

A less likely, but increasing phenomenon? Parliamentary party switching in Germany

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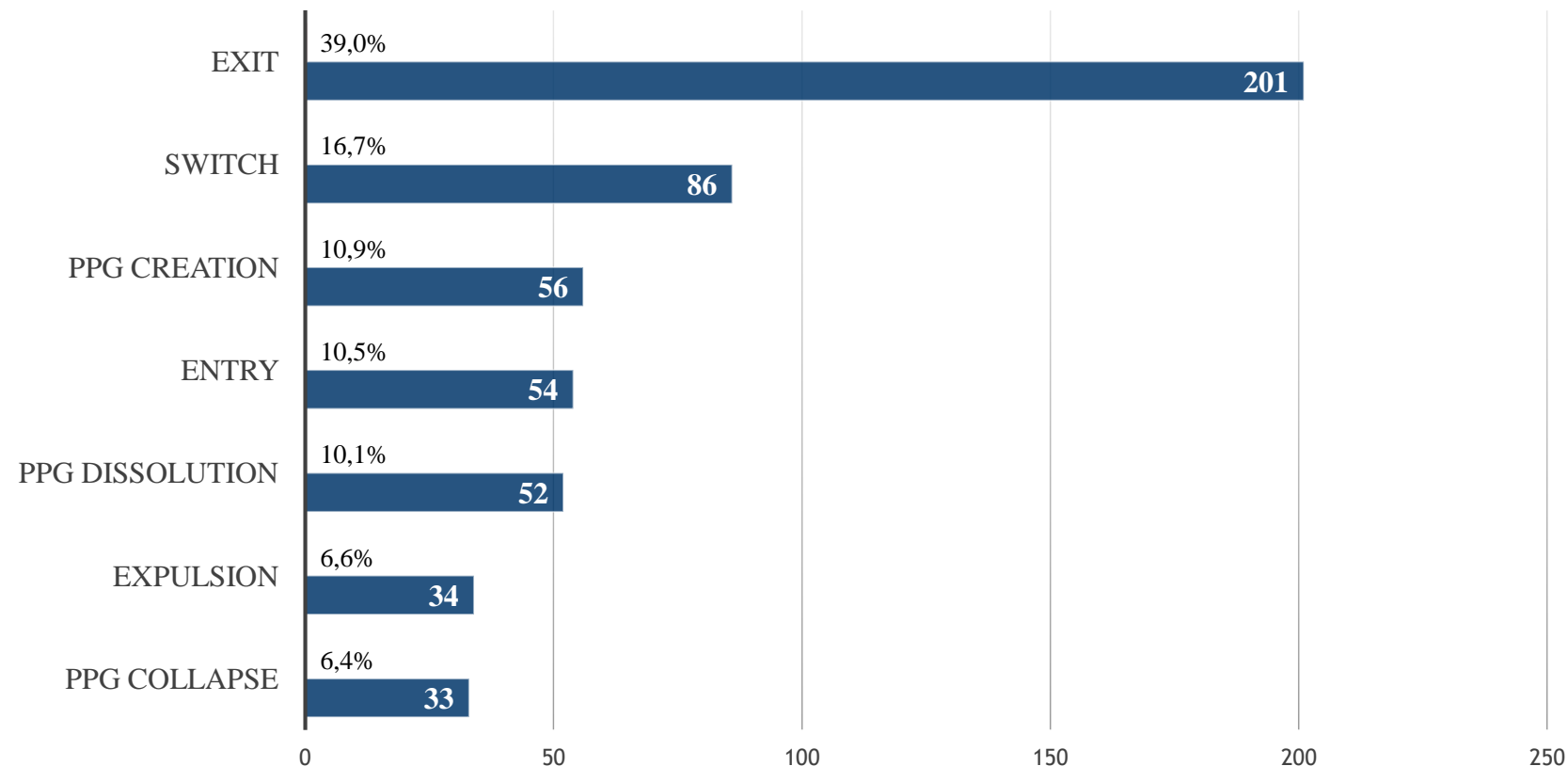
June 20 | www.iparl.de

