

# **Electoral Cycles and Party Switching: Opportunistic Partisan Realignment in Legislatures**

Carol Mershon  
Department of Politics  
University of Virginia  
P.O. Box 400787  
Charlottesville, VA 22904-4787 USA  
tel: 434/924-7875  
fax: 434/924-3359  
e-mail: [cam6m@virginia.edu](mailto:cam6m@virginia.edu)

Olga Shvetsova  
SUNY Binghamton and  
California Institute of Technology  
228-77 Caltech  
Pasadena, CA 91125  
tel: 626-395-8773  
e-mail: [olga@hss.caltech.edu](mailto:olga@hss.caltech.edu)

July 2005

Prepared for presentation at the 2005 Workshop of the Party Switching Research Group, Charlottesville, Virginia, July 10-14. Revised version of a paper presented at the 2005 MPSA Annual Convention, April 7-10, Palmer House Hilton Hotel, Chicago; and at the 2005 ISA Annual Convention, March 5-8, Hilton Hawaiian Village Hotel, Honolulu. We thank Rado Iliev for research assistance and Will Heller and other members of the Party Switching Research Group for rich and probing conversations about party switching. We are also grateful to John Aldrich and Lucio Renno for their helpful comments on the paper. Mershon acknowledges support from NSF grant SES-0339877.

# **Electoral Cycles and Party Switching: Opportunistic Partisan Realignment in Legislatures**

## **Abstract**

In this paper, we view party strategy as fitting the compound imperatives of the entire "political business cycle"—from one election to the next—and focus on the legislative stage of that cycle. To the extent to which the legislative-stage objectives of the players can be assumed to be autonomous (and we discuss instances when that is indeed the case), we seek to identify the parliamentary switching strategy that emerges as a response to those objectives. For the cases of Italy and Russia, we locate actors in parliaments whose legislative-stage optimization problem can be analyzed in isolation from that of the electoral stage. For those players, we show the presence of behavior consistent with policy objectives (e.g., “hunting the core of policy space”). This policy-driven behavior is manifested in the pattern of switching parties in both of our country cases; and in both, it introduces elements of dynamism to the party system during the legislative stage. While we look for similarities between our two cases for the legislative-stage model and data, when we expand our analysis to include the full business cycle we highlight a key contrast that we attribute to differences in institutions, in the age of the democratic regimes, and thus in the information available to electorates.

## 1 Introduction

Competition among elites for popular support, along with widely shared rights to participate in the selection of representative elites, defines a democratic regime (Dahl 1970; Schumpeter 1950). Political parties organize the teams and terms of elite competition, and thus offer and defend alternative choices to voting citizens. Fittingly, one of the most frequently cited judgments in political science is that democracy without parties is “unthinkable” (Schnattschneider 1942, 1).

And yet political parties are so important and reliably present that too often analysts take their existence for granted and, apparently automatically, include them in the set of institutional actors. For a recent example, consider the treatment of political parties as “veto players” alongside the president, the court, or the cabinet in Tsebelis (2002). While institutionalized parties are probably regarded this way precisely because their functioning closely mimics the working of institutional actors, there is a fundamental theoretical difference between the two. Institutions are a given and fixed presence in the political process. Though they must somehow be enforced and are in principle subject to modification, they can reasonably be viewed as exogenously given parameters in the short to medium term. Under a moderately stable political regime, institutions remain constant within a broad range of parameters characterizing the behavior of the many individuals involved; parameter shifts other than institutional reforms cause any observed change.

Parties, on the other hand, owe their existence in every moment of time to the combined good will of their members and their voters, and, at the same time, to the good will of the members and the voters of every other party in the field. Short of legally penalizing changes in the parties, there is nothing but the possibility that patterns in

individual behavior are somehow inherently resistant to change to shield parties and party systems from the vagaries of voters' and politicians' strategic reconsideration of their choices. Strictly speaking, if taken to the extreme, a party system is changed when a single voter alters her vote. The relative stability that we observe (in case of the relatively few privileged democracies) and that has historically contributed to many analysts' taking institutionalized parties and party systems for granted is but the result of the lack of strategic reconsideration of final choices in elections, such as choices of labels with which to run and for which to vote. But even here, the intermediate choices, as, for example, the content of party programs, do have to be altered on a regular basis.

This paper examines politicians' choices—and changes—of party labels during the life of a legislative term, that is, during the legislative stage of the political business cycle. As we do so, we treat the institutionalization of parties and party systems as variable (cf. Aldrich 1995; Mainwaring 1999), not fixed by assumption. The next section presents our conception of the political business cycle and the role of switching within the cycle. The third part of the paper develops the analytical framework and presents our hypotheses. Fourth, we put the hypotheses to the test against evidence from Italy and Russia. The fifth section recapitulates the findings and draws out the implications of our study.

## **2 “Improving” parties and parliaments by means of switching**

A scholarly tradition dating back to the work of Ostrogorski (1902) views political parties as the creatures of intra-parliamentary coalition-building. The current literature on new party systems identifies the parliamentary stage as an important step in party system development (see, e.g., Filippov 2002, 2004, Olson 1994, 1998) and links coalitional behavior in legislatures with the institutional variables structuring the parliamentary rather

than the electoral game (Filippov 2004, Remington and Smith 1998, Shvetsova 2002). We see the analysis of individual strategies with regard to party membership (switching, if the status-quo can be obtained as reference) as a generalization of the institutionalist model that attempts to explain party systems with institutional determinants. The conventional model is designed specific to stable democracies with stable party systems (e.g., Mainwaring 1999). To presume that it could be applied more broadly, without modification, would be profoundly misleading. Instead, a more general model where individuals can continue changing their parties needs to be adopted. This paper and other studies (e.g., Laver and Benoit 2003, Heller and Mershon 2004) show that this more general setup is far from a needless complication of matters, as it does much to account for important phenomena in the growth, survival, and erosion of parties and the evolution of party systems. This essay in particular contributes to the development of a general model of a party system that remains dynamic during the political cycle (from one election to the next, covering the legislative stage)—due to the interfactional mobility of the MPs.

We differentiate types of switching on the basis of the “location” of switching behavior within the parliamentary business cycle, and identify the requirements of the switching data that would make it usable for testing related institutional hypotheses. In this way we generalize the old institutionalist model of parties to permit parties to be in a continuous state of change. Our political cycle approach is a logical extension of such thinking, and can be summarized as a model in which individuals can change their choice of parties as they pursue the goals of the moment—goals specific to the stage in the political cycle.

### **3 The political business cycle: stages and strategic opportunities within each stage**

Within the political cycle or, more specifically, the parliamentary business cycle (from one election to the next), we can identify circumstances in which switching is likely to occur in connection with the phase of the cycle (see Figure 1). Such events as government formation and major policy decisions may occur more than once during the cycle, but the same is true for the pre-electoral “positioning,” because local and presidential elections, or by-elections to the parliament, may provide similar motivation.

(Figure 1 about here.)

By considering the phase at which the individual decides to change party affiliation, we can identify the likely rationale for the switch. The reasons for switching may include obtaining parliamentary offices and privileges, or preferred policy outcomes, or advantageous positioning for the next parliamentary election.<sup>1</sup> All of these motives may prove relevant for each individual, and thus none should be ignored when evaluating a particular case of switching. The relative salience, though, might well differ over time. Indeed, it is reasonable to suppose that “perks” are more important in early switching (Stages O and A in Figure 1), that electoral positioning weighs more heavily in late switching (Stage R in the figure), and that policy concerns are more salient in early perks-related moves (where office can better serve policy goals, given a longer time horizon) as compared to later in the cycle. Policy motivations for switching come to the fore, as well, during the segments of the legislative term devoted specifically to debates and decisions over such major agenda items as annual budgets (Stage P). Furthermore, the more switching one can expect to see in the next cycle, the less stable the party system should be

---

<sup>1</sup> On these goals as driving politicians’ behavior generally, see Strøm 1990; Müller and Strøm 1999.

from the current to the next legislature, since MPs become free to choose what they see as their new electoral parties knowing that they do not have to commit to a policy position in the sitting parliament.

