

THE SOURCES OF PARTY SYSTEMS: THE LENS OF SPLIT-TICKET VOTING IN RUSSIA

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Why is it that once electoral competition is introduced, virtually all political systems become *party* systems of some sort? Perhaps because the question is so fundamental, social science has largely taken the answer for granted. The presumed answer is largely a functionalist one: parties must provide goods and/or services that are useful to candidates, legislators, and/or voters. Thus in a rare display of scholarly consensus, thinkers as diverse as Weber (1946), Schattschneider (1942), and Aldrich (1995) concur that democracy is “unimaginable,” “unthinkable,” or “unworkable” without political parties. While classic works do recognize that new democracies often undergo an initial pre-party period, they almost always depict a relatively smooth and steady process by which parties inevitably come to dominate those parts of the political system where elections determine officeholders (Aldrich 1995; Duverger 1954; Hofstadter 1970; LaPalombara and Weiner 1966; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Ostrogorski 1902; Panebianco 1988; Sartori 1976; Schattschneider 1942). Mainstream research on parties, therefore, has tended to focus on questions that take parties as givens, notably seeking to explain the number and quality of parties in a system of parties and the nature of their interrelationships within it.¹ There are of course some dissident strains, such as those who have testified to a “decline of parties” in the developed West (Dalton 2002; Lawson 1988; Mair 1990). To date, however, this literature is mostly about perceived declines in the importance, coherence, issue orientation, and/or representational quality of parties and not about their outright extinction, to say nothing of their failure to crop up in newly democratized societies.

The case of post-Soviet Russia, however, poses something of a challenge to the widespread assumption that electoral competition naturally gives rise to party competition. Its politics have continued to be remarkably nonpartisan even as party competition has been legal there through more than fifteen years and the country has undergone eight federal-level elections and hundreds of competitions for regional and local office (Hale 2006). While some would say that Russia’s second president, Vladimir Putin, has simply squelched real political competition, it was evident that parties had failed to dominate Russia’s electoral market even under Boris Yeltsin and even as Russia faced political competition at its fiercest (Colton and McFaul 2003).

¹ Notable studies of determinants of the *number of parties* include Cox 1997; Downs 1957; Duverger 1954; Lijphart 1994; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rae 1967; and Taagepera and Shugart 1989. On patterns in the *quality of party competition*, see Bielasiak 2002; Blondel 1968; Coppedge 1998; Dahl 1966; Geddes 1995; Mainwaring 1998; Mair 2002; Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Sartori 1976; and Treisman 1998. On the *quality of parties*, see Ansell and Fish 1999; Boix 1998; Burgess 1999; Dalton 2002; Downs 1957; Enelow and Hinich 1984; Epstein 1967, 1986; Hinich and Munger 1994; Inglehart 1983; Katz and Mair 1994, 1995; Kirchheimer 1966; Kitschelt 1989; Kitschelt et al. 1999; Kollman, Miller, and Page 1998; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Michels 1911; Ostrogorski 1902; Rohrschneider 1994; Sartori 1976; Schlesinger 1984, 1991; Shefter 1977, 1994; Smyth and Kitschelt 2002.

Russia has never had a partisan president, its major-party nominees won less than half of the district seats to its parliament between 1993 and 1999, and only about 3 percent of its governors chose to be party nominees when running for reelection between 1995 and 2000.

This paper, and the broader project of which it is a part, seeks to use Russia as a case that adds important comparative leverage to the question of when and how party systems become congruent with electoral systems. Past theories of party system development have almost all been developed with primary reference to the histories of countries where parties have already long dominated the polity, thereby contributing to this sense of their inevitability given electoral competition (for example, Aldrich 1995). Moreover, most previous studies of voting in Russia have tended either to study it as a *sui generis* case (perhaps representative of a greater set of postcommunist cases) or to use Russia for testing or refining aforementioned Western-developed theories that take parties for granted.² We seek in particular to utilize Russia's plethora of independent candidates to generate important control variables, enabling us to better discern not only why someone might vote for one party rather than another party, but why someone would choose to vote for a party candidate at all when they have nonparty alternatives.

One promising path to understanding why parties may or may not dominate a given polity is to study how people cast their ballots when given the chance to vote in more than one way on the very same day. This question has generated a rich body of theory on split-ticket voting in the United States and some other countries (e.g., Benoit, Laver, and Giannetti 2004; Burden and Kimball 2002; Jacobson 1989). The US-based literature, however, has largely focused on why voters might cast two votes for two different *parties* (say, for a Republican for the presidency but a Democrat for Congress) even when there have been important opportunities to study why some might choose to split their tickets with an independent instead of another party.³ Interestingly, following the literature on Western countries, most work on postcommunist split-ticket voting has so far also not taken advantage of the opportunity to study ticket-splitting that involves *independents*.⁴ By including independents in the mix, we stand to gain insight not only into the sources of voter inconsistency in selecting parties across institutional settings, but also into the conditions under which this inconsistency opens avenues for nonparty candidates to reduce the degree to which parties dominate the political system.