Changes of party affiliation

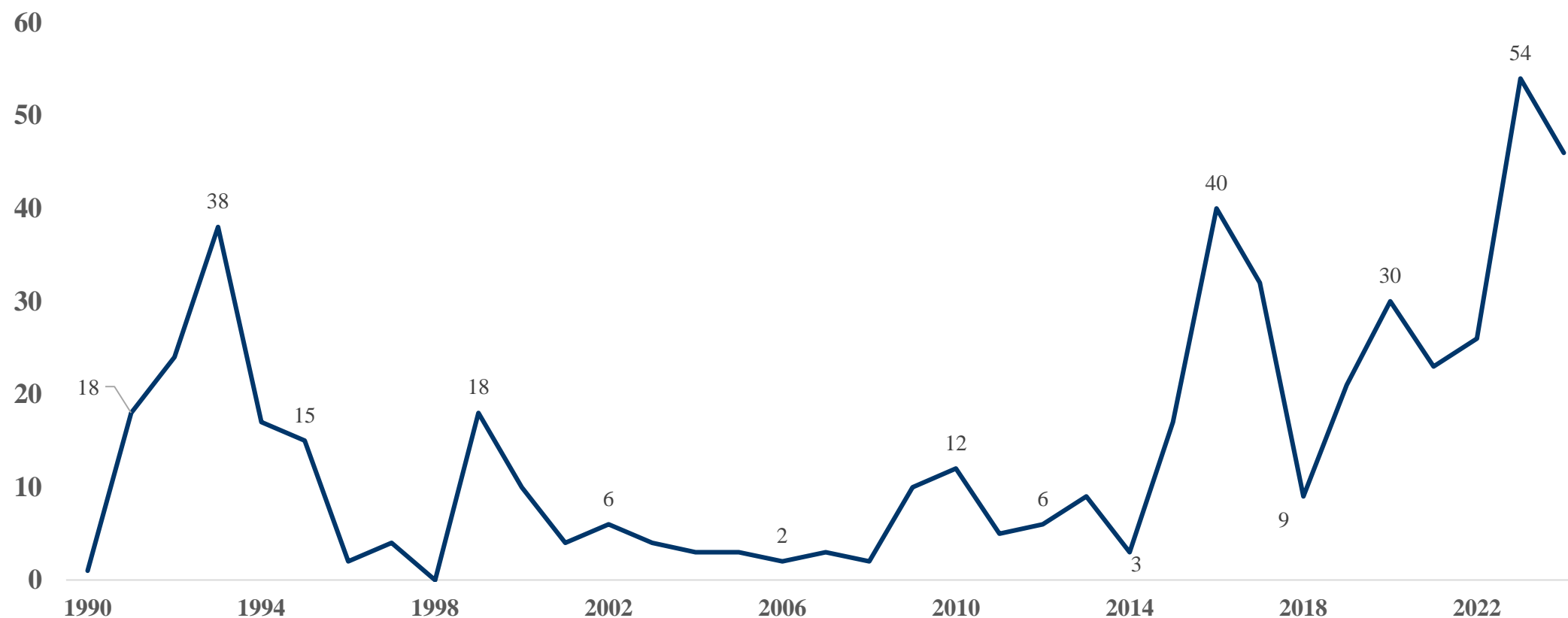
- upsurge of relevant studies but no research on **Germany as a "less likely" case**
- considered as anomaly **destabilizing democratic representation** (parties & parliaments)
- **question:** To what extent do German MPs abandon their group, when and why?
- **data set:** including all changes at the federal level & state level since 1990 (work-in-progress)

