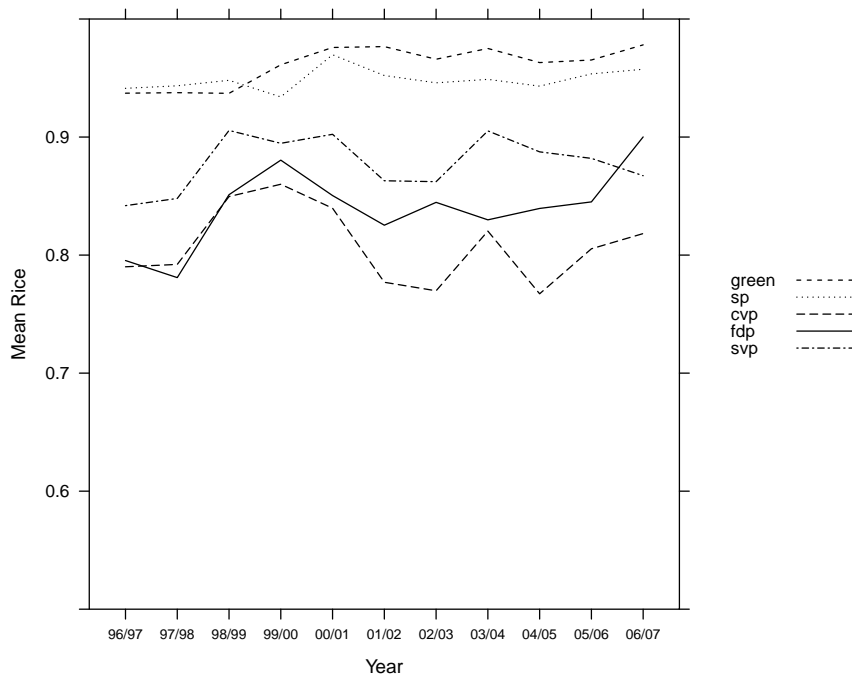
Figure 1 displays the average Rice index per year for the largest party groups in the Swiss lower house between 1996 and 2007. Party unity is overall very high among the two left parties (the SP and the Greens). The SVP also displays a fairly high level of party unity. Party discipline is lower among the two center-right parties (the CVP and the FDP). However, we see that the FDP has considerably increased its voting unity in recent years. The same holds, to a lesser extent, for the SVP. The Christian Democrats have the lowest unity in parliamentary votes.

While our measure for the *formal importance* is based on the accessibility of the voting information (see above), to measure the *substantive importance* of

---

<sup>11</sup>Data is also available for the most recent 2007-2011 legislature, but the procedure for making voting decisions available has changed as all votes can now be consulted on the parliament's website. We therefore refrain from including the 48th legislature. Restricting our analyses to votes on legislative acts introduced by government increases the homogeneity and as a consequence the comparability of the parliamentary votes. Thus, we exclude votes on parliamentary initiatives, motions or postulates. Additional tests, not reported here, show that including these votes into the analyses does not affect our results substantially. Further, note that as the electronic voting system was introduced when the 45th legislature had already started, the votes for the first few sessions are missing. Similarly, in the 47th legislature period the parliament held its meetings for one session in a mountain resort where unfortunately the electronic voting system malfunctioned as well. Finally, at the beginning when the electronic voting system was introduced for a short period the voting record of a handful of MPs was not recorded. As these missing votes are a quite small share of total number of votes, we ignore this data limitation.

Figure 1: Party unity over time in the Swiss parliament



votes, we rely on a database with information on newspaper articles covering election campaigns collected by Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier and Frey (2008) (see also Kriesi, Grande, Dolezal, Helbling, Höglinger, Hutter and Wüest, 2012).<sup>12</sup> This database includes issue - party relations during the election campaigns in 1999, 2003 and 2007. More specifically, the researchers coded newspaper articles dealing with the electoral contest in the time period, starting two months before each election.<sup>13</sup> The data contains information on how often a party takes a position on a specific issue. To indicate the salience of an issue for a party, the authors calculated the relative frequency of a party's position on a specific issue during the pre-election period. Kriesi and his colleagues used 84 issue categories, which we aggregated for our purposes in order to make

<sup>12</sup>We are grateful to Hanspeter Kriesi and his colleagues for providing us with their dataset.

<sup>13</sup>The researchers selected articles in one quality newspaper (NZZ) and one tabloid (Blick). Of the selected articles the headlines and the first paragraph were coded sentence by sentence.

them comparable to the issue categories in our voting data. The aggregated relative frequency of an issue category (we simply added the percentages of the sub-categories) then serves as the criteria for substantive importance. All issue categories with a relative frequency of more than 10 percent were considered as important for a party (see table 2 in appendix). Based on this information, we generated a dummy variable indicating whether a specific vote was substantively important for a party.<sup>14</sup>

To account for the proximity to an election the legislative term was split in two parts. The variable “before election” is equal to one if the general election (automatically taking place every four years) is less than one year away and zero otherwise.<sup>15</sup> To assess the effect of elections according to our hypotheses, interaction terms between policy and vote-types were created. As we are interested simultaneously in the cohesion of all (major) parties in the Swiss parliament, and most likely unobservable factors influence simultaneously all parties, we employ a seemingly unrelated regression (SURE) model. While similar to Ordinary Least Squares regression models, it accounts for the fact that similar unobservables might affect the level of cohesion across parties. To allow for time trends across legislatures we also include legislature dummies, with the 45th legislature as reference category.

