

**INSTITUTIONAL REGULATION OF INTERPARTY
PRE-ELECTORAL COORDINATION IN EUROPE: 1945-2018**

by
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**INSTITUTIONAL REGULATION OF INTERPARTY
PRE-ELECTORAL COORDINATION IN EUROPE: 1945-2018**

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ABSTRACT

INSTITUTIONAL REGULATION OF INTERPARTY PRE-ELECTORAL COORDINATION IN EUROPE: 1945-2018

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Keywords: electoral reform, pre-electoral alliances, party system fragmentation,
electoral volatility, democratic age

This dissertation examines changes in the formal institutional background of pre-electoral alliance formation. Building on an original dataset covering 27 European countries from 1945 to 2018, it investigates Why countries modify their electoral rules that govern pre-electoral alliance formation. It also conducts a single case study on Turkey to investigate Why parties exhibit preferences over a specific type of pre-electoral alliance over others. The dissertation focuses on the motivations of political parties for modifying electoral rules, specifically those governing pre-electoral alliances. Drawing from rational choice and historical institutionalism paradigms, the research explores factors such as party system fragmentation, electoral volatility, and democratic age. The empirical analyses demonstrate that while fragmentation within a party system doesn't directly predict changes, fragmentation within ideological clusters has a more significant impact, especially in the second largest party's cluster. The study also highlights the role of electoral volatility, indicating that it increases the likelihood of change in alliance rules, particularly towards restrictive changes. But when volatility occurs within the ideological cluster of the second largest party, permissive changes are more likely. The dissertation's contributions are twofold. Firstly, it presents a comprehensive comparative study of changes in rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation, shedding light on the motivations behind these changes. Secondly, it bridges the gap between the electoral reform and pre-electoral alliance literatures, offering insights into the intricate interplay between institutional design and political strategies.

ÖZET

AVRUPA'DA PARTİLER ARASI SEÇİM KOORDİNASYONUN KURUMSAL
DÜZENLEMESİ: 1945-2018

ZEYNEP ÖZGE İÇDIR

SİYASET BİLİMİ DOKTORA TEZİ, TEMMUZ 2023

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Anahtar Kelimeler: seçim reformu, seçim ittifakı, parti sisteminin parçalanması,
volatilité, demokratik yaş

Bu tez, seçim ittifakı oluşturunun resmi kurumsal arkaplanında meydana gelen deęişiklikleri incelemektedir. 1945-2018 yıllarını kapsayan orijinal bir veri setine dayanarak, bu çalışma, ülkelerin seçim ittifakı kurulmasını düzenleyen kuralları neden deęiştirdiğini araştırmaktadır. Ayrıca, Türkiye üzerine bir örnek olay incelemesi sunarak, partilerin neden belirli bir seçim ittifakı türünü diğerlerine tercih ettiklerini araştırmaktadır. Tez, siyasi partilerin seçim kurallarını, özellikle de seçim öncesi ittifakları düzenleyen kuralları deęiştirme motivasyonlarına odaklanmaktadır. Rasyonel tercih ve tarihsel kurumsalcılık paradigmalarından yararlanan araştırma, parti sistemi parçalanması, volatilité ve demokratik yaş gibi faktörleri incelemektedir. Ampirik analizler, parti sistemi içindeki parçalanmanın doğrudan deęişiklikleri öngörmediğini, ancak ideolojik kümeler içindeki parçalanmanın daha büyük bir etkisinin olduğunu, özellikle ikinci en büyük partinin ideolojik kümelesinde gerçekleşen parçalanmanın etkili olduğunu göstermektedir. Çalışma aynı zamanda volatilitenin rolünü vurgulamakta ve bunun özellikle kısıtlayıcı deęişiklik olasılığını artırdığını göstermektedir. Ancak seçim oynaklığı, ikinci en büyük partinin ideolojik kümesi içinde meydana geldiğinde, izin verici deęişiklikler daha olası hale gelmektedir. Tezin katkısı iki yönlüdür. İlk olarak, seçim ittifakı oluşturmaya düzenleyen kurallarda meydana gelen deęişiklikleri kapsamlı, karşılaştırmalı bir çalışmayla sunarak, bu deęişikliklerin arkasındaki motivasyonları aydınlatmaktadır. İkincisi, seçim reformu ve seçim ittifakı literatürleri arasındaki boşluğu kapatmakta ve kurumsal tasarım ile siyasi stratejiler arasındaki karmaşık etkileşimi anlamada içgörüler sunmaktadır.

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*To my lovely grandparents
Hadice and Müslüm*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Following a joint proposal by the incumbent AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi - Justice and Development Party) and its political ally MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi - Nationalist Action Party), on March 13, 2018, the Turkish Parliament (Turkish Grand National Assembly - TGNA) ratified a new law (Law No. 7102), which can be referred as a highly influential milestone in the realm of Turkish election legislation. The law brought about several pivotal amendments with far-reaching implications for the administration of elections and the regulation of political parties. Of these amendments, the most significant modification entailed the introduction of a novel article (Article 12), that allows political parties to form pre-electoral alliances in a specific form, known as *apparentement* in the literature. According to this law provision, political parties that meet the eligibility requirements for participation in elections are granted the opportunity to participate in elections by forming pre-electoral alliances, but they should publicly declare their alliance name beforehand and should register the name of the alliance to the Supreme Election Council (Yüksek Seçim Kurulu - YSK). In the ballot, both the parties' names as well as the alliance name take place separately. Voters have one vote, and they could either vote for the alliance or they could indicate their preference for a specific party in the alliance by sealing the designated area for the party. In the initial seat allocation step, alliances are treated as single parties if their vote total surpasses the 10 percent national threshold.

During the floor debates, the opposition parties, namely CHP (Cumhuriyetçi Halk Partisi - Republican People's Party) and HDP (Halkların Demokratik Partisi - People's Democratic Party) expressed strong criticism of the proposal. They advocated for the use of joint lists, or alternatively, not to allocate votes to parties if they are not specifically for a party as stipulated by the amendment. It is worth noting that the practice of joint candidate lists, whereby multiple political parties compete with a single list of candidates under a common alliance name, has been prohibited in Turkey since 1954. This prohibition was originally established by the incumbent DP (Demokrat Parti - Democrat Party) and has been retained by the subsequent

election laws in the country. On several occasions, mostly smaller opposition parties made proposals for abolishing the ban on joint lists but were not taken into consideration by the incumbent parties.¹

These empirical observations derived from the Turkish case raise several questions that require explanation. The first question that arises from the example outlined above is ‘Why do countries change their electoral rules that govern the formation of pre-electoral alliances’. Changing electoral rules necessitates two things: the presence of an incentive to initiate change and the ability to modify election law. We can therefore argue that the decision to change election rules reflects the goals and motivations of political actors who are powerful enough to change electoral rules. Therefore, an assessment of the reasons that account for the changes in the rules that regulate interparty electoral coordination provides valuable insights in terms of the dynamic relationship between the electoral system and the evolving goals and motivations of the political actors.

Another question that arises from the example outlined above is ‘Why do parties exhibit preferences over a specific type of pre-electoral alliance over others’. Understanding the rationale behind political parties’ preference of one, specific type of pre-electoral alliance over others provides valuable insights into their strategic calculations. Such an assessment, enables us to comprehend the dynamic nature of the pre-electoral alliance formation that encompasses various processes, such as bargaining, negotiation, and coalition or consensus building among alliance members. Understanding these processes is very crucial since they have significant implications for governance, policy-making, and the overall functioning of the political system. Moreover, studying preferences of political parties over specific types of pre-electoral alliances also provides valuable insights into the broader political context, including party ideologies, voter behavior, and electoral competition. Hence, it helps us grasp the complex interplay between party strategies, electoral rules, and the preferences of voters, thereby enhancing our understanding of electoral competition.

Therefore, the primary objective of this dissertation is to fill the gap in the current literature by providing comprehensive answers to the two research questions outlined above. Despite the outlined reasons for studying the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation, the existing body of literature has largely neglected this area of inquiry. The first field of study that we can look at for an explanation for how various pre-electoral alliance types influence electoral politics is the literature on pre-electoral alliances. This literature demonstrates that pre-electoral alliances of

¹This system was employed only during the 2018 elections when two apparentements participated in the elections. In 2022, the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances were once again modified.

political parties are not actually a rare phenomenon. A variety of them can be observed across different continents such as Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia. Parties form pre-electoral alliances prior to elections and focus on coordinating their pre-electoral strategies to enhance their electoral support. For instance, Golder (2006) has shown that in 47.8 percent of the 364 lower chamber elections held between 1946 and 2002 in the 23 advanced parliamentary democracies, at least one pre-electoral alliance contested. This prevalence of pre-electoral alliances has also been confirmed by more recent studies with a more heterogeneous sample of countries and elections. According to the *Comparative Studies of Electoral Systems Dataset (CSES)*, which provides time series cross-national information on electoral systems and parties running in the elections, at least one pre-electoral alliance was formed in 17 out of 41 lower chamber elections held between 2016 and 2021 (CSES 2022). Acknowledging the prevalence of pre-electoral alliances, the dominant focus of this literature is on (i) the factors that motivate parties to form pre-electoral alliances and (ii) the effects of pre-electoral alliances on different aspects of the political system, including political parties, coalition formation, and government stability.