Types of changes

in total:
>500 changes
since 1990

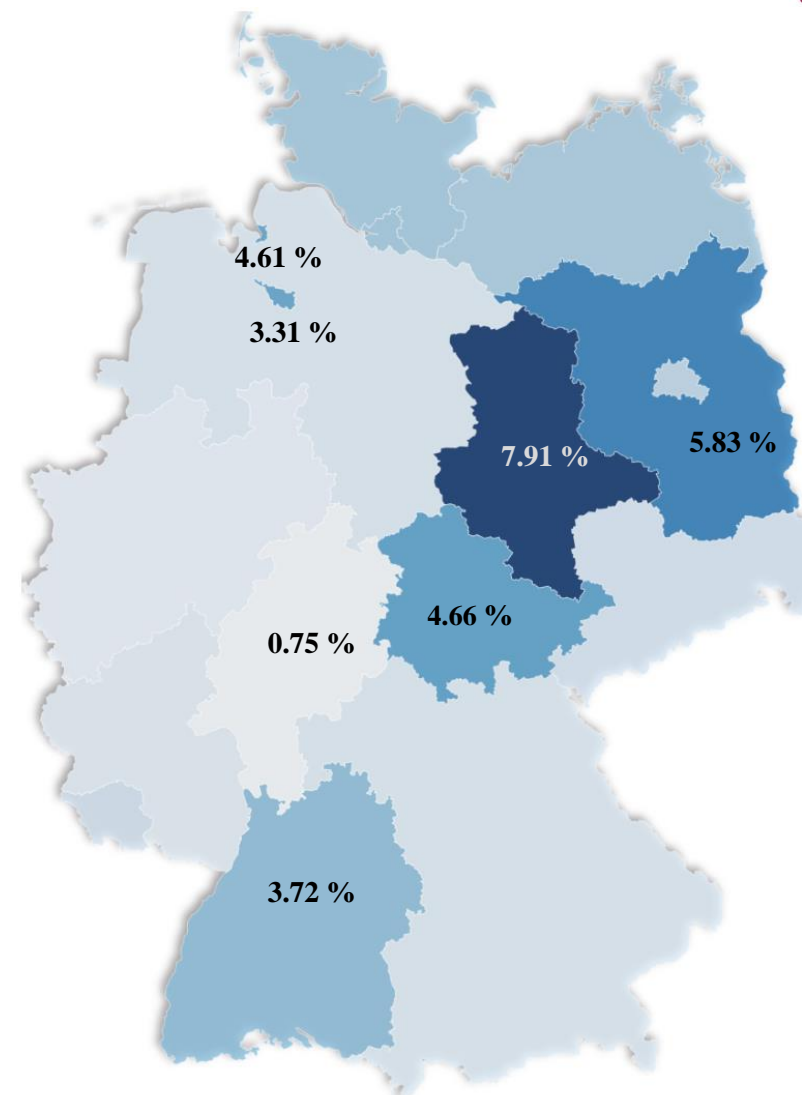


Changes over time

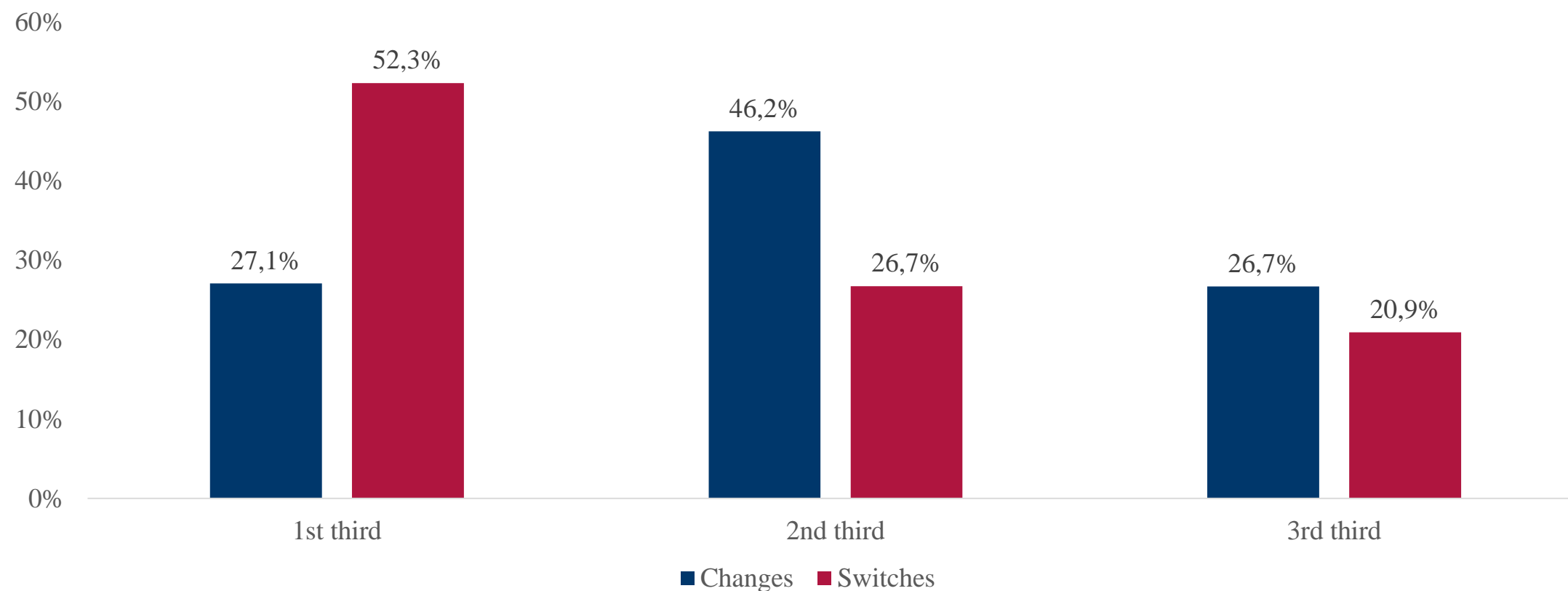


Changes by Parliament

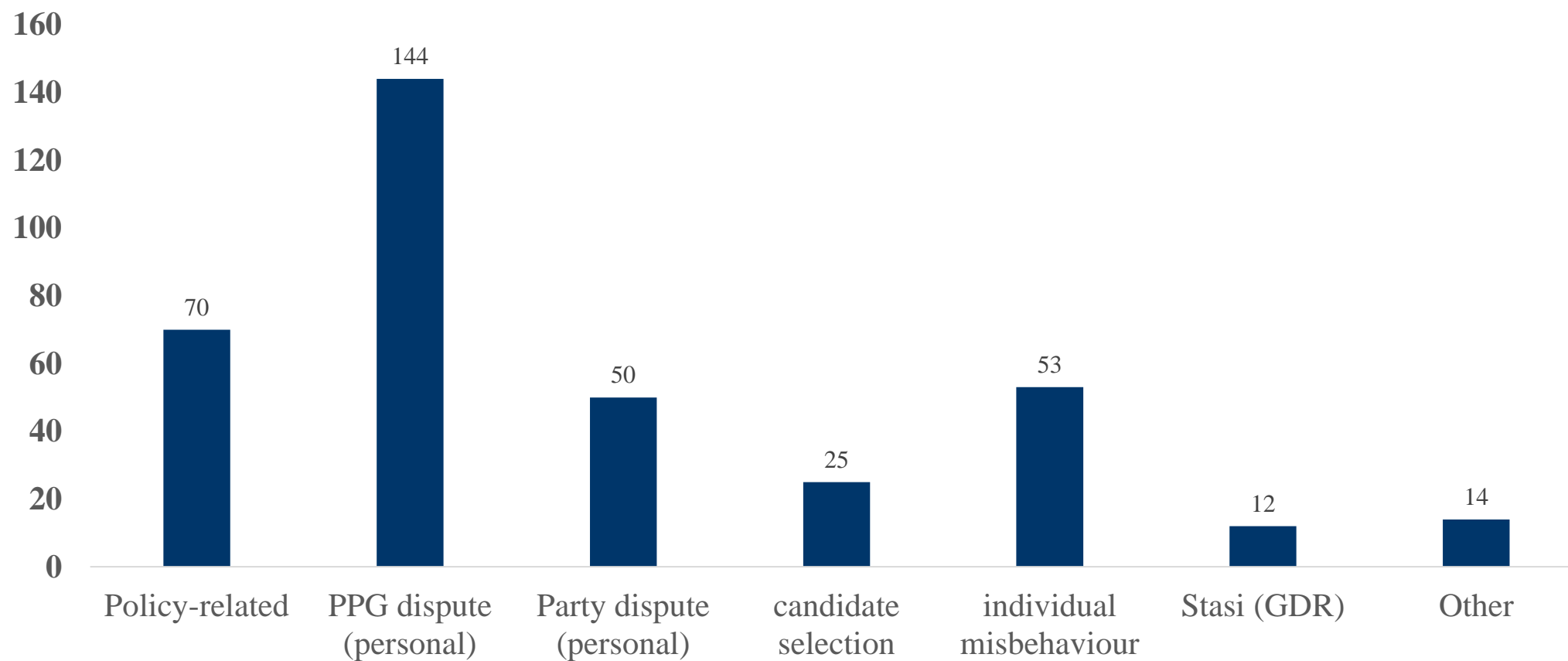
	Total number of MPs	Ratio Changes
Bundestag	5918	1.86%
Baden-Württemberg	1128	3.72%
Bavaria	1364	1.54%
Berlin (partly E)	1362	2.57%
Brandenburg (E)	618	5.83%
Bremen	803	4.61%
Hamburg	726	3.31%
Hesse	938	0.75%
Mecklenburg-Western Pommerania (E)	571	3.15%
Lower Saxony	1228	1.55%
North Rhine-Westphalia	1688	1.13%
Rhineland-Palatine	707	1.41%
Saarland	408	1.96%
Saxony (E)	777	1.80%
Saxony-Anhalt (E)	822	7.91%
Schleswig-Holstein	702	3.28%
Thuringia (E)	622	4.66%
Total	20382	2.54%