## 5 Results

Table 1 reports the results of the estimation. A first element of importance is that for three of the five parties, the Green Party, the FDP and the SVP, unity was higher in later legislatures than in the 45th legislature, while the SP and the CVP show no increase in voting unity.

The remaining coefficients relate more directly to our hypotheses, but they are much harder to interpret, as we have a series of interaction terms. For this

---

<sup>14</sup>More specifically, the importance variable equals one if the issue(s) of a specific vote was (were) important for a party during the previous election campaign. Thus, we code the importance of votes in the year before an election as well as the three years following the election year based on the issue salience in a specific election. For example, the importance for votes in the time period autumn 1998 until autumn 2002 was based on the issue salience in the 1999 election (elections take place in October).

<sup>15</sup>We also report results in a separate appendix for analyses using the first post-election year as independent variable, as well as those of an analyses combining the pre- and post-electoral dummies.

Table 1: Effect of elections on party unity 1996 - 2007 (one year before election compared to other years)

	<b>Greens</b>	<b>SP</b>	<b>CVP</b>	<b>FDP</b>	<b>SVP</b>
importance	-0.02*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.02*** (0.01)
before election	-0.02*** (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.02** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)
requested rollcalls	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.12*** (0.01)	-0.12*** (0.01)	-0.05*** (0.01)
automatic votes	0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.17*** (0.01)	0.14*** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
importance * before election	0.04*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	0.07*** (0.01)
importance * requested votes	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.05*** (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.06*** (0.02)
importance * automatic votes	-0.01 (0.01)	0.00 (0.01)	0.05*** (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
election * requested votes	0.02* (0.01)	-0.01 (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.09*** (0.02)	0.04* (0.02)
election * automatic votes	0.02** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)
importance * election * requested votes	0.00 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.03)	-0.05 (0.03)
importance * election * automatic votes	-0.03 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.04 (0.03)	-0.00 (0.03)	0.05* (0.03)
46th legislature	0.03*** (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.04*** (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
47th legislature	0.04*** (0.00)	0.01 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.05*** (0.01)	0.03*** (0.01)
Intercept	0.94*** (0.00)	0.94*** (0.00)	0.79*** (0.01)	0.78*** (0.01)	0.88*** (0.01)
$R^2$	0.01	0.00	0.12	0.09	0.01
N	7534	7534	7534	7534	7534

\* p<0.10, \*\* p<0.05, \*\*\* p<0.01

reason we calculated predicted values and marginal effects on the basis of 1000 draws from the distribution of estimated coefficients (Gelman and Hill, 2006). The following figures depict the parties' average voting unity for particular sets of votes at election time as well as during non-election periods (including the corresponding 95% confidence intervals).<sup>16</sup>

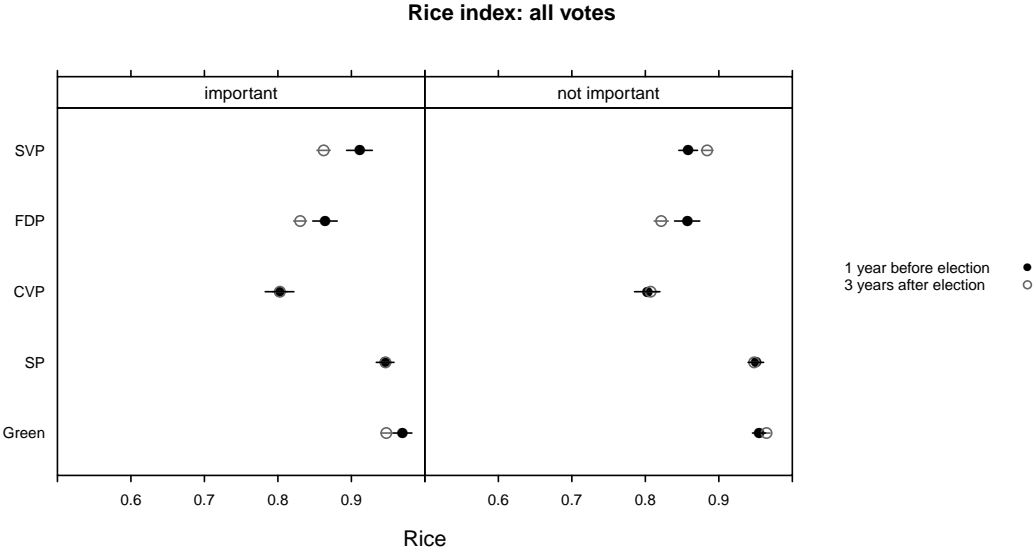
Figure 2 presents the differences in party unity between the pre-election period and the remainder of the legislature on substantively important and unimportant parliamentary votes. Starting with the effect of elections in votes on issues that are important for the party platform (left panel), we see that for three parties (the SVP, the FDP and, to a lesser extent, the Greens) voting unity is overall higher in the year before an election than in the post-election period. Considering unimportant issues (right panel), it appears that the effect of elections is different for two of these three parties (the SVP and the Greens). This is most obvious for the SVP: On important issues party unity is substantially higher in the year before an election than in the three following years; the reverse holds for unimportant issues, where party unity is significantly lower in the pre-election year. A similar pattern also holds for the Greens, but the results are hardly significant. By contrast, the substantive importance of the issue at stake does not matter much for the FDP, whose voting unity is higher in the run-up to elections on both important and unimportant issues. Finally, the SP and the CVP do not seem to be affected by the electoral cycle, nor by issue importance: Their level of voting unity is stable across all configurations. The fact that the SP is in all situations highly unified is likely to account for this result. This explanation is, however, not valid for the CVP, which is the least unified party overall. In sum, while our results show election effects for three parties, they support our first hypothesis for only two of them, namely the SVP and the Greens.