The existing research, however, predominantly neglects the formal institutional background of pre-electoral alliances, which can lead to different forms depending on the political context and electoral system of a given country. These various forms of pre-electoral alliances are influenced by the overall electoral system and specific rules in place. Consequently, there is a lack of a clear definition or widely accepted classification of pre-electoral alliances in the literature, despite their frequent occurrences. To address this gap, this dissertation proposes a classification of pre-electoral alliances into two main categories: joint nominations and combined nominations. This classification is based on two principles: the number of candidate lists within an alliance and the level of political cost that different pre-electoral alliance types may impose on political parties. As outlined in Chapter 2, joint nominations require parties to withdraw their own candidates to support another party within the alliance. This necessitates extensive bargaining, negotiation, and consensus-building among the alliance members. The cost associated with these efforts is contingent upon each party's ability to convince its own supporters about the benefits derived from joining the alliance. Conversely, connected nominations do not necessitate such calculations, since alliance parties are not required to withdraw any candidacies. By employing this categorization, the thesis aims to provide a more nuanced understanding of the dynamic nature and diverse implications of pre-electoral alliances.

Furthermore, the classification of pre-electoral alliances based on their political costs offers valuable insights into the underlying motivations and preferences of political parties in selecting a type of pre-electoral coordination. This understanding becomes particularly crucial as political parties with significant influence in parliament can potentially modify the electoral regulations governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances. The above classification, therefore, provides valuable insights into the rationale behind parties' preferences for specific alliance types, taking into account the varying degrees of political costs associated with each. It allows us to grasp the strategic decision-making process of political parties and their considerations when navigating the formation of alliances within the existing legal framework. By examining the interplay between electoral laws, political parties, and pre-electoral alliance formation, the categorization employed in this thesis offers a comprehensive perspective that deepens our understanding of the complexities surrounding pre-electoral alliance formation. It sheds light on the strategic choices made by political parties, the dynamics of coalition building, and the implications for electoral outcomes and governance.

Another field of study that can provide explanations for changes in electoral rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation is the literature on electoral reform. This literature has widely been recognized as a mature field within political science (Lijphart 1985; Shugart 2005; Renwick 2018). Initially, the focus of this literature was on explaining the rarity of electoral reform until the 1990s. However, it has now shifted towards acknowledging that even seemingly minor changes in various electoral system features can have a substantial impact on electoral politics. While the recognition of these seemingly minor changes has provided valuable insights into formulating theoretical expectations regarding changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation, the field's maturity remains limited to certain aspects of electoral systems. There exist valuable case studies and monographs that explain why countries adopt specific rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. However, there is still a lack of systematic comparative studies that empirically test these propositions.

This dissertation aims to address this gap in two main ways. First, it expands the scope of electoral reform literature by specifically examining the changes in rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. By doing so, it contributes to expanding the understanding of the broader field of electoral reform. Secondly, this dissertation puts forward the first systematic comparative study that examines the changes in the rules related to pre-electoral alliance formation. By conducting a comprehensive empirical analysis of rule changes in 27 European countries between 1945 and 2018, this dissertation aims to provide a systematic and comparative analysis of these

changes, shedding light on the factors and dynamics that drive them. In summary, this dissertation seeks to offer new insights, knowledge, and empirical evidence to the literature on electoral reform and pre-electoral alliance formation, thereby filling a significant gap in the existing research. This contribution can enrich the broader literature on electoral reform by exploring the dynamic interplay between short-term electoral strategies of party politicians and institutional design.

1.1 Overview

Chapter 2 of this dissertation conducts a review of the existing literature on pre-electoral alliances, placing particular emphasis on understanding the diverse nature of different types of pre-electoral alliances. Based on this review, the chapter proposes a categorization framework that classifies pre-electoral alliances according to the criteria discussed above. The first category, joint nominations, refers to those pre-electoral alliances in which parties either run under a joint candidate list or field a joint candidate in a given electoral district. This category consists of two subcategories based on the electoral system utilized in a specific country: joint lists and nomination agreements. The former is typical to electoral systems that employ multi-member districts whereas the latter is used when the electoral system utilizes single-member districts.² The second category connected nominations is simply defined as the formal linking of several electoral candidate lists. This latter category includes inter-party apparentements which impose lower levels of political costs on parties since parties do not necessarily drop any candidates from their candidate lists. In the second part of this chapter, I briefly touch upon factors that encourage parties to form pre-electoral alliances in order to derive theoretical expectations for the hypotheses. The aim of this chapter is to provide a clearer understanding of the various forms of pre-electoral alliances, enabling a more nuanced analysis of these alliances within the electoral context.

Chapter 3 of the dissertation provides a critical review of the literature on electoral reform, with a particular focus on studies that treat electoral systems and their attributes as explanandum rather than explanans. The chapter begins by examining theories that explain the origins of electoral systems and the factors that drive changes in these systems. In Section, 3.1, the chapter conceptualizes electoral

²This dissertation specifically examines parliamentary elections, but it is worth mentioning that nomination agreements are also frequently employed in presidential elections.

reform, focusing particularly on minor changes. This section aims to provide an understanding of the nature and scope of electoral reform, specifically focusing on these smaller-scale alterations that occur within a given electoral system. Section 3.2 explores major theoretical approaches to institutional change, with a particular emphasis on how these approaches have been applied to the study of electoral reform and institutional regulation of pre-electoral alliance formation. Since these approaches do not specifically address this question, their benefits are limited to developing proximate theoretical expectations.

Chapter 4 presents a case study on Turkey. It examines changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation with a broader focus on the politics of electoral reform in Turkey. In addition to examining the two (successful) incidents of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination, the chapter also provides an in-depth analysis of failed attempts to bring about such changes. Furthermore, the case study examines the pre-electoral coordination attempts that occurred occasionally in the elections since the 1990s. Examining the nature of these coordination attempts that emerged in various elections, the chapter provides insights into the dynamic interplay between electoral rules and pre-electoral alliances. The chapter argues that changing rules that govern pre-electoral alliance formation is a short-sighted strategy applied by the incumbent parties with the specific aim of controlling actors' entrance to the party system.

Chapter 5 presents the conceptual framework of this dissertation. As outlined above, one of the research questions addressed in this dissertation is why and how governing parties modify the rules that govern interparty pre-electoral coordination. The existing literature falls short in adequately addressing changes in these rules as minor reforms, and as a result, it does not provide a satisfactory explanation. To fill this gap, this dissertation examines permissive and restrictive changes to the rules that govern the formation of pre-electoral alliances. The section 5.1 outlines the operationalization of the dependent variables: change and type of change. Change is defined as the changes in the election rules related to the formation of pre-electoral alliances. Building upon this, Section 5.2. introduced a novel conceptual framework that differentiates between two distinct types of change: permissive change and restrictive changes. Differentiating between permissive and restrictive changes provides us with a more nuanced assessment of the preferences of the political actors with enough power to implement a change.

Chapter 6 of this dissertation introduces hypotheses, data, and methodology employed in the study. Grounded in rational choice theory, this dissertation posits that political parties seek to maximize their seat share and, therefore express a preference

for electoral reform that aligns with this objective. The underlying assumption is that changes in the institutional regulation of pre-electoral coordination occur when the existing rules fail to effectively address the instabilities in the party system. Therefore, this dissertation investigates the effect of change in party system fragmentation and electoral volatility as the main independent variables in the study. It examines how these factors, both individually and collectively influence the likelihood of changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. Additionally, in order to provide a nuanced understanding of the direction of these changes, i.e. permissive vs restrictive, the study explores the distinct effects of party system fragmentation and electoral volatility within ideological clusters of the largest and 2nd largest parties. Section 6.1 presents the hypotheses of the dissertation, outlining the expected relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Section 6.2 details the case selection process and dataset construction, describing the empirical foundation of the analysis. The operationalization criteria for the independent variables are discussed in Section 6.3, while Section 6.4 explains the model-building process employed in the study.

Chapter 7 presents the findings of the dissertation. As outlined above the first question of the dissertation explores why countries change their electoral rules that regulate the formation of pre-electoral alliances. The dissertation proposes that political parties seek to maximize their seat share and, accordingly, incentives for reform arise from changes and instabilities within the party system that could signify potential seat losses. Parties change their rules governing pre-electoral alliances to adapt or address these changes. However, empirical analyses have shown that parties are more likely to change these rules to address the electoral volatility, rather than fragmentation in the party systems, suggesting that parties may be less proactive in changing rules without experiencing an actual vote loss. Moreover, the dissertation also proposes that parties do not uniformly respond to either party system fragmentation or electoral volatility. Empirical analyses have also shown that restrictive changes are more likely when fragmentation occurs within the largest opposition parties' ideological bloc. Restrictive changes are also more likely if new parties draw votes from a larger party's support base. Conversely, permissive changes are more likely if new parties draw votes from parties within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party.

Chapter 8, the concluding chapter of the dissertation, provides a summary and discussion of the findings, discusses the limitations of the dissertation, and outlines directions for future research.

