## Electoral Responsiveness in closed autocracies: Evidence from petitions in the former German Democratic Republic.

### **Hans Lueders**

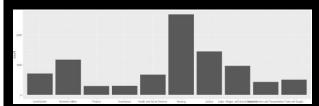
"I propose that closed autocracies engage in cycles of responsiveness before uncontested elections to assure citizens of their competence and raise popular support. They do so to mitigate the short-term destabilizing effects of elections."

Replication by Philip Kruger

## Hypothesis

#### **Elections:**

- East Germany was an Authoritarian state without free elections from 1945 to 1990.
- There were elections every three years where there was only 1 candidate on the ballot.
- The last election was reported to have 99.7% turnout with 99.94% voting for the government.



#### Petitions:

- Petitions were could be sent by individual citizens to any level of government
- Between 0.5-1 million were submitted each vear.
- They could be about anything from personal housing to foreign policy.
- This study measures the response speed and success rate to test for responsiveness to voters.
- Government higher ups want to solve petitions to stop revolutions and uprisings. (especially around elections).
- Local officials want to solve petitions to get good real turnout and vote share at elections to move up in the party.

## Replication formulas

This study has 2 outcome variables:

- The response time = 1+ln(date\_petition\_answered date\_petiton\_received)
- Positive resolution: dichotomous 0, 1 variable.

This paper statistically tests:

- Response time 90 days before an election compared to 90 days after an election for the 1979, 1981 and 1984 elections.
- Increase in positively resolved petitions before and after the 1982 election.
- Response time for petitions critical of the government around all elections.

It uses simple fixed effects linear regression with the covariates:

- Dichotomous Before/After Election
- · Number of Pending Petitions
- District of Petitioner
- Year completed
- Day of Year
- Dichotomous Positive Resolution

		7	lable 1:							Table 2:			
			Depende	ent variable:						100000000000000000000000000000000000000	CARL SECTION AND AND		
	log(timediffTOPCODED + 1)				200000e					ndent variable:			
			CM	CM		all petitions	all petitions	all petitions	tive resolution) all petitions	housing	non-		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
preALL_2	0.193**		0.153	0.193***				-0.011	-0.120	-0.026	-0.011		0
electionALL	(0.095)	(0.132)	0.101)	(0.069)			preALL_2	(0.061)	(0.082)	(0.063)	(0.058)	(0.161)	(0
electionALL	(0.000)	(0.000) (0	0.000)	(0.000)			electionALL	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.101)	(4
pre1989				derese.	-0.265***	-0.282***	,	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0.000)	(0
					(0.032)	(0.035)	n_net	0.002*	0.002***	0.002**	0.002**	0.002	0
n_net	(0.001)		0.001	(0.001)	(0.00004)	(0.0001)	7527-2928-147-1552	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.001)	(0.002)	(0
preALL 2:electionALL	-0.314***		0.296***	-0.314***	(0.00004)	(0.0001)	preALL.2:electionALL	0.077*	0.090**	0.091**	0.077**	0.240***	0
proceedings	(0.089)		0.092)	(0.092)				(0.040)	(0.046)	(0.042)	(0.030)	(0.081)	(0
Day-FE?	yes	yes	yes	yes			Day-FE? Year-FE?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
Year-FE?	yes		yes	yes			Year-FE? County-FE?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
County-FE?	yes		yes	yes	yes		zip code-FE?	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	
zip code-FE?		yes				yes	County x year?		yes	VOS			
County x year? SE clustered by	county		yes ounty con	inty and month-year	county	zip code	SE clustered by	county	zip code	county	county and month-year	county	co
Observations	3,737		3,737 con	3.737	4,770	4,770	Observations	2.625	2,621	2.625	2.625	852	1
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.090		0.089	0.090	0.166	0.140	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.029	0.072	0.059	0.029	0.021	- 6
Note:			*n<0.1: **n<	<0.05; ***p<0.01			Note:			*n<0.1: **	p<0.05; ***p<0.01		
			38 77 E	171 27	_					3 1	20 0 0		
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	1000 JUL 1000				30								
		Dependent variable: Response time (log days) 1(Central government response)							amber Prof	bability of No Res	ponse Before and After an Ele	ection for the	Counci
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	Response (1)					Probability of No Resp	nse Before and After an Election for	the People's Ch	2 -	-		Cuon for the	Counci
re1989		time (log days)	1(Central g	government response)		nature.	nse Before and After an Election for	the People's Ch	5 -	- Marine		accounter an	Counc
	(1) -0.101*** (0.036)	time (log days) (2)	1(Central g (3)	(4) 0.005 (0.022)	ouse	nature.	nse Belore and After an Election fol	the People's Ch	200117	- Marie Contraction of the Contr		ecasii isi ak	Counci
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haracter, criticism	(1) -0.101*** (0.036)	(2) -0.125*** (0.025)	1(Central g (3) 0.066***	(4) 0.005 (0.022)		- There are a second	ise before and After an election for	the People's Ch	0.8 1.0	- Andrew	The same of the sa	coon for the	Counci
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haracter_criticism esponse_centralgov .net re1989-character_criticism re1989-response_centralgov	(1) -0.101*** (0.036) -0.110*** (0.040)  0.001*** (0.00005) -0.359*** (0.058)	(2) (2) (-0.125*** (0.025) (0.025) (0.035) (0.0035) (0.0004) (0.0004) (0.053)	1(Central g (3) 0.066*** (0.019) -0.0001*** (0.00003)	(4) 0.005 (0.022) -0.103*** (0.019) -0.0001* (0.00003) (0.075** (0.031)	Probability of No Response	Before Election	40 60		Probability of No Response 02 04 06 08 10	- After Election	20 40		
acter, criticism onse .centralgov 4 989:character.criticism 989:response.centralgov nty-FE?	(1) -0.101*** (0.036) -0.110*** (0.040)  0.001*** (0.00005) -0.359*** (0.058)	(2) (2) (2) (2) (2) (2) (3) (4) (4) (5) (4) (5) (5) (6) (6) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7) (7	1(Central g (3) 0.066*** (0.019) -0.0001*** (0.00003)	(4) 0.005 (0.022) -0.103*** (0.019) -0.0001* (0.00003) 0.175*** (0.031)	Probability of No Response	Before Election	40 60		Probability of No Response 02 04 06 08 10	- After Election	20 40		

