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## **Party Nomination Rules and Campaign Participation**

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## Abstract

This study examines how political party organizations shape campaign participation in advanced industrialized parliamentary democracies. In some parties, members directly nominate candidates for their party's nomination. In others, selection is the sole responsibility of the party elite. Two countervailing arguments are presented: one stating that member participation will increase incentives to get involved in campaigns; the other contending that democratic nominations expose internal party divisions and depress participation. The paper also argues that a party's ideology, size, incumbency, and heterogeneity may influence participation. The hypotheses are tested using cross-national election surveys and original candidate selection data. Participation is measured in two ways: campaign activity and political persuasion. The results suggest that partisans are more likely to participate when elites, rather than members, select candidates. In addition, small and left-leaning parties are found to be more successful at mobilizing their core supporters, as are those parties currently in government.

What leads people to campaign? Previous research has largely addressed this question by focusing on individual-level determinants of participation, such as socioeconomic status (Campbell et al. 1960; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995), political sophistication or knowledge (Claassen 2007), and partisanship (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Verba and Nie 1972). While such attributes provide an individual with the means to participate, recent studies have shown that social context also plays an important role in determining which individuals actually employ these resources and become active. For example, individuals are more likely to participate if members of their social network frequently discuss politics, especially if these networks are self-reinforcing (Mutz 2002) or include political experts (McClurg 2006). Similarly, people are more likely to become active if they participated in volunteer organizations as a young adult (McFarland and Thomas 2006), they are pressured or encouraged to do so by a social group (Klofstad 2007; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993), or they feel threatened by government policies (Cho, Gimpel, and Wu 2006).

While recent research has moved attention from the individual to their social context, it has often overlooked features of the political system that shape participation. In particular, few studies focus on aspects of the party or politician for whom a person may actively campaign.<sup>1</sup> Most research concentrates on a single country (typically the U.S.), and in many cases a single time period, leaving little variation and an insufficient number of parties to make systematic comparisons.<sup>2</sup> Yet, we know that participation rates differ across parties and over time.<sup>3</sup> Some parties are simply more successful at mobilizing their supporters to

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<sup>1</sup>Similar observations have been made by Brockington (2009), Heidar (2006), and Zipp (1985).

<sup>2</sup>Several recent studies examine how participation is influenced by competition and policy outcomes. Pacheco (2008) finds that individuals in the U.S. are more likely to vote later in life if they lived in competitive districts as adolescents. Flavin and Griffin (2009) find that important policy decisions can motivate both policy winners and losers to participate.

<sup>3</sup>See, for example, Verba, Nie, and Kim (1987) and Heidar and Saglie (2003).

attend rallies, knock on doors, and persuade others to vote.

This paper investigates how features of political parties shape campaign behavior. Drawing on existing participation and party organization literatures, I present two countervailing arguments about how intraparty democracy might affect participation. The first makes the case that supporters of parties with democratic candidate selection procedures will be more informed and motivated to participate. Members of these parties develop a habit of participation, making them more likely to become active in the general election campaign. The second argument maintains that a familiarity with party procedures can divide partisans. Informed and empowered supporters take sides in internal party debates, allowing factions to penetrate party membership in democratically-organized parties. Party divisions lead some supporters to become dissatisfied and opt out of campaigning in the general election. In addition, I draw on previous research on mobilization and collective incentives to theorize about and examine the role of party ideology, size, incumbency, and heterogeneity.

A number of scholars have highlighted recent trends toward increasing internal party democracy and questioned the potential ramifications for electoral support, campaign activity, and party-society linkages (Carty and Blake 1999; Faucher-King and Treille 2003; Hazan and Rahat 2010; Kitschelt 1988; LeDuc 2001; Pedersen et al. 2004; Scarrow 2000; Young and Cross 2002). Yet without a cross-national database of party institutions to draw on, empirical work thus far has primarily taken an undifferentiated view of parties or examined over-time changes in campaign activity through country case studies. To advance this research agenda, this article draws on a new database of party institutions and candidate selection mechanisms in 50 parties from 17 advanced industrialized parliamentary democracies. These data are combined with election surveys from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES). The results reveal that party supporters are most likely to campaign and attempt to persuade others of their political views when elite party officers are responsible for candidate nominations. Party institutions are found to play a significant role – in some cases doubling participation rates. Partisans of left-leaning parties, as well as those that are

less popular or have recent experience in government, are also more likely to participate.

This research provides a first explanation for when and why we observe participatory asymmetries across parties in the same country or ideological family. The results suggest that in an era where parties are increasingly devolving authority to rank and file members, active participation and party-voter linkages are likely to continue to weaken. Across electoral systems, parties that mobilize their core supporters to campaign are generally more successful at the polls (Carty and Eagles 2005; Karp, Banducci, and Bowler 2007; Pattie, Johnston, and Fieldhouse 1995; Whiteley and Seyd 2003). As a result, this research also speaks to the broader study of party competition and electoral outcomes.

The next section considers the influence of candidate selection on participation. I then present the data, including an overview of different selection mechanisms. The last two sections test the theory and discuss implications for party organization and participation.

## **Internal Party Democracy and Participation**

Some of the most well-developed and rigorously tested theories in political science investigate how electoral institutions shape vital aspects of democratic politics. Ballot structure, district magnitude, and electoral formulae have been shown to influence government responsiveness (Cox 1997; Lijphart 1999; Powell 2000), the number and policy positions of competitive parties (Cox 1997; Duverger 1954; Laakso and Taagepera 1979), individuals' attitudes and participation (Anderson and Guillory 1997; Huber, Kernell, and Leoni 2005; Karp, Banducci, and Bowler 2007), and ultimately public policy (Stratmann and Baur 2002).

Analogous selection procedures exist within political parties. Just as electoral systems at the country-level determine which individuals are elected to public office, candidate selection mechanisms within parties dictate who will appear on the ballot. National legislative candidates are the faces and voices representing a political party in elections, and potentially in government. Consequently, the individuals empowered to choose which candidates carry a

party's label play a critical role in forming the party's public appearance and policy direction. As Schattschneider famously wrote, "the nominating process has become the crucial process of the party" (1942, 101).

