Why Political Elites Support Governmental Transparency: Self-Interest, Anticipation of Voters’ Preferences or Socialization?

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ABSTRACT: Since governmental transparency is considered to be a key mechanism for democratic accountability and representation, we compare three analytically distinctive motivations that could potentially explain transparency support among political elites: (1) From a principal-agent perspective, elites have no incentive to reduce their informational advantage over voters inherent in the policy process. (2) From an office-seeking perspective, it should be beneficial to support popular issues such as transparency. (3) From a democratic-elitism perspective, a specific elite-socialisation should lead to high support of civil liberties like transparency. Analysing survey data of candidates for the German Bundestag 2009, we find high variance among elites and complementary influence of the three motivations. Socialization in left-leaning parties has the most dominant positive effect. We find anticipation effects among candidates that are highly dependent on voters’ support and whose voters are in favour of transparency at the same time. Further, transparency support is higher among young candidates. The findings imply that more transparency policies might be implemented in the future if public support for transparency increases and older candidate cohorts are replaced. Examining underlying motivations for policy changes, this work contributes to the literature of policy representation and is the first to investigate elites’ preferences towards governmental transparency.

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Of the three sources of power the most important for sovereignty is the power over the thoughts that give trust. Violence can only be used negatively; money can only be used in two dimensions, giving and taking away. But knowledge and thoughts can transform things, move mountains and make ephemeral power appear permanent’ (Mulgan 2007: 27)

1. Introduction
Why do political elites support governmental transparency? To address this question, we draw on three established theories that can explain elite preferences: principal-agent theory, office-seeking and democratic elitism. From each theory we derive an analytically distinct, ideal-typical motivation to support transparency policies: self-interest, anticipation of voters’ preferences, and elite socialization. We combine these three motivations into an explanatory framework and suggest that their influence on elites’ preferences is complementary. For the empirical analysis we draw on survey data of candidates for the German Bundestag 2009. The contribution of this work is twofold.

First, to the best of our knowledge, we are the first to investigate the attitudes of political elites towards governmental transparency. Governmental transparency is ‘the ability to find out what is going on inside a public sector organization (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007: 308). It can be achieved by disclosing information such as politicians’ individual voting behaviour in parliament, perquisites of delegates, key figures of all kind of political and economic developments, ex ante expectations or ex post evaluations of policies, and details about placing and costs of public contracts. Recently, revolutionary movements during the Arab Spring, the publications of classified material by Wikileaks, the rise of Pirate Parties in Europe, and similar events made ‘citizens’ right to know’ a heavily debated issue. Political scientists underline the importance of governmental transparency as well. There is a bulk of empirical literature that shows how governmental transparency is beneficial for citizens: Transparency increases responsiveness (Besley and Burgess 2002), civic engagement (Capuno and Garcia 2010),

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2 The empirical investigation of public support for governmental transparency has started to become a matter of interest for some researchers in recent time. C.f.: Association of Government Accountants (2010); Cuillier and Piotrowski (2009); Cuillier (2008); Driscoll et al. (2000); Piotrowski and Van Ryzin (2007). In summary, this research shows high support for transparency among the public. In contrast, there is only one study (McDonagh 2010) which surveys elite attitudes towards the issue. However, this study is mainly concerned with the subsequent evaluation of benefits and problems of the introduction of a freedom of information law and only provides some descriptive statistics.
trust in government (Grimmelikhuijsen 2009), and good governance (Islam 2006). Therefore, Robert Dahl (1989) might not exaggerate in his seminal work ‘Democracy and its Critics’ when he claims that inequality in information and knowledge is the most severe resource inequality that threatens democracy. He even considers it more substantial than those differences in resources that permit violent coercion or stem from wealth and economic position.

Second, by focusing on the motivations of legislators to adopt policies, we add to the literature of policy representation. Most often, this literature focuses on the impact of public opinion on policies (Page and Shapiro 1983; Monroe 1998; Burstein 2003; Brooks and Manza 2006). The idea behind this kind of democratic representation is that public opinion affects elite preferences and that political elites will consequently create policy outcomes according to public opinion. In other words, this approach assumes the ideal democratic case that political elites solely execute the public will. It neglects the possibilities that the causality can also work vice versa, elite preferences affect public opinion, or that elites pursue their own interests and thus affect policy outcomes directly (Hill and Hinton-Anderson 1995; Rae and Taylor 1971). Although we will not participate in the debate about the causal direction of the public opinion-policy linkage, we acknowledge the importance of elite preferences. Chances for the implementation of a specific policy will be low, if there is prevailing resistance among legislators, even if public support for it is high. For this reason, we directly focus on explaining how preferences are motivated and thus ask under which circumstances political elites are willing to change policies. Empirical analyses of different elites’ motivations have often investigated institutional change, in particular changes of electoral institutions such as direct democracy (Bowler et al. 2006; Ziemann 2009). Like direct democracy, governmental transparency weakens elites’ control over the political agenda and thus has a ‘redistributive feature’ (Tsebelis 1990). For this reason, elites’ motivations to support transparency are less obvious than the citizens’. Therefore, support for governmental transparency does not only have important practical consequences. With three different underlying motivations, it also offers a unique possibility for a theoretical investigation of the formation of elite preferences using three different theories.

The first one is principal-agent theory. It stresses the informational advantage in the policy process that politicians enjoy over citizens. Politicians can exploit this advantage to enforce their own interests which might differ from citizens’ interests (Stiglitz 2002).
According to principal-agent theory, there should be no rational reason for politicians to support transparency since it would lower the information asymmetry and consequentially decrease the possibilities to enforce their self-interest. The second theory we draw on is office-seeking: If one assumes that voters are highly in favour of transparency policies, anticipating these preferences might be considered as rational behaviour for political elites as well because supporting such transparency policies might lead to more electoral support from voters. From this broader perspective of rational behaviour, politicians do not gain utility by enforcing their self-interest, but by supporting popular policies to maximise their chances to win or to retain office. Third, elite theory emphasises the impact of elites’ socialization on their attitudes (Bachrach 1962; McClosky 1964; Stouffer 1955). According to the democratic elitism literature, political elites in general have a particularly high appreciation of democratic values and civil liberties – in any case higher than that of ordinary citizens. Since governmental transparency can certainly be considered a democratic value, elite theory would suggest that elites show strong support for transparency as a consequence of their specific elite socialization.