Figure 1 identifies the critical stages within the political cycle where switching would be theoretically expected to occur and would be motivated by different goals pursued by the MPs. The figure serves as a device for separating the motives for switching as they acquire salience over time. We hypothesize that the time of the relative salience of each specific motivation that induces switching behavior can be identified at the outset, on the basis of the record of activity of the parliament, institutional prescriptions (e.g., the date of an impending new election), and events that dominate decision-making on an overarching policy dimension (e.g., the start of the Chechen War, obviously a security crisis but also a constitutional one.)

What we label as stage O (for Onset) is essentially the transition from the popular vote to the taking up of legislative seats in the first legislative session. At this stage, while seats are assigned to parties and candidates in accordance with electoral rules, continuity is not assured between the partisan labels of candidates in the election and their announcement of factional labels for the future legislative session. This is also the time when any independents who have won election might opt to participate in an organized parliamentary faction. This stage of the cycle offers an important opportunity to MPs: They can appropriate electorally or legislatively advantageous policy positions vacated by those parties that were denied representation due to extreme fragmentation and/or high electoral thresholds. This sort of moving to grab policy positions, however, should be primarily characteristic of systems with a relatively clearly defined policy space (of our

two cases, Italy). One possibility for identifying this phase is as the interval between election day and the day when MPs announce their parliamentary group (factional) membership. The latter might or might not be the day that parliament first meets, depending on the specific rules in a given parliament.

Our stage A is the time when executive portfolios on the one hand and on the other committee positions, committee chairs, and other positions of influence in the parliament are allocated. As a general approach, we can locate stage A from the day of the announcement of factional membership to the day that government composition, including the distribution of all portfolios, is announced and the day that all committee assignments are decided. In operationalizing this stage, we take into account institutional differences between our two cases, where the strength of the Russian presidency removes the need to form any governing coalition, and committees and internal parliamentary governance posts are the only offices divided at stage A. Stage A can cover multiple sub-stages in a single legislative term, involving for instance the installation of multiple executives, as in Italy.

We posit that switching in stage P occurs in order to secure agenda control and thus affect policy choices given the set of possibilities. Switching should take place above all in periods of intense policy bargaining. Hence, stage P must be decomposed into multiple stretches of time so as to isolate the sub-stages of the most active, controversial policy bargaining. We want to set for ourselves exogenous criteria for locating these intense policy bargaining periods, and thus limit ourselves to the areas of finance (budgetary questions) and, as applicable, security and foreign affairs and constitutional conflict.

Finally, as Figure 1 illustrates, stage R closes the parliamentary cycle. Here, we believe, electoral motivations should come to the fore and switching should serve as a



means for pre-electoral positioning. Approaches to measuring this stage can be several. One set of boundaries would be the start of registration for the ballot (in Italy, the depositing of lists and candidates' names) for the next parliamentary elections and election day itself. We find this approach inadequate, though, for tapping strategic behavior in anticipation of decisions on lists and candidacies. Given the evident capacity of Italian and Russian politicians to anticipate electoral competition—well in advance of the scheduled parliamentary elections, as we discuss below—we opt for designating an arbitrary stage R (or pre-stage R) period, specific to the rules and practices in each national setting. Where electoral campaigns for subnational offices take place during the legislative term (as in Italy), we also expect electoral concerns to enter into play. In stage E, more specifically, we expect some MPs to switch into new parties formed to contest the non-legislative elections.

The discussion thus far suggests a number of testable hypotheses, which can be summarized as follows:

- *Hypothesis 1: Rate of switching varies by stage.* The frequency of switching should vary across stages. In particular, sub-stages of intense policy bargaining should generate relatively high switching.
- *Hypothesis 2: Type of switching varies by stage.* Office-driven switching should predominate in stages O and A, policy-driven switching should predominate in stage P, and vote-driven switching, in stages E and R. This leads naturally to a corollary hypothesis.
- *Hypothesis 2a: Attributes of switchers should vary by stage.* For example, independents should switch in stage O, and “notables” most capable of strongly

influencing policy should switch within stage P and above all within those sub-stages of stage P marked by greatest controversy.

- *Hypothesis 3: Stage P switches should aim for clear policy effect.* Those switches identifiable as policy-driven (by timing in the legislative cycle, i.e., Stage P switches) should either be hunting the core, grabbing agenda advantage, or breaking the government. Otherwise, the switches would not change policy outcomes.
- *Hypothesis 4: New factions (groups) should emerge in stages P and E.* The start-up of new factions (groups) on the part of political entrepreneurs, and entries into the units on the part of MPs, should occur neither early nor late in the legislative term. On the one hand, assuming electoral motivations, entrepreneurs and MPs need some “lead time” before the next parliamentary elections to test out their new electoral vehicles (say, in subnational elections, in stage E), build a record in parliament, and convey information to voters. On the other, assuming policy goals, the start-ups need to be timed as to affect policy during stage P. This leads naturally to the next hypothesis.
- *Hypothesis 5. New factions (groups) should be located at the center of the policy space.* Assuming policy goals, political entrepreneurs should found new parliamentary groups in the center of the policy space. They should, in other words, hunt the core.

#### **4 Empirical Analysis of Switching: Italy and Russia**

We now examine our hypotheses against evidence from the 1996-2001 Italian Chamber of Deputies and the 1993-95 Russian Duma. We first discuss elements of

research design, and then turn to assess the fit between hypotheses and data.

#### **4.1 Research Design**

Our goals in the empirical analysis are twofold, and inform our choice of country cases. First, we seek evidence to support our theory of cyclical switching rates during the electoral-legislative period. For this purpose, the distinctions between our two cases are analytically advantageous, because, if similarities in switching were to appear, the relatively advanced stage of party development and democratic consolidation reached in Italy would preclude interpreting whatever patterns Russia might evince as mere aberrations due to the uncertain and transitional nature of Russian politics. Our selection of cases, at the same time, rests on the premise that formal political institutions powerfully shape party systems. Thus, our study of cases with institutional parallels—above all, hybrid electoral laws<sup>2</sup>—also affords advantage, because, if differences in switching behavior were to appear, this would clearly undermine our hypotheses (unless some detail in the rules differed too); similarities in switching would equally clearly confirm our reasoning. Second, we are interested in evidence on differences in types of switching across parliamentary stages. In this part of the analysis, the identification of types of switching does not crucially depend on cross-national comparison and proceeds by comparing multiple stages in the life of the same parliament. Cross-national similarities (and differences), however, stand as valuable discoveries in their own right, since they point to potential determinants of switching patterns in a broader array of countries.

Given our framework, hypotheses, and goals, we need to sketch electoral laws and the party system in the two countries chosen for study. The Russian hybrid electoral rules

---

<sup>2</sup> Other institutional similarities include subnational governments with substantial powers (though Italy does not qualify as federal) and lack of concurrence between parliamentary elections and other important elections.

permit independent candidacies in single-member districts (SMDs).<sup>3</sup> The Italian version of hybrid electoral laws instead prevents independents from competing, for every SMD candidate must be visibly linked to a party list: The symbol(s) of the party (parties) supporting each candidate on the SMD ballot is (are) arrayed alongside the candidate's name, and each candidate in the single-member race must have the support of at least one party appearing on the proportional representation (PR) ballot. Linkage applies not only to the Italian ballot structure but also to the way the seats are allocated, with SMD victories partially compensated by adjustments in the PR tier (see Katz 1994). No such linkage between SMD and PR tiers exists in Russia (e.g., Moser 2001). Whereas in Russia equal numbers of SMD and PR deputies are elected, in Italy roughly three-fourths of the MPs are elected in SMDs. Both systems have thresholds for PR, 5% in Russia and 4% in Italy.