2. PRE-ELECTORAL INTERPARTY COORDINATION

Pre-electoral alliances of political parties are quite common. A variety of them can be observed across different continents such as Europe, South America, Africa, and Asia. Parties form pre-electoral alliances, before an election and focus on coordinating their electoral strategies to enhance electoral outcomes. The nature of these alliances varies: In some countries, parties present joint candidate lists, in others, they withdraw from the elections in order to support another party's candidate. In some countries, party lists are linked and their votes are pooled. These diverse forms are also influenced by the electoral systems in general, and electoral rules in particular. These combinations result in various types of pre-electoral alliances. Despite the prevalence of pre-electoral alliances and their various manifestations, it is still difficult to find a clear definition or widely accepted classification of them in the literature.

However, understanding different types of pre-electoral alliances is crucial because the cost associated with an alliance can significantly influence parties' decisions to join an alliance. Also, such costs may also have an impact on parties' motivations to propose changes in the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances. To gain insights into the likelihood of changes in the institutional regulation of pre-electoral alliances, it is important to examine past research and analyze the dynamics of pre-electoral alliances. This chapter, therefore, aims to review the existing literature on pre-electoral interparty coordination in order to derive expectations about the likelihood that lead to changes in the institutional regulation of interparty pre-electoral coordination.

In doing so, this chapter, first of all, provides a review of the conceptualization and classification of interparty pre-electoral coordination. In the literature, various concepts have been used to refer to such coordination attempts. A review of them and the analytical differences between different conceptual preferences is crucial for conceptual clarity. Second, the chapter provides a review of the studies on the effects of electoral institutions on inter-party pre-electoral coordination. As we have also seen in the previous chapter, most of the studies in the field focus on the role

of various electoral system attributes in the formation of pre-electoral alliances. Focusing on various electoral system attributes, these studies aim to understand under what kind of electoral rules, the formation of electoral alliances is more (or less) likely to form. However, this relationship is not one-sided. The presence or lack of pre-electoral alliances has also influenced parties and party systems in a variety of ways. Therefore, the chapter also reviews scholarly research on the effects of interparty pre-electoral coordination on parties and party systems.

2.1 What Constitutes Pre-Electoral Interparty Coordination?

Despite the growing interest in the study of pre-electoral coordination among parties, it is still difficult to find a clear definition in the literature. Instead, scholars tend to provide definitions based on the analytical framework they choose to employ in their empirical research. As also pointed out by Nikolenyi (2014, 421) nearly a decade ago, it is still equally difficult to find a taxonomy or classification of different types or forms of pre-electoral interparty coordination. Political parties engage in pre-electoral coordination in various ways, necessitating further clarification to comprehend why specific forms of pre-electoral coordination are observed in some countries in specific time periods, while absent in others.

One analytical distinction in the literature is focusing on whether there is a formal commitment between parties to enter government together and whether parties present joint candidate lists or field joint candidates in the election. Golder's study on 'pre-electoral coalitions' is based on a dichotomy between "parties that compete independently at election time and parties that do not compete independently" (Golder 2006, 16). Building upon this dichotomy, she defines 'pre-electoral coalition' as "a collection of parties that do not compete independently in election, either because they publicly agree to coordinate their campaign, run joint lists or candidates, or enter government together following an election" (Golder 2006, 12). According to Golder's research, a total of 240 pre-electoral coalitions competed in elections between 1946 and 2002 across 23 Western European countries (Golder 2006).¹

Following this analytical distinction, other scholars offer narrower definitions

¹Golder introduces a classification at the beginning of her book but does not distinguish between pre-electoral alliances in her dataset. Those 240 pre-electoral alliances therefore also encompass those based on a public commitment to govern together which are not covered by this dissertation as they do not require any formal rules.

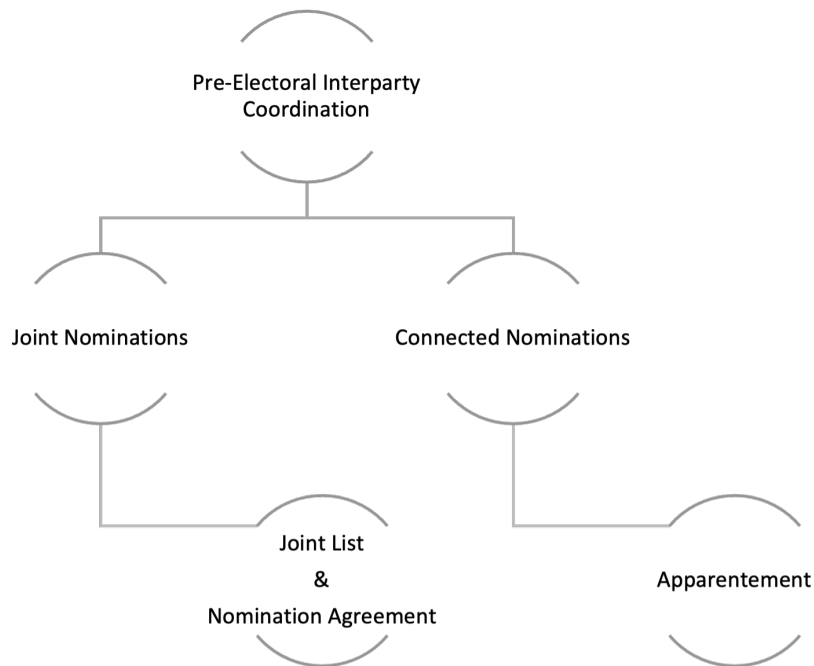
(Haugsgjerd Allern and Aylott 2009; Carroll and Cox 2007; Cox 1997; Nikolenyi 2014). In his seminal work, *Making Votes Count*, Cox (1997, 67) differentiates between explicit and tacit electoral coalitions, while the former “negotiated between party leaders”, the latter “worked out among voters through strategic voting”. Carroll and Cox (2007, 18) for instance, define an electoral coalition as a “formal commitment to govern together”, implying a connection between pre-electoral alliances and government coalition. It is important to, note, however, that government coalitions and pre-electoral coalitions are in fact different entities. Indeed, while it is common for alliance members to form government coalitions, it is important to note that this is not always the case.² Haugsgjerd Allern and Aylott (2009, 261) argue that Golder’s broader definition “blurs an important distinction between electoral and pre-electoral coalition”. The former, as noted by Strøm (1991), is typically designed to circumvent penalties imposed by many electoral systems on smaller parties, whereas the latter, as described by Rommetvedt (1991), refer to pre-electoral declarations or agreements regarding the formation of a coalition government after the upcoming election (Haugsgjerd Allern and Aylott 2009). Following a similar line, Nikolenyi (2014) implies a distinction between coalition and coordination: He disagrees with Golder in the sense that not all forms of coordination can be considered as an electoral coalition. Nikolenyi (2014, 46) states, instead, “for a coalition to be present, the contracting parties’ agreement to cooperate has to be credible”. He states that pre-electoral cooperations that do not have such credibility “are forms of electoral coordination but not electoral coalitions among parties per se” (Nikolenyi 2014, 47). Nikolenyi (Nikolenyi 2014, 45-46) defines ‘electoral coalition’ as “an organized and institutionalized form of electoral coordination among political parties that is made credible by the presentation of joint candidates, or lists of candidates, in the election.” Employing this definition as his criteria, Nikolenyi (2014) identifies 76 ‘electoral coalitions’ that competed in 53 elections between 1990 and 2010 in Post-Communist Europe.

²Studies examining the relationship between pre-electoral alliances and government coalitions consistently find a strong association between the two. For example, Golder (2006) discovered that 25 percent of the pre-electoral alliances in their study eventually transformed into government coalitions. Similarly, Strøm, Müller, and Bergman (2008) found that one-third of the government coalitions in their study were formed based on pre-electoral alliances. Chiru (2015) further supports this finding by demonstrating that pre-electoral alliances contribute to the survival and stability of government coalitions.

2.2 Types of Pre-Electoral Interparty Coordination

Pre-electoral alliances can be categorized in various ways depending on the chosen criteria. For instance, Golder (2006) distinguishes five types of pre-electoral coalitions based on the degree of political coordination among its members. In the following section, pre-electoral will be classified into two primary groups based on the number of candidate lists (or candidates in single-member district) within the alliance. As Figure 1 illustrates, the first category is referred to as joint nominations, while the second category is called connected nominations. Joint nominations encompass joint candidate lists and nomination agreements made by alliance parties to present joint candidates in single-member districts. On the other hand, connected nominations involve apparentements, which can simply be defined as the formal linking of separate candidate lists.

Figure 2.1 Categorizing pre-electoral interparty coordination



For the purpose of this thesis, the adopted categorization, which also incorporates Golder's pre-electoral alliance types, is a more effective classification tool for two reasons. The first reason why this categorization is more effective is that it reveals a clear contrast between the two alliance categories in terms of the political costs they impose on political parties. As outlined in the upcoming section, joint nominations require parties to withdraw their own candidates in favor of another party within the alliance. This necessitates extensive bargaining, negotiation, and consensus-building

among the alliance members. The cost associated with these efforts depends on each party's ability to convince its own supporters about the benefits derived from joining the alliance. Conversely, connected nominations, may not necessitate such calculations as alliance parties are not required to withdraw any candidacies. By employing this categorization, this dissertation aims to provide a clearer understanding of the differing dynamics and implications of pre-electoral alliances, shedding light on the complex processes of bargaining and decision-making within these alliances.

