

Varieties of left-wing authoritarianism? The local foundations and intra-party heterogeneity of the German challenger party BSW

Online Appendix

Appendix 1

Table A1: Aggregated party positions (bridge statements only)

Party	The Left	Greens	SPD	BSW	FDP	CDU	AfD	N
General left/right	-.75	-.73	-.56	.10	.35	.47	.65	102
Democracy & Elections	-.94	-.76	-.65	-.12	-.26	-.06	.21	17
Gender	-.75	-.75	-.83	.50	.75	.75	1	12
Climate, Environment & Transport	-.50	-.83	-.37	.29	.71	.62	.96	26
Culture	-.1	-.1	-.50	-.63	.13	-.38	.63	4
Law & Order	-.67	-.46	-.29	-.08	.04	.96	.50	12
Migration & Integration	-.73	-.82	-.73	.45	.23	.55	.73	11
Social Affairs & Education	-.1	-.80	-.90	-.80	0	.30	-.10	5
Economy	-.92	-.46	-.63	-.08	.63	.29	.67	12
Socio-economic (version 1)	-.94	-.56	-.71	-.29	.44	.29	.44	17
Socio-cultural (version 1)	-.71	-.76	-.54	.16	.32	.49	.70	82
Socio-economic (version 2)	-.67	-.72	-.50	.06	.60	.49	.76	43
Socio-cultural (version 2)	-.80	-.72	-.62	.10	.14	.43	.57	56

Note: N is the number of VOTO statements on which the respective estimation is based. The positions can vary between -1 (very left) and +1 (very right).

Table A2: List of bridge statements and allocated policy areas

No.	Statement	Policy area
1	The electoral system for municipal elections with cumulation [giving several votes to a single person] and cross-voting [distributing votes across candidates from different parties] is too complicated.	Democracy & Elections
2	The minimum voting age for municipal elections should be lowered to 16.	Democracy & Elections
3	In [city name], more decisions should be made directly by the citizens.	Democracy & Elections
4	[city name] should increasingly support projects against left-wing extremism.	Democracy & Elections
5	[city name] should increasingly support projects against right-wing extremism.	Democracy & Elections
6	Non-EU foreigners living here should be granted the right to vote in municipal elections.	none
7	It is important that gender-neutral language is used in all official documents in [city name].	Gender
8	Leadership positions in public administration and municipal companies of [city name] should have an equal number of women and men [also known as gender parity].	Gender
9	[city name] should take in (additional refugees) [Municipalities have no direct influence on the allocation of refugees, but can take in more via initiatives such as Safe Harbors].	Migration & Integration
10	Muslim prayer rooms or mosques should not occupy prominent places in the cityscape.	Migration & Integration
11	The EU restricts the scope of action of municipalities too much.	Europe
12	Climate protection should be given greater importance than economic considerations in local political decisions.	Climate, Environment & Transport
13	[city name] should designate more areas for wind turbines.	Climate, Environment & Transport
14	Cultural offerings should be more strongly promoted by the city of [city name].	Culture
15	Important places and streets in [city name] should be monitored by video.	Law & Order
16	The police presence in public spaces in [city name] should be increased.	Law & Order
17	[city name] should reduce municipal spending.	Economy
18	Business tax for companies in [city name] should be reduced.	Economy
19	There should be more car-free zones in [city name].	Climate, Environment & Transport
20	[city name] already has enough 30 km/h zones.	Climate, Environment & Transport
21	The expansion of cycle paths in [city name] should not come at the expense of car traffic.	Climate, Environment & Transport
22	In [city name], more housing for low-income people should be designated.	Social Affairs & Education

Note: Number 6 was not assigned to any policy area because the coders disagreed on whether “Democracy & Elections” or “Migration & Integration” would be the more appropriate classification.