Despite the radical changes in the Italian party system in the wake of the massive corruption scandal that broke open in 1992, the Italian policy space is still relatively well defined compared to the Russian. Despite the drastic changes, too, Italian parties and the party system are relatively well institutionalized compared to the Russian.<sup>4</sup> We think it telling, for instance, that Russian MPs in the Duma sit in alphabetical order according to MP surname, whereas in Italy parliamentary groups choose what can only be interpreted as a left-right seating in the Chamber hemicycle (i.e., Communist Refounding, RC, sits on the extreme left, the Democratic Left sits next to the RC, and so forth, onto the National

---

<sup>3</sup> Our depiction of electoral institutions and parliamentary procedures in Russia is limited to the "Yeltsin period" of reasonably functioning competitive electoral and party systems. As of the time of writing, those no longer apply, having been amended, discarded, or rendered irrelevant by the more binding administrative and authoritarian constraints during the reign of President Putin.

<sup>4</sup> The only relatively institutionalized party in Russia in 1993-95 was the former Communists. From 1994 to at least 2001, the Italian party system was less institutionalized than it was from 1946 to 1992, when the Christian Democrats dominated party competition. For data on electoral volatility, an oft-used indicator of institutionalization, see Bartolini and Mair 1990; D'Alimonte and Bartolini 2002.

Alliance, the former and reformed neo-Fascists, which sits on the extreme right). The left-right structuring of the Italian Chamber hemicycle extends to the MPs of the Mixed Group, who divide themselves up and sit according to left-right location.<sup>5</sup>

The final component of research design to address is our combination and integration of descriptive statistics with the class of methods known as event history analysis (Allison 1984; Beck and Katz 1995, 1998; Box-Steffensmeier and Jones 2004; Mayer and Tuma 1990; Yamaguchi 1991). Although continuous-time models are sometimes used with event history data, we choose discrete-time models for two reasons. First consider the practical measurement of an MP's change of party affiliation. The only way that the time of switching can be registered is by calendar dates, that is, by discrete time intervals. If multiple MPs were to hop parties on the same day, then, a continuous-time approach would treat such ties in the data as zero-probability events, which would seriously bias parameter estimates (Yamaguchi 1991, 16). The realities of measurement also suggest that the recorded day of a switch is an indicator whose seeming precision is illusory. After all, the event of switching has to be communicated to an appropriate internal parliamentary agency and to the party groups involved. The press of items on the agenda, ongoing debates, or even the peculiarities of handling paperwork may slow the announcement and processing of a switch. We thus adopt the week rather than the day as our standard discrete-time interval. Second, we use discrete models because we believe that party switching is in essence strategic behavior; indeed, the strategic nature of switching is a fundamental premise of our theoretical framework. Again, we argue that the probability with which an MP moves from one faction (party group) to another differs

---

<sup>5</sup> For current locations of Chamber groups, see <http://www.camera.it>; for seating at the end of the 1996-2001 Legislature, see <http://www.camera.it/organiparlamentari/gruppiparlamentari/leg13/mappa.asp>.

systematically across different stages of the legislative cycle (in the language of event history models, different exogenously given risk periods), because of the MP's period-specific strategic concerns. Accordingly, the exact time of the switch-as-recorded is less important than the fact that the MP carries out the switch during a phase when it is opportune, when the switch is informally "promised" and officially executed as a strategic response to the incentives facing her at that stage of the parliamentary cycle.

#### **4.2 Switching by Stage: A First Cut**

As an initial step in the analysis, we characterize the frequency of switching by stage in Russia and Italy, distinguishing among deputies according to mode of election. We present and analyze the descriptive data in ways that echo the logic underlying event history models. For instance, Table 1 reports standardized measures of switching behavior—more precisely, the rates of occurrence of the event of switching, in the language of the event history approach (e.g., Yamaguchi 1991, 72). The stages organizing Tables 1 through 4 serve as the risk periods in the piecewise constant rates model, which is particularly suited to assessing the impact of breakpoints on switching (e.g., Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 133-137).

Table 1 compares the distribution of Russian and Italian legislators' switches by stage in the political cycle. We standardize the measure of frequency of switching by examining mean weekly switches per 100 MPs. Note first that, as the top row of the table displays, the opening weeks of the term (stage O) exhibit the highest rate of occurrence of switching in both Italy and Russia. Nonetheless, the Russian rate is fully 28.5 times the Italian rate in stage O.

[Table 1 about here.]

The chief explanation for this enormous difference is that Russian independents, having won election in SMDs, engage busily in party shopping and party hopping during stage O. And in 1993 the majority of Russian SMDs were won by independents, reflecting not only the Russian electoral rules and weakly institutionalized party system but also the rushed campaign in 1993, a product of Yeltsin's decision to call the parliamentary elections on short notice and to time those elections to coincide with the ratification referendum for his constitution. Although in Italy the ballot structure inhibits independents from entering the Chamber, substantially more switching occurs in stage O among SMD deputies than among PR ones. This finding, too, speaks to the impact of electoral laws and the incentives they create. All of the SMD switchers in the Italian stage O were center-leftists elected in districts where the Olive Tree bloc was trying to put up candidates that appealed to broad electorate. The appeal worked, in that the candidates won seats, but the strategy backfired, in that these seven MPs moved to the Mixed Group instead of affirming membership in the parliamentary group corresponding to the largest party (Democratic Left or Popular Democrat) sponsoring their electoral list (Di Virgilio 1997, 2002; more).

In stage A, shown on the second row of the table, mean weekly switches per 100 MPs look roughly similar for the full lower house across Italy and Russia. The occurrence of the event of switching is, however, almost three times higher among PR deputies in Italy than among SMD deputies. In Russia, the proportion is flipped, with SMD legislators switching roughly three times as frequently as their colleagues when legislative and executive payoffs are allocated. Reasons for this difference include the very firmly entrenched norm in Italy that offices are distributed proportionally to party size (Dogan 1984; Mershon 2001), the equally entrenched norm that all parties, no matter how small,

have a right to representation on legislative committees, and the fact that the smaller Italian parties tend under the hybrid rules to earn relatively many PR seats. We return to this “proportionalist” logic below.

Table 1 demonstrates that, not only in stages O and A but in all stages, Russian legislators elected in SMDs evince a higher rate of switching than do PR ones.<sup>6</sup> In another contrast with the Italian case, switching in the various periods devoted to policy (the aggregated stage P) is over five times more frequent in Russia than in Italy. The rate of occurrence of switching in proximity to Italian subnational elections (stage E) closely resembles that registered in stage P. As shown below, moreover, substantial variations—and flurries—in switching emerge across particular non-legislative campaigns in Italy. The two-year Russian legislative term does not feature any subnational electoral cycles.

The penultimate row of Table 1 shows that mean weekly switches per 100 MPs drop to their lowest rate in the full lower house for both Italy and Russia in stage Q, the “null” period, when the onset of the term is over, when neither offices are allocated nor major policy decisions dominate the agenda nor elections loom. In both countries, switching in the aggregated stage Q is relatively quiescent.

Postponing discussion of stage R for the moment, we take stock of how Table 1 bears on our hypotheses. The basic notion that the rate of switching varies by stage (Hypothesis 1) finds preliminary support, although we have not yet isolated the most intense sub-stages of policy bargaining for scrutiny. Independents and notables do switch in stage O, in line with Hypothesis 2a. Additional data are needed to examine more adequately the second hypothesis—and for that matter, all of the hypotheses.

---

<sup>6</sup> This pattern holds up when the stages are disaggregated, as in Tables 2B and 3B: With one insignificant exception (Q-4), in all Russian sub-stages SMD deputies switch more frequently than do their PR counterparts.