The second reason why this categorization is more effective lies in its ability to enhance our understanding of the complex relationship between electoral laws, parliamentary political parties, and the formation of electoral alliances. Through the classification of pre-electoral alliances according to their political costs, we gain insight into the motivations and preferences that drive political parties in their choice of pre-electoral alliance. This understanding becomes particularly crucial as political parties with significant influence in parliament can potentially modify the electoral regulations governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances. The above classification, therefore, provides valuable insights into the rationale behind parties' preferences for specific alliance types, taking into account the varying degrees of political costs associated with each. It allows us to grasp the strategic decision-making process of political parties and their considerations when navigating the formation of alliances within the existing legal framework. By delving into this interplay between electoral laws, political parties, and pre-electoral alliance formation, the categorization employed in this thesis offers a comprehensive perspective that deepens our understanding of the complexities surrounding pre-electoral alliance formation.

2.3 Joint Nominations

Joint nominations are referred to as a type of pre-electoral alliance in which parties either run under a joint candidate list or field a joint candidate in a given electoral district. Therefore, this category can be classified into two subcategories based on the electoral system utilized in a specific country: joint candidate lists and nomination agreements.

2.3.1 Joint Candidate Lists

Joint candidate lists are typical of electoral systems that employ multi-member constituencies. In the case of a joint candidate list, multiple political parties compete with a single list of candidates. Unlike party mergers, however, alliance members maintain their individual legal status, separate institutions, and autonomous budgets and select their candidates independently (Shapira 2022).

While my main interest in this thesis is to understand how countries make and change election rules regulating the formation of alliances it is also important to understand why parties decide to form such alliances. Joint lists are primarily formed due to electoral systems that favor large parties or make it difficult for small ones to be elected, such as a high electoral threshold, small constituencies, and formulas for allocating seats that benefit large lists like the D'hondt method. Examples include granting bonus seats to the largest list, as seen in the Italian parliamentary elections from 2006 to 2013 and giving the initial right to form a government to the head of the largest list, which occurs in Greece and Bulgaria (Shapira 2022). Scholars also argue that joint lists can attract more voters than separate parties because voters tend to choose larger lists (Kaminski, 2011). Additionally, an official union between parties can facilitate a "rebranding" of the new party, making it easier to appeal to a wider audience (Bélanger and Godbout 2010). Creating a joint list can also help parties save financial resources by operating only one campaign organization (Van De Wardt and Van Witteloostuijn 2021).

However, scholars also acknowledge the potential risks associated with joining a pre-election coalition. Contesting elections with a joint list or joint candidate entails considerable political costs for the involved parties, which is contingent upon factors such as the number of parties comprising the alliance and the degree of ideological affinity among the alliance members (Golder 2006). Joining a pre-electoral alliance also has the risk of eroding party brands and undermining party identity (Lupu 2014, 569):

“Party brands will also dilute when parties converge. As this happens, voters find themselves unable to distinguish one party brand from another. They may observe that different party brands are indistinguishable because elites from different parties support the same policies. Or they may see different parties entering into formal or informal alliances—signals that they are willing to agree on a political agenda.³⁸ Even when voters are certain about two-party brands, their substitutability means that voters fail to form strong attachments to either party.”

In the case of the joint nomination type of a pre-electoral alliance, each partner is required to engage in numerous negotiation processes, both within their respective party and in their affairs with the other parties in the alliance, as well as in their interactions with their own constituents. When two or more parties enter an election by forming a joint list, each partner is compelled to nominate a smaller number of candidates than they would if they were contesting the election independently. Having fewer nomination positions available may give rise to internal conflict and discontent within the party, particularly among members who are competing for a spot on the candidate list. The presence of ideological disparities among the member parties comprising the alliance can heighten the probability of internal conflict and discontent within the coalition.

Once a party leader has persuaded their party to join a pre-electoral alliance and contest the election with a joint list the subsequent step is to engage in a bargaining process with other parties in the alliance. In the case of a joint list, this process involves determining the composition the candidate list. This process can be particularly difficult in electoral systems that use closed candidate lists where voters cannot change the ranking of the list. Consequently, a candidate's ranking on the joint list is crucial to their likelihood of being elected. If an alliance party fails to secure a parliamentary seat in a given electoral district, this may be due to their candidate's ranking on the joint list. In order to mitigate this effect and minimize potential tensions, parties sometimes employ primaries. For instance, Kemahlioglu, Weitz-Shapiro, and Hirano (2009) find that pre-electoral alliances are more likely to use primaries in order to determine their candidates.

Moreover, in the case of electoral alliances presenting a joint candidate list, the individual votes cast for each party in the alliance cannot be distinguished. Consequently, after the election, the alliance parties are unable to determine the level of support they received from voters, thereby hindering their ability to evaluate their performance. This also removes the possibility of these parties receiving state support in countries where such support is allocated based on the percentage of votes received.

Despite the incentivizing effect of certain electoral system characteristics in encouraging the formation of joint candidate lists or political costs that discourage them, joint candidate lists are formed in some countries but not in others. According to the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)* dataset, at least one joint list contested in 13 of the 40 elections that were recently held across 36 countries (CSES 2022). Institutional regulation may explain this variation. The legal framework governing elections may act as a strong veto player, determining whether parties can

run under a joint candidate list. Requirements for running under a joint candidate list vary by country and electoral laws. While some countries allow joint candidate lists under the same rules as independent parties, others require additional criteria. Some countries explicitly prohibit joint candidate lists under election laws.

For example, joint candidate lists have been legally permitted and commonly used in Portugal since the adoption of a closed-list proportional representation system based on the d'Hondt method in 1975 (Freire 2017). Recently, the Portuguese Communist Party formed a joint candidate list with the small Green Party for the 2019 legislative elections (Jalali, Moniz, and Silva 2020). Since the late 1980s, these two parties have always run in alliance under the heading of the Unitarian Democratic Alliance (da Silva and Mendes). In the ballot papers, however, voters are presented solely with the party names written side by side and their respective logos. A sample ballot paper from the 2019 Portuguese elections can be seen in Appendix A. The Communist Party has been the major force in the alliance and therefore has the majority of places in the closed candidate list, however, the Green Party also has a significant presence. Notably, in the 2015 and 2019 elections, the Greens secured 2 parliamentary seats out of the 17 obtained by the alliance.³ In the parliament, the two parties appeared as distinct entities for official purposes. They maintain separate parliamentary groups and have divergent positions on certain issues.⁴ For instance, while the Communist Party advocates for the utilization of nuclear energy, the Greens take an opposing stance (van Haute 2016). In 2022, however, the alliance experienced a significant decrease in their vote share resulting in the Greens failing to secure any parliamentary seats (Lopes 2023).

Joint candidate lists are also quite common in Hungary, where the legal framework governing the conduct of elections permits multiple political parties to run with a joint candidate list. For example, in 2018 far-right Fidesz (Fidesz – Hungarian Civic Alliance) and the small KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party - Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt) run in the election under a joint candidate list. It is noteworthy that these two parties have contested in every election since 2006 under a joint list. On the left, MSZP (Hungarian Socialist Party - Magyar Szocialista Párt) and Párbeszéd (Dialogue – The Greens' Party - Párbeszéd – Zöldek), representing greens, collaborated by forming a joint candidate list for the election.

³<https://www.parlamento.pt/sites/EN/Parliament/Paginas/PreviousElectionResults.aspx>, Retrieved on 20.02.2023.

⁴Even though having a parliamentary group with only two MPs may sound odd, the Portuguese Parliament Rules of Procedure does not specify the number of MPs required for a parliamentary group. See Art. 6. https://www.parlamento.pt/sites/EN/Parliament/Documents/Rules_of_Procedure.pdf, Retrieved on 23.05.2023.

The ballot paper showed the logos and names of the parties participating in the election, with the MSZP-Párbeszéd alliance occupying the 9th position, while the Fidezs-KDNP list is ranked 13th. The top five candidates from each party/alliance are listed below their respective logos, with the first candidate being the prime minister if their party/alliance wins. Further information regarding each candidate and their respective party lists can be found on the website of the Nemzeti Választási Iroda (NVI), which serves as the supreme election board for Hungary. A sample ballot paper showing joint candidate lists is available in Appendix A.

Hungary's election law requires an electoral alliance to surpass the electoral threshold to win a seat. The threshold varies based on the number of parties in the alliance: 5 percent for individual parties and 10 percent for alliances of two parties, and 15 percent for alliances of three or more parties. This country uses a mixed electoral system with 106 seats assigned to single-member constituencies and 93 seats assigned proportionally based on the party's national vote share. Voters cast two votes: one for the candidate in their constituency, and another for their preferred political party using a separate ballot. The candidate with the most votes in a constituency wins according to the simple majority method.

Fidezs-KDNP won 133 out of 199 parliamentary seats in the 2018 elections. In 2020, the Orban government made several changes in the election laws based on the assumption that the opposition wouldn't be able to unite. These changes forced opposition parties to form alliances in both single-member districts and party lists. Six opposition parties with diverse ideologies formed a joint list called "United Hungary" with for the 2022 elections.