The effects of the interaction between election time and the formal importance of parliamentary votes appear in figure 3. Regarding the overall differences across institutional types of votes, we find that party unity is higher in automatic roll call votes than in unpublished votes, and higher in the latter than in requested roll calls. However, when considering variations in party unity across parties, we find the most variation in requested votes and the least variation in automatic roll call votes. These results may stem from party strategies, but they may also be due

---

<sup>16</sup>Here we follow Hanmer and Kalkan (2008) and calculate the average effect over all observations in our sample.

Figure 2: Party unity one year before election compared to other years (1996-2007): substantive importance





to the specific characteristics of the votes: Automatic roll call votes are mostly ensemble and final passage votes, for which MPs no longer have to decide whether they support a specific aspect of a legislative act, but whether they are ready to endorse the legislative act as a whole. This presumably accounts for the high share of unanimous votes, i.e. the share of votes that all MPs support, among automatic roll call votes: Between one fifth and almost a half of all ensemble votes and final votes were accepted unanimously during the 1996-2007 period. By contrast, both, requested roll call votes and unpublished votes, are mostly detailed (article-by-article) votes, which almost never lead to consensus (less than 3% of detailed votes were unanimous).

While requested roll call votes and unpublished votes both deal with legislative details, they differ in one important respect: requested roll call votes, which must be held if demanded by 30 MPs, are highly publicized and thus visible to voters, whereas unpublished votes remain largely unnoticed. According to our second hypothesis, this difference is likely to produce varying incentives with respect to party unity. More specifically, in election times requested roll call votes are expected to foster party unity, whereas unpublished votes are not. In automatic roll calls variations between election and non-election times are expected to be smaller than in requested roll calls but stronger than in unpublished votes.

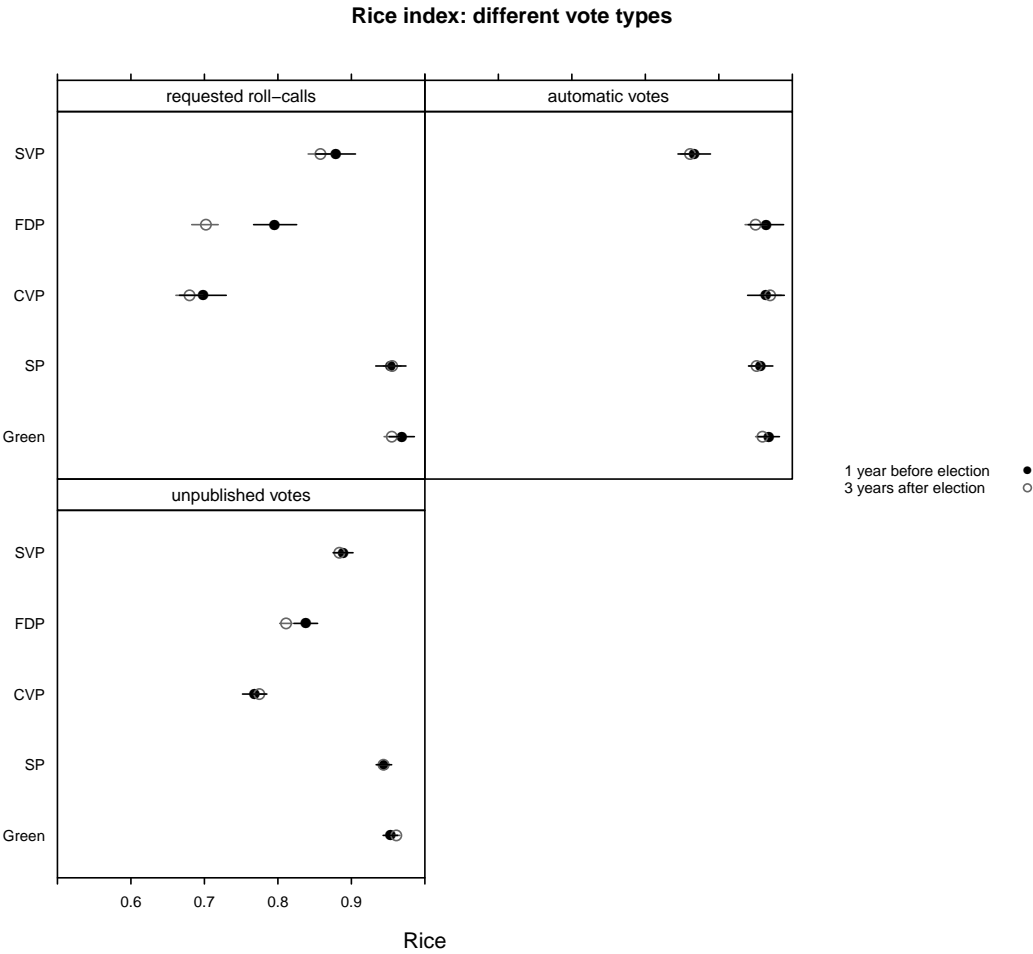
Indeed, we find the hypothesized difference between the pre-election period and the rest of the legislative period in requested votes for all parties but one:<sup>17</sup> For the SVP, the FDP, the CVP and the Greens, requested roll call votes lead to higher party unity in the year before election. However, the effect reaches statistical significance for only one party, namely the FDP. Among MPs of the SP the election variable does not matter at all, which may again be due to the overall very high cohesion of this party.

