

# Political Parties in a Comparative Perspective

## Candidate Selection

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## What we did last week...

- We discussed what cleavages are and how they are manifested in different parties
- ...and briefly considered how they change

## Plan for today

With today's session, we are already moving to the third (long) block of the seminar on parties' functions. We will discuss...

1. ...how parties can recruit their candidates
2. ...and which implications this has for different qualities of democracy

## Summary of last week's session

*Again, as a refresher: What were the key-takeaways from last week's session?*

## Social transformations

*Why do new cleavages arise?*

1. educational expansion
2. rising levels of migration
3. decline of the (White) working class
4. ageing societies
5. re-politicization of space (depletion of rural areas)

## Re-politicization of space

KCW: What do you think the University of Wisconsin-Madison does not do well? When you think about [it]. . . .

Martha: Represents our area. I mean we are like, we're strange to Madison. They want us to do everything for Madison's laws and the way they do things, but we totally live differently than the city people live. So they need to think more rural instead of all this city area.

Donna: We can't afford to educate our children like they can in the cities. Simple as that. Don't have the advantages.

Ethel: All the things they do, based on Madison and Milwaukee, never us.

Martha: Yeah, we don't have the advantages that they give their local people there, I think a lot of times. And it is probably because they don't understand how rural people live and what we deal with and our problems.

Figure: Focus groups with rural residents in the US (Walsh 2012, p. 523)

What does Walsh (2012) do in her study and what does it tell us about space as a cleavage? [Frieda, Kyro and Melanie]

## Why is candidate selection important?

*Which function does candidate selection fulfill for political parties?  
Is candidate selection the only example of this function?*

## Why is candidate selection important?

Candidate selection is one form of parties' recruitment function.

- there are other forms, e.g. recruitment of youth organizations
- “41 percent of all councillors indicated that they had started their political career in the youth organization of their party” (Hooghe, Stolle, and Stouthuysen 2004)



# The different forms of candidate selection

The candidate selection process usually differs on four dimensions:

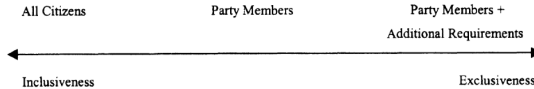
1. candidacy
2. selectorate
3. centralization
4. voting systems

## Group work

*Form four groups:* Discuss what the different dimensions of candidate selection mean and which variants exist.

	1	2	3	4
1	Ole Niklas	Aida	Kyro Joan	Luís
2	Richárd	Anastasia-Evgenia	Jordi	Robin
3	Madalena	Nils Wilhem Louis	Kennedi	Ava Eleonora
4	Pietro Marco Aurelio	Kim Noah	Fabian Frank	Parichehr
5	Clara Deirdre	Jan Niklas	Tetiana	Lotta
6	Vincent Leonardo	Melanie	Sophie	Gustav
7	Carolin Fiona	Paul	Lena	Mark Hyeon
8	Maximilian	Fedor Benedikt Georg Otto	Bjarne Lars	Lilli
9	Frieda Maja	Pia Charlotta	Frederike	Ada
10	Tiffany Maria	Finn	Bennet Mattheo	

# Candidacy



**Figure 1.** Candidacy

**Figure:** Continuum of regulations on candidacy

# Selectorate

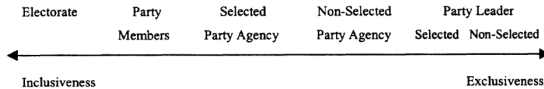


Figure 2. Party selectorates

Figure: Continuum of regulations on the selectorate

# Centralization

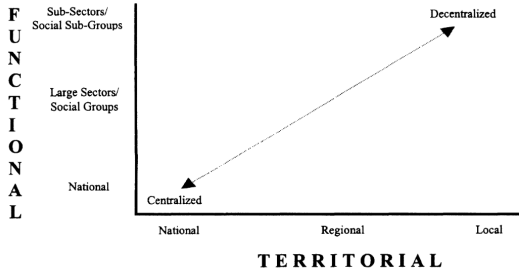


Figure: Two-dimensional space on centralization of candidate selection

# Voting systems

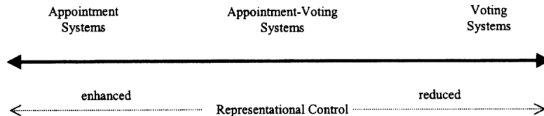


Figure 5. Candidate nomination and party representational control

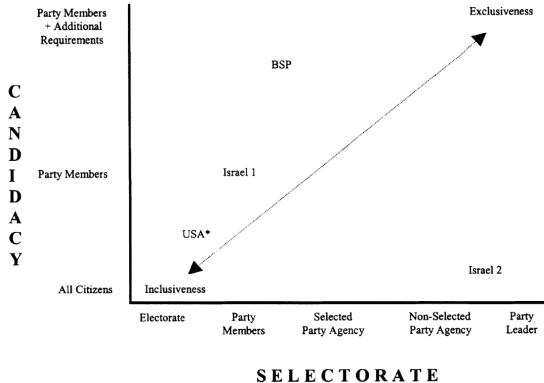
Figure: Voting systems in candidate selection