Internal rules and practices for selecting candidates vary significantly across parties, especially in the degree to which they entrust regular rank and file members with candidate selection. In some cases, selection is *democratic*: members are solely responsible for choosing which candidates receive their party's nomination, and there is no check from the party elite. In others, selection adheres more strictly to Michels's (1962) model of an *oligarchic* organization: candidates are chosen by those individuals with the highest status in their party. Leaders in these organizations essentially hand-select whomever they see fit to compete for parliamentary office without input from everyday members. Many parties fall somewhere in between – allowing members to nominate candidates who are then subject to a veto from the party elite; or vice versa.<sup>4</sup>

Scholars have long differentiated parties by their level of internal democracy, though few have collected cross-national data.<sup>5</sup> In the most comprehensive examination of this process, Hazan and Rahat (2010) propose a framework for sorting parties along a continuum of "inclusiveness." Parties with greater inclusiveness are more democratic. They allow members, or even voters, to control nominations, while those that are more "exclusive" put selection in the hands of party elite. In what follows, I present two competing arguments about how a party's level of inclusiveness shapes campaign participation among its supporters.

### **Internal Party Democracy Fosters Participation**

The first line of reasoning argues that members of inclusive parties should be more likely to participate in electoral campaigns because they are more informed, opinionated, and

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<sup>4</sup>I use candidate "selection" and "nomination" interchangeably to refer to the process by which parties choose candidates to run for parliament.

<sup>5</sup>Exceptions include Bille (2001), Janda (1980), and Katz and Mair (1992).

experienced than their counterparts in exclusive parties. Since they play a pivotal role in candidate nominations, democratic parties' members face greater incentives and have more opportunities to learn about internal party operations, current policy debates, and potential candidates' positions and personalities (Scarrow 1994; Wauters 2010). Previous research has found that individuals participate more often when they have a heightened sense of personal efficacy (Whiteley and Seyd 1998) or are presented with "meaningful choices" (Wessels and Schmitt 2008), and if their vote may be consequential (Jackman 1987; Jackman and Miller 1995). This "instrumental motivation" theory (Franklin 2001, 2002) has found support in intraparty elections as well; in a survey of Belgium party members, Wauters (2010) found that participation was highest among individuals who believed they could impact the election outcome. As a result, inclusive selection may lead partisans to develop a habit of involvement that they carry on to the general election. Informed members may also prove more effective at mobilizing their peers to show up at the polls (Carty and Eagles 2005; Heidar 2006). And because potential candidates must appeal directly to the rank and file to secure their nomination, personal connections between members and candidates may increase participation (Ezrow et al. 2011; Gaines and Garrett 1993; McSweeney 1999).

In contrast, when elites control nominations there is no direct link between a party's members and its nominees. Elite selection is typically a private affair, and members may be wholly unaware of which candidates are being considered until official nominations are announced. Even if they are informed, everyday members play little to no formal role in candidate selection. Internal disagreements are most likely to be aired and resolved privately within the upper echelons of the party, and members have little incentive to monitor the selection process.

The existing literature consistently finds that the citizens most likely to vote or campaign have greater political experience and hold stronger partisan loyalties and ideological opinions (Dalton 1998; Verba and Nie 1972; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Consequently, the benefits of information, experience, and efficacy associated with membership in democratic

parties may lead to greater participation. To the extent members are responsible for recruiting other supporters to campaign for the party, this pattern will extend beyond the rank and file.

Parties that fall in between these two extremes allow members and elite officers to share nomination control. Members in these parties have an incentive to be more informed than their counterparts in undemocratic parties, but may be less involved than those who support inclusive parties.

### **Democratic Rules Inhibit Participation**

A contrary line of reasoning holds that democratic candidate selection rules induce conflict, making it difficult for parties to act as unified teams. As contenders for the nomination compete with one another by boosting their own policy positions and sowing doubt about their opponents, party divisions will arise or gain traction (Carty and Eagles 2005; Hopkin 2001; LeDuc 2001; Ware 1996). Party members may monitor these appeals and form opinions about the preferences, priorities, and credibility of potential candidates. As cleavages among the party leadership become more salient to general party members, candidate selection can divide supporters into winners and losers, with losers subsequently finding their enthusiasm weakening in the general election campaign. In some cases, candidates from democratic parties register and pay for hundreds of new members to show up and vote for them at nomination meetings – a practice that frequently causes intraparty disputes among potential nominees. These “instant” members may otherwise be disinterested in party politics and campaigns, and they often relinquish their membership (and sometimes electoral support) after nominations (Carty and Eagles 2005). The appearance of internal divisions and unfavorable candidate assessments may further dampen participation even among members who do not take sides in the nomination process. Parties tend to deemphasize an issue on which they are divided, presumably because it could lead to greater internal conflict and dampen electoral support (van de Wardt 2013).



This argument follows the logic of the “divisive primary” literature in American politics (Atkeson 1998; Hacker 1965; Henderson, Hillygus, and Tompson 2010), which finds that a candidate’s general election vote share is positively associated with his or her margin of victory in the primary.<sup>6</sup> Such an outcome may occur for various reasons. First, in a heated election, candidates and their supporters are likely to engage in mudslinging. Negative information about candidates can demobilize the electorate, especially when it comes from within the candidates’ own parties (Ansolabehere and Iyengar 1995). Second, voters may be less inclined to support a party that is internally divided than one with a unified base if they view divisions as signifying a party’s inability to agree on and collectively enact their platform. Third, party supporters whose preferred candidates do not receive the nomination may “bolt” from the party by abstaining in the election or electoral campaign as a way of sending a strong message that their claims must be recognized and rewarded. Last, supporters will be disenchanted when their preferred candidates are not nominated and therefore be less motivated to turn out and vote for the party (Kenney and Rice 1987). Party infighting may also lead to heightened media scrutiny (Faucher-King and Treille 2003).

Although divisive primary arguments focus on depressed turnout, their logic should apply to other forms of participation as well. Indeed, disaffected party members may be more likely to opt out of a campaign meeting or rally than to defect or abstain on election day when presented with an objectionable opposition. Research on cross-cutting exposure to political information also supports this claim. Mutz (2002) finds that individuals are less likely to vote when they face cross-pressures from groups with conflicting political stances. And Campbell et al. (1960) report that individuals with conflicting partisan attitudes show weaker interest in campaign activity.

Kitschelt (1988) finds that democratically-organized Green parties often face a number of unintended consequences that prove detrimental to their electoral success. Parties that

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<sup>6</sup>Although see Wichowsky and Niebler (2010) for contradictory evidence from the 2008 U.S. election.

allow members to participate experience greater factionalism and infighting, and policy debates are often overpowered by issues surrounding candidates' charisma or personality. De Winter observes a similar trend, finding that democratic parties "tended to overemphasize tensions between different intraparty factions" (1988, 42-43). Thus, by instituting competition, democratic parties may promote factions, spawn intraparty divisions, and discourage subsequent campaign activity.

The arguments presented here suggest two competing rationales for how party organization shapes participation. Before testing these theories empirically, I consider an alternative argument linking internal democracy with decreased participation.