The three approaches outlined above provide distinct (and partly conflicting) motivations for politicians to support or reject governmental transparency. However, for our analysis, we do not assume a single explaining motivation or homogenous preferences among political elites. All three motivations will rarely appear in its ideal typical form: the selfish homo oeconomicus who abuses her power and exploits her position at the expense of the citizenry; the unprincipled turncoat who tells the voters what they want to hear; and the benevolent upholder of democratic values. Instead we suggest that there are complementary motivations for political elites to support or reject transparency policies and assume that politicians are influenced by all impacts.

For the empirical analysis, we draw on data of the German Candidate Study that surveyed candidates for the German Bundestag 2009 (Rattinger et al. 2009). Using data from Germany has several advantages. If differences between different groups of political elites exist in a consensus-oriented democracy such as Germany, they should be even more prominent in majoritarian democracies like the U.S. or the UK. Furthermore, the mixed-member proportional representation system with three kinds of candidacy  

\footnote{Rationality here is defined as choosing the one alternative out of a space of action that maximizes an agent’s utility.}
modes – constituency candidacy, party-list candidacy and mixed mode – differ substantially in their dependency on voters’ favour. This provides the opportunity to disentangle the different impacts on support for transparency. In addition, the multi-party system of Germany makes it possible to control for a wide range of party socialization influences.

The remainder of this article is organised as follows. In the theoretical section, we start the investigation with a brief introduction about the role of information in the policy process. We then present the three motivations that are drawn from the literature and apply them to the issue of transparency support. Finally, we show how the different approaches are related and can be considered complements. In section 3 we introduce the dataset used for this study, explain the operationalisation of the variables and outline the methodological proceeding. Section 4 shows the empirical results. In section 5 we conclude.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1. The Role of Information in the Policy Process

Figure 1 depicts the role of information in the policy process. In a representative democracy, citizens as sovereigns delegate power to politicians. Ordinary citizens simply lack the time as well as the ability for mass-coordination that is necessary to find binding rules for the whole society. The idea of representation is that politicians shape policies in the best interest of citizens (Pitkin 1967). However, the actual policy outcome is not only formed through politicians’ actions and decisions but is also influenced by several contextual factors that are beyond the influence of the individual politician, such as budget constraints, veto powers, party strategy, economic development, etc. To hold politicians accountable, i.e. to ensure that they act in the citizens’ best interest, there are

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4 The definition of one best interest is tricky for several reasons. First, there are various concepts of representation (Mansbridge 2003). Second, there are doubts that voters themselves know what is their best interest (Manin et al. 1999). Third, electoral heterogeneity allows public officials to play off some voters against others to escape from the electoral control mechanism and undermine their accountability to anyone (Ferejohn 1986).

5 For reasons of convenience we just consider such contextual factors as exogenous here, although we are aware that each of these influences is the result of complex processes that deserve their own fields of research.
periodical elections. If citizens are dissatisfied with the politicians’ performance, they can replace them in the next legislative period.

However, evaluating politicians’ performance is not a straightforward matter. Citizens can only evaluate their own well-being, i.e. the outcome they perceive (Ferejohn 1986). But they usually lack information about politicians’ actions and decisions (hidden action) as well as about the details of contextual influences (hidden information). This is why Easton (1965) calls the policy process a ‘black box’. This lack of information limits the possibility to hold politicians accountable, as citizens cannot distinguish between the politicians’ performance and the contextual factors. Thus they can only partly identify actions that are not in their interest. To remedy this problem, intermediaries have the crucial task to provide voters with informational feedback and to make the policy process as transparent as possible. Only a transparent information flow enables citizens to evaluate politicians’ performance on a basis different than the actual policy outcome.

According to Piotrowski (2007: 91), there are five channels through which such informational feedback can flow: First, proactive dissemination by all kind of public agencies via press releases, provision of statistical figures, publications of historical documents or posting documents online. Second, through requested information that is not proactively provided by any agency but has to be specifically requested by journalists or citizens. The release of the information is often examined for each individual case and is based on legal rights such as a freedom of information act. The third and fourth are less formal channels: whistle-blowing – the publication of administrative misbehaviour, and leaks – the release of information to some media outlets that is not intended to become public. The fifth and last channel are open meetings where information is discussed publicly by both political elites and representatives of media or interested citizens. Notably, most information released via any of these channels reaches citizens through some kind of information intermediary such as journalists, broadcasting agencies, bloggers, etc. Ordinary citizens most often lack the time, the interest or the cognitive ability to acquire such information on their own.

Information that reaches citizens via whistle-blowing or leaks is an import source for revealing and preventing wrongdoing. Nevertheless, these kinds of information flows are not intended by the government and thus cannot be considered in a study that asks...
for motivations why politicians (purposely) support transparency. Contrary, information flowing through the other three channels can be actively controlled by politicians. Among all the binding decisions politicians come to, they also determine to which degree they reveal information about their own actions, decisions and performance to the public (Manin et al. 1999). So to some extent, by regulating governmental transparency they can determine the degree to which they can be held accountable. Besides the role of information in the policy process, figure 1 also includes the three motivations assumed to drive politicians’ transparency support and that will be elaborated on in the next sections.

2.2. Self-Interest

The policy process as described above corresponds to the typical characteristics of a principal-agent relation (Barro 1973; Ferejohn 1986; Miller 2005): A principal (citizen) delegates a specific task to an agent (politician) and rewards the agent for acting in her interest. The principal-agent relationship is characterised both by at least partly different preferences between principal and agent and by asymmetric information. The agent has an informational advantage over the principal regarding the quality and commitment of her own actions because the principal cannot perfectly monitor her. Principal-agent theory suggests that in such a situation with hidden action and hidden information, the agent will maximise her utility by enforcing her self-interest – so-called moral hazard behaviour – behaviour that would not occur under complete information. Typical moral hazard behaviour in representative democracies includes policy divergence (the deviation from citizens’ preferred policy), rent extraction (the exploitation of political authority for private benefits), fraud, corruption, and leisure shirking (bad policy outcomes as a consequence of politicians’ low effort) (Strøm et al. 2003).

