

## **German Democratic Republic (East Germany)**

Vanderbilt

German Democratic Republic is coded as a single-party authoritarian regime from 1954, when it gains independence according to COW, until 1989, when East and West Germany unify. Walter Ulbricht ruled as general secretary of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) until 1971 when Erich Honecker took over. This is not a SOLS change. On Dec 3, 1989 Egon Krenz became general secretary. His rule coincides with a transition. According to (Ziblatt 1998, 123) “on December 3, 1989, the East German Parliament (*Volkskammer*) removed the SED’s status as the ‘leading party’ which guaranteed the SED’s monopoly on power.” On Dec 15, 1989 the SED became the SED-PDS (Party of Democratic Socialism). On Dec 18, 1989 Gregor Gysi took over as head of the SED-PDS. These are not SOLS changes according to our coding rules because it is still considered a single-party system in 1989. On Feb 4, 1990 SED-PDS became simply PDS. The German Democratic Republic is missing democratic regime type coding for 1990, the year of reunification with the German Federal Republic (West Germany).

### References:

Ziblatt, Daniel F. 1998. “The Adaptation of Ex-Communist Parties to Post-Communist East Central Europe: a Comparative Study of the East German and Hungarian Ex-Communist Parties.” *Communist and Post-Communist Studies* 31/2: 119–137. From  
<<http://www.people.fas.harvard.edu/~dziblatt/publications2/hungary.pdf>>.

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