### **Alternative Argument: Heterogeneity Divides Party Support**

Typically, inclusive selection occurs at the constituency level in public gatherings much like American-style caucuses, where each member of the rank and file is eligible to cast a vote for their preferred district nominee(s). In contrast, elite selection almost always transpires at the national level, usually in meetings held behind closed doors and out of the public eye.<sup>7</sup> This makes it difficult to isolate the potentially independent effects of *who* selects and at what *level* they do so, an issue that is particularly important because the level of selection may impact participation through internal party heterogeneity. Hierarchical parties that select candidates through a single national elite body instead of multiple mutually-exclusive member associations around the country may solve coordination problems that plague subnational selectorates and therefore succeed in choosing a *set* of candidates who command broad support among a party's core supporters. Top-down parties may also be

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<sup>7</sup>While there is nothing proscribing national member assemblies from selecting candidates, or local elite officers from hand-picking nominees in their district, I found that these methods were rarely employed. In all but a few parties examined below, member participation occurred at the district level and elite participation at the national level – even when the two groups share power.

more successful at communicating and imposing the national party platform or responding to external threats than democratic parties (Meguid 2008), and candidates may be more accountable to voters (Caul 1999). In contrast, in a democratic party, party members may nominate candidates who best reflect their regional interests or who have strong local, but not national, loyalties. Even if internal party democracy does not divide voters within their own districts, it may lead to a set of locally minded politicians broadcasting disparate appeals, which could weaken the party program's capacity to generate enthusiasm among partisans. Thus, the heterogeneity of a party's candidates may diminish support for the party in the national election if individuals are motivated to campaign by the party's set of candidates instead of only the candidate(s) in their district. Conversely, if individuals choose to participate based only on their assessment of the candidate(s) in their district, heterogeneity should have no effect on participation. And, if candidates from heterogeneous parties are more likely to reflect the interests of the party's voters in their districts, we would expect heterogeneity to increase overall participation.

Since democratic parties may be more heterogeneous, it is important to test for the effect of heterogeneity when examining the relationship between internal democracy and participation. Because it is impossible to separate these dimensions given their high – almost perfect – collinearity, I control for a party's internal heterogeneity. If heterogeneity is found to have an indirect negative impact on participation, decentralization may play a role; finding no effect or a direct effect would suggest it does not.

## **Testing the Argument**

To test among these competing arguments, I combine the original data on candidate selection described below with information about a party's ideology, heterogeneity, size, and incumbency, as well as survey data from the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems. These surveys, which are administered by a collaboration of social scientists in over 50 countries

around the world, contain a common module of questions pertaining to demographic characteristics and electoral behavior. The post-election surveys used in the following analyses were conducted between 2002 to 2006 and were held within eleven (and typically less than three) months of the corresponding country’s parliamentary election.<sup>8</sup>

For feasibility and comparability, I limited collection efforts to the most mature parliamentary democracies in the CSES. This includes 13 European countries, as well as Australia, Canada, Japan, and New Zealand. In choosing parties that are sufficiently similar to warrant comparison, the analyses are limited to those parties that are the most competitive. Across countries I observed a natural division between parties that received greater or less than eight percent of the vote; namely, almost all parties in government cross that threshold. Thus, I only examine parties that received at least eight percent of the vote in the election for which there is CSES data available. Descriptive statistics for the 50 parties that meet this requirement are listed in the Appendix.

## Measurement

The previous section argues that a party’s candidate selection method should affect participation among party members. Since the CSES (as well as any other large cross-national survey) does not ask respondents about membership, I include only those respondents who report strongly identifying with a party.<sup>9</sup> Strong partisans are most likely to be party mem-

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<sup>8</sup>Another way to isolate the effect of party institutions would be to examine participation over time in parties that have changed selection mechanisms. Unfortunately, the CSES only asked if respondents participated in campaigns or persuasion during one survey wave, so temporal changes cannot be assessed with these data.

<sup>9</sup>Partisans are respondents who answer “yes” to the standard CSES party identification question, “Do you usually think of yourself as close to any particular political party?” and name a valid party in response to the follow-up question, “What party is that?” They are then asked “Do you feel very close to this party, somewhat close, or not very close?” Approximately

bers and become active in the party (Whiteley and Seyd 1998). As Scarrow (1994) argues, the utility that members receive from varying party incentives and organizations may be received by all party supporters. “Party organizers may not view the distinction between ‘members’ and ‘active supporters’ as a rigid one” (Scarrow 1994, 57; see also Heidar 2006). Moreover, because parties’ membership requirements differ within and across countries, examining strong partisans (who are categorized according to the same metric in every country) ensures greater comparability, and less potential for selection effects, across parties. In total, there are 2,337 respondents in the analyses.

### **Dependent Variables: Campaign Participation and Persuasion**

Two questions from the CSES are used to measure political participation. The survey states, “Here is a list of things some people do during elections. Which if any did you do during the most recent election?” The first question, which hereafter is referred to as *campaign*, asks if the respondent “showed [their] support for a particular party or candidate by, for example, attending a meeting, putting up a poster, or in some other way.” The second question, hereafter *persuade*, asks if the respondent “talked to other people to persuade them to vote for a particular party or candidate.” Both actions gauge participation, but they may tap into different forms of involvement, as campaigning is more active, or “high intensity,” than persuading (Whiteley and Seyd 2002). If the respondent answered “yes” to either question, they were prompted with a follow-up question asking how often they participated in the activity, where “frequently,” “occasionally,” and “rarely” are the options they could specify. The following analyses employ both dichotomous measures of *campaign* and *persuade* (where either variable equals 0 if the respondent did not participate at all and 1 if they did), as well as ordered models where a person’s campaign activity ranges from 0 (no participation) to 3 (frequent participation). On average, 27 percent of strong partisans campaigned, and 40 percent of identifiers report that they feel “very close” to their most-preferred party. I consider these respondents “strong partisans.”

percent tried to persuade someone to vote for their preferred party or candidate.

## Candidate Selection

I collected data on candidate nomination rules from two primary sources: official party documents – including statutes and bylaws – and in-person or telephone interviews with party bureaucrats and representatives. The statutes collected were in effect prior to each country’s corresponding election, and nearly all of the interviews occurred between 2005 and 2008. In most cases, I interviewed the person(s) in charge of writing the party constitution or heading the party’s internal organization, such as the General Secretary or Director of Organizational Development.<sup>10</sup> This thorough investigation provided intricate details about how potential candidates initiate, compete for, and ultimately secure their party’s nomination. It also revealed substantial variation among parties – both within and across countries.