*How else do candidate selection processes differ?*

## Different types of candidate selection

1. uniform selection → each candidate faces same selection methods
2. mixed selection → candidates face different selection methods (e.g., depending on where they live)
3. multi-stage selection → candidate faces different stages in the selection process with different guidelines

# Democratization in candidate selection



**Figure:** Two-dimensional mapping of democratization of candidate selection process



## Democratization in candidate selection

*“Political parties, which are the functional bodies that operate in the democratic arena, should not become too internally democratic themselves.” – Rahat and Hazan (2001, p. 313)*

**Question by Fedor:** How does a “undemocratization” of parties fit in with the idea that parties themselves are at the base of a democracy?

**Question by Frieda:** Is the goal to strengthen parties or democracy?

## Democratization in candidate selection

There are four potential consequences democratization of parties' candidate selection has on various attributes:

1. Participation
2. Representation
3. Competition
4. Responsiveness
5. Separation of power
6. Party's organizational capacity

In your groups, discuss which set-up of candidate selection would produce the best outcomes on these dimensions.

## Implications of having an inclusive candidacy

- parties become more responsive/competitive and ensure participation if they allow more candidates to run
- however, if there are no hurdles at all to candidacy, they risk becoming undermined by non-partisans (and less effective)

**Question by Kennedy:** Would the four-dimensional framework yield different results if it were applied to different political regimes, such as two-party systems?

# Implications of having an inclusive selectorate

**Table 10.1.** The relationships within parties between participation, representation, competition, and responsiveness in four kinds of party selectorates

Selectorate	Participation	Representation	Competition	Responsiveness
Party elite	Low	High	Low	Party
Party delegates	Medium	Medium	High	Mainly party
Party members	High	Low	Medium	Party and nonparty
Voters	Highest	Lowest	Medium-low	More nonparty than party

**Figure:** Selectorate and four pillars of democracy (Hazan and Rahat 2010, p. 169)

## Implications of decentralization

There is a trade-off between different forms of decentralization:

- territorial decentralization may lead to better integration of local concerns (representation and responsiveness)
- but: territorial integration might hamper other forms of decentralization (like those of marginalized groups)
- more decentralization: less competition
- decentralization ensures better distribution of power but may slow down party organization
- social representation could lead to lower competition and more responsiveness towards social groups

## Implications of decentralization

**Question by Kyro and Pari:** If candidates fail to receive sufficient support from the selectorate to attain a higher position, do they truly deserve that seat? Is it fair?

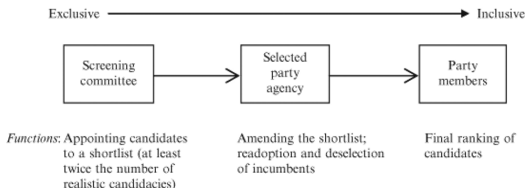
**Question by Paul:** How can decentralizing the selectorate hurt the inclusiveness of that selectorate?

## Implications of voting

- appointment ensures organizational capacity, better enables parties to ensure representation of marginalized groups
- voting system is more responsive and increases competition + participation

## A perfect system?

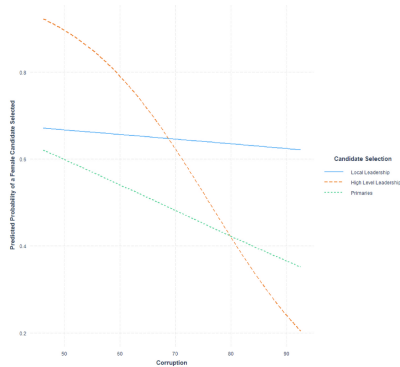
**Question by Vincent:** Shouldn't there be a way of democratizing the candidate selection process, without having to face a weakening/loss of party control and cohesion. A sort of middle-ground that still allows the members to have a say?



**Figure:** A multi-stage proposal by Hazan and Rahat (2010, p. 175)



## Other implications



**Figure:** Corruption, candidate selection and women's representation in Italy (Schwenk 2022, p. 8)

What does Schwenk (2022) do? What does she find? [Ada, Lena, Maximilian, Sophie, Vincent?]

## Data to use

If you are interested on party from within, two datasets could be of interest

1. **Political Party Database**: rich data on party's organizations, including rules of their candidate selection process
2. **V-Party**: data including information on party resources, organizational strengths and intra-party cohesion

## What we've done today...

- discussed how parties can select their candidates
- and what this might mean for democracies

## To prepare for next week...

- Next week is on 'Preference Aggregation and Articulation'
- Readings
  - **Main reading**
    1. **Hobolt SB and Vries CE** (2015) Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition. *Comparative Political Studies* **48** (9) (9), 1159–1185. ISSN: 0010-4140. DOI: [10.1177/0010414015575030](https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414015575030)
  - **Complementary reading**
    1. **Huber LM** (2022) Beyond Policy: The Use of Social Group Appeals in Party Communication. *Political Communication* **39** (3), 293–310. ISSN: 1058-4609, 1091-7675. DOI: [10.1080/10584609.2021.1998264](https://doi.org/10.1080/10584609.2021.1998264) → recommended for essay task