The pages that follow present some very preliminary findings from a study of Russia's mixed parliamentary election system as it existed for the last elections to the State Duma, the lower house of the federal parliament, which occurred in December of 2003. We do discover that some of the most prominent theories developed in the American context in fact carry over to

² These works have yielded considerable insights on the development of partisanship, the effects of institutions on voting for parties, and the sources of party system instability, just not the kind of insight that is the subject of this paper. See, for example: Brader and Tucker 2001; Colton 2000; Miller et al. 2000; Moser 2001; Rose and Munro 2003.

³ For example, Garand and Lichtl (2000: 175-6) study split-ticket voting in 1992 but exclude voters for independent Ross Perot from their analysis, considering them a phenomenon conceptually distinct from split-ticket voting, which they cast solely in partisan terms. This pattern characterizes most of the important literature on split-ticket voting, which focuses not on why voters occasionally vote for independents but on why they vote for different parties in different elections. See Alesina and Rosenthal 1995; Beck et al. 1992; Burden and Kimball 1998, 2002; Fiorina 1996; Garand and Lichtl 2000; Grofman et al. 2000; Jacobson 1990; Miller and Niemi 2002: 185-6; Petrocik 1991; Smith et al. 1999.

⁴ For example, Hesli, Reisinger, and Miller (1998) acknowledge that most candidates in the Ukrainian elections they studied ran as independents, but focus on determinants of the "emerging party system," leaving consideration of the "independents" category for undefined future work. On Russia, see McAllister and White 2000. A partial exception is Colton and McFaul 2003, which does devote some attention to independents.

Russia despite the presence of large numbers of strong independent candidates: voters who are highly oriented to ideology, have strong partisan loyalties, and believe in parties as effective instruments of parliamentary governance are the least likely to split their tickets and are the most likely to vote consistently for the same party. There is even some limited support for the venerable thesis that voters split their tickets because they like divided government and thus seek to promote party competition. As for why ticket-splitters would choose to split with an independent, the most prominent reason appears to be voters' orientations to personality when selecting district candidates. Interestingly, though, we find that when ideologically committed voters do split their tickets, they tend to cast their district ballots for independent candidates rather than for a party other than the one they selected in the party-list competition. We also find that men and women have very different tendencies, with women tending to avoid independents and to vote consistently for the same party when they can, but preferring independents when their party-list party does not happen to nominate a candidate in the district contest. Overall, we gain strong new empirical grounding for theoretical claims that parties tend to push out independents when they provide important connections to voters that independents have a harder time providing, particularly ideology and loyalty. At the same time, we find that independents are able to compete with parties on other crucial fronts and may actually have an advantage over parties in communicating attractive local personality.

Parties, Independents, and Split-Ticket Voting

The comparative literature that tries to explain the congruence of party systems and electoral systems, discussed briefly above, boils down to a claim that parties offer office seekers one or more of three tangible benefits that eventually lead the most influential politicians in a given political system to work through parties. The first is a capacious *organization* that will grant candidates support in communicating with and rallying supporters and money to subsidize their campaigns. No less basic is a second benefit, provision of what political scientists, borrowing from the lexicon of commercial marketing, have termed party *branding* effects. A partisan brand conveys valuable information on candidates' likely future stands, fosters and evokes party loyalties, ties candidates in voters' minds to other powerful politicians, and/or signals that a candidate has wide social support (e.g., Aldrich 1995; Snyder and Ting 2002). A major-party label can also bestow on a candidate the focal status of "contender" and eliminate citizens' fear of wasting a vote on someone who has no significant chance of winning (Cox 1997). The third advantage is thought to turn up relative to legislative or policy *outputs*. Even were parties not to provide office seekers with organizational or branding help in overcoming the collective action problem in the electorate, they can still allay the social choice problem in the legislature (Aldrich 1995). Assuming that voters care about legislative outputs, party candidates will reap an advantage because they are better positioned to "deliver the goods" voters want than are candidates who will insist on independence in the legislature.

Given that parties can potentially help candidates in these ways, why is it that independent candidacies have persisted in Russia? Split-ticket voting offers an interesting window through which to explore this question since it represents instances where voters abandon a party that they vote for in one race – either for another party, or for an independent in a different race in the same election cycle. We thus gain insight into the factors that promote both consistency within the set of parties and consistency in voting for party candidates as opposed to independents.