### **4.3 Switching by Sub-Stage: Inferences about Attributes and Aims of Switchers**

Like Table 1, Tables 2A and 2B report mean weekly switches per 100 MPs—the rates of occurrence of the event of switching. The data are now disaggregated by sub-stage, so that separate tables for the two countries are required; the sequence and length of the sub-stages vary notably across the 1993-95 Duma and the 1996-2001 Chamber, as the tables make plain. Complementing Tables 2A and 2B are Tables 3A and 3B, which include not only the rates of occurrence but also the raw numbers of switches by stage and sub-stage. The latter two tables also provide a detailed country-specific key to the definition of stages and sub-stages.

[Tables 2A, 2B, 3A, and 3B about here]

The frequency of switching among Russian SMD MPs in sub-stage O-1 passes the intraocular test. This is, by a long shot, the highest rate of occurrence in any sub-stage for either subgroup of deputies (SMD or PR) in the two legislatures. During the Russian sub-stage O-1, SMD (but not PR) deputies are asked to self-identify with regard to their factional membership. Whereas the delegation of any party qualifying for PR seats automatically receives official Duma faction status, SMD deputies have the option of registering with “groups” endowed with the same rights that factions have, as long as the group meets the minimum size requirement of 35. Responding to the opportunities for self-identification, SMD legislators switch with abandon, and an entirely new faction is formed during O-1. PR-elected MPs have no access to this process during this sub-stage, and the opportunity to form factions in a “normal” way first emerges with the approval of the law on registration of factions in mid-March 1994, which marks the start of sub-stage O-2. Hypothesis 2a thus finds confirmation in both O-1 and O-2.

The rate of occurrence of switching is highest in Italy in a policy sub-stage near the middle of the term—specifically, in sub-stage P-6. Compared to the record in the Russian stage O-1, the figure of 2.11 mean weekly switches per 100 MPs may seem rather paltry. Both within-nation and cross-national comparisons deserve attention, however; and it is worth emphasizing that only in two Russian sub-stages does the rate of occurrence exceed 2.0 mean weekly switches per 100 MPs. The peak of Italian switching coincided with the first time in the postwar Republic that a cabinet fell because it lost on a confidence vote (Mershon 2002, 48-52, 86). In October 1998, the Prodi government made a vote on the 1999 budget a question of confidence, and went down to defeat. Communist Refounding (RC), routinely part of the legislative governing majority though not part of the Prodi executive, split on the confidence vote. The dissidents entered the Mixed Group, unable to form a separate parliamentary group due to Chamber rules on minimum group size; they contested subsequent elections as a distinct entity. The RC's fission and its effect are consistent with the third and fourth hypotheses, though not the fifth.

In Russia, aside the extraordinary behavior of independents in sub-stage O-1, policy disputes too generate the highest rate of switching near the middle of the legislative term. Sub-stage P-3, marking the second major campaign of the Chechen War, the battle for Grozny, witnesses 5.40 weekly switches per 100 MPs, the second highest rate in the entire term. The fourth highest rate (0.86 weekly switches per 100 MPs) is found in sub-stage P-2, which runs from the start of the war in late November 1994 through late January and coincides with legislative deliberations on the 1995 budget.<sup>7</sup> We thus find further support for the third hypothesis, that stage P switches should aim for policy impact.

---

<sup>7</sup> All military chronologies are due to [http://www.russianwarrior.com/STMMain.htm?1991\\_ChechHistoryFirst.htm&1](http://www.russianwarrior.com/STMMain.htm?1991_ChechHistoryFirst.htm&1). We do not examine security policy in Italy, since internal warfare appears only in Russia.

The second-highest peak in the rate of switching in Italy occurs during sub-stage A-3, which falls in the first year of the term and precedes (even briefly overlaps with) the 1997 subnational electoral cycle, as Table 2A shows, and which accounts for virtually all of the switching in the aggregated stage A, as seen in Table 3A. The payoffs allocated in A-3 are legislative offices—seats and leadership posts on the large Bicameral Committee on Constitutional Reform (*la Bicamerale*). The Prodi government made constitutional reform one of its top priorities. Politicians, pundits, and citizens, of left, right, and center alike, viewed the work of *la Bicamerale* as crucial to addressing the ongoing system-wide crisis that had opened with the vast corruption scandal in 1992 (e.g., Pasquino 1996). Naturally, since the choice of rules would carry profound consequences for policy outcomes (e.g., Riker 1980), the work of *la Bicamerale* stirred great controversy; and the allocation of offices on this committee was intrinsically linked to high-stakes policy. The bulk of switches in sub-stage A-3 involved MPs from the Christian Democratic Center-United Democratic Christians (CCD-CDU), the leftmost parliamentary group in the center-right bloc. The moves were made *en masse*, as the CDU component of what began as the unified CCD-CDU parliamentary group split off in its entirety, entering the Mixed Group; the CDU component contained an unusually large share (half) of PR MPs. The day after the CDU bolted, its leader, Buttiglione, was named to *la Bicamerale*, with a seat on two of the committee's four subcommittees. We join Italian scholars in deeming the new hybrid laws as doing little to prevent the fragmentation of the party system and, most pertinent to the argument here, as creating the conditions for eventual splits (e.g., D'Alimonte and Bartolini 2002; De Micheli and Verzichelli 2004, Ch. 3).<sup>8</sup> Moreover, we identify in this

---

<sup>8</sup> Chief sources on the CDU events are: <http://www.cattaneo.org>; <http://www.camera.it/parlam/bicam/rifcost/composiz/home.htm> ;

episode evidence that marches with our hypotheses 2 (on office and policy motivations, bound together here), 2a (“notables”) and 3 (agenda advantage).

After P-6 and A-3, the other Italian sub-stages that qualify as those with the highest rates of switching are, in descending order, Q-5, P-8, Q-6 and E-4 (with the same frequency), and E-3. Active switching in two sub-stages of the generally calm phase Q does not upset our hypotheses, and in fact supports them. Note the timing of these sub-phases relative to allocation, policy, and electoral phases. The single week classified as Q-5 occurs in late October 1998, between the installation of D’Alema I, which followed the ill-fated Prodi executive, and the resumption of committee handling of the 1999 budget. Likewise, Q-6 precedes sub-stage E-4, the electoral cycle defined by the June 1999 subnational and European Parliament (EP) elections. In phase Q-6, in preparation for E-4 and June 1999, Prodi spearheaded the formation of a new parliamentary group, the Democrats-Olive Tree (Dem-U). Sub-stage P-8 featured debates on finance so acrimonious that two days after the 2000 budget bill gained approval (that is, two days after P-8 ended), the government resigned; no new switching accompanied allocations in the new cabinet, and indeed switching was minimal throughout the rest of the term. Sub-stage E-3, the run-up to and aftermath of the May 1998 subnational elections, overlaps substantially with the deliberations of *la Bicamerale*. The flurry of switching here reflects the fact that Senator Cossiga founded a new centrist party (the UDR, Union of Democrats

---

[http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/deputati/composizione/leg13/Composizione/schede/\\_/d00096.asp](http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/deputati/composizione/leg13/Composizione/schede/_/d00096.asp) . The experience of the rightmost parliamentary group in the center-left bloc, Italian Renewal (RI), looks like a mirror image of that of the CCD-CDU. The RI broke up on the day that the Chamber approved the 1997 budget—at the end of sub-stage P-2 in our scheme. The breakup reflected preordained lines, those defining the mini-parties that had joined together for the purpose of overcoming the 4% PR barrier in the 1996 elections; it was the MPs from the Segni Pact and Italian Socialist component of the RI who left the party ([www.istcattaneo.org/archivi/avvenimenti/1996.htm](http://www.istcattaneo.org/archivi/avvenimenti/1996.htm)).

for the Republic) to contest 1998 subnational elections, which attracted MPs from the former CDU and CCD, as well as some with center-left origins. As the campaign unfolded, Cossiga announced the UDR's vote on budget legislation and clarified its stance on constitutional questions ([www.cattaneo.org](http://www.cattaneo.org)). As we interpret the record, Cossiga was not only simultaneously pursuing tightly linked electoral and policy aims, but was also hunting the core of the Italian policy space. Indeed, Cossiga founded the successor party to the UDR, the Democratic Union for Europe (UDEur) in sub-stage P-8, discussed just above.<sup>9</sup> We now have in hand support for all five hypotheses.

