

**CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERS:
SAME BED, DIFFERENT DREAMS**

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Executive Summary

1. The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) regained its political strength in the post-Mao era due to its organizational revival and its role in China's economic success.
2. The 80 million members of the CCP form a large political interest group and are likely to play an important role in China's future political change. Yet the rank-and-file party members are less understood than the party elites and the party organizations.
3. The findings of a public opinion survey data show that the CCP is becoming an elite organization. Compared to non-party members, party members as a whole are older, more educated, more urban, enjoy higher social and economic status, and are more likely to be a male.
4. Party members play a dual role of resisting democracy outside the party but promoting "civil society" within the party. Compared to the masses, party members are more likely to support the government and obey the orders of the state, enjoy more opportunities for political participation and have a stronger sense of political efficacy.
5. Although orthodox party members still cling to their ideological conviction, the younger generation of party members is slowly breaking away from the party's ideological bind and considering the CCP as a vehicle for self-realization.
6. This division between ideology and realism is becoming more visible among party members as more young and educated people are recruited into the party.
7. The two groups of party members are noticeably different in their political attitude. While orthodox party members are more anti-democratic, the

pragmatic party members are politically more independent and are unlikely to give in to political pressure without a fight.

8. In the future, the CCP will have to face the risk of alienating the masses if the socioeconomic gap between the party and the society continues to widen, and losing the loyalty of the future generation of party members.