To begin, it is useful to survey the key factors that existing theory identifies as generally influencing patterns of split-ticket voting in cases where party systems are seen to be firmly entrenched, notably the United States. One prominent theory (sometimes called policy balancing) holds that split-ticket voting results when voters seek particular policy mixes that no single party represents or when they generally support one party but want to keep it in check (Fiorina 1996, Alesina and Rosenthal 1995, Smith et al. 1999).⁵ Related to this is the notion of issue ownership, the idea that voters see some parties as being better than others on different issues and that this leads them to vote differently when different institutional settings bring different issues to the foreground (Jacobson 1990; Petrocik 1991). Unsurprisingly, this is also found to depend on the degree to which voters are informed (Garand and Lichtl 2000). Others have noted that partisanship and ideology tend to breed consistency in party support and that their decline results in greater split-ticket voting, though some also note that ideological commitment can produce party defections when party and ideology do not perfectly coincide (for example, the Democratic Party's presidential candidate might be much more conservative than its congressional candidate in the 4th District of Massachusetts) (Beck et al 1992; Grofman et al. 2000; Nie, Petrocik, and Verba 1976).⁶ A final group of scholars considered here have focused on candidate- and district- based reasons for split-ticket voting, such as uncontested districts, lopsided congressional races that may lead voters not to see "their party's" candidate as viable, the advantages incumbents have through constituency service provision and pork-barrel politics, or local candidate efforts to encroach on rival parties' ideological terrain (Burden and Kimball 1998, 2002).

While these studies generally presume that parties dominate the system and thus do not consider *why* parties dominate the system, they do imply a certain set of understandings as to what the connection is between voters, candidates, and parties. *Branding* effects appear most often. The split-ticket voting theories focusing on partisanship are the most obvious case in point; parties help bond candidates to the electorate through some form of psychological attachment or long-term "running tally" of party performance that effectively resembles loyalty in the short run.⁷ Theories of divided government that give individuals' policy preferences pride of place (those emphasizing voting based on ideology, policy balancing, and issue ownership) imply that parties are least in part vehicles by which candidates communicate their own policy stands to voters, who then select a slate or a mix of candidates to reflect their views – also a branding effect. Candidate- and district-centered theories are doing at least two things: shifting the locus of policy-oriented (branding) explanation to the district level and, most importantly, adding important "pragmatic" considerations that involve both the *organizational* and *output* functions of parties. That is, ticket-splitting hinges upon parties' relative abilities to supply their candidates with organizational resources for political battle and to produce outputs ("pork" or constituency service) that can woo people who otherwise might vote for a different party. For some of these theories, the main purpose parties are serving is to be repositories of strong or popular candidates.

This has certain implications for political systems where parties have not closed out the electoral marketplace. In general, we would expect the same factors to govern split-ticket voting

⁵ For a critique of this "cognitive Madisonianism," see Sigelman, Wahlbeck, and Buell 1997.

⁶ Miller and Niemi (2002, 185-6) argue that voters can identify with more than one party, another factor potentially giving rise to split-ticket voting.

⁷ On psychological attachments, see Campbell et al. 1960 and Green, Palmquist, and Schickler 2002. On running tallies, see Fiorina 1981.

in “full party systems” as in “partial party systems,” but with a twist: voters in the latter setting also have the option of voting for independent candidates. Importantly, parties are not the only forms of political organization that can provide the kinds of goods and services (organization, branding, outputs) that theorists hold to explain parties’ prevalence.⁸ Independents thus frequently have access to important “party substitutes” (everything from local patronage machines to personal vote organizations to private media) that can make them capable of competing effectively for votes even against parties that possess significant organization, branding, and outputs (Hale 2006). Ticket-splitting with an independent thus becomes a viable alternative to ticket-splitting with another party.

The effects of these independents on our expectations regarding ticket-splitting are likely to be several. For one thing, partisan voters now have someplace else to go if they are compelled or temporarily convinced to abandon their own party: rather than outright betray their loyalty by voting for a rival party (boosting its national standing), they can vote for an independent. A similar effect is likely to be true for ideological voters: independents are likely to provide views more closely (or credibly) tailored to a voter’s own constituency, thus voters who for some reason do not vote for their usual party may feel they can find a better match in an independent than in a rival party with a rival ideology. Just as the comparative literature postulates that some voters are “cognitive Madisonians,” preferring government that is divided along party lines, so might voters have views on whether their representatives function best as members of political parties. Those who do not believe party membership enhances legislator performance, or even believe that independents are better parliamentarians, might be forced to vote for a party in a party-list competition but would be likely to vote for an independent on other ballots. Naturally, while many voters have been found to support parties based on the personalities of their leaders, independents can supply personality without other “baggage” that might be associated with parties; thus personality-oriented voters might be more likely to split tickets in a way that involves independents. The remainder of this paper explores these preliminary suppositions alongside more established theories of split-ticket voting in the setting of Russia’s 2003 parliamentary election.