MARK – To PSRG: Paper now proceeds in less polished fashion and by bullets

- *Stage R: Re-election:* We define the pre-electoral stage for Russia as starting three months before, and ending one month before, the election, since the ballot registration stops at the latter date. This qualifies as the sixth highest rate of occurrence of switching for the entire Duma, and the fourth highest rate for PR legislators. Defining Stage R for Italy as we do for Russia, we cannot observe switching among MPs, for the simple reason that the rules differ. President Ciampi dissolved the Parliament before the 2001 election day had been decided and before the mandated day could be identified for depositing candidate names and party lists with the Ministry of the Interior.<sup>10</sup> We can define three pre-electoral sub-stages, with cutpoints corresponding to different decisions on the units to enter into the 2001 electoral competition; only one

---

<sup>9</sup> Eighteen deputies and senators from the UDR or UDEur obtained senior or junior posts in the cabinets formed after Prodi. If, as we believe, UDR and UDEur switchers were alone among switchers in extracting executive payoffs (a check is needed), this would yield even stronger evidence of Cossiga's strategic success. He not only hunted the core by creating new parties but also launched some of their MPs into the executive so as to control directly the levers of policy.

<sup>10</sup> Candidate information and party lists, for both SMD and PR competition, must be deposited with the Ministry of the Interior between the 42<sup>nd</sup> and the 44<sup>th</sup> day before the day of parliamentary elections ([http://www.mininterno.it/sezioni/attivita/Le%20elezioni/s\\_000000056.htm](http://www.mininterno.it/sezioni/attivita/Le%20elezioni/s_000000056.htm)).

MP moved during any of the pre-R sub-stages.<sup>11</sup> In the more institutionalized Italian party system, jockeying for electoral advantage occurs in conjunction with subnational and supranational elections (cf. Heller and Mershon 2005).

- *Closer look at independents* among Russian SMD MPs: Russian SMD deputies who were elected as independents evince a substantially greater propensity for switching (xx and yy weekly switches per 100 independents with and without sub-stage O-1). Also on Russian SMD MPs: a very small group of SMD MPs who were electorally linked to parties that washed out in PR displayed a pattern of frantic searching for a new home. Since there were only seven such MPs, nothing conclusive can be said about them; and yet their switching propensity is striking, xx weekly switches per 100 if sub-stage O-1 is considered, and yy weekly switches per 100 if not.
- Focusing on *partisan MPs in Russia* (setting aside independents, that is, and also setting aside sub-stage O-1, since the weight of that sub-stage in the Russian data is so great that it threatens to obscure the dynamics that followed): There is a notable similarity in general switching patterns of partisan MPs, regardless of their mode of election.
- Investigating the *formation and location of new groups in Italy*: Table 4 reports the number of MPs in each parliamentary group at the start and end of the legislative term and also at the endpoint of each of the seven Italian sub-stages with the highest mean weekly switches per 100 MPs. We array party groups along the left-right spectrum following convention and MPs' choice of seating in the Chamber hemicycle. In line

---

<sup>11</sup> The three alternative cutpoints are: the day noted as marking the first discussions in the center-left on a leader to guide the alliance in the 2001 elections (7-VI-00); the day noted as marking the first announcement of a new party list for the 2001 elections (11-VIII-00); and the day on which the center-left bloc designated its premier-candidate (22-X-00). For sources, see Table 3A notes.

with the fourth and fifth hypotheses, the three new groups founded during the 1996-2001 term—the DemU, UDR, and UDEur—emerge in (pre-)electoral or policy sub-stages, in the center of the policy space, and in particular in those areas of the left-right policy space that are opened up by the shrinking or disappearance of parties extant at the start of the legislature.

(Table 4 about here.)

- *Location of groups and new groups in Russia:* Spatial identification of factions on the center and the periphery is complicated for the Russian case by the extreme fluidity of the policy space and the instability of the relative locations of the parties and parliamentary factions. All the same, we can study the location of the new “entrants” in the Duma party system—newly formed factions. A good portion of Duma switching occurred in the form of coordinated moves to establish new factions. These, according to our fifth hypothesis, should be centrally located if formed in stage P, while we make no such prediction for stage O. For stage O, instead, we expect that the new factions would grab the temporarily vacated policy “territory.” We anticipate the creation of new factions neither in stage A nor in stage R. In stage R, in particular, it is too late to reap the benefits of policy record for the next election. Considering the four instances of faction creation in the 1993-95 Duma, we use the time-specific spatial maps of the factions (based on roll-call votes) generated by the Duma statistical service INDEM. The new factions are marked in red. Figures t, u, and v report the results. The two factional entries that correspond to our stage O indeed take place on the periphery relative to the Duma heavyweights, Russia’s Choice, Communists Liberal-Democratic party of Russia, Agrarians, and later N-96, the first of the entrants, which are marked in

blue. The argument of “hunting the core” is somewhat more applicable to the stage P entrants as in Figure vv. One problem with INDEM spatial placements of the factions is that those are given for the period when the entrant is already in existence and votes on legislation; in light of the extreme spatial fluidity in the Duma, post-entry spatial placement does not reliably correspond to the policy environment at the time immediately preceding the entry. (Another problem, not explored here, is the methodology of aggregation.)

(Figures which about here.)

- *Cross-national comparisons via figures and additional tables:* Figure rr summarizes switching statistics within and between the stages in the parliamentary cycle. The hypothesis that switching rates remain even within and between the identified stages can be safely rejected. [Charlottesville presentation will feature more discussion.]
- [To PSRG: Despite Rado’s heroic work on reconfiguration of datasets, Carol and Olga have not yet estimated event history models as of 8 July. Future iterations of this paper will estimate models where the dependent variable is whether the deputy in question switches in a particular week, and the key time-varying covariates are stage and sub-stage, for our basic hypothesis is that the probability of switching should differ in different exogenously given risk periods. Comparing the piecewise constant rates model with other types of event history models allows us to assess breakpoints by legislative stage (see, e.g., Box-Steffensmeier and Jones, 133-137).]

## 5 Conclusion

In both Italy and Russia, we find elements of a long-term switching cycle. We identify in our evidence patterns of switching for spatial positioning, office perks, policy



advantage, agenda grabbing, and pre-electoral jockeying at distinctive stages of the parliamentary cycle. These commonalities across the two different systems provide compelling support for our overarching theoretical framework.

At the same time, we posit that the different degrees of institutionalization across the Russian and Italian party systems would yield some differences in switching behavior. Since the Italian system is more institutionalized, pre-electoral positioning (via switching) occurs in anticipation of subnational elections and, to a smaller degree, in the wake of subnational elections, as MPs adjust expectations about voters (cf. Heller and Mershon 2005). In contrast, in Russia pre-electoral positioning occurs during national election campaigns. To the extent that two-thirds of SMD deputies bear no electoral connection to any party, the conditions are in place for one party system to operate for the purposes of elections and another to be created, through bargaining, for parliamentary activity, once the legislature is in session. Indeed, we find similar patterns of switching across Russian and Italian MPs with SMD and PR mandate alike—when they have strong electoral linkages to parliamentary parties. In the less institutionalized part of the Russian Duma, the switching patterns are drastically different. Switching in the Duma makes party system adjustment before the 1995 election both easy and important, since the entities in the parliament have a weakened claim to their previous electoral label, and since the parliamentary configuration of parties no longer corresponds to any electoral equilibrium. The 1995 Duma elections, therefore, feature competition among parties with weak labels, award seats to ideologically poorly defined parties, and empower political entrepreneurs with strong name recognition so that they may resume coalition-building or opportunistic switching in the next parliament.

