

---

# Making, Breaking, Acting. Governments in Parliamentary Democracies in their Institutional Context

Universität Greifswald - SoSe23 - Wednesday 16-18

Sophie Suda - 03834 420 3154 - sophie.suda@uni-greifswald.de

Office Hours: Friday 9-12 - ELP 3.41

---

## 1 Abstract

In this seminar, we look at all aspects concerning governments, mainly in parliamentary democracies. Three blocs of topics will be covered: how governments are formed, how they end, and how they work. First, we deal with how governments are formed: how do parties find their coalition partners? How do institutions shape coalition choices? How does the allocation of cabinet portfolios work? Second, we look at how governments end: this includes factors that make the breaking of governments more likely, and mechanisms that can be installed to prevent premature termination. Third, we look at how governments act. Since this is a broad topic, this bloc is limited to the relationship between parliament and government, and the extent to which parties in government fulfil their campaign pledges. While the main focus is on the content of our readings, we will also look at how to empirically measure different concepts, how to find data sets and how to perform a quantitative analysis.

## 2 Course Requirements

Please be aware that the first three requirements need to be fulfilled in order to pass the course. For those who wish to write their seminar paper in this course, all four apply. If you decide to drop the course, please let me know.

### 2.1 Readings

Each week, there will be a short reading, which is necessary to follow the course.

### 2.2 Summary of Dataset

This short exercise is really just for you. You will get a dataset assigned where you will have to fill in a table with the most important information, such as access, variables and time frame. In the end, we will have a big table with the most commonly used datasets in political science, which will help you for this term paper as well as future research. Deadline is **June 27th** .

---

### 2.3 Proposal for Seminar Paper

You will have to submit a proposal with your research question and a summary of 1-2 pages to me by **July 12th**. Then, you will have to **critically comment** on a colleague's proposal within 7 days. You will receive a colleague's feedback plus my own that you can base your seminar paper on. No specific format or literature is required.

### 2.4 Seminar Paper

In the end, you will have to write a seminar paper in English or German answering a research question of your choice. About **7-10 pages** are required. The paper needs to address the research question in an empirical way, which means using a (bivariate or multivariate) **regression** using Stata or R. However, the empirical results do not influence the grade! Deadline is **August 31st**.

You are encouraged to come talk to me about your research question or any problems you may encounter. Further details on how to write a seminar paper will be discussed during the course.

## 3 Stata Help

Kohler, Ulrich and Frauke Kreuter (2012). *Data Analysis Using Stata* De Gruyter.

Stata Tutorial Germán Rodríguez (<http://data.princeton.edu/stata/>)

idre UCLA (<http://www.ats.ucla.edu/stat/stata/>)

**Stata Help Desk on Moodle**

---

## 4 Course Structure

### 1 Introduction (12th April)

No readings

### 2 Presidential vs. Parliamentary Systems (19th April)

Linz, Juan (1990): The Perils of Presidentialism. *Journal of Democracy* 1(1): 51-69.

### 3 Government Formation I: Forming Coalitions (26th April)

Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver and Peter Mair (2011): "Building and Maintaining a Government." in: Gallagher et al. *Representative Government in Modern Europe*. McGraw-Hill: 381-403.

### 4 Government Formation II: Duration (3rd May)

Ecker, Alejandro and Thomas M. Meyer (2015): The duration of government formation processes in Europe. *Research & Politics*, 2(4).

### 5 Government Formation III: Ministerial Selection (10th May)

Bäck, Hanna, Marc Debus and Patrick Dumont (2011): Who gets what in Coalition Governments? Predictors of Portfolio Allocation in Parliamentary Democracies. *European Journal of Political Research* 50: 441-478.

### 6 Government Action I: Partisan Theory and the Welfare State (17th May)

Schmidt, Manfred G. (1996): When parties matter. A review of the possibilities and limits of partisan influence on public policy. *European Journal of Political Research* 30(2): 155-183.

### 7 Dies Academicus - session cancelled (24th May)

No seminar

### 8 Government Action II: Populist and Radical Parties in Government (7th June)

Huber, Robert and Christian Schimpf (2016): A drunken guest in Europe? The influence of populist radical right parties on democratic quality. *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Politikwissenschaft* 10(2): 103-129.

### 9 Voters' Expectations: Compromise (14th June)

Plescia, Carolina, Alejandro Ecker and Thomas M. Meyer (2022): Do party supporters accept compromise in coalition government? *European Journal of Political Research* 61(1):

---

214-229.

### **10 Self-study (21st June)**

Group Work "Testing Partisan Theory"

You will get a dataset, with which you can test if left or right governments implement different policies.

### **11 Relationship of Coalition Parties (28th June)**

Imre, Michael, Alejandro Ecker, Thomas M. Meyer and Wolfgang C. Müller (2023): Coalition mood in European parliamentary democracies. *British Journal of Political Science*, 53(1), 104-121.

### **12 Consequences of Govt Behaviour: Economic Voting (*date forthcoming*)**

Debus, Marc, Mary Stegmaier and Jane Tosun. (2014). Economic voting under coalition governments: Evidence from Germany. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 2(1), 49-67.

### **13 Government Termination (12th July)**

Lewandowsky, Marcel, Maximilian Andorff-Woller, Erik Baltz, Lisa Klagges and Sophie Suda (2023): Friendly foes or enemies within? Assessing the (in)stability of coalition governments with populists in Europe. *forthcoming*.

### **14 Discussion of Term Papers and Semester Wrap-up (19th July)**

No readings