Research Design⁹

Russia’s political setting is both a blessing and curse for the study of split-ticket voting. To begin with the blessings, Russia provides an opportunity to study ticket-splitting in elections for the same legislative organ, the Duma. This is because Russia’s mixed parliamentary electoral system has until now given voters two ballots: they cast one for a party list through a proportional-representation (PR) system and a second for a district representative through a

⁸ A political party, building on Sartori (1976: 58-64) and Schattschneider (1970: 35-7), is here defined as an enduring association of people who identify themselves by a public label and are joined together under it for the primary purpose of winning control of the national government by means of presenting their own candidates in elections for public office on the basis of a common platform. Russian law lays out specific, but somewhat different, criteria for an organization to register as a “party.” Forty-odd organizations were recognized as parties as of the summer of 2003.

⁹ The research on which this paper is based was made possible by a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Funds from the U.S. Department of State Office of Research, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and the National Council for Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER) (under authority of a Title VIII grant from the U.S. Department of State) also supported work leading to this report. The statements made and views expressed within this text are solely the responsibility of the authors and not of the U.S. Government, the NCEEER, the NSF, or the Carnegie Corporation. The authors are grateful to all whose support made this project possible.

single-member-district (SMD) plurality system.¹⁰ In other words, the PR ballot forces voters to choose a party (or vote “against all”) at the same time that the SMD ballot usually gives them an opportunity to choose from among independents and party nominees. The presence of the “independent option” gives us the interesting empirical leverage we need to study the determinants of party voting when voters actually have a choice as to whether to “go partisan.”

Russia’s setting also poses some major challenges for studies of split-ticket voting, however. For one thing, some twenty-three parties were on the PR ballot for the 2003 Duma elections, and slightly more than that number nominated at least one candidate in the SMD half of the elections. Even when we decide to focus only on the four parties that cleared the five-percent threshold in the national PR voting to win an officially recognized fraction in the Duma, we are still left with an extremely complicated picture. For one thing, the existence of four major parties still means that voters had 16 different ways to split their ballots between the PR and SMD contests in 2003. This already makes it effectively impossible to conduct a clean statistical (multinomial logit) analysis of the determinants of each type of ballot; this was possible for Burden and Kimball (2002) and Sigelman et al. (1997) who had just two parties and four combinations to work with, but the presence of 16 combinations poses high methodological hurdles. And this is not the end of the difficulties. More challenging still is the fact that not a single party covered all 225 districts with its nominees, and even the major parties left dozens of gaps. The Russian norm, therefore, was for voters to face very different choice sets in each district, sometimes having one major-party nominee to choose from and at other times having nominees from all four big parties. The situation is further complicated by the fact that virtually all of the 225 single-member districts featured significant independent candidates, sometimes more than one strong independent, meaning that studies of split-ticket voting that ignore independents are capturing only part of the story. This also, of course, contributes to the observation that voters faced a different meaningful set of choices in almost every district.

Given these challenges, we focus here not on the determinants of particular combinations of ticket-splitting, but on factors that generally lead Russian voters to consistently support a single party in both the PR and SMD contests, to split their tickets between one party and a second party, or to split their tickets between a party in the PR race and an independent in the SMD voting. We do so using an original mass survey on political attitudes and voting behavior in the most recent round of Russian parliamentary elections, those in December 2003.¹¹ These survey data are complimented with a separate database on all 225 district elections, compiled from a variety of sources, including local expert correspondents. We have not yet had a chance to integrate all information from the district database into the survey database, but we have been able to do enough to generate some interesting preliminary findings.

Split-Ticket Voting in Russia: Some Patterns in the Data

Of the twenty-three parties and quasi parties in the party-list half of the 2003 election, only four crossed the 5 percent threshold. United Russia, the “party of power” loyal to the Kremlin and to President Putin, took 37.6 percent of the popular vote and won 120 of the 225 seats distributed to the party lists. The Communist Party of the Russian Federation (KPRF)

¹⁰ Recent legislation will change the system. Beginning with the Duma election scheduled for 2007, all Duma deputies will be elected from national party lists.

¹¹ The survey, carried out by the Demoscope group in Russia’s Institute of Sociology at the Academy of Sciences of the Russian Federation, interviewed 1,648 adult Russian citizens between December 19, 2003, and February 15, 2004, that is, shortly after the December 7, 2003, Duma election.

finished second with 12.6 percent of the popular vote and 40 deputies returned on its list. The erratically nationalist Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR) came in third with 11.5 percent and 36 list seats. And a newly-formed bloc of nationalist hue named Motherland garnered 9.0 percent of the popular vote and 29 list seats.¹² The four major parties also took a majority of the seats in the single-member districts – 102 seats for United Russia, 12 for the LPRF, and 8 percent for Motherland; the LDPR did not elect any deputies in the districts. Of the remaining district seats, 32 were won by candidates nominated by minor parties and twice that many, 68 out of the total of 225, were won by independent candidates not nominated by any party or bloc.