Regarding automatic roll call votes, our results do not support our hypothesis. Differences in party unity between the pre-election period and the periods following the elections are only small and not significant. Given the overall very high level of party unity in automatic roll call votes mentioned above, this result should, however, not come as a surprise. Finally, we find only small differences between the two periods in unpublished roll calls, even though party unity is gen-

---

<sup>17</sup>Ideally we should take account of who requested the roll call vote. Unfortunately this information is not systematically available, as requests are handed in to the Chamber president on papers that are most often discarded after a session.

Figure 3: Party unity one year before election compared to other years (1996-2007): formal importance



erally much smaller in these votes. This result is compatible with our hypothesis 2, which claims that differences in voting unity would be smallest in unpublished votes compared to the other vote types.

In sum, our results offer partial support for our second hypothesis. On the one hand, both the positive - albeit not all significant - effects of election times on party unity in requested roll call votes and the lack of effects in unpublished votes are in line with our theoretical expectations. On the other hand, the absence of election effects in automatic roll call votes contradicts our hypothesis.

Figures 4a and 4b depict the effects of the electoral cycle on party unity in interaction with both the formal and substantive importance of the vote. Remember that according to our hypothesis 3 election effects should be most pronounced in requested roll call votes that are substantively important to parties. Our results tell a more complex story, as election effects vary considerably across parties.

In requested roll call votes on important issues all parties (the SVP, the FDP, the CVP and the Greens) except one (the SP) display a higher voting discipline in the pre-election years compared to the years after elections. For two of them the difference is significant. As the right panel of figure 4a shows, the corresponding effects are on average smaller in requested votes on unimportant issues: Only one party, the FDP shows significantly higher voting unity before elections. For this party the magnitude of the election effect is even higher on unimportant issues than on important issues: In the former cases the party unity is increased by 0.11 in the Rice index, against 0.07 in the latter.

The results are again less clear-cut for automatic roll call votes (figure 4a), except for the SVP, which shows significant differences in voting unity in automatic roll calls before elections compared to automatic roll calls in the remaining legislative period. In votes on important issues party discipline is much higher in the pre-election year than in the remainder of the legislative period; conversely, in votes on unimportant issues the SVP is much less unified before elections, than when elections are not looming ahead. For this party, therefore, the interaction between formal and substantive importance contributes to the explanation of voting unity. While, as we have seen in figure 3, the SVPs voting unity in automatic roll call votes is on average not affected by the elections, important effects appear if we take into account the substantive importance of issues. Election

Figure 4a: Party unity one year before election compared to other years (1996-2007): requested rollcalls and automatic votes