The coding used below distinguishes among parties that are *inclusive* (internally democratic; members select candidates), *exclusive* (authoritarian; elites select candidates), and *semi-inclusive* (members and elite share authority).<sup>11</sup> In the models below, semi-inclusive parties make up the base category. Using indicator variables, instead of a single continuous measure of internal democracy, allows us to better pinpoint the level(s) of member control

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<sup>10</sup>In-person interviews were held in Germany, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, and the United Kingdom (as well as Austria, which is not included in this analysis).

<sup>11</sup>Of course, this classification cannot account for all of the variation in candidate selection methods. For example, I consider parties semi-inclusive when party elite can veto nominees selected by party members, regardless of the actual veto rule (e.g. majority or supermajority). More detailed information is not available for all parties, and I employ the three-part typology described above in the interest of including more parties into the analysis. More importantly, party supporters may not know the intricacies of their party’s voting rules and may choose to become informed (or not) simply based on their involvement in candidate selection. None of the parties examined here allow non-members to participate in selection.

that shapes active participation.<sup>12</sup>

Australia's Labor Party provides an example of an inclusive party. Parliamentary candidates are selected by their districts' party members, and elites have no formal influence over nominations. In some democratic parties, the specific selection method is left to the discretion of local, member-run organizations, as is the case with Sweden's Liberal People's Party. In others, such as the Swedish Moderate Party, bylaws standardize the candidate selection procedures employed by subnational bodies.

The British Labour Party falls at the other end of the spectrum. Although Labour's constitution describes rules governing parliamentary candidate selection by members at the constituency level, "the normal procedure may be dispensed with by the National Executive Committee (NEC) ... when the NEC are of the opinion that the interests of the party would be best served by the suspension of the procedures" (Labour Party of Britain 2006). Since ultimate authority rests with the NEC – a 33-person organization making up the party's central leadership – candidate selection for all constituencies is effectively in the hands of the party elite. In a few cases, such as Italy's National Alliance Party in 2006, exclusive parties rely on a single leader to hand pick all parliamentary candidates.

In many parties, candidate selection is shared by both members and the party elite. For example, local party members nominate candidates in the Spanish People's Party, but the national elite hold veto power. In the Dutch Labor Party (PvDA), members choose a pool of potential candidates, and party leaders select nominees from this group. The British Conservative Party reverses this sequence; the national office generates a list of acceptable

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<sup>12</sup>Results are robust to modifications of this variable. While candidate selection procedures surely reflect strategic decisions by the party elite (and in some cases, rank and file members), I treat the level of internal party democracy as exogenous. These institutions are enduring and stable; only a handful of parties have changed their selection procedures over the past 20 years. In all parties, candidate selection procedures were in place long before the CSES survey respondents decided to participate in these elections.

candidates and members choose from among this group. These semi-inclusive parties are increasingly common in modern democracies; as Blondel observes, “more commonly, parties stand halfway between centralization and decentralization” (1978, 51).

Most countries experience some organizational variation across their most competitive parties, but in a few systems all of the parties employ similar rules. In particular, Scandinavia tends to have more democratic parties than countries in central and southern Europe. Japanese parties are more elite-driven (and secretive) in their processes.<sup>13</sup>

### **Other Party Covariates: Ideology, Heterogeneity, Size, and Incumbency**

In addition, the models include measures of a party’s ideology, heterogeneity, size, and incumbency status. Previous research provides initial evidence that left parties’ supporters are more likely to participate. For example, Pedersen et al. (2004) find that members of left parties in Denmark spend more time working for their party and campaigning than members of conservative parties. And in their classic study on participation, Verba, Nie, and Kim (1987) find that strong supporters of left parties in Austria and the Netherlands are more likely to campaign than supporters of the right, controlling for education.<sup>14</sup> Left parties’ supporters may be more active for a number of reasons. Because many “old left” mass-based parties developed out of labor unions, their culture and organization are designed to mobilize members quickly and effectively. Union members are accustomed to expressing their political preferences *en masse*, and members of parties with strong ties to labor movements may find it easy, familiar, and effective to attend rallies and pass out party propaganda

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<sup>13</sup>Similar data on party organizations were collected by Janda (1980) and Katz and Mair (1992). Neither of these impressive studies covers the time period in which the CSES surveys were conducted. I was unable to obtain organizational data for several parties that received at least eight percent of the vote. These parties, such as Belgium’s Flemish Bloc or Italy’s Democrats of the Left, are not included in the analyses.

<sup>14</sup>However, they do not observe similar patterns outside Europe.



(D'Art and Turner 2007; Kerrissey and Schofer 2013).<sup>15</sup> Likewise, parties of the “new left,” such as the Greens in Germany, typically grew out of social movements, and their founders and core supporters are accustomed to grassroots political mobilization (Spoon 2009). New left parties also advocate for greater participatory democracy (Kitschelt 1988; van de Wardt 2013). To preserve their grass-roots image, these parties may prioritize member mobilization, participation, and engagement in political discussions.<sup>16</sup>

A party's *ideology* is measured as the average placement by expert respondents from Benoit and Laver's (2006) Party Policy in Modern Democracies study. Country specialists were asked to place parties between 1 (left) and 20 (right). Average ideological placement ranges from 3.6 (Germany's PDS) to 17.2 (Sweden's Moderates). Party *heterogeneity* is measured as the standard deviation of these expert respondents' ideological placements.<sup>17</sup> The values for *heterogeneity* range from 1.2 to 3.4.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>In contrast, strong labor ties may do little to encourage small-scale political activity such as persuasive discussions.

<sup>16</sup>These arguments apply to distinct groups of left parties, and it would be fruitful to conduct a study with more parties to untangle the roles that ideology and party family play in participation (especially among parties on the left). Interestingly, Labor and Green parties are typically organized in different ways: the former are more often exclusive, while the latter are usually inclusive. Additional analyses – not shown here, but discussed below – include party family as well as ideology. To my knowledge, this is the first study to ask if ideology is systematically related to participation, controlling for party organization.

<sup>17</sup>The standard deviation among experts' placements has been shown to be significantly associated with intraparty variation and dissent (Steenbergen and Marks 2007). Similar measures of heterogeneity are employed by Campbell (1983), Grofman et al. (1999) Rehm and Reilly (2010), and Whitefield et al. (2007).