Table A3: Left-right self-placements by voter groups

Party	Min	25% quartile	Median	Mean	75% quartile	Max	N
The Left	-1	-0,8	-0,6	-0,64	-0,6	0,6	495
Greens	-1	-0,6	-0,4	-0,44	-0,4	1	1418
SPD	-1	-0,6	-0,4	-0,38	-0,2	1	732
BSW	-1	-0,6	-0,2	-0,22	0	1	424
FDP	-1	-0,2	0	0,04	0,2	0,6	166
CDU	-1	0	0,2	0,08	0,2	1	780
AfD	-1	0,2	0,4	0,34	0,6	1	893

Table A4: Aggregated positions of voter groups (bridge statements only)

Party	The Left	Greens	SPD	BSW	FDP	CDU	AfD	N
General left/right	-.42	-.39	-.14	.28	.30	.31	.62	102
Democracy & Elections	-.53	-.42	-.29	.11	.02	.07	.61	17
Gender	-.35	-.25	.06	.56	.62	.59	.81	12
Climate, Environment & Transport	-.47	-.65	-.24	.29	.38	.32	.70	26
Culture	-.81	-.65	-.61	-.46	-.23	-.34	-.14	4
Law & Order	-.13	.03	.29	.57	.39	.67	.63	12
Migration & Integration	-.38	-.35	-.06	.61	.38	.51	.83	11
Social Affairs & Education	-.77	-.59	-.54	-.46	.00	-.21	-.37	5
Economy	-.31	-.24	-.20	.06	.29	.08	.44	12
Socio-economic (version 1)	-.44	-.33	-.29	-.09	.22	.00	.21	17
Socio-cultural (version 1)	-.42	-.41	-.12	.34	.32	.35	.68	82
Socio-economic (version 2)	-.46	-.53	-.26	.14	.32	.20	.51	43
Socio-cultural (version 2)	-.39	-.29	-.07	.37	.29	.37	.67	56

Note: N is the number of VOTO statements on which the respective estimation is based. The positions can vary between -1 (very left) and +1 (very right).

Appendix 2

In order to validate our findings, we use data from the German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES), precisely the GLES 2025 cross-section post-election data (GLES 2025). These data include respondents' list votes in the 2025 German federal election as well as their left-right self-placements on an 11-point scale. This allows us to replicate Figure 1 based on GLES data. Results are shown in Figure A1.

Since Figure 1 is based on a purely East German sample, it is useful to additionally compare the VOTO-based results with those based only on East German GLES respondents. As the GLES data include a respective variable, this is technically possible; the results are shown in Figure A2.

Figure A1: Left-right self-placements by voter groups (based on GLES data)

