

Understanding Roll Call Vote Requests and their Consequences

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Second intermediary report

1 Summary

The second year of the present research project has been devoted to four main tasks. First, the expert survey was launched with the active support of the *Association of Secretaries General of Parliaments*¹ and the *Inter-Parliamentary Union*.² Reto Wüest was largely responsible for drafting and implementing the online survey, while Simone Wegmann collected information on the experts to be contacted.

As we carried out this data collection in waves and started with experts of European parliaments we first focused on analyzing the data collected for these chambers. A first paper presenting this data will be presented at a workshop (ETHZ May 2012) and two international conferences (EPSA Berlin June 2012, and ECPR Standing Group on Parliaments Dublin June 2012). A forthcoming newspaper article in *Le Temps* presents these results to a broader audience in relation to the parliamentary initiative to be debated in the upper house regarding the introduction of an electronic voting system. We will carry out similar analyses for all parliamentary chambers of the world and make available, first for the experts having participated in the survey, and then the broader academic community, the data collected.

Second, in the process of this data collection we have also coordinated our research efforts with a team of researchers at Emory (Atlanta: Clifford Carrubba) and Washington University (St. Louis: Brian Crisp and Matthew Gabel) who carry out a related research project financed by American National Science Foundation. A research visit this winter has allowed coordinating our research efforts. While the team in Geneva focused in this reporting year on the expert survey, the teams at Emory and Washington University focused on collecting information on data availability of voting in parliaments. In addition first steps were undertaken to expand on the theoretical model proposed by Carrubba, Gabel and Hug (2008a) and to expand the empirical analysis on the European parliament initiated in Carrubba, Gabel and Hug (2008b). This joint efforts have led to a joint invitation to participate at the Conference “Open Legislative Data in Paris. A Conference of the Third Kind with Hacktivists and Academics” at Sciences Po Paris (July 2012).

Third, we have made already considerable progress in analyzing parliamentary voting and roll call voting data under various perspectives. First, the published article by Hug and Martin (2012) uses particularities of the Swiss political system to position for the first time both members of parliament (MPs) and voters in the same ideological space, based on information on voting behavior in parliament

¹The two co-presidents Stephen Mark and Agathe Le Néhanec were very helpful in this endeavor.

²Andrew Richardson and Hiroko Yamaguchi provided invaluable help and advice.

and in referendums. Hug and Martin (2011) expand this analysis to cover not only the lower house (as in Hug and Martin, 2012) but to include the upper house as well. The data on voting in the upper house was collected on the basis of video recordings and allowed us to publish two articles in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (see under 2). Relying on similar ideas we also intervened through an article in the *Weltwoche* on the rather shoddy information policy of the Federal government and questionable analyses on legislator ideology reported in newspapers (see under 2).

These analyses also inspired and drew upon the forthcoming publication by Hug (2012b) who reviews in detail the literature on parliamentary voting, showing both the shortcomings and strengths of this literature. It also sketches out important future research avenues related to the present research project.

Following up on the paper by Carrubba, Gabel and Hug (2008b) the paper by Hug (2011) and the forthcoming publication by Hug (2012a)³ evaluate empirically several of the hypotheses theoretically derived by Carrubba, Gabel and Hug (2008a). The former paper will be submitted for publication after presentation at two conferences this fall (APSA New Orleans August-September 2012, ECPR Standing Group on European Politics Tampere September 2012).

Two papers deal with voting unity and party discipline. Traber, Hug and Sciarini (2011) assess whether party unity in the Swiss lower house is affected by the electoral calendar. They find evidence that for some parties approaching elections actually lead to a changed behavior, but these effects are conditional on the importance of the topic and the visibility of the vote (i.e., whether it is a roll call vote that is published or not). This paper has received a revise and resubmit from *The Journal of Legislative Studies* and will be revised and resubmitted shortly. The paper by Hug and Wüest (2011), which has been revised after a first presentation at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops in St. Gallen (April 2011) and presented at the Annual meeting of the MPSA (Chicago April 2012), studies party discipline by taking advantage of the frequent party switchers in the Polish lower house. Employing both an item-response theory (IRT) model to estimate the ideological positions of MPs and a matching technique to address the non-random decision to switch party, they find that changes in the ideological position after switching parties depends on the ideology of the sending and receiving party. This paper, once the analyses will have been expanded, will be submitted for publication to a international peer-reviewed journal.

Related to these analyses is the paper by Hug and Leemann (2010) which assesses the strategic interactions between political actors in parliament all the way leading to popular votes. This paper was presented at an international conference (EPSA Dublin June 2011) during the reporting period and is in the process of being revised to be submitted to an international peer reviewed journal

³First to be presented at a conference in Taipeh and then to be published in a journal (see below 2).

for publication.