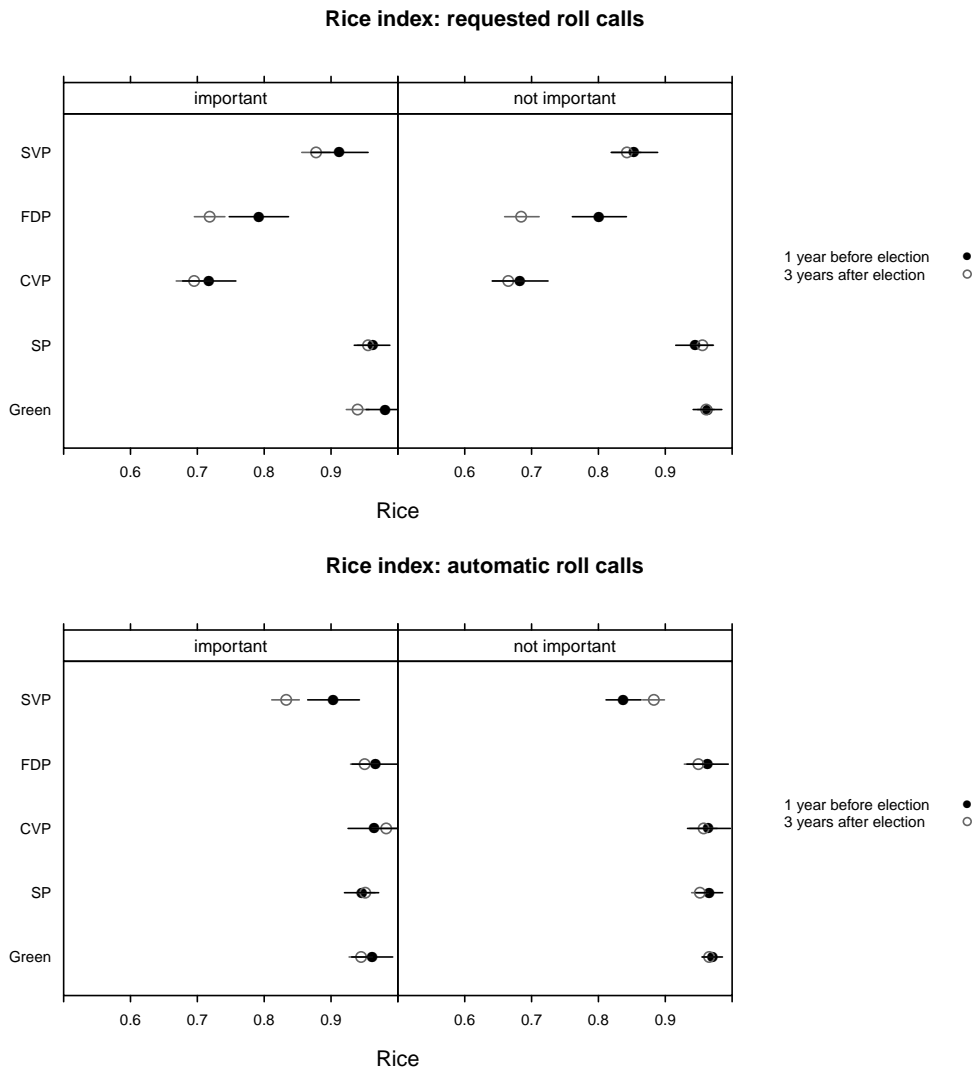
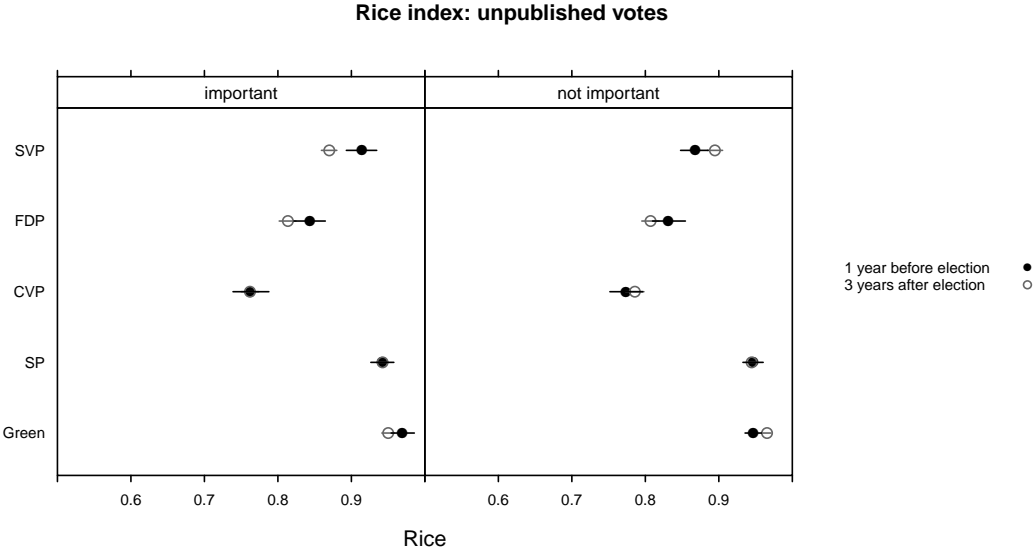


Figure 4b: Party unity one year before election compared to other years (1996-2007): unpublished votes



effects operate in the opposite direction for important and unimportant issues, which cancel each other out in Figure 3.

Finally, our results in 4b show that in unpublished votes on important issues party unity increases in the pre-election period for three parties (the SVP, the FDP and the Greens). Again, the difference is substantially higher for the SVP, and nearly reaches statistical significance for the other two parties. As non-published votes are all intermediary votes on parts of bills, our result suggests that in pre-election periods the three parties close their ranks in intermediary votes on issues important to them, to get the legislation passed in a form that corresponds to their wishes. While this interpretation makes sense, it is not fully consistent with our third hypothesis that postulates a smaller election effect on the unpublished and less important, article-by-article votes. Variations in party unity are again smaller in votes on unimportant issues (right panel in Figure 4b). We witness a negative, albeit hardly significant, election effect on the voting unity of the SVP and the Greens, and a positive effect on the FDP's voting unity.