## To prepare for next week...

2. **Laver M** (2014) Measuring Policy Positions in Political Space. *Annual Review of Political Science* **17** (Volume 17, 2014), 207–223. ISSN: 1094-2939, 1545-1577. DOI: [10.1146/annurev-polisci-061413-041905](https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-061413-041905)
3. **De Sio L and Weber T** (2014) Issue Yield: A Model of Party Strategy in Multidimensional Space. *American Political Science Review* **108** (4), 870–885. ISSN: 0003-0554, 1537-5943. DOI: [10.1017/S0003055414000379](https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055414000379)
4. **Rohrschneider R and Whitefield S** (2009) Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems: Issue Position and Issue Salience in 13 Post-Communist Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies* **42** (2), 280–313. ISSN: 0010-4140. DOI: [10.1177/0010414008325285](https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414008325285) → recommended for essay task

## To prepare for next week...

5. **Thau M** (2019) How Political Parties Use Group-Based Appeals: Evidence from Britain 1964–2015. *Political Studies* 67 (1), 63–82. ISSN: 0032-3217, 1467-9248. DOI: [10.1177/0032321717744495](https://doi.org/10.1177/0032321717744495)
  6. **Erfort C** (2023) *Gendered Targeting: Do Parties Tailor Their Campaign Ads to Women?* DOI: [10.31219/osf.io/5vs9b](https://doi.org/10.31219/osf.io/5vs9b). URL: [https://osf.io/5vs9b\\_v1](https://osf.io/5vs9b_v1) (visited on 03/10/2025). Pre-published → recommended for essay task
- **Podcast** (complementary)
    1. **Abou-Chadi T** (2020) *Political Parties as Entrepreneurs*.

Thank you for your attention!  
Any further questions?

## Literature

-  **Abou-Chadi T** (2020) *Political Parties as Entrepreneurs*. 2020.
-  **De Sio L and Weber T** (2014) Issue Yield: A Model of Party Strategy in Multidimensional Space. *American Political Science Review* **108** (4), 870–885.
-  **Erfort C** (2023) *Gendered Targeting: Do Parties Tailor Their Campaign Ads to Women?* 2023. Pre-published.
-  **Hazan RY and Rahat G** (2010) *Democracy within Parties*. Oxford University Press, 2010.
-  **Hobolt SB and Vries CE** (2015) Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition. *Comparative Political Studies* **48** (9), 1159–1185.



## Literature

-  **Hooghe M, Stolle D, and Stouthuysen P (2004)** Head Start in Politics: The Recruitment Function of Youth Organizations of Political Parties in Belgium (Flanders). *Party Politics* **10** (2), 193–212.
-  **Huber LM (2022)** Beyond Policy: The Use of Social Group Appeals in Party Communication. *Political Communication* **39** (3), 293–310.
-  **Laver M (2014)** Measuring Policy Positions in Political Space. *Annual Review of Political Science* **17**, 207–223.
-  **Rahat G and Hazan RY (2001)** Candidate Selection Methods: An Analytical Framework. *Party Politics* **7** (3), 297–322.

## Literature



**Rohrschneider R and Whitefield S (2009)** Understanding Cleavages in Party Systems: Issue Position and Issue Salience in 13 Post-Communist Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies* **42** (2), 280–313.



**Schwenk J (2022)** Candidate Selection and Female Representation in the Context of High Corruption: The Case of Italy's 2014 Mayor Elections. *Electoral Studies* **79**, 102500.



**Thau M (2019)** How Political Parties Use Group-Based Appeals: Evidence from Britain 1964–2015. *Political Studies* **67** (1), 63–82.



**Walsh KC (2012)** Putting Inequality in Its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective. *American Political Science Review* **106** (3), 517–532.

# Primaries



Figure: Explanation of primaries and caucuses in the US by Britannica

## Cross-over voting

But in 10 days, for the first time in his life, Mr. Tenenbaum will cast a vote in a Republican presidential primary here. And like thousands of other Democrats and independents across South Carolina and the country who are transforming this year's presidential race, he will give that vote to Senator John McCain.

"It's not an easy thing for a yellow-dog Democratic like me to do," said Mr. Tenenbaum, vice president of a large steel company in Columbia, the state capital. "And I don't even agree with everything he stands for. But McCain has a moral compass, a real sense of maturity. He's the only one who seems to understand what this country is all about."

Mr. McCain has made great strides toward the Republican nomination because of the help -- even if short-lived -- of non-Republicans like Mr. Tenenbaum. In open-primary states like South Carolina, voters of any party can vote in a primary, and many experts estimate that 10 to 30 percent of the voters on Feb. 19 will cross over party lines. Even in closed primary states, like Massachusetts and California, many Democrats are switching their party affiliations, and officials attribute the shift to Mr. McCain.

Figure: Cross-over voting in the 2000 Republican Primaries, Source: [nyt.com](https://www.nytimes.com)