

# B2.3 Intra-party Heterogeneity and its Political Consequences in Europe



**Director/** Marc Debus

**Researchers/** Markus Baumann, Jochen Müller

**Funding/** German Research Foundation (DFG)

## Project outline

### This project aims at

- enhancing the notion of parties being unitary actors,
- measuring ideological heterogeneity within parties, and
- exploring the causes and consequences of intra-party heterogeneity.

### Theoretical framework:

In our attempt to assess varying levels of intra-party heterogeneity, we take into account

- theories on political socialisation,
- the principal-agent approach, and
- incentives stemming from institutional constraints (e.g. electoral systems).

### Data and methods:

- Individual features of MPs and ministers
- Parliamentary speeches (analysed with computerised methods)
- Co-sponsorship of bills
- Legislative voting behaviour

### Cases:

- Belgium, Germany
- Czech Republic, Ireland
- Estonia, Norway
- Finland, Sweden

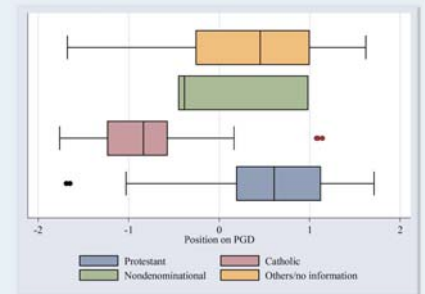
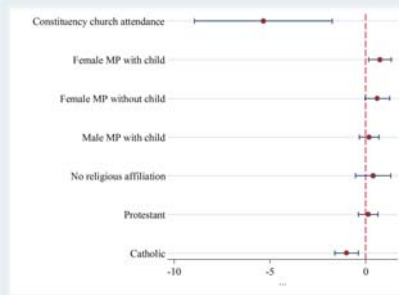
### Recent working papers:

- Bäck, Hanna, Marc Debus und Wolfgang C. Müller (2012): Intra-Party Diversity and Ministerial Selection in Coalition Governments. University of Lund, University of Mannheim, University of Vienna: Unpublished Manuscript (under review).
- Bäck, Hanna, Marc Debus and Jochen Müller (2013): Who is allowed to take the floor? Individual and party-level determinants of the number of legislative speeches delivered by Swedish MPs. (Political Studies Association Annual Conference, Cardiff, March 2013).
- Baumann, Markus, Marc Debus and Jochen Müller (2013): Beyond Party Unity: MPs' Personal Traits and Legislative Behavior on Moral Policy Issues. University of Mannheim: Unpublished Manuscript (under review).
- Baumann, Markus (2013): Tabling Priorities: Individualized MP behavior and Electoral Incentives in Parliamentary Questions. (MPSA Annual Meeting, Chicago, April 2013).
- Baumann, Markus and Dominic Nyhuis (2013): Intra-party Networks in the German Bundestag. (INSNA XXXIII. Sunbelt Social Networks Conference, Hamburg, May 2013).
- Debus, Marc and Hanna Bäck (2013): Hört die Signale: Determinanten der Länge und Inhalte von Reden in der 14. Legislaturperiode des Deutschen Bundestags. University of Mannheim, University of Lund: Unpublished Manuscript (under review).

## An outlook along three studies

MPs' personal attitudes affecting their behaviour in the decision on pre-implantation diagnostics (PGD) in the German Bundestag in 2011:

- Behaviour of MPs is influenced by partisan issues and constituency preferences...
- ...and by their personal traits such as religious denomination, gender and parental status.

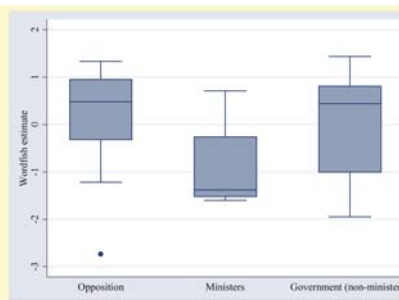
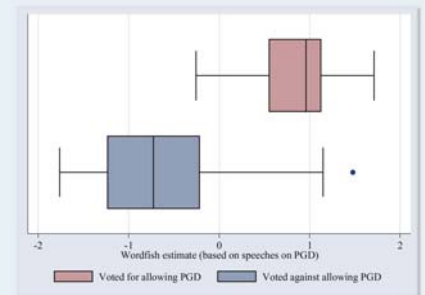


**Above:** Catholic MPs communicated more restrictive standpoints regarding PGD in their legislative speeches.

**Left:** The likelihood of co-sponsoring a more permissive regulation depends on church attendance in the constituency. Furthermore, personal characteristics have a significant impact.

**Right:** The final vote was on the most permissive initiative. MPs who voted against the regulation had voiced more sceptic positions in the debate:

- Positions derived from the speeches are tightly interlocked with voting behaviour
- Evaluating parliamentary speeches is a reasonable tool for analysing intra-party heterogeneity, particularly where party unity is high.

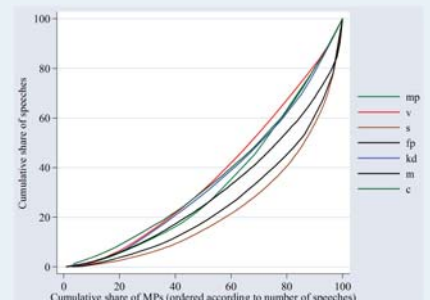
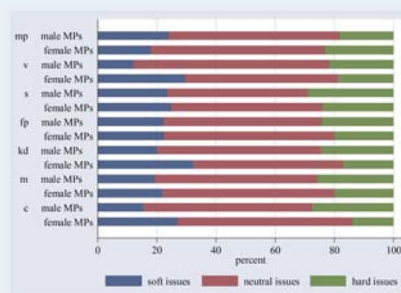


2001 Irish debate on abortion:

- Not followed by a free-vote
- Party cohesive voting behaviour
- Analysing speeches reveals diverging positions
- Cabinet members adopted more conservative positions than did MPs from the government parties not holding cabinet offices

Allocation of speaking time to issues and individual MPs in the Swedish Riksdag (2002-2010)

**Right:** Unequal allocation of speaking time: Varying dominance of frontbenchers across parties.



**Left:** MPs' presence on the floor depends on the policy area at stake: Most parties have a gender-specific division of labour in parliamentary debates; women speak more often on "soft" issues, whereas men speak frequently on "hard" issues.