Like Hungary, joint candidate lists are also required to pass higher thresholds in Italy. In 2017 Italy introduced a mixed electoral system with a 10 percent national threshold for joint party lists and 3 percent for single party lists (Chiaramonte et al. 2018). In Lithuania, Slovakia, Romania, Czech Republic, and Poland, joint candidate lists also must meet higher thresholds (Nikolenyi 2014). In some other countries, parties are prohibited from contesting in elections with joint candidate lists. In Estonia, parties are not allowed to run under joint candidate lists since 1998 when the party system fragmentation reached extremely high levels leading to highly unstable governments (Nikolenyi 2014). Turkey is another country where presenting joint candidate lists is prohibited. In Turkey, political parties are not allowed to run under joint candidate lists since 1954. The ban was implemented because of the incumbent Democrat Party's intention to prevent opposition coordination in elections (Eroğul 2013).

2.3.2 Nomination Agreements

This form of coordination is typical of electoral systems that employ single-member constituencies. In the case of a nomination agreement, multiple political parties field a single candidate in a given electoral district (Cox 1997; Golder 2006). It is important to note that the incentives for forming pre-electoral alliances differ in single-member constituency elections compared to multi-member constituency elections. In single-member constituency elections, where only one candidate can occupy the office, the transferability of benefits among alliance members is limited (Shin 2019). Therefore, the formation of pre-electoral alliances in single-member constituency elections can be particularly more costly compared to presenting joint candidate lists in multi-member constituency elections. In the case of fielding a joint candidate, the negotiation process entails determining which party withdraws its candidate from each electoral district. Parties now confront the challenge of convincing their supporters to cast votes for a different political party. However, this is quite risky since supporters of separate parties may not support the pre-electoral coalition or the ideological compromises it entails (Blais and Indridason 2007). In systems like First-Past-the-Post (FPTP), where each seat is decided by plurality, fielding a joint candidate can result in a given district's only seat being handed to another party in the alliance (Shugart and Taagepera 2017).

This practice has previously been observed in France, the UK, Germany, Italy, and New Zealand (Golder 2006). In France, for instance, parties often opt to nominate a single candidate in each district before the first round of elections, or they agree to withdraw their respective candidates in favor of a coalition candidate prior to the second round of voting. An example of the former was seen in the 1981 legislative elections when the two mainstream right parties, UDF and RPR, agreed to put up a single candidate in 385 districts and choose to nominate a single candidate in each district before the 1st round of elections (Golder 2006). During the 1980s in the UK, the Liberal Party and the Social Democratic Party agreed to nominate a joint candidate by allocating the constituencies among each other (Golder 2006). In Germany, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and the German Party (DP) formed a pre-electoral alliance prior to the 1953 and 1957 elections. The Christian Democratic Union (CDU) agreed not to present candidates in constituencies where the German Party (DP) was strong in return for the DP's support of Konrad Adenauer as Chancellor. This pre-electoral alliance was crucial for the DP's survival in these elections (Golder 2006).

According to the *Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES)* dataset, at least one nomination agreement was contested in 13 of the 40 elections that were recently held across 36 countries (CSES 2022). For instance, in Hungary parties presenting joint candidate lists in multi-member districts in the 2018 and 2022 elections, also fielded joint candidates in the single-member districts. In Italy, following the adoption of a new mixed-member electoral system that allows both joint candidate lists and nomination agreements, major Italian parties grouped together into two competing pre-electoral cartels for the 2018 legislative elections, these same parties also presented joint candidate lists in the multi-member districts. Appendix A includes a sample ballot paper from the 2018 Italian elections, illustrating how parties, candidates, and their alliances are presented to the voters.

2.4 Connected Nominations

Haugsgjerd Allern and Aylott (2009) differentiate between different types of electoral coordination based on whether members of the alliance intend to form coalition governments if they win the elections. They categorize types of electoral coordination without such post-electoral commitments as technical arrangements rather than pre-electoral alliance. These arrangements are, primarily designed to protect smaller parties from being penalized by electoral systems that favor larger parties (or alliances of parties). Although they do not clearly express what they consider to be technical electoral coordination, the practice of *apparentements* may serve as an example of this type of arrangement between parties.

The French term, *Apparentement*, can simply be defined as the formal linking of several electoral candidate lists. The term *apparentement* is occasionally translated as ‘cartel’ (Harrop and Miller, 1987: 66 (Lijphart and Grofman 2007, 189; Caramani 2000, 3), ‘association’ (Newland 1982, 57), interparty connected lists’ (Lijphart 1994, 144), Surplus agreements (Hazan, Itzkovitch-Malka, and Rahat 2017, 598). But it has been also used in the literature as it is in French. In this type of pre-electoral coalition, as Lijphart explains in the clearest possible way, “the party candidate lists that belong to an *apparentement* appear separately on the ballot, and each voter would be able to vote for one list, but in the initial seat allocation, all the votes cast for the lists in the *apparentement* are counted as having been cast for the *apparentement*. The next step is the proportional distribution of the seats won by the *apparentement* to the individual party lists that belong to it” (Lijphart 1994).

Even though they sound similar, apparentements differ from joint lists in two ways. While the latter type of electoral alliance requires parties to run with a single joint candidate list, in apparentement each party keeps its own candidate list. Therefore, in the case of a joint list, there is only one single candidate list whereas there are several lists in apparentements, the number of which depends on the number of alliance members. Parties coordinating their electoral strategies in this way do not necessarily come up with a coalition protocol or a declaration of a joint platform as frequently observed when parties run with a joint candidate list (Pukelsheim and Leutgäb 2013, 123).

Rather than being a type of pre-electoral coordination, apparentements are commonly referred to as an electoral system feature, typically implemented to mitigate the penalties that smaller political parties may face under list proportional representation (PR) systems (Carstairs 2013; Lijphart 1994). Although initially puzzling, apparentements are a common feature in electoral systems in Western European countries, albeit exhibiting varying degrees of implementation across countries and time periods. Despite this variation, a recurring pattern seems to have emerged in the literature regarding the abolition of apparentements. This pattern suggests in most Western European countries, apparentements were typically abandoned after several years of implementation. When a voter cast a vote for an apparentement, their vote also benefits the other party within the apparentement that they may not actually support. As the democratic regime consolidates and the party system becomes institutionalized, therefore, the practice of apparentement is seen as detrimental to the fairness of elections due to its potential to diminish the transparency of elections.

In some countries, interparty apparentements were allowed following the adoption of PR (Austria, France, Germany, Norway, Switzerland, Sweden). In Austria, apparentement was permitted in 1919 following the adoption of PR based on the d'Hondt formula with multi-member districts but abolished in 1920 when a nationwide second tier was adopted (Caramani 2000). In France, the law of 1951 introduced apparentements and allowed “national parties, that is parties fielded candidate list in at least 30 constituencies, to pool their support in order to prevent ‘wasted’ votes (Caramani 2000; Vinen 2002). In 1958, France adopted a two-ballot majority system with single-member constituencies and therefore abolished apparentements (Caramani 2000). Following the adoption of a list proportional representation system in 1919 in Germany, the Weimar Republic permitted the use of apparentement agreements in the elections to the Reichstag until the republic’s collapse in 1933 (Caramani 2000). Scholars have argued that the electoral system of the Weimar Republic contributed to a high level of fragmentation within the party system. To

address this issue, apparentement was not adopted in the first post-war election law of 1949 in an attempt to discourage fragmentation (Caramani 2000; Kreuzer 2004; Zittel 2017).

In Norway, apparentements were introduced in 1930 with the efforts of socialist parties who felt threatened by the potential Labor majority. It was used until 1949 when the Labor succeeded in getting rid of it (Lijphart and Grofman 1984, 2007). Since the adoption of proportional representation with the D'Hondt method in 1911, Sweden permitted the use of apparentement agreements in elections until 1952, when the Sainte-Lague electoral formula was introduced as an alternative safeguard to protect the interests of smaller parties (Carstairs 2013; Lijphart and Grofman 2007). Switzerland has permitted the use of apparentement agreements in elections since the adoption of PR in 1919 (Caramani 2000), and it remains the only Western European country that currently employs this electoral system feature. Between 1924 and 1952, Sweden permitted inter-party apparentement agreements, which enabled lists from different parties in the same constituency to pool their votes (Caramani 2000). Apparentements were utilized by non-socialist parties to mitigate the underrepresentation of small parties that resulted from the implementation of the D'Hondt formula (Cox 1997). By allowing parties to pool their votes without the need for an actual merger, apparentements offered a viable solution to this problem (Cox 1997).

In some other Western European countries, apparentements have been permitted after more than one electoral cycle. In the Netherlands, the PR system was adopted in 1918 but apparentements of different parties were not permitted until the 1970s (Carstairs 2013; Lijphart and Grofman 2007). The introduction of apparentements in 1973 allowed different, mostly smaller parties to combine their lists for the distribution of remainder seats. This electoral system feature increased their chances of winning such seats (Jacobs 2017; Lijphart and Grofman 2007). Apparentements were abolished in the Netherlands after the 2017 general elections due to their detrimental effect on the operation of free and fair elections. The feature was found to be incompatible with the principles of proportional representation and therefore eliminated from the electoral system. This electoral system feature was no longer available after 2017. A sample ballot paper showing apparentements in the 2017 Netherlands elections is available in Appendix A.