<sup>18</sup>Benoit and Laver's (2006) expert survey is used instead of the CSES question about party location because the latter was not asked in Belgium, Italy, or Japan. The two measures are

I also include a variable measuring each party's share of the national vote in the CSES election. Larger parties may be more heterogeneous, so incorporating *percent vote* in the model allows us to test if heterogeneity influences campaign activity, controlling for size. By including party size we can also investigate whether or not individuals are more likely to participate when the pool of potential activists is smaller (Olson 1965; Franklin 2002; Tan 1998; Weldon 2006). Previous research has found that niche parties – typically much smaller in size – are more responsive to the interests of their core supporters (Adams et al. 2006; Ezrow et al. 2011), which could drive up participation among the party faithful. Parties with larger memberships may also be less efficient at mobilizing supporters or organizing campaigns (Scarrow 2000). Conversely, others have found that short-term electoral defeat can depress member enrollment and campaign activity (Fisher, Denver, and Hands 2006). Success may spur a “spiral of mobilization,” increasing collective incentives to participate (Whiteley and Seyd 1998).

*In government* equals one if a party was in the previous governing cabinet and equals zero if they were not. This variable may be positively related to participation if incumbent parties more effectively mobilize their supporters through access to government resources or media attention (Boas and Hidalgo 2011), or if they send clearer messages about the party's electoral platform. Selective outcome incentives – such as advancing in the party or securing a job in government – as well as feelings of group efficacy have been found to increase party activism (Seyd and Whiteley 1992; Whiteley and Seyd 1998, 2002). Both should be higher for partisans who identify with parties that are currently in power.

## **Individual Covariates**

Several individual-level explanatory variables are included in the following models. They are the respondent's *education* (measured on a 1 [no formal education] to 8 [post-graduate] scale), sex (such that *male* equals 1 and *female* equals 0), *age* (in years), and an indicator for

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strongly correlated: 0.94 for *ideology* and 0.35 for *heterogeneity* ( $p < 0.01$  for both).

*union* membership. Previous research leads us to expect all four covariates to be positively associated with campaign activity and persuasion. Well-educated individuals typically have more money and time to participate in politics (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1987; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Education also increases a person’s capacity to understand – and consequently, care about – politics (Whiteley 2011).

In most countries, men outnumber women in politics. Women are less commonly recruited by political parties, and their participation efforts are not as likely to be rewarded – with committee appointments, staff positions, or candidate nominations – as male participants (Cheng and Tavits 2011; Fox and Lawless 2010). Women may also be less likely to work in politically-charged environments, affording them fewer opportunities or pressures to discuss politics, form political opinions, and participate in campaigns.

As individuals age, they accumulate more information about politics (Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Strate et al. 1989) and develop stronger attachments to parties (Barnes 1989, Campbell et al 1960). Yet, older people less often participate in activities that are not “institutionalized,” such as protesting, campaigning, or contacting an election official (Gallego 2007; Goerres 2009; Norris, Walgrave, and Van Aelst 2005; Quintelier 2007). The models therefore also include  $age^2$  to test if the relationship is nonlinear and diminishing throughout a person’s lifetime.

Previous research argues that union members may be more politically active (D’Art and Turner 2007; Gray and Caul 2000; Kerrissey and Schofer 2013; Radcliff and Davis 2000; Uhlaner 1989). Because they participate in decision making at their place of work, union members may have a heightened sense of individual efficacy (Pateman 1970; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Unions also often offer training courses, designed to help members develop an aptitude and skill-set for political participation and lobbying (Clawson 2003). And, unions are effective institutions at conveying information and mobilizing a large group of activists (Kerrissey and Schofer 2013).

In regression models not shown here I also include measures of household income. This

variable was not included in the Belgian survey, and was never close to significant in models excluding Belgium.

### Country Covariates

With only 17 cases, a variety of country-level covariates cannot be included. But an indicator for the type of electoral system is: *majoritarian* equals one for countries employing single member plurality districts or alternative vote; it equals zero for all other systems. Previous research has found that first-past-the-post systems experience lower turnout (Jackman 1987; Radcliff and Davis 2000), but greater campaign participation (Karp, Banducci, and Bowler 2007).

### Specifying the Model

The hypotheses are tested with multilevel models that capture the hierarchical structure of individuals nested within parties within countries. Country and party variables are modeled to only shape a party's intercept.

## Results

Table 1 displays the results for four logistic models where the binary dependent variable is *campaign* (1a and 1b) or *persuade* (1c and 1d). The first and third models test the primary hypothesis in the absence of heterogeneity; the second and fourth include a measure of intraparty heterogeneity. Individual-level factors are displayed at the top, followed by party-level and country-level variables below.

Across all four models, education is positive and statistically significant. College graduates are on average eight percentage points more likely to campaign, and ten points more likely to try to persuade someone, than high school graduates who did not attend college. These results are consistent with previous findings that education provides resources and

	Model 1a	Model 1b	Model 1c	Model 1d
Education	0.13*** (0.03)	0.13*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)	0.15*** (0.03)
Male	0.18* (0.11)	0.18* (0.11)	0.26*** (0.10)	0.26*** (0.10)
Age	0.05** (0.02)	0.05** (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)
Age <sup>2</sup>	-0.0005*** (0.0002)	-0.0005*** (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)	-0.0001 (0.0002)
Union member	0.33*** (0.12)	0.33*** (0.12)	0.08 (0.11)	0.08 (0.11)
Inclusive	-0.89*** (0.30)	-0.91*** (0.32)	-0.72* (0.40)	-0.62 (0.40)
Exclusive	-0.25 (0.29)	-0.27 (0.31)	-0.57 (0.40)	-0.46 (0.41)
Ideology	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)
Percent votes	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03* (0.01)	-0.03* (0.01)
In government	0.33* (0.19)	0.32* (0.19)	0.11 (0.22)	0.13 (0.22)
Heterogeneity		0.05 (0.28)		-0.37 (0.32)
Majoritarian	0.43 (0.29)	0.40 (0.35)	0.87 (0.58)	1.11* (0.60)
Constant	-1.09 (0.76)	-1.16 (0.86)	0.45 (0.87)	1.07 (1.02)
$\sigma_{party}^2$	0.19 (0.10)	0.19 (0.10)	0.28 (0.12)	0.28 (0.13)
$\sigma_{country}^2$	0.09 (0.09)	0.09 (0.09)	0.80 (0.38)	0.73 (0.36)
Observations	2244	2244	2337	2337

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses; \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.10$ , two-tailed tests

Table 1: Estimates for multilevel logistic models. There are 50 parties and 17 countries in each model.

social opportunities to become politically informed and engaged (Verba, Nie, and Kim 1987; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Whiteley 2011). Yet while the link between education and participation has been well established, this study demonstrates that the relationship persists even when the analysis is limited to those individuals with strong partisan attachments. Gender also matters. On average, men are four percent more likely to campaign, and six percent more likely to attempt to persuade others, than women.