In a world of perfect information, i.e. with absolute transparency, as it is often assumed by neoclassic economic theory, citizens can perfectly observe politicians’ behaviour and precisely distinguish their performance from other impacts. Thus they can exactly detect when politicians try to enforce their own interest. With perfect transparency, politicians have no incentive to cheat on citizens in any way because any kind of fraud would

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6 Since this kind of moral hazard behaviour has negative consequences for all voters, we consider the assumption of homogeneous voter interests concerning transparency justifiable. The above mentioned limitation of accountability as a result of heterogeneous voter preferences and ambiguity about a “best interest” thus carries less weight here.
immediately be sanctioned in the next elections. Vice versa, in a world with absolute non-transparency, i.e. without any information flow, once the voter delegates her power to the politician she has no further impact on the formation of the policy outcome. The principal-agent approach suggests that after the election, a politician has no incentive to stick to the voters’ interest. This is because politicians are aware that voters have no way to evaluate the formation of the outcome in any case. The consideration of these two extreme points illustrates that the amount of transparency determines the politicians’ ability to realise their self-interest against the voter’s interest. In its most canonical form, principal-agent theory thus suggests a homogenous disapproval of all information flow to citizens. There should not be any support for transparency policies at all.

However, self-interest motivations can also explain heterogeneous preferences among elites. Based on considerations in the literature on changing institutions (Riker 1980; Shepsle and Weingast 1981; Tsebelis 1990), Bowler et al. (2002) propose that those elites who lose under the current institutional arrangement will support institutional changes while those in power will refuse changes in order to maintain the status quo. In line with this argument, the authors argue that expanding direct democracy gives new actors (‘outsiders’) access to the public policy agenda and thus weakens the power of the actual legislators. In fact, their empirical results show that candidates of the ruling party are much less in favour of direct democracy than those of the opposition. The same could be shown for incumbent members of parliament compared to their respective contenders. Analogous to the argument for direct democracy, governmental transparency opens political institutions and increases information levels of outsiders. Political elites who are not in government or in parliament could gain more control over policymaking by increased governmental transparency. Thus, from a self-interest perspective, the more involved a politician is in the policy process, the less she should support governmental transparency.

2.3. Anticipation of Voter Preferences

From a principal-agent perspective, politicians maximise their utility by engaging in moral hazard behaviour. But the utility notion can be regarded in a broader way. The main idea in this section is that voters evaluate politicians’ policy positions and that politicians can gain utility by attracting voters’ support for promoting specific policies (Wlezien 1996; Highton 2012; Pietryka and Boydstun 2011). This argument is in line with early theorists such as Downs (1957), who states that parties maximise electoral
support to gain governmental control, or Schumpeter (1942), who claims that the whole democratic process is virtually defined by different political elites’ competition for citizens’ support. The literature of coalition formation and party competition uses the concept of ‘office-seeking’ for party behaviour that maximises the chances to control government (Strøm 1990). We borrow this term to describe individual elite behaviour. From this perspective, politicians that seek office should support policies that are popular among the electorate to increase their chances to win or to retain office.

Since voters highly appreciate governmental transparency (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007), elites might increase their utility by committing themselves to transparency policies. Contrary to the principal-agent approach above, politicians’ utility here stems from electoral support and not from enforcing self-interest. This idea is closely related to the argument that elections are a mechanism to select ‘good types’ of politicians (Fearon 1999). Those politicians who support a high level of transparency might qualify as such good types in the eyes of citizens and thus have a competitive advantage over political opponents that reject transparency. Consequently, from this office-seeking perspective, supporting transparency is generally beneficial for politicians. But how much utility a politician can gain from supporting transparency policies exactly depends on two factors: first, how much the specific politician depends on the voters’ support, and second, how much her specific voters value governmental transparency.

Dependency on the voters’ support is strongly linked to the candidacy mode of the politician. Pure constituency candidates are highly dependent on the voters’ favour since they campaign as individuals in their constituency. The campaigns of pure list candidates are much more focused on the respective party. ‘Mixed-mode candidates’ campaign in a constituency, but are backed up by their party list. Pure constituency candidates thus should be more responsive to voters’ interest for office-seeking reasons compared to list candidates that have only an indirect connection to the voters. Empirical data show that candidates in Germany indeed differ substantially in campaigning and in positions taken up according to the mode of candidacy (Wüst et al. 2006). The dependency on voters’ support could furthermore be influenced by politicians’ expectations about the closeness of the electoral race. If a specific candidate can expect a bold majority of the votes in her constituency, attracting further voters’ support is much less crucial as if there is a close race between two or more candidates. Conversely, if the election
outcomes are expected to be very narrow, support for governmental transparency might tip the scales.

How much voters appreciate governmental transparency depends on the voters’ ideology. Left-leaning citizens are more concerned with governmental transparency than right-leaning ones (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007). And left-leaning voters usually vote for left-leaning candidates and for left-leaning parties. Because politicians anticipate their respective voters’ preferences, office-seeking behaviour implies that both left-leaning candidates and candidates from left-leaning parties show stronger support for transparency than their right-leaning competitors. Furthermore, the voters’ appreciation of transparency might depend on the respective structure of their constituencies. Consequently, the candidate can anticipate a different popular demand for governmental transparency depending on the structure of the constituency. This assumption is based on the cleavage theory by Lipset and Rokkan (1967) who suggest that the electoral outcome is also a result of the conflicts arising from the structure of a society. For Germany, this approach is taken up by Magin et al. (2009) who analyse how the electoral outcome can be predicted from the composition of the regional social structure. The authors find that the church-state cleavage and the materialism-postmaterialism cleavage significantly shape the regional electoral outcomes in Germany. Thus, issues that address one of these conflicts might be particularly relevant for the structural impact on voters’ support. Postmaterialist values are often related to the desire for, having a say, more control and more participation in politics (Inglehart 1977). Since transparency can be considered as an important means to these ends, the demand for transparency policies should be higher among voters with postmaterialist values. Irrespective of their own ideological preferences which will be discussed in the next section, candidates should anticipate this demand for transparency in their constituency.

2.4. Elite Socialization

While the two former approaches point out motivations to maximise two different kinds of utility – enforcing self-interest and attracting voters’ support – elite theorists focus on the influence of political elites’ specific socialization. This elite socialization is characterised by high levels of motivation, education, openness, participation in the political system, responsibility, contact with ideological diversity, and the belief in the necessity to find compromise (Sullivan et al. 1993). These factors are supposed to have a
strong influence on elites’ political preferences. More specifically, democratic elitism in its most canonical form suggests that political elites are highly committed to democratic values and civil liberties, especially more than ordinary citizens are (Stouffer 1955; Bachrach 1962; McClosky 1964; McClosky and Brill 1983). Elites are seen as the ‘carriers of the democratic creed’ (McClosky 1964) that defend democracy against a public that is often quite intolerant towards such values. If one agrees with Stiglitz (2002: 29) that ‘in democratic societies citizens have a basic right to know, to speak out, and to be informed about what the government is doing and why and to debate it’, one should consider governmental transparency as such a basic democratic value. Consequentially, democratic elitism would suggest that politicians support transparency and intentionally reduce the information asymmetry inherent in the policy process.