Changes in one's choice of parties, or switching, can be more or less costly depending on the level of electoral accountability in a political system, the value of party labels in directing voters, the role of parties in the nomination process, and the weight of electoral concerns in politicians' calculations of their stream of future payoffs. Consequently, one would expect democratic regimes at different levels of consolidation and party systems of different levels of institutionalization to exhibit differences in switching patterns at various stages of the political cycle. The cyclical pattern we document suggests that switching behavior may be contingent on previous electoral outcomes (e.g., disproportionality of seat allocation), as well as on a number of institutional variables, such as concurrence or nonconcurrence of different elections, the strength of the presidency, requirements for constituting parliamentary groups, and rules of parliamentary agenda-setting. In ongoing research, we investigate these factors more closely.

**Table 1. Mean Weekly Switches per 100 MPs by Type of Stage, 1996-2001 Italian Chamber and 1993-95 Russian Duma.**

Stage	Italian Chamber				Russian Duma			
	Cumulative N Weeks	All MPs	SMD	PR	Cumulative N weeks	All MPs	SMD	PR
O	4	0.36	0.43	0.18	6	10.26	11.11	0.09
A	9	0.35	0.25	0.67	12	0.30	0.44	0.15
P	109	0.20	0.18	0.27	26	1.09	1.63	0.71
E	94	0.21	0.21	0.27	0	n/a	n/a	n/a
Q	95	0.10	0.11	0.08	53	0.14	0.18	0.10
R <sup>1</sup>	unobserved	n/a	n/a	n/a	8	0.42	0.50	0.33

**General key to stages:**

O = Onset

A = Allocation of legislative and executive offices and perks

P = Policy

E = Elections at subnational or supranational level

R = Re-election of national parliament

Q = All periods other than O, A, P, E, and R.

**Note:** All stages save Q can overlap or coincide.<sup>1</sup>See details in Table 3 notes.

**Table 2A. Mean Switches Per Week by Category and Sequence of Sub-stage, Italian Chamber, 1996-2001.**

Category, Sequence, and Length of Sub-stage			Mean Weekly Switches Per 100 MPs		
Sub-stage	Sequence (weeks in term spanned)	N Weeks	All MPs	SMD	PR
O	0-3	4	0.36	0.43	0.18
A.1	4	<1	0.28	0	1.13
A.2	4-6	3	0	0	0
Q.1	7-14	8	0.02	0.03	0
P.1	15	<1	0	0	0
Q.2	15-22	8	0.02	0.03	0
P.2	23-35	12	0.20	0.18	0.27
Q.3	36-38	3	0	0	0
P.3	39	1	0	0	0
A.3	40-41	2	1.35	0.99	2.58
E.1	41-59	19	0.18	0.15	0.30
P.4	42-111	70	0.14	0.12	0.20
E.2	70-88	19	0.02	0	0.07
P.5	83-86	4	0.04	0	0.17
E.3	96-114	19	0.39	0.34	0.57
Q.4	115-127	12	0.01	0.02	0
P.6	128	1	2.11	1.54	4.06
A.4	129-130	2	0.09	0.13	0
Q.5	131	1	1.29	1.28	1.50
P.7	132-139	8	0.27	0.37	0
Q.6	140-151	12	0.42	0.46	0.38
E.4	152-170	19	0.42	0.46	0.37
Q.7	171-185	16	0.08	0.08	0.08
P.8	186-190	5	0.90	0.77	1.41
Q.8	191	<1	0	0	0
A.5	191	<1	0	0	0
Q.9	191-194	4	0.17	0.24	0
E.5	195-211	17	0.05	0.06	0
A.6	209	1	0	0	0
Q.10	212-231	19	0.03	0.03	0
P.9	232-243	12	0	0	0
Q.11	244-255	11	0.01	0	0.06

**Table 2B. Mean Switches Per Week by Category and Sequence of Sub-stage, Russian Duma, 1993-95.**

Category, Sequence, and Length of Sub-stage			Mean Weekly Switches Per 100 MPs		
Sub-stage	Sequence (weeks in term spanned)	N Weeks	All MPs	SMD	PR
O.1	0	1	56.0*	56.0	0
A	1-12	12	0.30	0.44	0.15
O.2	13-17	5	1.11	2.13	0.09
P.1	18-24	7	0.13	0.21	0.06
Q.1	25-46	22	0.10	0.14	0.08
P.2	47-55	9	0.86	1.33	0.40
Q.2	56-60	5	0.31	0.36	0.27
P.3	61-63	3	5.40	8.15	2.67
Q.3	64-74	11	0.28	0.36	0.20
P.4	75-81	7	0.50	0.64	0.38
Q.4	82-87	6	0.04	0	0.07
R	88-95	8	0.42	0.50	0.33
Q.5	96-104	9	0.02	0.05	0

**Table 3A. Distribution of MPs' Switches, by Active Legislative Stage and Sub-stage, Italian Chamber, 1996-2001.**

Stage and Sub-stage	N Switches	Mean Switches per Week per 100 MPs per (Sub)Stage		
		All MPs	SMD	PR
<b>O</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.36</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.18</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>0.35</b>	<b>0.25</b>	<b>0.67</b>
A.1	1	0.29	0	1.13
A.2	0	0	0	0
A.3	17	1.35	0.99	2.58
A.4	1	0.09	0.13	0
A.5	0	0	0	0
A.6	0	0	0	0
<b>P</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>0.20</b>	<b>0.18</b>	<b>0.27</b>
P.1	0	0	0	0
P.2	15	0.20	0.18	0.27
P.3	0	0	0	0
P.4	61	0.14	0.12	0.20
P.5	1	0.04	0	0.17
P.6	19	2.11	1.54	4.06
P.7	13	0.27	0.37	0
P.8	26	0.90	0.79	1.41
P.9	0	0	0	0
<b>E</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.21</b>	<b>0.27</b>
E.1	22	0.18	0.15	0.30
E.2	2	0.02	0	0.07
E.3	47	0.39	0.34	0.57
E.4	51	0.42	0.46	0.37
E.5	5	0.05	0.06	0
<b>R</b>	cannot observe	n/a	n/a	n/a

**Key to stages, Italy, 1996-2001:**

Stage O = Election day (21-IV-96) to last day that MPs must announce membership in parliamentary groups (14-V-96, two weekdays after first session of legislature on 9/10-V-96)

Stage A = In a legislative term featuring one executive, day groups announced to day all legislative and executive payoffs completed; since multiple executives govern during the 1996-2001 term, Stage A is not continuous and is defined as the sum of sub-stages A.1 through A.6.

A.1 = Day groups announced (14-V-96) to day payoffs in first executive announced (18-V-96)

A.2 = Day executive payoffs allocated to day allocations of all legislative payoffs are completed (chamber leadership elected 9-V-96, 15-V-96; committee assignments completed and committee chairs elected (5-VI-96)

A.3 = Day *la Bicamerale* gains 2/3 approval in lower house (22-I-97) to day committee elects chair (includes days that committee appointments are made) (5-II-97)

A.4 = Day government falls (9-X-98) to day new executive payoffs announced (21-X-98)

A.5 = Day government resigns (18-XII-99) to day new executive payoffs announced (21-XII-99)

A.6 = Day government resigns (17-IV-00) in light of preceding day's losses in regional elections, to day new executive payoffs announced (25-IV-00)

Stage P is defined for decision-making on the national budget and on constitutional reform. We order sub-stages chronologically.