Timing during the legislative period



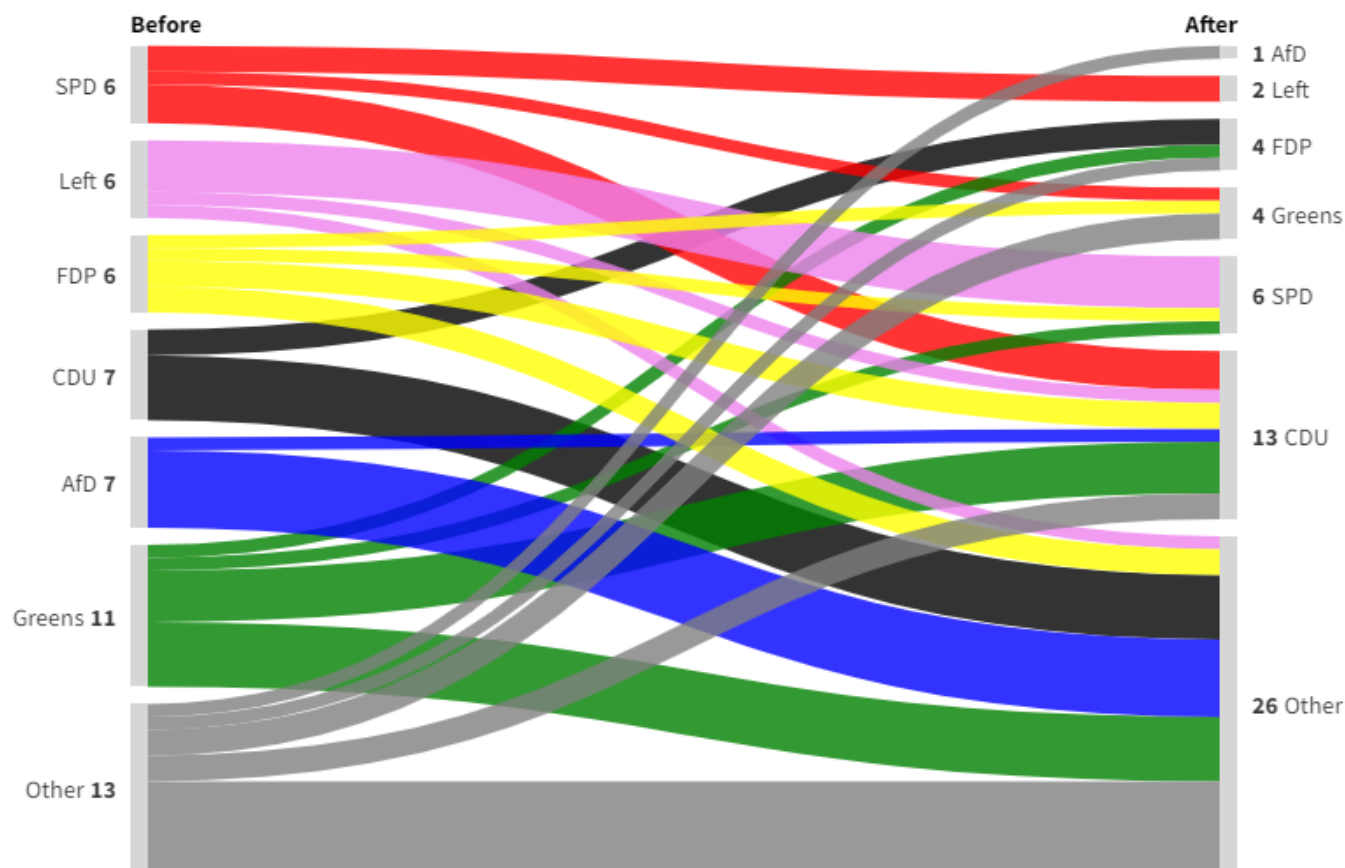
Reasons for PPG changes



Direction of changes

from	→	to	cases
governmental majority		governmental majority	1
governmental majority		opposition	77
opposition		governmental majority	14
opposition		opposition	425

Direction of switches to other groups



Do changes affect political careers?

further legislative terms after change	0	1	2	3	4
cases	339	35	10	4	3
In per cent	86.7%	9.0%	2.6%	1.0%	0.8%

Changes...

- happen more regularly than conventional wisdom suggests
- occur mainly within the opposition camp & due to personal quarrels (within PPG or party)
- break political careers
- do not affect the functioning of parliaments (so far)

Appendix

Misbehavior: The „Führerwein“ scandal



Candidate selection: The case of Elke Twesten



Why do they change or switch?

- Policy-related
- PPG dispute
- Party dispute
- Candidate selection
- Third-party candidacy
- Individual misbehavior
- Discriminatory statements
- Collaboration with the Ministry for State Security of the GDR (Stasi)
- Criminal charges
- Others

Changes and switches by Parliament

	Changes	Switches	Total number of MPs	Ratio Changes
Bundestag	110	3	5918	1.86%
Baden-Württemberg	42	29	1128	3.72%
Bavaria	21	4	1364	1.54%
Berlin (partly E)	35	6	1362	2.57%
Brandenburg (E)	36	4	618	5.83%
Bremen	37	8	803	4.61%
Hamburg	24	5	726	3.31%
Hesse	7	0	938	0.75%
Mecklenburg-Western Pommerania (E)	18	7	571	3.15%
Lower Saxony	19	3	1228	1.55%
North Rhine-Westphalia	19	1	1688	1.13%
Rhineland-Palatine	10	0	707	1.41%
Saarland	8	3	408	1.96%
Saxony (E)	14	0	777	1.80%
Saxony-Anhalt (E)	65	12	822	7.91%
Schleswig-Holstein	23	0	702	3.28%
Thuringia (E)	29	3	622	4.66%
Total	517	88	20382	2.54%
(E) denotes a state that was part of the GDR before 1990 and is therefore a so-called "Eastern" state.				