The literature cited above regards political elites as a homogenous entity and thus assumes uniform preferences. If democracy is considered as a competition among political elites, as Schumpeter (1942) suggests, this assumption appears debatable. Notably, Schumpeter does not deny the importance of elite socialization. But in his view this specific socialization is based on competition. Therefore, it does not lead to uniformity of higher moral obligations but to distinct positions between blocks of elites. The resulting ‘ideological convictions’ (Putnam 1971) consequently lead to different preferences among elites. Indeed, there is empirical evidence that there is no consensus but rather a high heterogeneity among political elites concerning civil liberties, with elites sometimes being even less supportive than citizens (Sniderman et al. 1991; Gibson and Duch 1991; Fletcher 1989). By reanalysing the data from McClosky and Brill, Sniderman et al. can show that conservative elites are no more approving of civil liberties than are conservative citizens but less approving than left-leaning elites and left-leaning citizens. In a less canonical form that considers heterogeneity among politicians, elite theory would thus suggest that left-leaning candidates and candidates from left-leaning parties support governmental transparency more than their more right-leaning counterparts. Notably, these differences stem from strong convictions that are a result of different socialization. As opposed to the two former approaches, rational calculus does not play any role here. This motivation could thus be analogous to the concept of ‘policy-seeking’ used in the party-competition literature (Strøm 1990).

Recently governmental transparency has often been considered in connection to developments in information and communication technology. For this reason, one
could ask whether there is a socializing effect of internet usage on political elites. One term often mentioned in this context is open government, a broad concept for measures that use new technologies to increase transparency, accountability, public participation, and collaboration. Although it is not clearly defined which measures belong to the concept, in a broader sense open government can also be understood as a shift in the thinking about the relationship between public administration and citizens. Bertot et al. (2010) suggest that open government and social media have the potential to create a ‘culture of transparency’ and thus can be seen as anti-corruption tools. Heavy users of information technologies should be more convinced of the benefits of governmental transparency and therefore appreciate transparency more. Indeed, among ordinary citizens frequent online information seeking increases the support for access to public records (Cuillier and Piotrowski 2009).

2.5. The Complementation of Motivations

In the previous sections we presented three different theoretical approaches that can potentially explain political elites’ preferences: enforcement of self-interest, anticipation of voter preferences, and elite socialization. While principal-agent theory suggests low support for transparency policies, elite theory and office-seeking provide motivations for high support. Although these perspectives are analytically distinct, they can be related to each other.

First, principal-agent theory and democratic elitism (in their most canonical forms) both compare transparency preferences of political elites and citizens, but their predictions are contradictory: While principal-agent theory suggests higher transparency preferences among citizens, democratic elitism assumes higher support among politicians. The opposing predictions are a result of the assumed difference in the driving forces behind elite preferences: self-interest or socialization, respectively. Second, both self-interest and anticipation of voter preferences are based on rational considerations, i.e., politicians’ considerations on how to maximise their own utility. Since transparency preferences are contrary for these two motivations, there is a trade-off. A politician must deliberate about whether enforcing self-interest or attracting voters’ support will be more beneficial for her utility. Third, elite socialization and office-seeking motivations point in the same direction, but the respective reasons to support transparency are completely unrelated. Elite socialization points to a sincere intrinsic
conviction – a ‘policy-seeking’ motivation – while anticipation of voters’ preferences emerges from utility-maximizing considerations.

Instead of asking which of these three motivations is the one that explains politicians’ preferences, we consider these motivations to be complementary factors that shape politicians’ preferences together. A politician who is only trying to enforce her self-interest, or who is doing everything to gain her voters’ favour, or who is acting solely according to higher moral values will rarely appear in existing democracies and thus has to be considered as ideal-typical only. Instead, we suggest that most political elites have to prioritise between conflicting motivations that have different degrees of influence on their preferences and actions. While self-interest might be a driving force for decisions, ideological convictions might limit its extent to a certain set of actions. While a politician might want to decide according to her ideological convictions, pragmatic considerations might make her deviate from own preferences and anticipate those of her voters. Because of the simultaneous occurrence of all three motivations, an absolutely unambiguous and minute disentanglement of impacts in the empirical part is impossible. This is especially true for the concept of ideology, because both the individual left/right classification and the party membership are assumed to have an impact via socialization and via anticipation of voters’ preferences. We will instead analyse which of the three motivations do exist at all and under which conditions one can find them.

3. Data and Methodology
For the analysis we use data from the German Longitudinal Election Study (GLES), more specifically from one of its components, the German Candidate Study. The candidate study surveys all candidates from the six parties represented in the German Bundestag shortly after the German federal election 2009. The population exists of 2,077 candidates. Questionnaires were sent to the candidates via mail starting from 4th of November 2009, with two reminders after one month each. Candidates also had an

7 C.f. Rattinger et al. (2009). There is similar data from 2005 available, c.f. Gschwend et al. (2005) However, we will not use it here for two reasons. First, there is no information about the constituency number, so survey data cannot be matched with contextual data. Second, various candidates were surveyed both in 2005 and 2009. For reasons of anonymity, however, the data have no panel structure and those candidates cannot be identified. Thus, the issue of autocorrelation cannot be addressed.
option to participate online. Altogether 790 complete questionnaires could be realised which corresponds to 38% of the population. The realization rate varies with party affiliation between 30% for the CSU (Christlich-Soziale Union) and 47% for the Greens (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen). Furthermore the realization rate is lower for successful candidates (32%) than for those who failed to enter the parliament (41%). Taking the different number of candidates per party into account, the different realization rates lead to a considerable overrepresentation of FDP (Freie Demokratische Partei), Greens and The Left (Die Linke) in the sample. With the exception of the Bavarian-only CSU, all parties have a share of about 20%.

