

Review: “Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose?”

Unified Germany in Perspective

Hardware



- ▶ Territory: + 44 %
 - ▶ Population \approx + 25 %
 - ▶ New neighbours: Poland
 - ▶ Unemployment: from 7.9 to 13 per cent – and back to 7 per cent
 - ▶ Soldiers: from 670,000 to less than 250,000
 - ▶ But use of military force re-established as a means of politics
- ▶ Lots of derelict industrial sites, massive environmental problems
 - ▶ Massive internal migration

Federalism/Constitution/Foreign policies

- ▶ Number of Länder increased by almost 50 per cent
- ▶ Länder/Germany even more heterogeneous than before 1990
- ▶ Consensus building in Federal Council ever more complex
- ▶ No systemic change
- ▶ Changes to constitution mostly cosmetic. . .

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- ▶ . . . until 2006/09: reform of Federalism
- ▶ Still exclusively *representative* concept of democracy at federal level
- ▶ More assertive foreign policies; Europe \leftrightarrow US more problematic

Welfare State/Economy

- ▶ Success of democracy in West Germany linked to Welfare State
- ▶ Which was built on the economic success of West Germany
- ▶ Economy less competitive in 1990s, but recently rebounding
- ▶ Welfare state still based on contributions (conservative model)
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- ▶ But recent shift toward (more) Anglo-Saxon model
- ▶ Permanent change? Partly undone by Great Coalitions 05-09, 13- ?
- ▶ Excellent performance during economic crisis ...
 - ▶ Due to reforms?
 - ▶ Large-scale state intervention/corporatism?
 - ▶ Structural adaption during 1990s?

Welfare State/Economy II

- ▶ Mass unemployment a permanent feature of the system in both halves, but recently massive improvements
- ▶ Taxation/Labour market: still high rates & confusion, but improvements
- ▶ Economy much more competitive than 10 years ago
- ▶ Economic gap between East and West will not close within next 30 years – so what ???

Political Culture/attitudes

- ▶ Political culture split
- ▶ Slightly different notion of democracy / ideal type of government in the East
- ▶ Easterners less trustful (probably)
- ▶ Socialisation
- ▶ **Plus** massive differences in economic situation
- ▶ Differences will not disappear quickly
- ▶ Demand for political alternatives/politicians caught

Party System

- ▶ Split party system established during 1990s
 - ▶ 2+2 in West Germany
 - ▶ 3 'major' parties in East Germany
- ▶ Lower level of party identification, more volatility, greater impact of short-term factors
- ▶ Especially in East Germany
- ▶ From 2005/07 "Fluid Five-party System" (with regional variation)

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- ▶ (Economic) Reform not a political issue?
 - ▶ Economic Crises
 - ▶ *Rollback* a major political issue

Why do people vote the way they do?

1. Political Sociology: Cleavages, Groups loyalties
2. Ann-Arbor:
 - ▶ Party identification
 - ▶ Candidates
 - ▶ Issues
3. Rational Choice: Issues

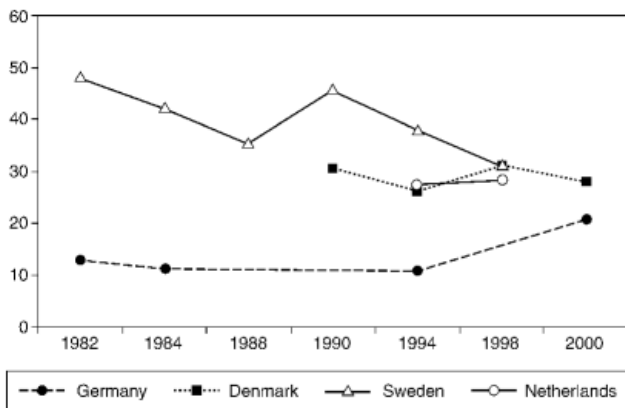
Parties and public opinion

- ▶ Do parties have to represent voters?
- ▶ Or can they shape the distribution of preferences?
- ▶ If so, under which circumstances?
- ▶ Directional voting

Research Design

- ▶ Look at public opinion
 - ▶ Security/Equality
 - ▶ Over time
 - ▶ Compare supporters of major left/right parties
- ▶ Look at party manifestos
 - ▶ Emphasis
 - ▶ Orientation of major right party
 - ▶ Polarisation

Figures & Tables: Support for benefit cuts



^a The absence of values for some elections reflects the omission of the welfare benefits item from national election studies.