P.1 = Day Senate transmits to lower house constitutional bill for establishment of Bicameral Committee on Constitutional Reform (30-VII-96), to day lower house grants first approval of committee, known as *la Bicamerale* (2-VIII-96)

P.2 = Day executive presents 1997 budget bill (*legge finanziaria*) for first reading in lower house (30-IX-96) to day 1997 budget gains final approval from both houses (22-XII-96)

P.3 = Day Senate grants second (2/3) approval of *la Bicamerale* and transmits revised bill to Chamber (16-I-97) to day *la Bicamerale* gains required 2/3 approval in Chamber (22-I-97)

P.4 = Day *la Bicamerale* chair begins to direct work of committee (5-II-97) to day Chamber President removes unified text of constitutional reforms from agenda due to interparty disagreements (9-VI-98); *la Bicamerale* dissolved same day. Some individual articles of Constitution are amended after 9-VI-98, but effort to frame integrated package of reforms is abandoned.

P.5 = Day Senate transmits 1998 budget bill for first reading in lower house (22-XI-97) to day 1998 budget gains final approval from both houses (18-XII-97) (entirely subsumed within P.4)

P.6 = Day executive presents 1999 budget bill for first reading in lower house (30-IX-98) to day conflicts over budget (and to some degree foreign policy) lead to fall of government on confidence vote (9-X-98)

P.7 = Day committee work relevant to 1999 budget bill resumes in lower house (28-X-98) to day 1999 budget gains final approval from both houses (20-XII-98)

P.8 = Day Senate transmits 2000 budget bill for first reading in lower house (15-XI-99) to day 2000 budget gains final approval from both houses (16-XII-99)

P.9 = Day government presents 2001 budget bill for first reading in lower house (30-IX-00) to day 2001 budget gains final approval from both houses (22-XII-00)

Stage E is defined for major subnational elections and for European Parliament elections. "Major" subnational elections are isolated as those involving numerous, populous, and prominent areas of the national territory.

E.1. Ninetieth day before first round of elections (27-I-97) to thirtieth day after second round (10-VI-97)

E.2. Ninetieth day before first round (18-VIII-97) to thirtieth day after second (30-XII-97)

E.3. Ninetieth day before first round (23-II-98) to thirtieth day after second round (7-VII-98)

E.4. Ninetieth day before first round (15-III-99) to thirtieth day after second (27-VII-99)

E.5. Ninetieth day before elections (17-I-00) to thirtieth day after (16-V-00)

Stage R = Cannot be observed. On day President dissolves Parliament (9-III-01), choice of election day (either 6-V or 13-V) is narrowed down but not yet decided. Rules require registration for ballot between 42 and 44 days before election (see note 12 in text).

*Sources for Italy:* Annual chronologies available at [www.istcattaneo.org/archivi](http://www.istcattaneo.org/archivi); Ministry of Interior information at

[http://www.mininterno.it/sezioni/attivita/Le%20elezioni/s\\_000000056.htm](http://www.mininterno.it/sezioni/attivita/Le%20elezioni/s_000000056.htm) and

<http://cedweb.mininterno.it>; Pasquino 1999; and the extremely rich documentation

available at the following pages on the Chamber of Deputies website:

[http://www.camera.it/chiosco\\_parlamento.asp?content=/parlam/leggi/home.htm](http://www.camera.it/chiosco_parlamento.asp?content=/parlam/leggi/home.htm),

<http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/stenografici/jvhomefr.htm>,

<http://www.camera.it/parlam/bicam/rifcost/>,

<http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/stencomm/tabaud.htm>,

<http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/stencomm/tabpdl.htm?>,

<http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/stencomm/tabindag.htm>,

<http://www.camera.it/chioschetto.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/bollet/00r.htm>, and

<http://www.camera.it/chiosco.asp?content=/dati/leg13/lavori/schedela/2371.htm&source=/Docesta/313/4455/documentotesto.ASP&position=Documenti\Progetti%20di%20legge>.

**Table 3B. Distribution of MPs' Switches, by Active Legislative Stage and Sub-stage, Russian Duma, 1993-95.**

Stage and Sub-stage	N Switches	Mean Switches per Week per 100 MPs per (Sub)Stage		
		All MPs	SMD	PR
<b>O</b>		<b>56.0</b>	<b>0.43</b>	<b>0.18</b>
O.1		56.0	56.0	0
O.2		1.11	2.13	0.09
<b>A</b>		<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.44</b>	<b>0.15</b>
<b>P</b>		<b>1.09</b>	<b>1.63</b>	<b>0.71</b>
P.1		0.13	0.21	0.06
P.2		0.86	1.33	0.40
P.3		5.40	8.15	2.67
P.4		0.50	0.64	0.38
<b>R</b>		<b>0.42</b>	<b>0.50</b>	<b>0.33</b>

**Key to stages, Russia, 1993-95:**

Stage O = Election day...

Stage A = ...allocation committee posts...

Stage P is defined for decision-making on the national budget, internal security, and thus on constitutional matters. We order sub-stages chronologically.

P.1 = Day xxx (11-V-94), to day xxx (6-VII-94)

P.2 = Day marking start of First Chechen War (29-XI-94) to end of campaign; overlaps with legislative deliberations on 1995 budget (xx-I-95).

P.3 = Day marking start of second major campaign of Chechen war (6-III-95) to end of campaign (20-III-95).

P.4 = Day marking start of hostage crisis (insurgents capture civilians inside Budennovsk hospital (14-VI-95) to ceasefire (30-VI-95).

Stage R = Day marking three months before 1995 election date (x-X-95) to end of ballot registration one month before election (x-X-95).

*Sources for Russia:* All military chronologies are due to

[http://www.russianwarrior.com/STMMain.htm?1991\\_ChechHistoryFirst.htm&1](http://www.russianwarrior.com/STMMain.htm?1991_ChechHistoryFirst.htm&1). Etc.



**Table 4. Party Group Sizes and Left-Right Positions, Endpoints of Sub-stages with Highest Mean Weekly Switches per 100 MPs and at Start and End of Legislative Term, 1996-2001 Italian Chamber.**

Time	Group and Size												
	Rc-rump	Rc	Ds	Pd	DemU	Ri	UdEur	Udr	Ccd-Cdu	Lega	FI	An	Misto
Start	0	35	171	67	0	26	0	0	29	59	121	89	25
A.3	0	34	170	68	0	20	0	0	19	58	117	90	46
E.3	0	34	170	67	0	24	0	29	0	58	108	88	44
P.6	14	21	169	67	0	24	0	31	0	55	108	88	59 <sup>a</sup>
Q.5	14	21	168	66	0	23	0	26	0	55	108	88	67 <sup>a</sup>
Q.6	14	21	164	60	20	0	0	20	0	55	107	87	88 <sup>a</sup>
E.4	14	21	165	61	21	0	0	0	0	51	104	87	111 <sup>a</sup>
P.8	14	21	165	58	21	0	22	0	0	46	106	89	93 <sup>a</sup>
End	14	21	165	56	20	0	21	0	0	46	107	89	82 <sup>a</sup>

*Note:* Except for the Mixed Group (Misto), party groups here are arrayed from left to right according to convention among Italianists, which in turn reflects the groups' own ordering in the Chamber hemicycle. See discussion and references in text. Stages are listed in chronological order, not ranking by rate of switching. Start of term here is first day that newly elected Chamber met, which falls within stage O.

<sup>a</sup>Total for Mixed does not include organized Mixed component of RC-rump, which is listed separately according to left-right ordering. *Stages:* As in Table 3A.