A selection bias between different groups of respondents can often be found in social surveys. However, in an analysis of the issue of transparency, the occurrence of a selection bias might be especially relevant because the decision to reveal information in a social survey can be considered as transparent behaviour itself, although anonymity is guaranteed. Therefore, participation in this survey is likely to be correlated with support for transparency policies. This means that our sample is probably more supportive for transparency policies than the general population of political elites in Germany. On the other hand, this might make the results more conservative: If there are any effects in this more homogenous and supportive sample with lower variance in transparency support, these effects should be even more prominent in a more heterogeneous and less supportive population with higher variance. To control for possible biases caused by selection bias, we validate all analyses with two different post-hoc weights: one adjusted for party differences among the whole population of candidates, the other adjusted to the party composition of the current German Bundestag. The weighted analyses do not differ considerably and can be found in table A1 in the online appendix.

3.1. Dependent Variable: Support for Governmental Transparency

The dependent variable is an index for support of governmental transparency. There is an item set asking for candidates’ attitudes towards several much discussed parliamentarian reforms. Three of these items concern transparency. Candidates are asked to indicate their position on a 7-point scale with labelled extreme points that are:

(1) ‘Parliamentary committees should always be held publicly’ to ‘Parliaments have to offer the chance for confidential consultation and for coming to a compromise’
The negotiations of parliamentary committees should be broadcasted live via electronic media’ to ‘The parliamentarian process must not become a media frenzy’

‘Members of parliament should have the right to unrestricted access to records of the ministerial bureaucracy’ to ‘Unrestricted access to records is superfluous or even harmful’

The first two items measure what is defined as governmental transparency, an information flow from politicians to citizens. Conversely, the third item measures an information flow from bureaucrats to politicians. Motivations to indicate support for item three thus might be reverse because approval here means increasing politicians’ information level, not reducing their informational advantage over citizens. For this reason only item one and two are included in the transparency support index.

We conduct a principle component analysis to see whether the two items measure the same concept. According to the Kaiser Criterion both items score on a single factor, explaining 82% of the variance. A reliability check provides a Cronbach’s Alpha of 0.78. Both numbers are considerably higher than those of an index with all three items. The dependent variable transparency is constructed by the factor scores using regression method. A high value on the index indicates strong support for governmental transparency.

One objection to this operationalisation could be that the two items are very specific and only relate to the work of parliamentary committees. This objection is justified, as a higher number and more diverse items would increase reliability. Nevertheless, we believe that a general inclination for transparency exists and that candidates that support transparency of parliamentary committees also support transparency in different governmental fields. At least for citizens this claim appears to be true, as they show consistent preferences among a wide range of transparency items (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007). Thus, despite the particular nature of the items, the index should allow for measuring a general preference for governmental transparency.

8 For comparison, we also applied principal factor analysis (instead of principal component analysis) and computed factor scores by the Bartlett method (instead of regression method). All possible scores correlate by 1.0.
Another problem that always exists in survey research is the social desirability bias. It might be especially strong for politicians since they are public persons and supposed to act as role models. Political elites will not answer surveys as ingenuously as citizens do, but will partially answer strategically according to role expectations. Since transparency can be considered as a democratic value, one could argue that there is an upward bias for support for transparency. However, we consider this objection as minor. First, absolute anonymity is guaranteed. Second, and more important, the items are coded in a way that both extremes can reflect desirable conditions. Whether transparency or offering ‘confidential consultation’ and avoiding ‘media frenzy’ are considered more desirable depends on individual preferences. For this reason, we consider the candidates’ answers to these items as a valid measurement of their real opinion and intention for decisions and actions.

### 3.2. Independent Variables

For analytical purposes, the independent variables are distinguished according to the three different theoretical approaches to elites’ support for transparency.

To capture the potential effects of self-interest as suggested by principal-agent theory, we use a dummy variable *MdB* that indicates whether the candidate was elected into the German Bundestag. Furthermore, we will compare transparency preferences among candidates with comparable data of citizens.

To measure the anticipation of voters’ preferences, we create dummies for the type of candidacy: The *constituency candidate* who only runs for a constituency; the *mixed type* who runs for a constituency but is backed up via party list; and the *list candidate* who only runs via party list. On the contextual level we create an index indicating the existence of postmaterialism values in each constituency. Adopting the procedure from Magin, Freitag and Vatter (2009) we use an additive index combining a) the z-standardised shares of work force with higher educational degree and b) 1,000 inhabitants per km². Furthermore the variable *closeness* is a proxy for the closeness of the electoral race in a constituency. It measures the gap in first votes in per cent between the winner of a constituency and the closest opponent.

Socialization effects are measured with dummy variables for each party and a variable *right* that indicates candidates’ self-reported ideological assessment on a scale from 1 = very left to 10 = very right. Furthermore, a dummy *internet* indicates when candidates
used the internet five hours and more for discussing and informing voters about issues during their campaign.

As controls, we include several demographic variables. There is a dummy for female candidates, a variable for age and two dummies for education: Considering the generally high level of education among candidates, only politicians with a university degree are considered as having high education, those with high school degree (Abitur) have medium education, below is the reference group of low education. The dummy GDR indicates socialization in East Germany, defined as being born there and being 15 years or older before 1989. Finally, we include a dummy East that relates to the location of the current constituency of a candidate. All variables of interest are summarised together with the respective expectations in table 1.

Table 1 about here

The dependent variable as well as all continuous variables of the analysis are $z$-standardised for the regression models. Therefore, coefficient sizes are straightforward to interpret and easy to compare, as a one-unit change in the independent variable always corresponds with a change of one standard deviation of the dependent variable. The data of both levels are matched via the number of the respective constituency. For pure list-candidates which do not campaign via a constituency we determine the local party branch the candidate belongs to and match the respective constituency. Descriptive statistics of all variables can be found in table A2 in the online appendix.

3.3. Analysis and Models

The data in the analysis have a hierarchical structure: candidates nested in constituencies. Ignoring the fact that individual observations nested in one common unit on the higher level are in general not completely independent leads to an underestimation of standard errors (Snijders and Bosker 1999; Raudenbush and Bryk 2002). For this reason, multilevel analysis is usually an appropriate way to address this kind of data. However, an empirical look at the variance components of the data reveals that a likelihood-ratio test and a Lagrange multiplier test both fail to reject the null hypothesis that the variance between constituencies is zero (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2008). In this data, the variance on the candidate level i.e. within one constituency is much higher than the variance between different constituencies. The independency assumption for observations on the individual level seems not to be violated here. For
reasons of parsimony, we therefore decide to use ordinary least square estimation.\textsuperscript{9} Nevertheless, to obtain robust variance estimates, we take possible effects into account and adjust standard errors for within-cluster correlation, also known as Huber-White-Sandwich Estimators (Williams 2000). These standard errors are also robust against minor deviations from the OLS assumptions.