How common was split-ticket voting in Russia's 2003 parliamentary election? If we look at only those survey respondents who voted in both halves of the election and who supported one of the four threshold-clearing parties in the party-list race (as more than 80 percent of our voters did), we find that a mere 24 percent of these citizens voted consistently in both halves of the election and a large majority, 76 percent, did not (N=1,018). But these figures exaggerate inconsistency and ticket-splitting because party nominations in the districts were spotty.¹³ In our survey sample, some 55 percent of the voters resided in an electoral district where their favored party had not nominated a candidate, so none of these individuals had the option of voting the straight ticket. In those districts where a candidate nominated by the individual's favored party was registered, more than half, 53 percent, voted the straight ticket and 47 percent split the ticket.

There was considerable variation in consistency of voting across party lines. In districts where a United Russia nominee was present, 60 percent of United Russia party-list voters cast ballots for the United Russia—nominated candidate. For KPRF voters, consistency was the same, 59 percent. For Rodina voters, consistency was 42 percent, or about two-thirds of the level recorded by United Russia and KPRF votes. For supporters of the erratic LDPR, however, that figure was a mere 23 percent. That is to say, even when the LDPR had a nominee in the given district, three-quarters of the citizens who had voted for the LDPR on the national party lists voted against the LDPR nominee within the single-member district. When no party nominee was available, United Russia voters stood out for their tendency to vote for independent candidates in the district. Fifty-seven percent of thwarted United Russia voters supported an independent candidate, whereas thwarted KPRF voters were considerably less likely to vote for an independent candidate (34 percent), and considerably more likely to vote for the nominee of a party other than the KPRF.¹⁴

¹² Survey data are imperfect, of course, in no small part because they rely on voters' own post hoc accounts of their own voting behavior. Our data thus follow a typical pattern, with rather more respondents reporting having voted for United Russia, the winning party, than actually did so according to official results (49.5 percent in our survey sample, vs. 37.6 percent in the actual results). Nevertheless, our findings for the other three major parties are reasonably accurate. In our sample, 12.3 percent reported having voted for the KPRF, 8.7 percent for the LDPR, and 9.0 percent for Motherland.

¹³ Although the national parties did considerably more by way of district nominations in 2003 in the past, their coverage was still far from universal. Of the big four parties, the LDPR led with 192 nominees in the 225 districts, followed by the KPRF with 174 nominees, United Russia with 147, and Rodina with only 55.

¹⁴ In fact, 25 percent of thwarted KPRF voters supported a nominee of the Agrarian party, a small, rural-based party which has always cooperated closely with the KPRF.

Correlates of Ticket-Splitting: Partisans and Independents

Our second preliminary cut into the data is to conduct three regression analyses, each using the logit technique due to the binary nature of the dependent variable¹⁵, so as to gain a better idea of what factors correlate with (and hence potentially influence) the ways in which voters allocated their ballots between parties and independents in the 2003 Duma elections.

The first regression comes the closest to being a direct test of the theories developed in the ticket-splitting literature. Here the dependent variable (*smdcons*) is a dummy variable coded 1 if a voter cast both the SMD and PR ballots for the same party, though only when that party is one of the four parties to win Duma fractions. We thus seek to identify those factors that generally lead a voter to back a single big-four party consistently regardless of whether the alternative is ticket-splitting with a party or ticket-splitting with an independent. Importantly, this regression considers only those respondents who were in districts where their PR party had in fact nominated an SMD candidate; that is, we consider only those voters who actually had an opportunity to vote consistently. To economize on space and save the reader a long description of variables included in the analysis at this early stage of our project, we describe them as they come up in our discussion of the most important findings (further information is available from the authors upon request).

Table 1 (appended in rough form as a *Stata* printout at the end of the paper) reports the tested correlates of consistent voting for one of Russia's four successful parties. One of the most striking findings is the strong relationship between transitional partisanship and the rejection of ticket-splitting. Transitional partisanship is a measure developed by Colton (2000) to measure budding party identification in new democracies. It asks whether voters consider any party to be "my party" or, if not, whether there exists a party that "more than the others" reflects their "interests, views, and concerns"; those who answer affirmatively are coded as transitional partisans if they then name (unprompted) an actual party. Transitional partisans of United Russia (variable *idunr03*), the Communist Party (variable *idkp03*), and the Motherland Party (variable *idrod03*) are all significantly more likely than other voters to vote a straight ticket. Only the transitional partisans of the LDPR, a highly leader-oriented party with a very unstable electorate (Colton and Hale 2004), do not appear to have backed their party in the SMDs when given the option of doing so.