Finally, apart the data collection on voting procedures we have also collected information on voting behavior in two international bodies, i.e., the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and the United Nations Human Rights Council.⁴ The former data has been analyzed under the perspective charted out by Carrubba, Gabel and Hug (2008a) and presented in the paper by Hug (2012c) presented this winter at the 5th Conference on The Political Economy of International Organizations (Villanova January 2012). A revised version will be presented at the Annual Meeting of the APSA (New Orleans August-September 2012). Similarly, the latter data has been analyzed in detail by Hug and Lukács (2011), and based on both datasets an article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (see below 2) has presented an analysis of the first ten years of Switzerland in the United Nations.

Fifth the doctoral student Reto Wüest and the research assisant Simone Wegmann have both made considerable headway in their dissertation projects. Reto Wüest's dissertation project has been approved by the scientific committee and Simone Wegmann is in the process of completing her project.

2 Research Output

Publications peer reviewed journals

Simon Hug, Danielle Martin. How electoral systems affect MPs' positions. *Electoral Studies* (2012) 31:192-200.

Publications newspaper articles

Simon Hug, Richard Lukacs, Simone Wegmann. In der Uno ist die Schweiz Japan am nächsten. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 16.4.2012, 9.

Sarah Bütikofer, Simon Hug. Licht in die "Dunkelkammer." *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 10.11.2011, 24.

Simon Hug, Reto Wüest. Achsen des Unsinnns. *Weltwoche*, 10.11.2011, 39.

Sarah Bütikofer, Simon Hug, Danielle Martin. Koalitionen im Stöckli. Im Ständerat dominiert die bürgerliche Allianz. *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 13.10.2011.

Forthcoming publications peer reviewed journals

Simon Hug (2013 forthcoming). The European Parliament after Lisbon (and before) *EurAmerica*

⁴A similar data collection effort was undertaken for the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, the predecessor of the United Nations Human Rights Council, but has not been yet completed. A short research note drawing on our article in the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (see below) is in the process of being written.

Simon Hug (2013 forthcoming), Parliamentary Voting in Wolfgang Müller and Hanne Narud, (eds.) *Party Governance and Party Democracy* (2013)

Forthcoming publications newspaper articles

Simon Hug, Simone Wegmann and Reto Wüest. Quelle transparence pour le Conseil des Etats. *Le Temps*. Juin 2012

Papers to be submitted

The following papers will be submitted to international peer reviewed journals in the months that follow: Hug and Leemann (2010), Hug and Lukács (2011), Hug and Wüest (2011), Hug and Martin (2011), Hug (2011), Hug (2012*c*), Hug, Wegmann and Wüest (2012). The paper by Traber, Hug and Sciarini (2011) is in the process of being revised after receiving a revise and resubmit from *The Journal of Legislative Studies*.

References

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- Carrubba, Clifford J., Matthew Gabel and Simon Hug. 2008*b*. “Voting at the surface. Roll call votes in the European Parliament.” Paper prepared for presentation at the 2nd Conference on the Political Economy of International Organizations January 29-31, 2009 in Geneva, Switzerland.
- Hug, Simon. 2011. “Roll call votes in the European parliament.” Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR General Conference University of Iceland, Reykjavik (August 25 - 27, 2011).
- Hug, Simon. 2012*a*. “The European Parliament after Lisbon (and before).” Paper prepared for presentation at the International Conference on “Beyond Lisbon Treaty: Re-examining EU Institutions and Governance” (Institute of European and American Studies (IEAS), Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan, September 7-8, 2012).
- Hug, Simon. 2012*b*. Parliamentary Voting. In *Party Governance and Party Democracy.*, ed. Wolfgang C. Müller and Hanne Marthe Narud.
- Hug, Simon. 2012*c*. “What’s in a vote?” Paper prepared for presentation at the 5th Conference on The Political Economy of International Organizations, Villanova, January, 2012.
- 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 Reto Wüest. 2011. “Ideological positions of party switchers.” Paper prepared for presentation at the ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshop, April 13-18, St. Gallen.
- Hug, Simon and Richard Lukács. 2011. “Preferences or blocs? Voting in the United Nations Human Rights Council.” Paper prepared for presentation at the conference The Political Economy of International Organizations, ETH and University Zurich, January 2011.
- Hug, Simon, Simone Wegmann and Reto Wüest. 2012. “Parliamentary voting procedures in comparison.” Paper prepared for presentation at the 2nd Annual General Conference Of The European Political Science Association, Berlin 21-23 June 2012.

Traber, Denise, Simon Hug and Pascal Sciarini. 2011. "Party Unity in the Swiss Parliament. The Electoral Connection." Université de Genève.