Other than in Western Europe they have also been permitted in Israel, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Turkey. In Israel, the practice of apparentements is a bit different than in its Western European counterparts. While several lists in an apparentement are considered as a single list in the initial seat allocation, in Israel

lists are considered as a single list only in the stage of the distribution of remainder seats (Jacobs 2017). In Hungary, they have been permitted in 1992 but never used (Nikolenyi 2014). In Slovakia, apparentement parties are required to individually exceed the 7 percent threshold in order to be eligible for the distribution of apparentement votes. In Turkey, an apparentement provision was introduced to election law in 2018 for the initial seat allocation. However, in 2022 this principle has changed and total votes of an apparentement are used for only surpassing the 7 percent national threshold.

Carstairs (2013, 23) implies that apparentements were often associated with political opportunism because they “can lead to purely electoral alliances which do not reflect any real co-operation of the parties in the pursuit of common political ends”. Additionally, instead of promoting smaller political parties, apparentements could be used as a tool by some groups of parties against others with whom they have a hostile relationship. This has been seen in politicians’ preferences over the adoption of apparentements, such as in France in 1951, Italy in 1953, Poland in 1991, and Turkey in 2018 and in 2022. In France, Fourth Republic elections were held under a system of proportional representation with multi-seat constituencies. In the 1947 municipal elections, Gaullists (RPF- Rally of the French People) the Communists (PCF- French Communist Party) received significant support. This election had been interpreted as an expression of public opinion on national rather than local issues (D. M 1947). The 1947 municipal election results posed a threat to the Third Force, a coalition of centrist parties that held the parliamentary majority and opposed both the Gaullists and the Communists. As a result, they introduced apparentements for the 1951 parliamentary elections. The Paris region was a stronghold for both the Communists and the Gaullists during the 1947 municipal elections. As a result, the electoral law mandated that these constituencies would use a proportional representation system with the largest remainder method, which was advantageous for small parties. In areas outside the Paris region, apparentements were allowed in the French electoral system. This system permitted "national parties" (parties that fielded candidates in at least thirty constituencies) to form pre-election agreements with each other. If a single party or a group of parties united by an apparentement agreement won over 50 percent of the vote in a constituency, they took all the seats. In cases where a group of parties won together, the seats were divided among them proportionally to the votes each had received. If no party or group of parties won over 50 percent of the vote, the apparentement agreement still proved beneficial, as any party that failed to gain enough votes to elect a deputy would have their votes transferred to their allies (Vinen 2002).

In Italy, the legge truffa (swindle law) of 1953 could be counted as another example to the adoption of apparentements as a mechanism to prevent parliamentary representation of certain actors. In order to allocate the largest party (or coalition of parties) 380 of the 560 seats, the apparentement provision was introduced (Passarelli 2017, 852-853):

“This system was aimed to ensure a parliamentary majority. The Christian Democrats (DC) won an absolute majority of seats (53.1 percent in 1948) with 48.5 votes. This was the only election in which a single party obtained a parliamentary majority. Nevertheless, the DC’s decline in local elections and the fear of neo-fascist resurgence induced the ruling party to seek a system that would secure a stable majority. Eventually approved over the vehement opposition of the Communist and Socialist parties, the law stated that after the elections, 380 of the 590 seats in the chamber of deputies would be given to any alliance of parties that won over 50 percent of the votes (Katz 2001; Renwick 2010). The coalition was composed of 4 parties: the DC, the Social democrats (PSDI), the liberals (PLI), and the Republicans (PRI). The total score for the coalition parties was 49.2 percent with the DC being the dominant party (40.1 percent). However, this good performance was not sufficient for them to reach their goal. In fact, although they lacked only 204.742 votes to reach a majority and consequently the bonus of seats, the legge truffa did not come into operation. The law was repealed in 1954, restoring the 1948 system until the 1990s.”

In Poland, the 1991 electoral law allowed for apparentement, which enabled parties to combine their votes into a partisan ‘bloc,’ and seats were assigned based on the total combined vote. Adam Słomka, leader of the Confederation of Independent Poland (KPD), used this to introduce several small parties, which subtracted votes from similar competitors, and the KPN (his party) was rewarded with seven extra seats for absorbing these parties because other parties did not form apparentements (Kaminski 2018).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the existing body of literature on pre-electoral alliances, with a specific focus on understanding their diverse types. The literature has often overlooked the various forms that pre-electoral alliances can

take. For instance, while joint lists and apparentements are entirely distinct forms of pre-electoral coordination, they are sometimes used interchangeably in the literature, leading to confusion and misinterpretation of the specific nature of the coordination employed by different alliances. However, by recognizing the distinction between joint lists and apparentements, researchers can accurately analyze and understand the diversity of the coordination strategies employed by political parties. Building on this distinction, therefore, this dissertation contributes to a more precise and nuanced understanding of interparty pre-electoral coordination.

3. UNDERSTANDING ELECTORAL REFORM: ELECTORAL SYSTEM FEATURES AS DEPENDENT VARIABLES

Nearly four decades ago, Arendt Lijphart (1985, 3) stated that electoral systems research was “the most underdeveloped subject in political science”. In a more recent assessment, Shugart (2005, 50) revises that “in the span of less than twenty years, the field of comparative electoral systems research has gone from being ‘underdeveloped’ to being a mature field of study”. Shugart (2005), on the other hand, also acknowledges that this maturation is limited to one side of the phenomenon of interest: the consequences of electoral systems. Renwick (2018) notes that the current state of the field differs significantly from the one Shugart depicted a little more than two decades ago, but there are still numerous issues that have yet to be resolved. One of those issues is the scope of electoral system features. Despite the advancements in the field, the literature on the origins or modification of electoral systems remains limited in scope.

This chapter provides a critical review of the literature, focusing on studies that treat electoral systems (and their attributes) as explanandum rather than explanans. The subsequent sections examine theories that explain the origins of electoral systems and the factors driving change in these systems. Section 3.1 conceptualizes electoral reform, focusing on minor changes, namely electoral rule changes within a given system. Section 3.2 explores major theoretical approaches to institutional change, with a focus on how these approaches have been applied to the study of electoral reform and institutional regulation of pre-electoral alliance formation.

3.1 What is Electoral Reform? Expanding the Definition

Renwick (2018) defines electoral reform as the process of changing the rules that govern an election. Electoral systems encompass various rules, including electoral

formula, district magnitude, assembly size, and ballot structure among many others. Countries occasionally modify one or more of these electoral system features. Nevertheless, determining which changes to electoral system features qualify as electoral reform remains a subject of inquiry. For instance, do the transition from majoritarian to proportional systems or implementing a new election law that restricts parties' options for running with a joint candidate list both fall under the umbrella of electoral reform? The answers to these questions have evolved over time in response to the development of the literature on electoral system change.

Leyenaar and Hazan (2011) classified the literature on electoral reform into three distinct waves that correspond to studies on (i) electoral system stability (1960-1990s), (ii) major reform (1990s-2000s), (iii) changes within a system (mid2000s-). The initial wave of research was not much interested in explaining change. This is mainly because, in the 1960s and 1970s, not many Western democracies changed their electoral systems (Renwick 2018). It was believed that “fundamental changes [to electoral systems] are rare and arise only in extraordinary historical circumstances” (Nohlen 1984, 217). Studies in this wave aimed to categorize electoral systems into two broad types, i.e., majoritarian, and proportional (Leyenaar and Hazan 2011). The primary objectives of the studies in this wave -that were published before 1980s- were to examine the impact of these systems on political parties and party systems, particularly with regard to the size that emerges under each system. The research conducted in the second wave of electoral reform literature went beyond examining the impact of electoral systems solely on the party system. Instead, these studies focused on exploring the connection between electoral systems and other facets of politics, such as governance, representation, accountability, and participation. The objective was to analyze the broader implications of electoral system choices on political outcomes beyond their effects on party systems (Leyenaar and Hazan 2011).

The third wave of research on electoral reform challenges the idea that once an electoral system is established, it is unlikely to change unless triggered by a significant historical or political event or a systemic transition. This assumption was proven wrong due to the proliferation of electoral system changes in the 1990s, including in countries such as Italy, France, New Zealand, Japan, and newly emerging Eastern European democracies.

“New interest in electoral system change began to emerge in the 1990s. The main impetus was a wave of real-world reforms. France abandoned its two-round majoritarian system in favor of proportional representation for the election of 1986, only to revert back to majoritarianism in the

election that followed. Of more lasting importance, in the mid- 1990s, New Zealand moved from first past the post (FPTP) to a mixed-member form of proportional representation (MMP), Italy replaced a pure proportional system with a less proportional mixed-member system, and Japan adopted mixed-member rules in place of the system of single non-transferable vote” (Renwick 2018, 114).