Table 1 also illustrates that the most ideologically consistent voters also tend to be those who are consistent in voting for one of Russia's big four parties. The variable *IdAgrAll* is a dummy variable coded 1 if the respondent reported that s/he shared the same view on market reform as both the party for which s/he voted in the PR race and the SMD candidate for whom s/he voted. Market reform was chosen as an issue because it is widely regarded as being the central issue in Russian campaigns both in the 1990s and in 2003 (Colton and McFaul 2003; Hale 2006); voters were asked whether they favored returning to socialism, keeping the present economic system, or accelerating and deepening market reforms. Voters who reported agreement with both of their ballot recipients on this issue tended not to be ticket-splitters. Also consistent with these finding is another: voters who report having used their PR ballot primarily to register a protest (*prprot*) were more likely to be ticket-splitters.

Other "ideology" variables appear to matter little in the Russian context. *Ideolog* is a dummy variable coded 1 for those respondents who could in fact give an answer as to their belief on market reform; those who responded "hard to say" were coded 0. The variable *Extreme* was

¹⁵ Using the Huber-White estimator of variance since observations within districts are not expected to be completely independent.

coded 1 for respondents who placed themselves on the outer reaches of a 0-10 ideology scale, with 0 representing the far Left and 10 being the far Right.¹⁶ Neither the ability to assign views on the market to oneself nor self-positioning toward the extremes of the Left-Right debate correlated with ticket-splitting.

Interestingly, we do find some support for theories positing that voting is influenced by citizens' relatively abstract beliefs about the utility of parties and party competition. The variable *parbest* records whether the respondent believes his or her SMD legislature best performs a legislator's priority task (be it legislation, pork, or constituency service) by participating in a party grouping in the Duma. As one would expect, voters who feel parties help legislators do their job tend to be consistent party voters, while those who think party delegations matter little or have negative effects tended to split their tickets. There is also a limited degree of support for the policy-balancing hypothesis frequently voiced in American scholarship and media. The variable *pargood* is a dummy variable coded 1 if respondents agreed with the statement that "competition among various political parties makes our system stronger." It turns out that voters reporting this abstract faith in the notion of competitive politics also tend to be ticket-splitters, perhaps thereby seeking to bolster the competition they favor.

There is no support for several other variables considered in our analysis. For one thing, there is no statistically significant association between consistent party voting and *smdlegis*, a dummy variable coded 1 if a respondent thinks that a district parliamentarian's top priority should be the passage of legislation that is good for the whole country as opposed to providing pork or constituency services – the sign is as expected but the significance level is below even the 90-percent cutoff. We also considered a variety of variables based on voters' own assessments of the reasons for their vote. It turns out that there is also no significant relationship between general ticket-splitting and pork-oriented SMD voting (*smdresou*) or personality-oriented SMD voting (*smdpersn*), at least if we believe voters' own statements as to why they made their voting choices. Nor was there any correlation between general ticket-splitting and strategic voting as reported by respondents (*smdstrat* and *prstrat*). We also found that ticket-splitting had no simple relationship to either the general political interest level of respondents (*polinter*), respondents' beliefs as to whether the parliament and president should have equal power (*divider*), or negative party identification (*negid*).¹⁷

Our demographic control variables present a couple of findings worthy of note here. While there was no statistically significant relationship between ticket-splitting and *age* (by year), education level (*educ2*), and economic well-being (*affluence*), we find that for some reason residents of smaller communities (*popqui*) are more prone to ticket-splitting. Even more intriguingly, our results indicate that women (*woman*) are more consistent in party voting than are men, at least insofar as Russia's big four parties go.

While Table 1 considers only the general question of why people might or might not split their tickets in Russia, we are also interested in *how* they might do so, opting for either an alternative party or an independent in the district contests. Given the fact that not all parties covered all districts in 2003, an answer to the *how* question is usefully broken down into two parts, which will be reflected in the next two regression analyses. Table 2 focuses on cases where voters had the opportunity to vote consistently while Table 3 includes only instances where voters were denied this opportunity.

¹⁶ That is, respondents who placed themselves 0-3 or 7-10.

¹⁷ To code negative party identification, respondents were asked if there was at least one party in the SMD race for whom they would never vote and then asked to name that party.

We first consider why respondents might split their tickets with an independent when the array of candidates available to them in their particular district would enable them to: (a) vote for the same party as in the PR race; (b) vote for the nominee of a different party; or (c) vote for an independent. Table 2 reports the results of a regression under just such conditions, with the dependent variable being a vote for an independent in the SMD race. In such settings, we find only three of the variables considered in Table 1 to be significantly capable of helping us predict split-ticket voting that specifically benefits independents. The first of these variables is one that is important and expected: respondents who reported voting on the basis of personality in the SMD vote (*smdpersn*) were indeed more likely to back independents than party candidates, including candidates from the same party they voted for in the PR contest. The second is also important and expected: voters who think candidates do their jobs best by joining party groups in the parliament are less likely to vote for independents when they split their tickets. The other significant variable is more surprising: women were less likely than men to cast ballots for independents in the district races when they could also vote for their PR party or a different party's nominee. None of the other considered variables proved related to voting for independents under the conditions stipulated here.