The empirical approach consists of two steps. In the first step we estimate OLS regressions covering five different blocks of independent variables. The first block only consists of demographic variables serving as controls. The second model adds the variable that indicates self-interest motivations. The third block adds the variables that measure anticipation of voter preferences. In model four we include variables that measure individual socialization effects. In the fifth model we include dummies to measure party socialization. Since all variables are z-standardised, effect sizes can easily be compared.

After estimating the main model with all relevant variables, in a second step we include interaction terms\textsuperscript{10}. This is necessary because effects of variables of individual ideology and party dummies might be caused by socialization motivations, or the anticipation of voter preferences, or both. To further examine the elusive effect of anticipation of voter preferences, we calculate all possible interaction effects between variables that measure dependency on voters’ support (candidate type, closeness of the race) and voters’ preferences for transparency policies (postmaterialism index, left/right measure, party membership). We extend the final main model from the first step by each of these interactions individually and test if it can improve the model significantly via chi-squared test. For those interactions that improve the main model, we provide the marginal effects.

4. Results

\textsuperscript{9} To validate the findings, we also estimate random intercept multilevel models. The results are basically the same and can be found in table A1 in the online appendix. We furthermore run a series of regression diagnostics considering outliers and influential cases, normal distribution of residuals, homogeneity of variance, multicollinearity and model specification. The assumptions of OLS regression are mostly met.

\textsuperscript{10} Although there is no significant variance component between constituencies, cross-level-interactions can be included in the model if strong theoretical considerations indicate its existence (Raudenbush and Bryk 2002: 258).
4.1. Descriptive Results

[Figure 2 about here]

In this section we provide descriptive statistics of the dataset. Figure 2 displays violin plots (Hintze and Nelson 1998), a combination of box plot and kernel density function, of the three transparency-related items in the dataset. The first two constitute the dependent variable. Support for publicly held committees and broadcasting of committee work both receive a median support of 4, which is at the centre of the scale. Support for the latter one is slightly lower and has considerable density in the strongly rejecting range of the scale. Still, both items have a high variance and utilize the whole range of the scale. The high variance indicates that there is no consensus for support for transparency among German political elites. Opinions on this question differ considerably. On the other hand, support for members of parliament having access to records of the ministerial bureaucracy is substantially higher and the variance is distinctly lower. It seems that political elites are indeed much more in favour of transparency when they can gain an informational advantage themselves, as opposed to revealing their own information to the public. This can be considered as first evidence for the existence of self-interest motivations. Furthermore, it underlines the decision to exclude this item in the governmental transparency index because it seems to measure a different concept.

[Figure 3 about here]

In Figure 3 we show how support for governmental transparency is distributed among several subgroups of political elites. First of all, there are only small differences between different demographic groups. Younger and lower educated candidates show slightly higher transparency support, while there are basically no differences regarding gender, region of constituency, and place of socialization. A one-sample mean-comparison test shows that support among members of the German Bundestag is significantly lower than among unelected candidates (p<0.001). This finding supports the idea of self-interest motivations proposed by principal-agent theory. Concerning office-seeking effects, we find mixed evidence. There is significant higher support among pure constituency candidates compared to both other types (p<0.001), whereas there is no significant difference between the two latter types. However, whether a constituency is materialistic or postmaterialistic and whether the electoral race is open or close has only
a marginal impact on candidates’ transparency support. Concerning socialization effects, we find only slightly higher support among candidates that use the internet to be in contact with voters compared to those who do not (p=0.029). The effects of ideology are however especially strong. On the individual level, the left-leaning candidates in the sample score about 0.5 units higher on the transparency index than the right-leaning candidates (p<0.001). On the party level, we find the highest impact of all subgroups in the descriptive analysis. There is low support among candidates of the two conservative parties, slightly below average support among candidates of FDP and SPD (Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands) and high support among members of the Greens and The Left. Nevertheless, there is still substantial variance within each party.

In summary, the descriptive statistics show that support for governmental transparency is at a medium level and that there is high heterogeneity among German political elites. A comparison with citizens’ level of support is difficult, as the data do not provide the same items for ordinary citizens and comparable data asking for transparency preferences are rarely available. However, according to a representative survey, 88% of the German population support the ‘disclosure of non-personal political data’ by public authorities (Forsa 2010). Among the U.S. citizenry, support for governmental transparency is also high (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007; Association of Government Accountants 2010). Although they are not perfectly comparable, these findings indicate that citizens might have higher preferences for transparency than elites. It also raises doubts about whether the democratic elitism’s claim that political elites show higher support for democratic values and civil liberties is valid concerning the issue of governmental transparency. Instead, the higher support among citizens supports the idea of self-interest motivations proposed by principal-agent theory. In addition, the descriptive results underline the strong impact of ideology and thus the importance of socialization effects. They also support the idea of anticipation of voter preferences. Since the variables are highly intercorrelated, however, we have to draw on multivariate analyses to try to disentangle effects.

4.2. Multiple Regression Results
Figure 4 shows the results of the OLS regression in graphical form. In model 1 we include six demographic characteristics of the candidates as control variables.\textsuperscript{11} Age and high education have a significant negative effect on transparency support. While a change of one standard deviation (11.44 years) in age changes transparency support by only 0.1 standard deviations, the impact of high education is more than twice as strong. However, the impact of candidacy in the eastern part of Germany and socialization in the former GDR are neither significant nor of any substantial strength.\textsuperscript{12} Considering adjusted \( R^2 \), the demographic variables together can only explain a modest share of the total variance.

[Figure 4 about here]

In model 2 we include a variable that should measure self-interest motivations. In line with our expectations, members of the German Bundestag support transparency policies significantly less than unelected candidates. This effect is stronger than that of any demographic control variable. Although adjusted \( R^2 \) triples, it remains on a rather low level.