In sum, the empirical tests provide partial support for our hypothesis 3. First, as expected, we find the strongest election effects in requested roll call votes, but not for all parties. As we have seen above, the Christian Democrats and the SP's voting unity does not seem to be affected by the election cycle, which is quite surprising in the case of the CVP, as their unity is considerably low and would allow for variation. Regarding automatic roll calls, the effects are weak for all parties except the SVP, notwithstanding the substantial importance of a vote (figure 4a). Because voting unity is exceptionally high in these votes, it is difficult to find large effects. No wonder then that we found some strong and consistent election effects for the party that is overall least unified on automatic roll call votes, namely the SVP. Finally, three parties appear to be more unified before elections in substantially important, unpublished votes, which is somewhat contrary to our hypothesis, as we expected the effects to be least visible in unpublished votes.

Altogether, our findings show that the right-wing SVP and the liberal FDP are the two parties that are most sensitive to the electoral cycle, but the SVP is the only one that also fits our expectations regarding the impact of issue importance. Our findings consistently show that the SVP votes more cohesively in the run-up to elections on issues that are substantively important for the party.

By contrast, its voting unity is not affected by the formal importance of vote (requested, automatic or unpublished). The latter result suggests that when elections are looming ahead the SVP attempts to close its ranks in all parliamentary votes, irrespective of their institutional nature. This, presumably, as part of a wider electoral strategy aiming at strengthening the party profile. Of course, the fact that the SVP is indeed known as the most profiled party (e.g. Kriesi and Sciarini 2004), and as the party most forcefully oriented towards vote-seeking and agenda-setting strategies (Varone, Engeli, Sciarini and Gava, 2011) can only reinforce our interpretation. The liberal FDP is also highly sensitive to election times, especially on requested roll call votes. However, contrary to the SVP, the FDP appear to increase their voting unity independently of the substantial importance of an issue. Apparently, their strategy aims at presenting an overall more cohesive party group before elections. This might also be due to the broader policy profile of this party, whereas the SVP focuses its election campaigns on fewer issues. Further, it is quite surprising that the other center-right party, the CVP, does seem to react to any kind of electoral incentive whatsoever, in spite of the fact that it displays the overall lowest party unity. Finally, the two left-wing parties are both highly unified across all votes, but they differ from one another with respect to their reaction to the electoral cycle: While the Greens tend to unify further in the pre-election year, the Social Democrats do not.

## 6 Discussion

The goal of this study was to assess the effect of elections on voting unity in parliament. Do MPs vote more cohesively with elections looming ahead? We tested our hypotheses on all votes on legislative acts held in the lower house of the Swiss parliament between 1996 and 2007.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, party unity is overall high in Switzerland. It is especially high among left-wing parties (SP and Greens). On the one hand, this presumably accounts for the little variations in voting unity across the election cycle that we found for the SP. On the other hand, the fact that we found some consistent election effects for the Greens, in spite of their extremely high voting unity, is of course more than encouraging. Party unity is overall lower among the three center right and right-wing parties, which leaves room for variation in voting unity throughout the electoral cycle. Indeed, our results show that two of these

parties, the liberal FDP and the right-wing SVP vote more cohesively before elections. The Christian Democrats' (CVP) legislative behavior, by contrast, is least sensitive to electoral politics (besides the SP), even though this party generally displays the lowest voting unity.

Our hypotheses postulated that the election effect on voting unity would appear in interaction with the formal and substantial importance of a vote. We found that the SVP, the FDP and, to a lesser extent, the Greens, display higher voting unity before elections in votes on issues that are important to their party platform. Regarding the formal importance of votes, we compare the effect of elections for three different types of votes separately: requested roll calls, automatic roll calls (mostly final passage and ensemble votes) and requested roll calls. We find that the effect of elections is most pronounced in votes with the highest formal importance - requested roll calls - and even more so in requested votes that are also substantially important to parties, which supports our hypotheses.

However, we did not find the expected effects for automatic roll calls, which can be explained by the overall very high voting unity in these votes, which leaves less room for variation. Only the right-wing SVP is significantly more unified in automatic roll calls before elections, but only on votes that are also important to their party platform. Indeed, if we look at the full set of interactions we see that the SVP is in fact highly sensitive to the election cycle in automatic roll call votes, but that the election effect operates in the opposite direction on important (higher unity) and on unimportant (lower unity) issues.

Our results are most significant for SVP and FDP, and to a lesser extent for the Greens, and do not contribute much to the explanation of voting unity among the MPs of the CVP and the SP. Interestingly, the SVP and the FDP are also the parties with increasing voting unity in recent years, and as our findings show, they attempt to close their ranks even more before elections, while at other times MPs vote more freely. Moreover, as the SVP center their election campaigns on a few issues only, their voting unity is especially high in votes on these issues. We did not find such an effect in the voting behavior of MPs of the FDP, however. Instead, we found that the FDP is more unified before elections notwithstanding the substantial importance of the issue at stake, which is probably due to the broader profile of this party.