Table 3 considers what happens when respondents' districts do not contain nominees from their PR party of choice but do contain at least one independent candidate and at least one big-four party nominee. In such districts, voters are in effect forced to split their tickets and have the option of splitting them either in favor of an independent or in favor of another party.¹⁸ As expected, the dynamics are somewhat different than in the set of districts considered in Table 2. In the latter, voters had the option of voting consistently, and in these circumstances the pull of independents appears to have been particularly strong only for respondents who were oriented to a factor best facilitated by independents (candidate personality) and who did not believe parties helped their representatives in serving their priority functions as parliamentarians (and for respondents who were men, for some reason). Here in Table 3, on the other hand, we see that the personality factor (*smdperson*) continues to favor ticket-splitting for independents, but much else is different. Among voters who are forced to split tickets, beliefs as to whether party groupings help legislators fulfill their duties (*parbest*) appear to matter little in guiding their choices of how to do the splitting. Intriguingly, women, who were found to reject independents and to vote consistently for one big-four party when they had the chance, are found to tend strongly toward independent candidates when they cannot vote for the same party they supported in the PR contest.

Several other variables become important once voters are forced to split tickets. As expected, we find that ideologically consistent voters (*IdAgrAll*) tend to split with independents rather than to support a rival party. Likewise, we find that transitional partisans of United Russia also tend to support independents rather than a rival big-four party in such conditions (*idunr03*). If parties trade on branding that evokes loyalty and communicates ideology, then, there is at least some evidence that independents are better able to attract ideological voters and partisans whose loyalties and ideologies may clash with rival parties. In this situation, we also find that voters who used their PR ballot to protest Russia's state of affairs (*prprot*) tended not to use their SMD ballot to back an independent.

¹⁸ Or voting against all in the district race.

TABLE 1: Determinants of consistent voting between PR and SMD

logit smdcons age woman popqui educ2 affluent Ideolog Extreme IdAgrAll idunr03 idkp03
 idld03 idrod03 smdlegis smdresou parbest pargood smdpersn prprot smdstrat prstrat
 negid polinter divider, cluster (okrug)

Logit estimates Number of obs = 459
Wald chi2(23) = 139.54
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
 Log likelihood = -262.61874 Pseudo R2 = 0.1693

(standard errors adjusted for clustering on okrug)

smdcons	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
age	-.0016093	.0063141	-0.25	0.799	-.0139848	.0107662
woman	.504435	.2159842	2.34	0.020	.0811137	.9277563
popqui	-.2333548	.1314415	-1.78	0.076	-.4909754	.0242658
educ2	.0981493	.0795571	1.23	0.217	-.0577797	.2540783
affluent	.1277477	.1137411	1.12	0.261	-.0951807	.3506762
Ideolog	-.6586432	.5058742	-1.30	0.193	-1.650138	.332852
Extreme	.3571908	.2353434	1.52	0.129	-.1040737	.8184553
IdAgrAll	1.216974	.2767405	4.40	0.000	.6745728	1.759376
idunr03	.7057533	.3753598	1.88	0.060	-.0299385	1.441445
idkp03	1.075878	.3981027	2.70	0.007	.2956112	1.856145
idld03	.3258281	.4356041	0.75	0.454	-.5279403	1.179596
idrod03	1.336058	.5228929	2.56	0.011	.3112071	2.36091
smdlegis	.2667737	.2170866	1.23	0.219	-.1587083	.6922557
smdresou	-.9070444	.4057316	-2.24	0.025	-1.702264	-.111825
parbest	.7093755	.2465928	2.88	0.004	.2260626	1.192688
pargood	-.6113916	.2385762	-2.56	0.010	-1.078992	-.1437909
smdpersn	-.4461784	.3588629	-1.24	0.214	-1.149537	.2571799
prprot	-.8722638	.4316777	-2.02	0.043	-1.718337	-.0261911
smdstrat	-.251214	.6153665	-0.41	0.683	-1.45731	.9548822
prstrat	.426945	.5588409	0.76	0.445	-.6683631	1.522253
negid	-.4241377	.2593107	-1.64	0.102	-.9323773	.0841019
polinter	-.0075828	.1252584	-0.06	0.952	-.2530847	.2379191
divider	.02767	.2112409	0.13	0.896	-.3863546	.4416947
_cons	-.2699668	1.022446	-0.26	0.792	-2.273925	1.733991

TABLE 2: Determinants of voting for indeps when one's PR party is nevertheless available in the SMD

logit smdvotin age woman popqui educ2 affluent Ideolog Extreme IdAgrAll idunr03 idkp03
 idld03 idrod03 smdlegis smdresou parbest pargood smdpersn prprot smdstrat prstrat
 negid polinter divider, cluster (okrug)

Logit estimates Number of obs = 376
Wald chi2(23) = 133.51
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
 Log likelihood = -167.25956 Pseudo R2 = 0.1287