In model 3 we add four variables that measure motivations of anticipated voters’ preferences. Both the direct constituency candidate and the mixed type who runs for a constituency and on a party list show substantially more support for transparency than the reference group, the pure list candidate. In fact, direct candidates show over half a standard deviation more support for transparency than list candidates. This is the strongest impact of all variables so far and indicates that the degree of dependency on voters’ electoral support increases candidate’s support for transparency. The impact of the closeness of the electoral race and the degree of postmaterialist values in a candidates’ constituency, however, have only a marginal impact. Including the variables of anticipated voters’ preferences again triples the value of adjusted \( R^2 \). Although the postmaterialism index and the closeness of election measure are not significant

\textsuperscript{11} After including them in a trial run of the regression, we drop the variables for “experience in politics” as well as the dummies for occupational group, as they do not have a significant impact but reduce the number of observations substantially.

\textsuperscript{12} Since the sample in this study is not representative, in a strict sense inference statistic is not valid here. For this reason significance values should not be overinterpreted and more attention should be paid to the strength of coefficients.
individually, the four variables indicating this theoretical motivation are jointly significant (Chi²=10.65).

To arrive at model 4, in the next step we add two variables that measure motivations stemming from individual socialization: a measure of ideology on a left/right dimension and a dummy whether the candidate uses the internet for contact with voters. Although internet usage had an impact in the descriptive part, after controlling for further variables, there is no substantial effect left. Quite on the contrary, the impact of individual ideology is particularly strong and highly significant. One standard deviation (2.29 units) towards a more right-leaning attitude decreases support for governmental transparency by about 0.35 units. After including the ideology measure the adjusted R² increases by about 0.1. But including this variable also decreases the impact of the candidacy mode and being member of the German Bundestag, which can be explained through the correlation of these variables with ideology. Many of the constituency candidates belong to the left-leaning parties, The Left and the Greens, while many members of the German Bundestag belong to the more conservative parties, CDU (Christlich Demokratische Union) and SPD. Interestingly, however, the effects of age and being candidate in a constituency in the eastern part of Germany gain in strength after including the ideology measure.

In model 5 we finally include party dummies to control for the impact of party socialization. In line with our expectations, membership in the left-leaning parties (The Left and the Greens) has the strongest positive effect on transparency support. Furthermore, the FDP, the liberal party, has a significantly positive effect. The FDP is usually considered more right-leaning than the SPD, but civil liberties are usually considered as a central issue of liberal parties. Thus, this result appears intuitive as well. Members of the SPD support transparency still considerably more than candidates of the CDU or CSU, but the effect is not significant. The impact of party membership on support for governmental transparency is extraordinarily strong. This becomes apparent in several ways: First, the coefficients, in particular those of the Greens and The Left, are the highest among all variables and all models. On average, support for transparency is one standard deviation higher for a member of The Left compared to a member of the CDU. Second, after including the party dummies, those variables that measure other motivations lose considerably in impact. Third, even though there are already many variables in the model, the party dummies are still able to increase adjusted R² to a value
The (regular) $R^2$ value of 0.256 tells us that about 25% of the variance in transparency preferences can be explained by this final main model.

In this model, apart from party membership only age has a significant (negative) impact on transparency preferences. The only other variable that has a similar (negative) effect – although it is statistically insignificant – is running for a constituency in the eastern part of Germany. All other variables that showed significant impact in previous steps become marginal after including the party dummies. This is particularly true for the individual left/right ideology and the candidacy mode that appeared to have a substantial impact before. At least partially, this loss of impact can be explained by the high correlation between party membership and ideology and party composition of the different candidate types.

However, the idea of other motivations than party socialization should not be abandoned that quickly. First, left-leaning parties’ candidates’ support for transparency might not only be motivated by party socialization, but also by anticipating that these parties’ voters have stronger preferences for transparency policies. Second, it might be the case that we observe anticipation motivations only in some specific constellations, for instance when a candidate is both highly dependent on voters’ support and these voters are strongly in favour of governmental transparency at the same time. For this reason, interaction effects are calculated as explained in the methodological section.

[Figure 5 about here]

Of all possible interactions, four specific ones improve the final main model significantly. The respective marginal effects are depicted in Figure 5. The upper left figure shows the difference in transparency support between a direct candidate and a list candidate conditioned on ten different levels of individual ideology. It becomes apparent that for left-leaning candidates, e.g. candidates scoring 1-3 on the left/right scale, there is a significant positive effect of direct candidacy on transparency support. On the other hand, there is no difference between candidacy modes for more right-leaning candidates (with the exception of two right-extreme candidates scoring on 10). These findings show that candidates actually anticipate voters’ preferences. Thus, direct candidates anticipate consider voters’ preferences more than list candidates, but only the

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13 One could argue that these findings on the tails of the distribution are based on a low number of observations. However, inflated confidence intervals pay respect to the low $n$ on the tails.
left-leaning ones come to the conclusion that higher transparency support is considered favourable among their voters and therefore show more support themselves.

We find a similar pattern for the impact of postmaterialism and closeness of the electoral race. Both have a significant positive effect on transparency support for left-leaning candidates, but not for right-leaning ones. However, effect sizes are less substantial than those for direct candidacy. Surprisingly, for postmaterialism we find a significant negative effect for strongly right-leaning candidates. The bottom right figure shows how individual ideology affects transparency support within different parties. In the main model, individual ideology lost its significance once partisan membership is controlled for. Now the individual ideology has an effect in addition to party ideology, but only for the more left-leaning parties. Within the SPD, the Greens and The Left, left-leaning candidates show higher support for transparency than their more right-leaning party colleagues. Within the more right-leaning parties individual ideology has no further impact on transparency support.

After including party dummies in the main model, all variables that measure anticipation of voters’ preferences lose impact on transparency support. The analysis of interaction effects illustrates the more sophisticated interplay between the variables. While being more dependent on voters’ support (constituency candidate, close electoral race) alone does not affect candidates’ transparency support, there is an effect in combination with strong voter preferences for transparency (left-leaning candidates). Apparently, candidates are aware of heterogeneous voter preferences. The combination of two characteristics that measure high voter preferences for transparency (postmaterialism + left-leaning ideology; left-leaning ideology + left-leaning party) also increases transparency support. Although there are a number of non-significant interaction terms, both findings emphasise the existence of a motivation that is driven by the anticipation of voters’ preferences.