With the exception of vote share, the remaining variables have differing effects depending on whether the dependent variable measures an individual's propensity to campaign or persuade. A person's age does not appear to affect persuasion, but it is related to campaign behavior. Campaigning peaks at age 50, and decreases by roughly 30 percent for individuals aged 20 or 80. As they age, partisans have more time to participate (Quintelier 2007) and are consistently shown to vote and join parties more regularly (Gallego 2007). But older partisans may experience decreased mobility or smaller social networks, causing them to campaign with less frequency than middle-aged partisans.

Union membership is positively associated with campaign propensity, but not persuasion. These results suggest that unions may play a greater role in group mobilization than increasing personal efficacy, or that the latter operates through partisanship strength – a factor held constant here.<sup>19</sup>

Turning to examine political party attributes, we find in Models 1a-c that *inclusive* is negative and statistically significant. Individuals who strongly identify with democratic parties are much less likely to campaign than are strong partisans of semi-inclusive parties (the base category). The coefficients on *exclusive*, however, are not significant. It appears as though full member participation decreases campaign activity, but that there is no difference in participation rates among partisans who identify with parties where the elite play either

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<sup>19</sup>D'Art and Turner (2007) also find mixed support for the efficacy hypothesis. Radcliff and Davis (2000) find that large unions can move parties to the left, which in turn strengthens participation. I also find (below) that left parties enjoy greater campaign support.

a full or partial role in candidate selection. Although the models do not directly test the effect of information on participation, the findings are consistent with the demobilization hypothesis: partisans who are more likely to be informed about their party's organization and intraparty conflicts less often participate in electoral campaigns. Members of semi-inclusive or exclusive parties may have reduced influence over key decisions about candidate selection, but they appear no less likely to rally behind the party during electoral campaigns. The elite in semi-inclusive parties can influence selection by making their preferences known – either through a formal list of approved candidates or by signaling which individuals they are sure not to veto. As Hopkin argues, “as long as party leaderships are able to regulate and condition the process, members’ choices will remain constrained” (2001, 358).

A party's ideology, size, and government experience also appear to influence campaign participation in the hypothesized directions. Consistent with arguments that left parties rely heavily on grass roots support and are effective mobilizers, supporters of these parties are more active than those who identify with parties on the right. However, ideology is not related to persuasion. In analyses not shown here, I also included a set of indicator variables to see if participation varies by five party families (as originally suggested by Duverger [1954]): Greens, Social Democrats, Liberals, Conservatives/Christian Democrats, and the Radical Right.<sup>20</sup> No combination of party families was significant when included with, or in place of, ideology, with the exception of the Radical Right, whose supporters are least likely to campaign. Radical Right parties rely on small membership bases and highly insular organizations (Mudde 2007).

A party's share of the vote in the corresponding CSES election is negatively related to both campaign behavior and persuasion. These results may reflect a number of factors. First, activism may decline with size because individuals carry less influence as the pool of supporters widens (Olson 1965; Weldon 2006). Second, smaller parties may receive greater support if partisans try to compensate for their party's losses (or expected losses) and reduce

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<sup>20</sup>Coding was based on Ennser 2012.

the cognitive dissonance associated with supporting a weaker party (Whiteley and Seyd 1998). Third, voters may be more informed about larger parties, making campaigning and persuasion less informative and worthwhile. Tan (1998) and Weldon (2006) find that activity decreases with the number of rank and file members.<sup>21</sup>

Although larger parties are less likely to mobilize their core supporters, parties in government enjoy an average boost in campaign support of three percentage points. Incumbent parties have better access to the media and government resources used to mobilize partisans, and supporters may feel a stronger sense of collective efficacy due to their parties' recent success (Whiteley and Seyd 2002).

There is weak support for the argument that electoral systems matter. In all four models *majoritarian* is positive, but it reaches statistical significance ( $p < 0.10$ ) only in Model 1d. The magnitude of the variable is meaningful, however; participation increases by as much as 20 percentage points in majoritarian compared to proportional systems.<sup>22</sup>

Models 1b and 1d test the alternative argument that exclusivity is associated with greater participation because democratic parties are more heterogeneous. The coefficient is not close to significant in either case, lending no support to the heterogeneity hypothesis.

To make the logit coefficients easier to interpret, Figure 1 plots the predicted probability of campaigning using results from Model 1a. Participation rates are shown for varying education levels to demonstrate the relative influence of each variable.<sup>23</sup> The predicted

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<sup>21</sup>Including *percent vote*<sup>2</sup> reveals that the effect of party size appears constant over vote share.

<sup>22</sup>Interacting *majoritarian* and *inclusive* revealed no evidence of a conditional effect. The results are also robust to including an indicator for federalism (which is never significant) or excluding the Netherlands (which has a single electoral district).

<sup>23</sup>Probabilities are calculated for females who are not members of a union, and reflect the mean level of participation predicted across all ages in the sample population. *Ideology* and *percent vote* are held at their means (12 and 25, respectively), and the party is set to have



probability of campaigning for a moderate, incumbent party that captures about a quarter of the electorate ranges from approximately 0.11 (for those with the lowest education in inclusive parties) to 0.40 (for those with the highest education in exclusive parties) for females. (The equivalent range for males is from 0.13 to 0.45.) Party organization clearly plays an important role. Partisans of inclusive parties are about half as likely to campaign as supporters of parties where elite members control nominations. Education, which accounts for more variation than any other individual-level variable, has a similar substantive effect: individuals with post-graduate degrees are about twice as likely to campaign as those with the least schooling.

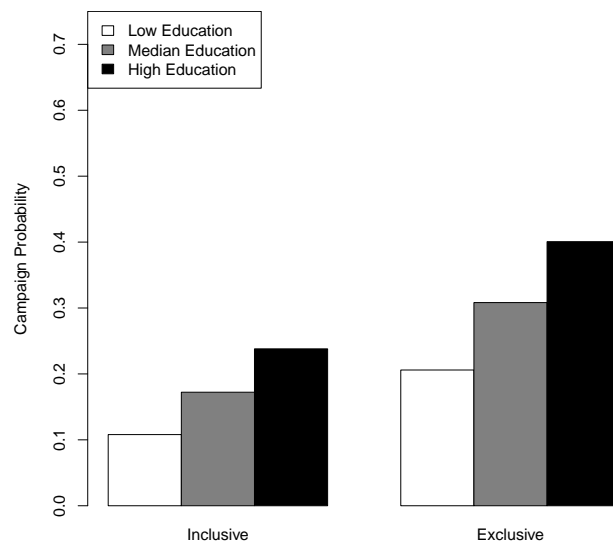


Figure 1: Predicted probabilities of campaigning by candidate selection and education.