### **New Covariates Theory**

The theory supposes that one reason that politicians are more responsive to petitions before elections to raise popular support to "mitigate the short-term destabilizing effects of elections". This is particularly true for higher ups in the party.

As such I propose that the increased response time and positive responses before elections will tend towards areas where unrest is more likely.

Using the district column in the dataset, I determine the Bezirk (county) and if it is urban or rural.

My hypothesis is that there would be a faster response time and more positive responses in western Bezike and around West Berlin than eastern Bezirke and that there would be faster response times and more positive responses in urban Bezirke than rural Bezirke.



# Results

	Table 4:	ero continuos con control			
	Dependent variable:				
	Response time (log days)	1(Central government response			
	(1)	(2)			
PCpetitions.preALL_2	0.182	0.023			
	(0.113)	(0.061)			
PCpetitions.electionALL					
as.factor(bezirk)chemnitz	-0.089	$-0.047^{\circ}$			
	(0.071)	(0.028)			
as.factor(bezirk)cottbus	-0.138	-0.032			
9000000 and a 400000000000000000000000000000000000	(0.101)	(0.041)			
as.factor(bezirk)dresden	-0.133**	-0.046*			
ON THE COURT OF THE CASE OF THE COURT OF THE	(0.064)	(0.025)			
as.factor(bezirk)erfurt	-0.032	0.006			
Marco Charles Control	(0.090)	(0.035)			
as.factor(bezirk)frankfurt_oder	-0.017	0.004			
And the second s	(0.103)	(0.041)			
as.factor(bezirk)gera	-0.115	-0.009			
	(0.097)	(0.037)			
as.factor(bezirk)halle	-0.242***	0.001			
And the second of the second o	(0.073)	(0.029)			
as.factor(bezirk)leipzig	-0.133*	0.004			
-5-10 Mb Control Anna	(0.076)	(0.030)			
as.factor(bezirk)magdeburg	-0.280***	-0.079**			
SATISFACE OF STATE	(0.096)	(0.040)			
as.factor(bezirk)neubrandenburg	-0.180	-0.068			
	(0.122)	(0.047)			
as.factor(bezirk)potsdam	-0.145*	-0.041			
	(0.078)	(0.031)			
as,factor(bezirk)rostock	0.058	0.012			
3 3	(0.096)	(0.040)			
as.factor(bezirk)schwerin	-0.064	0.025			
	(0.107)	(0.042)			
as.factor(bezirk)suhl	-0.060	0.057			
M N	(0.127)	(0.055)			
PCpetitions,n_net	0.0001	0.001**			
* I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I	(0.001)	(0.001)			
PCpetitions.preALL_2:PCpetitions.electionALL	-0.329***	0.058			
	(0.089)	(0.039)			
Day-FE?	yes	yes			
Year-FE?	yes	yes			
Observations	3,737	2,625			
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.087	0.013			
Note:	*n<0.1- **	p<0.05; ***p<0.01			

	Dependent variable:				
	Response time (log days)	1(Central government response)			
	(1)	(2)			
PCpetitions.preALL_2	0.027	0.057			
	(0.034)	(0.206)			
PCpetitions.electionALL					
	(0.000)	(0.000)			
PCpetitions.n_net	0.001***	0.002			
	(0.0002)	(0.001)			
urban	-0.008	-0.052			
	(0.009)	(0.044)			
PCpetitions.preALL_2:PCpetitions.electionALL	0.047*	-0.283*			
	(0.022)	(0.140)			
Day-FE?	yes	yes			
Year-FE?	yes	yes			
Bezirk?	yes	yes			
Observations	5,430	2,624			
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.049	0.098			

The results are not statistically significant. As such we are unable to reject the null hypothesis that response times and positive responses do not favour western Bezirke and urban Bezirke over eastern and rural Bezirke.