This unexpected proliferation of electoral reforms resulted in a shift in the academic debate towards more comprehensive questions, as noted by Leyenaar and Hazan (2011) who state that the current wave of research has moved beyond traditional assumptions about electoral systems. The advancements in the field resulted in the adoption of a more inclusive formula of electoral reform. Earlier studies in the literature almost exclusively focus on what Katz (2005) defines as “major electoral reforms,” which involve a complete replacement of the electoral formulae of national electoral systems. Lijphart (1994) on the other hand adopts a more inclusive definition for major electoral reform, focusing on the degree of proportionality and includes any changes involving the electoral formula as well as any change of at least 20 percent in district magnitude, legal threshold, or assembly size. Changes in these characteristics occur less frequently than changes in others. Changes in other features of electoral systems are referred to as ‘minor’ in the literature (Lijphart 1994; Katz 2005). Jacobs and Leyenaar (2011) proposed an ordinal scale for major, minor, and technical reforms along five dimensions: proportionality, election level, inclusiveness, ballot structure, and election procedures, arguing that there is no substantive difference between major and minor reforms. The Electoral System Change in Europe Since 1945 project (Pilet et al. 2016) is an example of such a broader consideration of minor reforms. It includes information on electoral law changes in 30 European countries since the end of World War II. However, such attention to minor reforms remains rare, particularly in a comparative context. One exception to this would be the studies on gender quotas and youth quotas that are introduced to the electoral systems in order to enhance the political participation of women and youth (Belschner 2021; Belschner and Garcia de Paredes 2020; Celis and Erzeel 2013). There are no studies, however, focusing on the changes in the institutional regulation of pre-electoral alliances. The only notable exception to this has been Csaba Nikolenyi’s study on Post-Communist European countries (Nikolenyi 2014). In his book, Nikolenyi (2014) offers a qualitative assessment of electoral reform processes in six Eastern European countries and examines rule changes related to pre-electoral alliances. He argues that during democratic transitions, reformers introduced permissive pre-electoral alliance provisions in to address the high level of party system fragmentation inherited from the communist era. In order to encourage

parties to merge and institutionalize, permissive pre-electoral alliance rules permitting parties to run with a joint nomination were introduced by design. However, in countries where these rules failed to mitigate fragmentation, more restrictive rules were implemented to exclude smaller parties and fractions from the party system.

3.2 Theoretical Approaches Explaining Electoral Reform

Why do electoral systems change? When can electoral reform be effectively implemented? A review of the existing literature on institutional change offers valuable insights to initiate a theoretical discussion on electoral reform. This section presents two distinct perspectives regarding the rationale behind electoral system adoption and redesign. The first perspective views parties as self-interested entities seeking to maximize their future seat shares. The second approach highlights the significance of history in shaping electoral reform processes.

3.2.1 Rational Choice Explanations to Electoral Reform

According to rational choice theory, political actors are rational and self-interested individuals who make decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis. They seek to maximize their interests and achieve their goals in the most efficient and effective way possible. In this research tradition, institutions are viewed as systems of rules and incentives that shape and constrain behavior of the political actors. Rational choice explanations for electoral reform, therefore, assume that electoral system reform and stability are outcomes of the actions taken by political elites, who weigh the costs and benefits of existing electoral systems against alternative ones and favor those that maximize their self-interest in terms of seats, office, or policies (Rahat 2011). Benoit proposes one of the most parsimonious theories of electoral reform Benoit (2004, 363): “Electoral laws will change when a coalition of parties exist such that each party in the coalition expects to gain more seats under an alternative electoral institution, and that also has sufficient power to effect this alternative through fiat given the rules for changing electoral laws.” This theoretical explanation states two things: only those with enough power can make reform, even if they have enough power, they should be incentivized by an expectations of increased seat share.

Although rational choice theory is the most widely used approach for explaining electoral reform as the dependent variable, earlier studies predominantly emphasized stability rather than change. This is mainly because “the dominant political forces, that hold the key to change, have vested interests in preserving the conventions that enabled them, in the first place, to be the guarding of this key” (Rahat 2011, 525). In other words, political actors typically exhibit a tendency to resist efforts aimed at changing the rules of the game that facilitated their previous victories (Nohlen 1984). Consequently, the electoral system remains unchanged unless there is an exogenous shock that precipitates a change in the preferences of political actors (Benoit 2004; Lijphart 1994; Nohlen 1984).

Most of the earlier studies within this research tradition seek to explain the wholesale replacement of electoral systems, namely, the adoption of proportional representation systems in Europe. These studies suggest that electoral system choices reflect the preferences and strategic considerations of those in power. Their decision to reform (transition to PR) is seen as a response to the changes in the party system that resulted from an exogenous shock. The literature identifies two exogenous shocks to explain why political elites may initiate electoral reform: the protection of minorities and the expansion of universal suffrage (Colomer 2018; Rokkan 1968). Focusing on the relationship between electoral rules and representation, these earlier studies suggest that proportional representation systems are better at protecting minorities than majoritarian electoral systems (Rokkan 1968).

The minority protection thesis was challenged by the strong demand for proportionality in ethnically more homogeneous societies at the beginning of the 20th century, leading rational choice scholars to find the suffrage expansion more appealing (Colomer 2018). According to Lipset and Rokkan (1967), when confronted with suffrage expansion and the emergence of socialist working-class parties, established right wing parties in Europe switched from plurality systems to minimize their expected seat losses. In countries where the right had traditionally been fragmented due to religious and other non-economic cleavages, these established right parties feared of the possibility that a more unified left would be popular among newly enfranchised voter (Rokkan 2009). As a result, if a weak working-class party emerged on the left or if the established right parties failed to coordinate to change the electoral system, the plurality system remained unchanged. On the other hand, if the right divided by religious and other cleavages, proportional representation was adopted as a means of mitigating the socialist threat (Boix 1999). However, others argue that established parties did not react to newcomers, instead smaller parliamentary parties promoted PR to ensure their survival (Blais and Indridason 2007; Colomer 2005; Lijphart and Grofman 2007). In both cases, nevertheless, “the ex-

planation for the introduction of proportional representation lies in the self-interest of parties willing and able to depart from existing majoritarian rules” (Harfst 2013, 430). This is also evident in the early introduction of apparentements following the adoption of proportional representation in Western Europe.

The topic of institutional regulation pertaining to the formation of pre-electoral alliances, namely the rules within election laws that govern the formation of such alliances, is unquestionably an area that has received insufficient research attention. However, the existing literature on the adoption of PR in Europe indicates that the decision to allow or prohibit apparentements was influenced by the vested interests and cost-benefit assessment of the government parties. In Sweden for instance, the adoption of PR along with apparentements provision in 1909 was a defensive strategy by the Conservatives who had already lost the parliamentary majority in 1905 and felt further threatened by the expansion of suffrage. In late 19th century Sweden, societal pressure regarding the adoption of universal suffrage had gained significant strength and had become the primary ideological division between the conservative and liberal factions in the bicameral parliament. The process of electoral reform, resulting in the transition to a proportional representation system, commenced with the conservative party’s loss of parliamentary majority in the 1905 elections. Until that defeat, the conservatives, who had maintained their dominance under the bicameral system, recognized that their survival depended on conceding to the implementation of a proportional representation system, as they had already lost the majority in parliament. The leaders of the Conservative party were concerned that if general suffrage were implemented under a first-past-the-post system, their party’s influence in the lower chamber would be significantly diminished or even eliminated. In 1908 Conservative government put forward a bill proposing the adoption of proportional representation based on the d’Hondt formula with small-sized districts (3-7 seats per district), including the provision for apparentements. The other two parties, the Social Democrats and the Liberals accepted the proposal. Consequently, the proposal was enacted and came into effect in 1909 (Lijphart and Grofman 2007).

Prior to the 1952 elections, the ruling Social Democrat party proposed another bill to abolish apparentements. This was a move to assure the survival of its minor coalition partner, the rightist Agrarian Union (formed in 1917 as a merger of the two farmer parties). The political alliances of these two parties dated back to 1932 when Social Democrats came to power and formed a minority government. The parliamentary base of the minority government was secured by a pact with the Agrarian Union concerning economic policy during the Depression years. Prior to the 1952 elections, these two parties announced that they had agreed to form a coalition government if

they won the elections. However, the Agrarian Union faced a pre-electoral tactical challenge. In the previous elections, the party had formed *apparentements* with the parties on the right, the Conservatives and the People's Party, in order to counter the under-representation of the smaller parties caused by the D'Hondt method. However, forming an *apparentement* with these parties in the upcoming elections was seen as politically unfeasible. Therefore, the ruling Social Democrats looked for a mechanism to solve *apparentement* problems for their junior coalition partner, and a proposal for a new election system was presented to the Riksdag for implementation in the 1952 election. The coalition parties sought an election system that would allow the Agrarian Union to survive without an *apparentement*, while still providing favorable treatment for small parties. To achieve this, they replaced the D'Hondt formula with a modified version of the Sainte-Laguë formula. This modified formula promoted proportionality by reducing the comparison numbers of larger parties more rapidly during seat allocation, thus benefiting smaller parties.