Figure 2 illustrates the relationships between a party's ideology or size and campaigning.<sup>24</sup> In the graph on the left, we see that partisans campaign for extreme left-wing parties with \_\_\_\_\_ been in government.

<sup>24</sup>Probabilities are shown for females with high-school education who identify with exclusive parties. *Ideology* and *percent vote* are held at their means when they are not varying.

a probability of 0.43. This drops to 0.24 for partisans who identify with parties on the far right.<sup>25</sup>

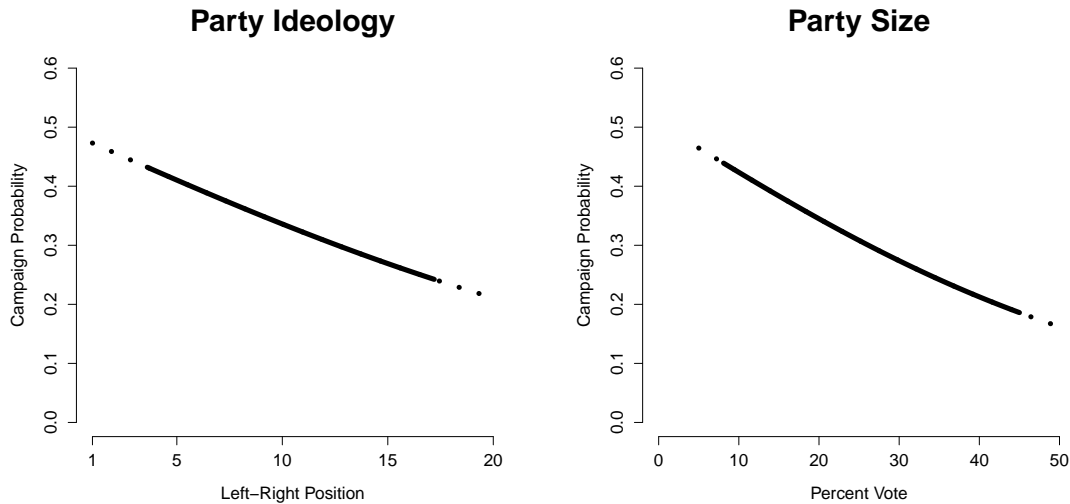


Figure 2: Predicted probabilities of campaigning for parties with varying ideology and electoral size. (Solid lines indicate the range of observations in the data.)

Party size has a similar effect to ideology when compared across the range of values in the data. The smallest party – the German Greens – received 8.1 percent of the vote, whereas the largest – the Portuguese Socialist Party – received 45 percent, and the probability of campaigning for parties with these vote shares ranges from 0.44 to 0.18. Popular parties are much less likely to receive campaign support from their strongest partisans. Supporters of large parties may have weaker ties to fellow party supporters or face stronger incentives to free ride. Moreover, because large parties are often more experienced in elections and government, their leaders may simply confront less of a need to campaign and educate voters about their party’s policy platform.

To assess the overall potential impact of candidate selection on participation, I calculated

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<sup>25</sup>I also included a measure of extremeness (not shown here) to see if parties on the far left and right received more support than those in the center. Once we control for party size, it becomes clear that ideology – not extremeness – drives participation.

predicted participation rates for the 50 parties in the sample under each of the three candidate selection rules. The percent of partisans who actively campaign jumps by 23 percentage points when parties are exclusive or semi-inclusive in comparison to inclusive. This represents a sizeable change in participation rates across party regimes. But the difference also varies significantly – from 16 to 25 percent – across the range of parties in the data. Parties vary in ideology and size, but also in their core supporters. The gains a party receives by appealing to a more educated pool of voters may be offset if it holds a conservative position or is one of the largest parties in the country. Variation in participation rates across parties can only be explained when we include both individual and party-level factors that influence behavior.

To examine the level of campaign activity or persuasion, I ran four ordered logistic models similar to those in Table 1, except where *campaign* and *persuade* are each measured on a 0 (no participation) to 3 (frequent participation) scale. The table of coefficients, and a more in-depth discussion, can be found in the Online Supplementary Appendix. The results indicate that the same factors related to joining a campaign or persuading others are also associated with participating in these activities more frequently. The coefficients are very similar to those in the binary models for most of the individual and party variables. *Education* and *male* are positively related to all forms of participation. Middle-aged partisans are more likely than their younger or older counterparts to campaign, as are union members. *Ideology* continues to have a significant negative effect on campaign activity, but not persuasion. *Heterogeneity* is unrelated to participation. And *percent votes* is negative and significant for all four models.

There are three differences between the binary and ordinal models. First, the coefficients on *inclusive* are again negative and significant for *campaign*, but they now reach statistical significance for both models that measure *persuade* as well. Second, *in government* and *majoritarian* are no longer significant for any of the models. A party's experience in government may motivate individuals who were not already involved to campaign, but it does not appear to affect their level of activity. (See the Online Supplementary Appendix for more detail.)

Overall, the results indicate that features of parties matter for participation. Parties that empower their members, take on leftist ideological positions, are less popular at the polls, and are currently in government are the most likely to mobilize their supporters to campaign. The results for persuade, however, are not as straightforward. There is evidence that partisans of small parties are more vocal at trying to convince others to support their party on election day. And it appears as though supporters of inclusive parties are more likely to persuade than those of semi-inclusive or exclusive parties (although this is not significant in Model 1d). But, ideology and government status do not relate to persuasion. And other individual-level variables that typically predict participation – age and union membership – also have no effect. Thus, it is important to remind ourselves that these two variables represent different motivations and behaviors. As Heidar states, a “party builder,” or someone “high in intensity and focused on internal activities,” may be completely different from a “party supporter,” who may “occasionally argue the party’s case among friends, neighbors or workmates” (2006, 307).

## Conclusion

“In the age of the mass media, political parties are constrained by the need to appear transparent while smoothing away internal disagreements” (Faucher-King and Treille 2003). This paper examines when and why either of these two party objectives wins out over the other. I pit two hypotheses against each other about how intraparty democracy affects campaign participation. One theory states that information and nomination power foster participation in electoral campaigns by increasing transparency and encouraging individuals to evaluate potential candidates’ positions. Grassroots participation is a key ingredient in many parties’ election strategies (Whiteley and Seyd 2002), and one might assume that empowering party members will increase participation in campaigns (Pennings and Hazan 2001). A second argument maintains that resources lead individuals to be more opinionated, but suggests that

these opinions foster intraparty divisions which subsequently decrease campaign support. To examine these arguments empirically, I test the effect of inclusive candidate selection on partisan activity, while controlling for an alternative explanation about party heterogeneity. The results support the second argument: individuals who identify with democratic parties are significantly less likely to participate in election campaigns and persuasion than partisans of semi-inclusive or exclusive parties. Moreover, inclusiveness is found to matter as much as three individual-level attributes that have strong, well-documented, effects on participation: gender, age, and going to college.