Despite the interesting findings of this paper, there is one important caveat.



Many sources of variation are quite possibly to be found on the level of individual legislators, which was not taken into account in this analysis. However, this study can be seen as a first step in the assessment of behavior of party groups in the Swiss parliament between elections. Further research should take into account individual-level factors, such as regional constituencies, and pay more attention to coalition dynamics, which are quite likely to affect voting behavior in the Swiss parliament, where no single party holds a majority and coalitions are expected to change between votes.

## Appendix A

Table 2 reports what topics were the most salient for the political parties in the three election campaigns considered. In tables ?? and ?? we report the results of a similar model as in table 1, but using a post-election, respectively a dummy equal to one in both pre- and post-election years. Figures ??-?? depict the corresponding estimated election effects.

Table 2: Most salient issues in election campaigns (relative frequency of position-taking in parentheses)

	Green Party	SP	CVP	FDP	SVP
Election campaign 1999	environment (38%) energy (19%) health (14%)	social policy (15%) research (13%) economy (13%) health (11%) migration (11%)	economy (17%) migration (11%) research (11%) social policy (11%)	finance (22%) economy (20%) migration (17%)	migration (28%) finance (25%)
Election campaign 2003	social policy (25%) finance (21%) environment (20%)	social policy (27%) finance (11%)	social policy (21%) finance (14%) education (12%)	social policy (20%) finance (20%) economy (11%)	migration (19%) finance (15%) social policy (12%)
Election campaign 2007	environment (19%) law (15%)	social policy (14%) environment (11%) law (11%)	social policy (15%) environment (13%) law (12%)	economy (13%) political institutions (10%)	migration (19%) political institutions (14%)

*Note:* The categories are based on the relative frequency of 84 issue categories in the election campaigns, collected by Kriesi and his colleagues (Kriesi, Grande, Lachat, Dolezal, Bornschier and Frey, 2008; Kriesi, Grande, Dolezal, Helbling, Höglinger, Huttrer and Wüest, 2012).

## References

- Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, James M. Jr. Snyder and Charles III Stewart. 2001. "The Effects of Party and Preferences on Congressional Roll Call Voting." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 26(4).
- Bailer, Stefanie, Sarah Bütikofer, Simon Hug and Tobias Schulz. 2007. "Preferences, Party Discipline and Constituency Pressure in Swiss Parliamentary Decisions." Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR General Conference Pisa, September 6-8, 2007.
- Bawn, Kathleen and Michael F. Thies. 2003. "A Comparative Theory of Electoral Incentives : Representing the Unorganized Under PR, Plurality, and Mixed-Member Electoral Systems." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 15(1):5–32.
- Bowler, Shaun, David M. Farrell and Richard S. Katz, eds. 1999. *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Government*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press.
- Carey, John. 2007. "Competing principals, political institutions, and party unity in legislative voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1):92–107.
- Carey, John M. 2009. *Legislative Voting and Accountability*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Carey, John and Matthew Shugart. 1995. "Incentives to cultivate a personal vote." *Electoral studies* 14(4):417–439.
- Cox, Gary and Keith Poole. 2002. "On Measuring Partisanship in Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3):477–489.
- Cox, Gary and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cox, Gary W. 1997. *Making Votes Count*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2009 (forthcoming). *Setting the Agenda: Parliaments, Procedural Cartels and Policy Making*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Denzau, Arthur T. and Michael C. Munger. 1986. "Legislators and Interest Groups: How Unorganized Interests Get Represented." *American Political Science Review* 80:89–106.
- Diermeier, Daniel and Timothy Feddersen. 1998. "Cohesion in Legislatures and the Vote of Confidence Procedure." *American Political Science Review* 92(3):611–621.
- Fiorina, Morris P. 1975. "Constituency Influence: A Generalized Model and Its Implications for Statistical Studies of Roll-Call Behavior." *Political Methodology* 2(3):249–266.
- Gelman, Andrew and Jennifer Hill. 2006. *Data Analysis Using Regression and Multilevel/Hierarchical Models*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Hanmer, Michael J. and K. Ozan Kalkan. 2008. "Behind the Curve: Clarifying the Best Approach to Calculating Predicted Probabilities and Marginal Effects from Limited Dependent Variable Models." Poster Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Political Methodology Section of the American Political Science Association, July 9-12, 2008. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Hix, Simon. 2002. "Parliamentary Behavior with Two Principals: Preferences, Parties, and Voting in the European Parliament." *American Journal of Political Science* 46(3):688–698.
- Hix, Simon. 2004. "Electoral Institutions and Legislative Behavior: Explaining Voting-Defection in the European Parliament." *World Politics* 56(1):194–223.
- Hug, Simon. 2010. "Selection Effects in Roll Call Votes." *British Journal of Political Science* 40(1):225–235.
- Hug, Simon and Danielle Martin. 2011. "Constituency Preferences and MP Preferences: The Electoral Connection." Paper prepared for presentation at the

Annual Meeting of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, March 30 - April 3, 2011.