**Key to party groups:**

RC Communist Refounding

DS Democratic Left (started legislature as PDS, Party of Democratic Left)

PD Popular Democrats

DemU Democrats-Olive Tree

RI Italian Renewal

UDEur Democratic Union for Europe

UDR Union of Democrats for the Republic

CCD-CDU Christian Democratic Center-Christian Democratic Union

Lega Northern League (name changes observed)

FI Forza Italy (Go, Italy)

AN National Alliance

Misto Mixed Group

**Table x. Frequency Distribution for Switches, 630 Italian MPs, by Mode of Election.**

N switches	All MPs	SMD	PR
0	491	113	378
1	63	21	42
2	37	9	28
3	30	10	20
4	5	0	5
5	1	1	0
6	2	1	1
7	0	0	0
8	1	0	1

**Table x. Distribution of Year of First Switch, 630 Italian MPs, by Clarity of Party Label.**

Year	All MPs			MPs on Clear Labels			MPs on Blurry Labels		
	N making 1 <sup>st</sup> move	N at risk	Est. hazard rate	N making 1 <sup>st</sup> move	N at risk	Est. hazard rate	N making 1 <sup>st</sup> move	N at risk	Est. hazard rate
1	35	630	.056	5	299	.016	30	331	.091
2	35	595	.059	0	294	.000	35	299	.117
3	54	560	.096	18	294	.061	36	266	.136
4	12	506	.024	0	276	.000	12	230	.052
5 <sup>a</sup>	3	494	.006	0	276	.000	3	218	.014

*Note:* For this table, Year 1 is defined as starting on the first day that the Chamber met for the 1996-2001 legislative term, 9 May 1996. All subsequent years thus begin on 9 May.

For definition of clear and blurry labels, see Heller and Mershon 2005.

<sup>a</sup>The fifth year is truncated at 306 days, since the Chamber's last day in session before the 2001 elections was 9 March 2001.

N.B. do for SMD and PR

**Table xx. Propensity to Switch among Russian Duma Deputies, 1993-95, by Selection Method, Clarity of Party Label, Independence, and Gender**

	ALL MPs	PR MPs	SMD MPs				Gender	
			All SMD MPs	SMD from excluded parties	SMD elected as independents	SMD with clear party label in Duma	Women	Men
N	461	<b>235</b>	226	7	161	<b>58</b>	61	400
Overall propensity to switch (mean switches per person)	0.74 (342)	<b>0.24</b> <b>(56)</b>	1.26 (286)	2.14 (15)	1.56 (248)	<b>0.40</b> <b>(23)</b>	0.57 (35)	0.77 (307)
Propensity to switch beyond stage O	0.47 (218)	<b>0.24</b> <b>(56)</b>	0.71 (161)	1.43 (10)	.83 (134)	<b>0.29</b> <b>(17)</b>	0.36 (22)	0.49 (196)

**Table xx. Frequency Distribution for Switches *Beyond initial Factional Placement*, for 461\* Russian Duma Deputies, by Selection Method, Clarity of Party Label, Independence, and Gender.**

Number of switches	All	<b>Elected through PR</b>	Elected through SMDs	SMD, from excluded parties	SMD elected as independents	<b>SMD with clear party label in Duma</b>	Women	Men
	461	<b>235</b>	226	7	161	<b>58</b>	61	400
0	319 (.69)	<b>191</b> <b>(.81)</b>	128 (.57)	1 (.14)	83 (.52)	<b>44 (.76)</b>	48 (.79)	271 (.68)
1	90 (.20)	<b>33 (.14)</b>	57 (.25)	3 (.43)	45 (.28)	<b>9 (.16)</b>	8 (.13)	82 (.21)
2	33 (.07)	<b>10 (.04)</b>	23 (.10)	2 (.29)	16 (.10)	<b>5 (.09)</b>	3 (.05)	30 (.08)
3	17 (.04)	<b>1 (.004)</b>	16 (.07)	1 (.14)	15 (.09)	<b>0 (0)</b>	2 (.03)	15 (.04)
4	2 (.004)	<b>0 (0)</b>	2 (.01)	0 (0)	2 (.01)	<b>0 (0)</b>	0 (0)	2 (.01)
<i>Switching at least once beyond initial factional placement</i>	<i>142</i> <i>(.31)</i>	<b><i>44 (.19)</i></b>	<i>98</i> <i>(.43)</i>	<i>6 (.86)</i>	<i>78 (.48)</i>	<b><i>14 (.24)</i></b>	<i>13 (.21)</i>	<i>129</i> <i>(.32)</i>
Cumulative N switches	218	<b>56</b>	159	10	130	<b>19</b>	20	183

## References

- Aldrich, John H. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Baldini, Gianfranco, and Guido Legnante. 2000. *Città al voto. I sindaci a le elezioni comunali*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Bartolini, Stefano, and Peter Mair. 1990. *Identity, Competition, and Electoral Availability: The Stabilization of European Electorates, 1885-1985*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Beck, Nathaniel, and Jonathan N. Katz. 1995. "What to Do (and Not to Do) with Time-Series-Cross-Section Data in Comparative Politics." *American Political Science Review* 89: 634-647.
- Beck, Nathaniel, Jonathan N. Katz, and Richard Tucker. 1998. "Taking Time Seriously: Time-Series-Cross-Section Analysis with a Binary Dependent Variable." *American Journal of Political Science* 42: 1260-1288.
- Box-Steffensmeier, Janet M., and Bradford S. Jones. 2004. *Event History Modeling: A Guide for Social Scientists*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- D'Alimonte, Roberto, and Stefano Bartolini, eds. 2002. *Maggioritario finalmente? La transizione elettorale 1994-2001*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Dahl, Robert A. 1970. *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- De Micheli, Chiara, and Luca Verzichelli. 2004. *Il Parlamento*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Di Virgilio, Aldo. 1997. "Le alleanze elettorali. Identità partitiche e logiche coalizionali." In Roberto D'Alimonte, Roberto and Stefano Bartolini, eds., *Maggioritario per caso. Le elezioni politiche del 1996*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Di Virgilio, Aldo. 2002. "L'offerta elettorale. La politica delle alleanze si istituzionalizza." In Roberto D'Alimonte and Stefano Bartolini, eds., *Maggioritario finalmente? La transizione elettorale 1994-2001*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Filippov, Mikhail. 2002. "Russian Voting and the Initial Economic Shock of Hyperinflation." *Public Choice* 111 (1-2): 73-104.
- Filippov, Mikhail. 2004.
- Heller, William B., and Carol Mershon. 2004. "Theoretical and Empirical Models of Party Switching." Paper presented at the Dublin Workshop Party Switching Research Group.
- Heller, William B., and Carol Mershon. 2005. "Party Switching in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, 1996-2001." *Journal of Politics* 67 (2): 536-559.
- Laver, Michael and Kenneth Benoit. 2003. "The Evolution of Party Systems between Elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 47 (2): 215-233.
- Laver, Michael and Kenneth Shepsle. 1996. *Making and Breaking Governments: Cabinets and Legislatures in Parliamentary Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mainwaring, Scott P. 1999. *Rethinking Party Systems in the Third Wave of Democratization: The Case of Brazil*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Moser, Robert G. 2001. *Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.

- Olson, David. 1994.
- Olson, David. 1998. "The Parliaments of New Democracies and the Politics of Representation." In S. White, J. Batt, and P. G. Lewis, eds., *Developments in Central and East European Politics 2*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Ostrogorski, M. I. 1902. *Democracy and the Organization of Political Parties*. London.
- Pasquino, Gianfranco. 1999. "Autopsia della Bicamerale." In David Hine and Salvatore Vassallo, eds., *Politica in Italia, Edizione 99*. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- Remington, Thomas, and Steven S. Smith. 1998. "Theories of Legislative Institutions and the Organization of the Russian Duma." *American Journal of Political Science* 42: 545-572.
- Schnattscheider, E. E. 1942. *Party Government*. New York: Farrar and Rinehart.
- Schumpeter, Joseph R. 1950. *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Shvetsova, Olga. 2002. "Institutions and Coalition-Building in Post-Communist Transitions. In A. Reynolds, ed., *The Architecture of Democracy: Constitutional Design, Conflict Management, and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Shvetsova, Olga. 2004. "The Political Business Cycle and Assessing the Motivations in Parliamentary Party-Switching Behavior." Paper presented at the Dublin Workshop of the Party Switching Research Group.
- Tsebelis, George. 2002. *Veto Players: How Political Institutions Work*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.