Previous research explaining participation, partisanship, and even vote choice, has largely focused on attributes of the individual, district, country, or social group. To my knowledge, this is the first cross-national study that systematically investigates how political party organizations shape individual-level behavior. The original data on candidate selection, and the framework employed in this paper, open the door for a wealth of research examining party institutions, and the role these organizations play in shaping voter behavior and election outcomes. Moreover, the study finds that participation varies systematically with three other important party characteristics – ideology, vote share, and incumbency. Parties that are conservative, enjoy greater electoral support, and are in the opposition, are less likely to activate their partisan base.

Beyond this, the theoretical arguments add to our understanding about how conflicting information may influence participation. While previous research has focused on exposure to conflict among partisans from different parties (Campbell et al. 1960; Mutz 2002), I find evidence that intraparty competition among members may also dampen participation. This is tested by focusing on a subgroup of individuals who have demonstrated a strong baseline level of partisan attachment.

Previous research has argued that primaries choose better qualified candidates than top-down elite selection (Adams and Merrill 2008). If anything, this would seem to suggest greater participation rates for democratic parties, as partisans may be more likely to cam-

paigned for well-qualified candidates. The findings presented here call this hypothesis into question, and beg for empirical research examining the role of party organization in shaping candidate quality. If the primaries hypothesis is true, the deleterious role of internal party democracy on campaign participation must be strong enough to overcome the benefits of candidate quality. Future research may also test the hypothesized mechanisms explicitly by asking partisans to report their positions on, and knowledge about, intraparty contests in inclusive parties.

Perhaps the most interesting question these findings raise is: why are some parties democratizing? Although only a handful of the parties examined here have changed their selection mechanisms in the past two decades, there is a general tendency across countries toward broadening the selectorate. Previous research suggests that parties devolve control in order to increase membership in a period of overall decline (Scarrow and Gezgor 2010; Whiteley 2011), and that this trend may be particularly strong among parties that recently suffered electoral defeats (Hopkin 2001). Indeed, parties offering opportunities to participate may especially attract those members most likely to become active in the party (Scarrow 1994). Parties may also democratize to appease members' explicit demands (Young and Cross 2002) and appear more transparent or uphold the image of a "mass" party (Hopkin 2001; Katz 2001; Lundell 2004; Mair 1994). Yet existing studies of party membership have found that greater inclusiveness does not always lead to a significant increase in membership or participation rates in primaries (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Scarrow 1994, 1999). The findings presented here also suggest that introducing internal democracy may not heighten participation among a party's key supporters. To better understand this dynamic, future work would benefit from examining party organizational changes over time, and their subsequent consequences for campaign participation and electoral success.

## Appendix: Parties included in the data\*

Country	Party	Ideology	Heterogeneity	Vote Share	In Government
Australia 2004	Labor Party	9.87	3.02	40.5	No
	Liberal Party	15.93	2.40	38.2	Yes
Belgium 2003	Christian Democratic and Flemish	12.32	1.64	13.2	No
	Flemish Social Democratic Party	6.63	2.26	7.5	Yes
	Flemish Liberals and Democrats	14.50	2.04	15.4	Yes
Canada 2006	Liberal Party	11.09	1.68	30.2	Yes
	New Democratic Party	4.93	2.10	17.5	No
	Quebec Bloc	7.20	2.63	10.5	Yes
Denmark 2005	Conservative People's Party	15.19	1.65	10.3	Yes
	Danish People's Party	15.31	3.04	13.2	No
	Liberal Party	15.08	2.13	29.0	Yes
	Social Democrats	7.58	1.45	25.9	No
Finland 2003	Agrarian Centrist Party	12.00	2.02	24.7	Yes
	Left Alliance	4.45	1.82	9.9	No
	National Coalition Party	15.58	1.70	18.5	No
	Social Democratic Party	8.39	2.50	22.9	Yes
Germany 2005	Christian Democratic Union	13.58	1.68	27.8	No
	Free Democratic Party	13.36	1.96	9.8	No
	The Greens	7.10	2.18	8.1	Yes
	The Left	3.55	2.12	8.7	No
	Social Democratic Party	8.36	1.81	34.2	Yes
Iceland 2003	Independence Party	16.25	1.54	33.7	Yes
	Progressive Party	12.75	1.71	17.7	Yes
	Social Democratic Alliance	8.75	2.26	31.0	No
Ireland 2002	Family of the Irish	12.74	1.96	22.4	No
	Labour Party	7.38	2.15	10.8	No
	Soldiers of Destiny	13.28	2.15	41.5	Yes
Italy 2006	Forward Italy	15.59	2.27	29.4	Yes
	National Alliance	16.94	1.51	12.0	Yes
Japan 2005	Democratic Party	11.59	2.78	31.0	No
	Liberal Democratic Party	15.81	2.51	38.2	Yes
	New Komeito Party	12.22	2.80	13.3	Yes
Netherlands 2003	Christian Democratic Appeal	13.57	1.43	28.6	Yes
	Labour Party	8.57	1.80	27.3	No
	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	16.33	1.83	17.9	Yes

New Zealand 2005	Labour Party	9.20	1.51	41.1	Yes
	National Party	14.60	1.50	39.1	No
Norway 2005	Conservatives	16.62	2.16	14.1	Yes
	Labor Party	7.90	1.79	32.7	No
	Progress Party	15.80	2.57	22.1	No
Portugal 2005	Social Democratic Party	13.86	1.62	28.8	Yes
	Socialist Party	8.67	1.46	45.0	No
Spain 2004	People's Party	16.99	2.13	38.3	Yes
	Socialist Workers' Party	8.20	1.72	43.3	No
Sweden 2002	Liberal People's Party	14.24	1.79	13.4	No
	Moderate Party	17.19	1.46	15.3	No
	Social Democratic Party	8.30	1.99	39.0	Yes
United Kingdom 2005	Conservative Party	16.39	1.81	32.3	No
	Labour Party	10.95	2.96	35.3	Yes
	Liberal Democrats	7.91	2.10	22.1	No

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\*Note: Each party's method of candidate selection will be included in the final version, but is not listed in this draft because I prefer to not make the data available until it is published.



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