- Hug, Simon and Danielle Martin. 2012. "How electoral systems affect MPs' positions." *Electoral Studies* 31:192–200.
- Hug, Simon and Lucas Leemann. 2010. "Modelling the strategic interactions in representative democracies with referendums." Paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Conference of the Midwest Political Science Association, Chicago, April 22-25, 2010.
- Hug, Simon and Pascal Sciarini. 2009. Parties and their success in the Swiss parliament. In *Demokratie als Leidenschaft*, ed. Adrian Vatter, Frédéric Varone and Fritz Sager. Bern: Haupt pp. 117–138.
- Jackson, John E. and John W. Kingdon. 1992. "Ideology, Interest Group Scores, and Legislative Voters." *American Journal of Political Science* 36:805–823.
- Kam, Christopher. 2001. "Do Ideological Preferences Explain Parliamentary Behaviour: Evidence from Great Britain and Canada." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 7(4):89–126.
- Kam, Christopher. 2008. *Party Discipline and Parliamentary Politics*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 1993. "Where's the Party?" *British Journal of Political Science* 23(2):235.
- Krehbiel, Keith. 2000. "Party Discipline and Measures of Partisanship." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(2):206–221.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter and Alexander H. Trechsel. 2008. *The Politics of Switzerland*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Martin Dolezal, Marc Helbling, Dominic Höglinger, Swen Hutter and Bruno Wüest. 2012. *Restructuring Political Conflict in Western Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, Martin Dolezal, Simon Bornschier and Timotheos Frey. 2008. *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Levitt, Steven D. 1996. "How Do Senators Vote? Disentangling the Role of Voter Preferences, Party Affiliation, and Senator Ideology." *American Economic Review* 86(3):425–441.
- Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Lindstädt, René, Jonathan B. Slapin and Ryan J. Vander Wielen. 2011. "Balancing Competing Demands: Position-Taking and Election Proximity in the European Parliament." *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 36(1):37–70.
- Lüthi, Ruth, Luzius Meyer and Hans Hirter. 1991. Fraktionsdisziplin und die Vertretung von Partiukulärinteressen im Nationalrat. In *Das Parlament - "Oberste Gewalt des Bundes"?*, ed. Parlamentsdienst. Bern: Haupt pp. 53–71.
- Lutz, Georg. 2009. "The Swiss Open Ballot PR System: Its Origin and its Effect on Strategic Behavior of Parties and Candidates." *Paper presented at the workshop on "Personal and Party Representation", 18-19 June 2009, Barcelona, Spain*.
- Maskin, Eric and Jean Tirole. 2004. "The Politician and the Judge: Accountability in Government." *American Economic Review* 94(4):1034–1054.
- Mayhew, David R. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- McElroy, Gail. 2008. Intra-Party Politics at the Trans-national Level: Party Switching in the European Parliament. In *Intra-Party Politics and Coalition Governments in Parliamentary Democracies*, ed. Daniela Giannetti and Kenneth Benoit. London: Routledge.
- Müller, Wolfgang C. 2000. "Political Parties in Parliamentary Democracies: Making Delegation and Accountability Work." *European Journal of Political Research* 37(3):309–333.

- Owens, John E. 2003. "Explaining Party Cohesion and Discipline in Democratic Legislatures: Purposiveness and Contexts." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 9(4):12–40.
- Przeworski, Adam, Susan C. Stokes and Bernard Manin, eds. 1999. *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Rice, Stuart A. 1925. "The Behavior of Legislative Groups: A Method of Measurement." *Political Science Quarterly* 40(1):60–72.
- Schwarz, Daniel. 2009. *Zwischen Fraktionszwang und freiem Mandat : Eine Untersuchung des fraktionsabweichenden Stimmverhaltens im schweizerischen Nationalrat zwischen 1996 und 2005*. Norderstedt: Books on Demand.
- Shugart, Matthew Soberg and John M. Carey. 1992. *Presidents and Assemblies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Sieberer, Ulrich. 2006. "Party Unity in Parliamentary Democracies: A Comparative Analysis." *Journal of Legislative Studies* 12(2):150–178.
- Skjæveland, Asbjorn. 1999. "A Danish Party Cohesion Cycle." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 22(2):121–136.
- Snyder, James M. Jr. and Tim Groseclose. 2000. "Estimating Party Influence in Congressional Roll-Call Voting." *American Journal of Political Science* 44(APR 2):187–205.
- Strøm, Kaare. 2000. "Delegation and Accountability in Parliamentary Democracies." *European Journal of Political Research* 37:261–289.
- Uslaner, Eric and Thomas Zittel. 2006. Comparative Legislative Behavior. In *Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions*, ed. R. A. W. Rhodes, Sarah A. Binder and Bert A. Rockman. Oxford University Press pp. 455–473.
- Varone, Frédéric, Isabelle Engeli, Pascal Sciarini and Roy Gava. 2011. "Agenda-Setting and Direct Democracy: The Rise of the Swiss People's Party." Department of political science and international relations, University of Geneva.



Wright, Gerald C. and Brian F. Schaffner. 2002. "The Influence of Party: Evidence from the State Legislatures." *American Political Science Review* 96(2):367–379.