Figures & Tables: Support for retrenchment

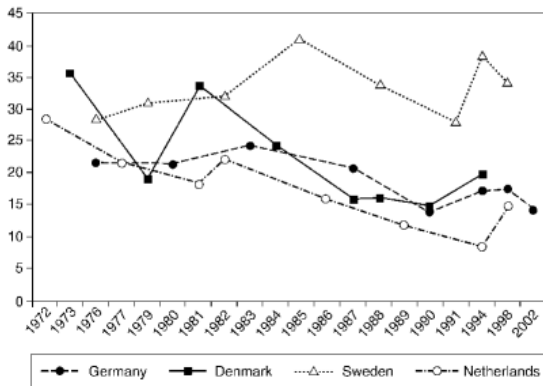
TABLE 4
GERMAN PUBLIC OPINION 2003-04

	Reform course % agree	Coal subsidies*	Home-owner bonus*	Job creation*	Commuter tax break*	Social assistance*	Unemployment spt*
Nov 03		61	44	42	41	37	34
Feb 04	35						
May 04		64	52	45	43	41	35
Aug 04	46						

*% agree with benefit reductions.

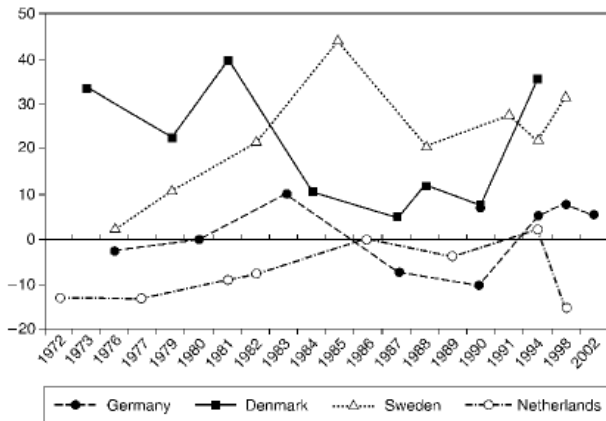
Figures & Tables: Emphasis on Welfare/Market

FIGURE 4
EMPHASIS MARKET ECONOMY + WELFARE



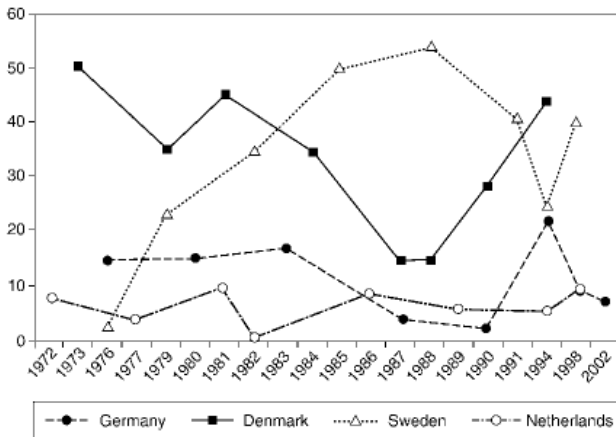
Figures & Tables: Position centre-right party

FIGURE 5
CENTRE-RIGHT PARTY: MARKET ECONOMY – WELFARE



Figures & Tables: Polarisation centre-right vs. centre-left

FIGURE 6
POLARISATION CENTRE-RIGHT – CENTRE-LEFT PARTY



Conclusion

- ▶ SPD and especially CDU not engaged in “cultivating” preferences for welfare state reform
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- ▶ SPD and especially CDU not engaged in “cultivating” preferences for welfare state reform
- ▶ 2005 Land election disasters and federal election deadlock largely due to this
- ▶ Confirmed by Grand Coalition policies and 09-11
- ▶ Economic Crises: “We’re all Keynesianists now”
- ▶ Further reforms unlikely

Class questions

1. Do you buy the story?
2. In your view, what are the most important changes in / the most interesting features of the “New Germany”?
3. What else could/should have been covered on this course?