(standard errors adjusted for clustering on okrug)

smdvotin	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
age	.0080115	.0085734	0.93	0.350	-.0087921	.0248151
woman	-.7146624	.2693766	-2.65	0.008	-1.242631	-.186694
popqui	.2144856	.2175912	0.99	0.324	-.2119853	.6409565
educ2	-.1120912	.107783	-1.04	0.298	-.323342	.0991595
affluent	.0095048	.1294499	0.07	0.941	-.2442125	.263222
Ideolog	-.2237896	.4755957	-0.47	0.638	-1.15594	.7083609
Extreme	-.5486816	.3820205	-1.44	0.151	-1.297428	.2000648
IdAgrAll	.1651345	.2778866	0.59	0.552	-.3795133	.7097823
idunr03	-.5155239	.5621644	-0.92	0.359	-1.617346	.5862981
idkp03	-.7654271	.5141368	-1.49	0.137	-1.773117	.2422624
idld03	-.0939778	.5354943	-0.18	0.861	-1.143527	.9555717
idrod03	-.8161866	.6768183	-1.21	0.228	-2.142726	.5103529
smdlegis	.1283797	.3203513	0.40	0.689	-.4994973	.7562566
smdresou	-.0398213	.6121286	-0.07	0.948	-1.239571	1.159929
parbest	-.9199888	.2955101	-3.11	0.002	-1.499178	-.3407997
pargood	-.2512407	.3633322	-0.69	0.489	-.9633588	.4608773
smdpersn	1.32561	.3826167	3.46	0.001	.5756949	2.075525
prprot	-.0043646	.5319015	-0.01	0.993	-1.046872	1.038143
smdstrat	1.046965	.7754206	1.35	0.177	-.4728317	2.566761
prstrat	.5360172	.3931675	1.36	0.173	-.2345769	1.306611
negid	.3701474	.3490676	1.06	0.289	-.3140125	1.054307
polinter	-.0117877	.1597146	-0.07	0.941	-.3248225	.3012472
divider	.0898712	.3717915	0.24	0.809	-.6388268	.8185692
_cons	-1.218446	1.14954	-1.06	0.289	-3.471502	1.03461

TABLE 3: Determinants of voting for indeps when one's PR party is not available in the SMD

logit smdvotin age woman popqui educ2 affluent Ideolog Extreme IdAgrAll idunr03 idkp03 idld03 idrod03 smdlegis smdresou parbest pargood smdpersn prprot smdstrat prstrat negid polinter divider, cluster (okrug)

Logit estimates Number of obs = 494
Wald chi2(23) = 127.31
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000
Log likelihood = -295.16832 Pseudo R2 = 0.1339

(standard errors adjusted for clustering on okrug)

smdvotin	Coef.	Robust Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf. Interval]	
age	.0002261	.0063608	0.04	0.972	-.0122408	.012693
woman	.4240655	.1639217	2.59	0.010	.1027849	.7453461
popqui	-.2192585	.1667795	-1.31	0.189	-.5461403	.1076233
educ2	.0431802	.0811966	0.53	0.595	-.1159623	.2023227
affluent	.0226437	.1177463	0.19	0.848	-.2081348	.2534221
Ideolog	.0959074	.4014423	0.24	0.811	-.6909049	.8827198
Extreme	.0082426	.2033787	0.04	0.968	-.3903723	.4068576
IdAgrAll	1.124418	.291433	3.86	0.000	.5532201	1.695617
idunr03	.7976809	.2494303	3.20	0.001	.3088064	1.286555
idkp03	-.2958609	.5419373	-0.55	0.585	-1.358038	.7663166
idld03	.2525356	.6947393	0.36	0.716	-1.109128	1.6142
idrod03	-.1969683	.5264577	-0.37	0.708	-1.228806	.8348698
smdlegis	.086991	.2545037	0.34	0.732	-.4118272	.5858091
smdresou	.3951314	.3830701	1.03	0.302	-.3556723	1.145935
parbest	.0195584	.2204851	0.09	0.929	-.4125845	.4517012
pargood	-.1184807	.2144811	-0.55	0.581	-.5388559	.3018945
smdpersn	.8080663	.3751271	2.15	0.031	.0728308	1.543302
prprot	-1.213127	.4507193	-2.69	0.007	-2.09652	-.3297329
smdstrat	-.5235141	.7062662	-0.74	0.459	-1.90777	.8607421
prstrat	.3116985	.5787319	0.54	0.590	-.8225952	1.445992
negid	-.4892396	.2522755	-1.94	0.052	-.9836905	.0052113
polinter	.0782625	.1171018	0.67	0.504	-.1512528	.3077777
divider	-.0765023	.2525408	-0.30	0.762	-.5714732	.4184685
_cons	-.6607042	.7135546	-0.93	0.354	-2.059245	.7378371