5. Conclusion

My analysis reveals that neither principal-agent theory nor democratic elitism in its most canonical forms can explain politicians’ preferences. We find neither homogeneous support for transparency policies nor a uniform rejection among candidates for the German Bundestag. Instead, the high variance in preferences among elites suggests that governmental transparency policies are clearly not a trivial issue to decide on.
By far the strongest predictor for differences in support for transparency policies is party membership. Since we control whether a candidate is member of the German Bundestag, we can eliminate the possibility that this party effect is only existent because each party has a different share of politicians in incumbent positions. Thus we can rule out that the party differences are motivated by self-interest only. Although we are not able to separate the amount of the party effect that is due to socialization from that which is due to the anticipation of voter preferences, we can still find evidence that both motivations exist. First, the impact of direct candidacy, postmaterialist values among the electorate, and closeness of the electoral race are existent for left-leaning candidates but not for right-leaning candidates, which speaks for the existence of anticipation of voters’ preferences. Second, the fact that transparency policies are not uniformly rejected, the nearly significant effect of left-leaning ideology on the individual level, and in particular the effect of individual ideology within the more left-leaning parties speaks for the existence of socialization effects. Furthermore, we find evidence for the existence of self-interest motivations. The overall mediocre transparency support, the lower response rate among successful candidates and the higher support for a policy change that increases the information level of candidates themselves can be considered as such.

My analysis further reveals that there are some variables that are often said to affect preferences but that do not have any impact on transparency support. Neither gender nor education or being socialised in the former GDR has any impact on transparency preferences. Although it is often associated with transparency, internet-usage has no impact. Additionally, we find only weak evidence for any structural impact of candidates’ constituencies. Postmaterialism and closeness of the electoral race show only weak impact in interaction with ideology. Also, there is no difference at all between candidates running for a constituency in the east or in the west. Apparently, with the exception of age, demographic characteristics and features of candidates’ constituencies can mostly be ignored. Party membership, individual ideology and candidacy mode are able to predict essential parts of elite preferences.

What are the implications of these results? At the moment, there is no consensus about governmental transparency among political elites. So far, the issue was mainly pushed onto the agenda by left-leaning parties. The results imply, however, that governmental transparency has the potential to become a major issue in the future: First, if the demand for transparent governmental work rises among citizens, the anticipation of
voters’ preferences will lead to higher support among political elites. Second, if the effect of age is interpreted as a cohort effect, with younger cohorts of elites being more supportive of transparency, proponents of transparency will slowly replace older and more sceptical colleagues. On the other hand, there might also be some obstacles on the way to transparent governments: There is (non-significant) indication that members of the parliament are less supportive of transparency than unsuccessful candidates. Furthermore, theoretical considerations by Bowler et al. (2006) (which would require longitudinal data to test) suggest that candidates of parties in government are less supportive of transparency than candidates of the opposition. Thus, those elites that have more power to adapt transparency policies are less likely to do so.

The contribution of this work is twofold. First, it is the first to investigate the current topic of governmental transparency from the perspective of political elites. The analyses show that political elites in Germany are neither selfish homines oeconomici nor unprincipled turncoats or benevolent upholders of moral standards. Instead, we find a complex connection of different motivations. Second, the article contributes valuable new insights to the literature of policy representation. Instead of focusing on public opinion, we developed a framework to explain elite preferences. We believe that this theoretical framework of complementing motivations can be useful for the analysis of further elite preferences as well. While there are some interesting and relevant findings, further research and better data are necessary to better understand and disentangle the underlying motivations to support governmental transparency. Longitudinal data could be helpful for observing how preferences react to changes of the institutional position of political elites. Comparable survey data of citizens could allow for testing propositions of principal-agent theory and democratic elitism that are related to differences between elites’ and citizens’ preferences.
Figures and Tables

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Note: The bold grey lines depict the policy process. The black lines depict motivations to support/reject transparency policies. While the dashed black lines illustrate the three analytical motivations, the bold black line is the overall support for governmental transparency as a complementary result of the three motivations.
Table 1: Summary of Hypotheses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Expected Effect</th>
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<tr>
<td>Self-Interest</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MdB</td>
<td>Member of German Bundestag (Ref.: Not member)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipation of Voters' Preferences</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Type</td>
<td>Constituency and list candidate (Ref.: List candidate)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Closeness</td>
<td>Gap between winner and runner-up candidate of a constituency (in per cent points of first votes; high values = small gap)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmaterialism</td>
<td>Postmaterialism index (Pop. density + share of workforce with higher degree)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite Socialization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Left/Right</td>
<td>Ideology measurement (High values = right)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>5h or more communication with voters via internet (Ref.: No or less than 5h communication via internet)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Party Dummies</td>
<td>(Ref.: CDU)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: The left/right measurement and the party dummies can be considered as measurement of anticipated voters' preferences as well.
Figure 2: Violin Plots of the Transparency Items

Note: High values on the x-axis indicate high support for governmental transparency. The inner part displays an ordinary box plot. The outer part is a kernel density estimation with a bandwidth of 0.8, mirrored along the box plot.
Figure 3: Means and Standard Deviations of Transparency Support for Several Subgroups in the Sample

Note: The dots represent the average transparency support for the specific group. The lines depict the mean ± one standard deviation. The number in brackets indicates the number of observations. Reading Example: 143 candidates from the CDU have a mean transparency support of about -0.7, the standard deviation reaches from about -1.5 to 0.1. Continuous variables have been dichotomised at the median for this figure.
Figure 4: Regression Main Results

Note: Although looking similar to figure 3, figure 4 provides inference statistical results. The dots represent the regression coefficient for the specific variable. The lines depict the 95% confidence interval (one-sided test) for the specific estimation. Thus, if the line does not intersect the zero-line, there is a significant effect at a 5% level. Reading Example: In model 2, being member of the German Bundestag has a coefficient of about -0.3 with a confidence interval reaching from
about -0.4 to -0.2. Since the confidence interval does not intersect the zero-line, the effect is significant at a 5% level.

Figure 5: Marginal Effects on Support for Transparency

![Graphs showing marginal effects on transparency support](image)

Note: The y-axis depicts the marginal change in transparency support for a change of one unit of the variable indicated by the particular headline conditional on different values of the moderating variable on the x-axis. The grey area illustrates a 95% confidence interval (one-sided test). Thus, if the shaded area does not intersect the zero-line, there is a significant effect at a 5% level.

Reading example: Direct candidacy has a positive impact of almost 0.5 points on transparency support, significant at the 5% level. There is no significant impact of direct candidacy for moderate or right-leaning candidates.

References


### Table A1: Comparison of Different Model Estimations

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Note: All variables are z-standardised. Values in brackets are standard errors.
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