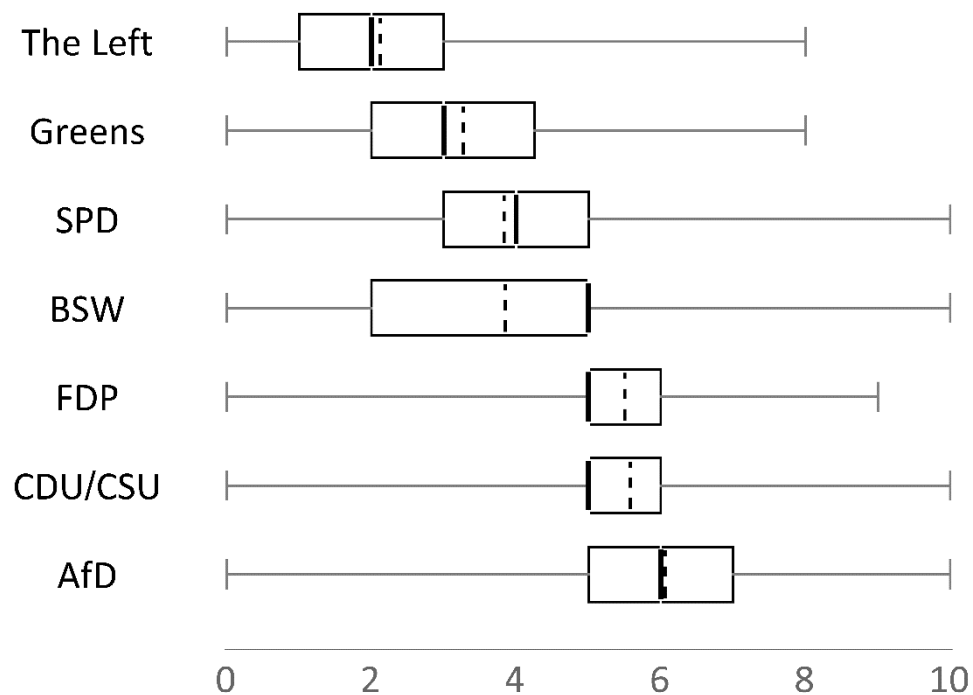
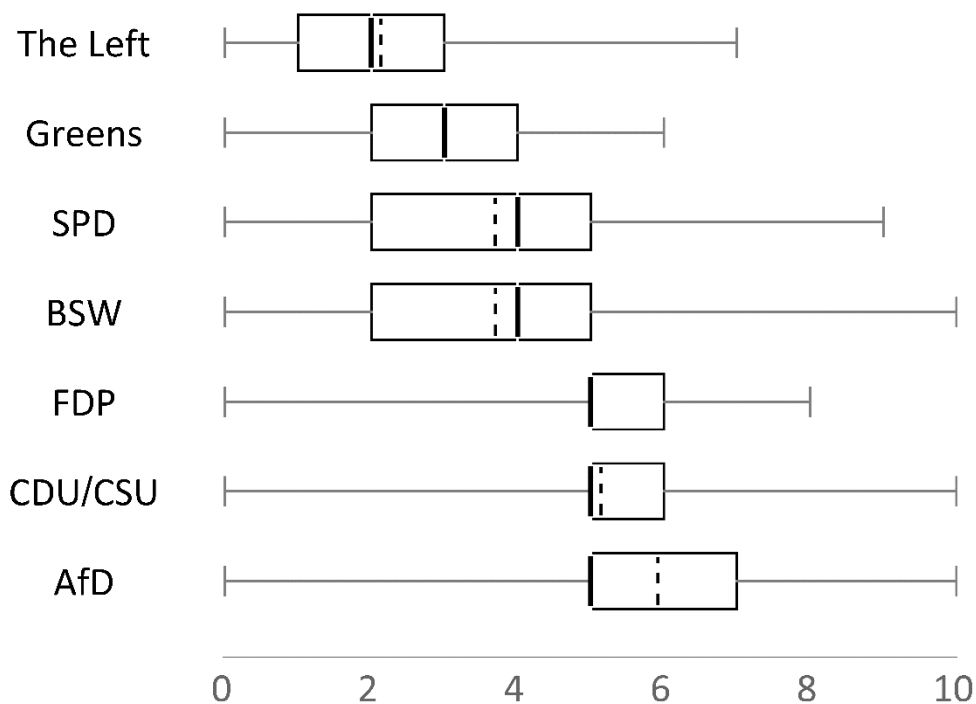


Figure A2: Left-right self-placements by voter groups (based on GLES data, East Germans only)



While there are some minor differences between the VOTO- and the GLES-based results, the more important finding is that the overall patterns shown in Figures 1, A1 and A2 are very similar. In particular, this is true for BSW voters, with the small exception that their positions resemble more those of SPD voters in the GLES data than in the VOTO data. Overall, the close correspondence between Figures 1 and A2 suggests that self-selection in the VOTO sample does not appear to substantially distort the ideological positioning of party electorates.

References to Appendix 2

GLES (2025). GLES Querschnitt 2025, Nachwahl (ZA10100; Version 2.0.0) [Data set]. GESIS, Köln.
<https://doi.org/10.4232/5.ZA10100.2.0.0> <https://doi.org/10.4232/5.ZA10100.2.0.0>