More recent major electoral reform attempts in the past few decades have challenged the idea of the stability of electoral systems. Major electoral reforms as the wholesale replacement of electoral systems in established Western countries such as Israel, Italy, Japan, and New Zealand in the 1990s showed that even in the absence of exogenous shocks, electoral reforms have been implemented successfully (Katz 2005). The acknowledgment of frequent changes within a specific electoral system further challenged the idea of rare electoral reform. These developments expanded the definition of electoral reform, making the notion of solely wholesale replacement of an electoral system too narrow. Later studies focus on changes within a given electoral system such as changes in assembly size, electoral thresholds, district magnitude, ballot structure etc. The underlying idea is that these seemingly minor changes have also a significant impact on the seat allocation to political parties (Katz 2005). This renewed emphasis on within-system changes led to the emergence of a new terminology regarding the permissiveness (changes enhancing proportionality) or restrictiveness (changes reducing proportionality) of an electoral system (Lijphart and Grofman 1984; Shugart 1992). These studies argue that electoral reforms are designed to benefit incumbent parties whenever a substantial change occurs in the election law. Changes in the election laws are viewed as parties' response to volatility and fragmentation in the party system caused by the emergence of new parties or the decline of the established ones (Shugart 1992). According to Santucci (2018), the adoption of permissive reforms is viewed as a defensive strategy aimed at avoiding electoral losses, while the implementation of restrictive reforms is seen as an offensive strategy to secure additional seats.

In these studies, the presumed direction of causality suggests that changes or charac-

teristics within party systems have an impact on the probability of electoral reform. In other words, it is believed that the party system influences or drives the implementation of electoral reform, rather than electoral reform directly shaping the party system. This causal link is contrary to Duverger law which states that electoral reform (adoption of proportional representation or plurality/majority system) determines the number of parties in a party system, rather than the other way around. For instance, Grumm (1958, 375) argues that multipartism preceded the electoral reform: “the generally held conclusions regarding the causal relationship between electoral systems and party systems might well be revised . . . it may be more accurate to conclude that P.R. is a result rather than a cause of the party system in a given country.” Many scholars agree on the view that the direction of causality in the relationship between electoral reform and party systems aligns with this perspective (Bielasiak and Hulseay 2013; Colomer 2004, 2005; Harfst 2013; Issever-Ekinci 2023; Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017; Remmer 2008; Shugart 1992). However, these studies provide mixed results on the direction of electoral reform. Some scholars posit that restrictive electoral reforms are more likely to be adopted when party system fragmentation is low, whereas permissive reforms are favored when fragmentation is high (Colomer 2004, 2005; Remmer 2008; Shugart 1992). Others posit a contrasting explanation, suggesting that restrictive reforms are more likely when party system fragmentation is high, whereas permissive reforms are more likely when party system fragmentation is low (Harfst 2013; Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017; Shugart 1992).

The first group of studies views party system fragmentation as a source of uncertainty. With an increased number of parties competing in elections, existing parties become uncertain about their electoral strength. As competition intensifies, the parties’ primary objective becomes minimizing significant seat losses. This context provides incentives for parties to explore alternative electoral systems that may safeguard their electoral strengths and reduce electoral risk. This motivation leads parties to consider adopting permissive electoral reforms. Permissive electoral rules, characterized by proportional representation or other mechanisms allowing for greater representation of multiple parties, are believed to decrease the chances of devastating seat losses for existing parties (Colomer 2004, 2005; Remmer 2008; Shugart 1992). In contrast, when the level of fragmentation is low, parties tend to pursue restrictive reforms in order to solidify and maintain their electoral gains in a less competitive environment. Shugart (1992, 221-222) argues cost of making restrictive changes reduces for major parties under lower levels of party system fragmentation: “Electoral systems are made more feeble to accommodate an increasing number of parties in the system, rather than being made stronger to staunch such increasing fractionalization. By the same token, the results suggest that propor-

tional electoral systems are made stronger when the fractionalization of the system is declining anyway, in other words, when political costs to the big parties of doing so are lessened. Such a dynamic may account for why, for example, Israeli parties have been finding it so difficult to agree on electoral reform to undercut somewhat the power of the minor parties (Brichta, 1990). At a time when both big blocs (Labour and Likud) have been losing votes (meaning increasing rather than decreasing N), the risks of alienating or even eliminating from parliament a crucial coalition partner are too great to undertake reform towards a stronger system, however 'rational' such a reform might appear to be from the standpoint of seat maximization for large parties”.

The second group of scholars presents a contrasting viewpoint, suggesting that electoral reform can actually counteract the prevailing trends within party systems (Shugart 1992; Harfst 2013; Nunez et al. 2017). In this perspective, restrictive reforms are more likely in situations of high party system fragmentation, while permissive reforms are favored when party system fragmentation is low (Shugart 1992). Scholars in this group argue that highly fragmented electoral systems are associated with challenges in governance, as it becomes increasingly difficult to form stable governments, pass legislation, and implement policies when small parties possess significant veto power within the parliament (Harfst 2013). On the other hand, permissive electoral reforms are considered more likely to be implemented when party fragmentation is reduced, potentially enhancing governability and decision-making processes. Within this school of thought, electoral volatility is perceived as a driving force that compels politicians to adapt to shifts in voter allegiance, the emergence of new parties, and the disappearance of existing ones by modifying institutions to ensure their continued viability. Nunez et al. (2017) argue that the emergence of new parties challenges the privileged position of established parties and creates an incentive to prevent new competitors from entering the parliament. Consequently, when there is a high level of volatility resulting from shifts in voting towards new parties, restrictive reforms become more likely, as existing parties can behave like a cartel and adopt such reforms to exclude the new entrants (Nunez et al. 2017). This strategic behavior aims to protect the dominance and power of established parties in the face of emerging competition (Sebők, Horváth, and M. Balázs 2019, 383).

The mixed empirical findings in these studies can be attributed to several factors. First of all, these studies focus on different regions such as Western Europe (Shugart, 1992; Nunez et. al), Latin America (Remmer 2008), and Central and Eastern Europe (Bielasiak and Hulsey 2013; Nunez et. al 2017) which have distinct political dynamics and historical trajectories. Numerous scholars highlight the importance of existing electoral institutions in affecting the electoral reform decision since the

uncertainty faced by both voters and parties is different depending on the initial electoral rule (Blais, Dobrzynska, and Indridason 2005). Secondly, their methodologies differ in terms of data sources, sample sizes, analytical approaches, and measurement decisions. For instance, Nunez and Jacobs (2016) state that most existing statistical analyses focus on factors that facilitate electoral reform but there are many reform debates that result in failure. These failed reforms are, indeed, an important part of the process (Bol 2016; Issever-Ekinci 2023; Levick 2017; Rahat and Hazan 2011). Their omission from the empirical analyses risks missing a substantial part in which politicians had incentives to change the electoral system. For a complete analysis of the party preferences, the inclusion of unsuccessful reforms is needed so that a relevant comparative base in the empirical analyses is achieved: cases where the government initiated an electoral reform and where they did not. Moreover, their preferences for measuring explanatory variables may lead to inconclusive results. The dominant approach is to measure party system fragmentation using ENEP/ENPP. However, İşsever-Ekinci argues that fragmentation in the major parties' own ideological clusters provides a better explanation in terms of the direction of the electoral reform. She finds that "ruling parties are more likely to initiate restrictive reform when small parties draw votes from their electoral base, but a permissive one when small parties draw more votes from their main competitor" (İssever-Ekinci 2023).

I believe that rational choice offers a powerful perspective for analyzing the changes in the rules regulating pre-electoral alliance formation. This theoretical approach emphasizes the rational decision-making of political actors who strategically assess the cost and benefits associated with different pre-electoral alliance rules. When it comes to rule changes in the regulation of pre-electoral alliance formation, rational choice provides insights into the incentives behind these adjustments. Political actors carefully evaluate the impact of rules that regulate the formation of pre-electoral alliances on their electoral prospects, coalition-building strategies, and overall political power. They consider factors such as the electoral potential for gaining or losing votes, the influence of rival parties, and the alignment of policy objectives.

Following the literature, one can suggest that ruling parties are more likely to initiate restrictive changes in the rules regulating the formation of pecs when they perceive that small parties are drawing votes from their electoral base. By implementing stricter rules, the ruling parties aim to limit the ability of smaller parties to undermine their electoral support and maintain their dominance. On the other hand, ruling parties may opt for permissive reforms when they observe that small parties are drawing more votes from their competitor. In this scenario, the ruling party seeks to weaken its opponent's electoral coalition by facilitating alliances and

cooperation among smaller parties. In sum, rational choice offers a comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding the decision-making processes behind rule changes in pre-electoral alliance regulations. By examining strategic calculations and the vested interests of political actors, this approach sheds light on why and how parties modify these rules.

I also believe that initial institutional structure plays a crucial role in governing parties' decisions to make permissive and restrictive changes in the rules regulating party formation. Existing institutions establish certain constraints and opportunities that affect the choices made by political actors. For instance, if the initial institutional structure promotes a competitive party system and has the most flexible rules for pre-electoral alliance formation, we cannot expect parties to make permissive rule changes. In contrast, if the existing rules are already the most restrictive, we cannot expect restrictive rule changes. Therefore, historical legacies and existing formal rules and informal norms should be taken into consideration while assessing the direction of rule changes in pre-electoral alliance regulation. To further explore these aspects, I will examine explanations offered by historical institutionalism in the next subsection.

3.2.2 Historical Institutional Explanations to Electoral Reform

Historical institutionalism has also been a popular approach to studying the dynamics of electoral system change (Levick 2017). Embedded within the broader framework of new institutionalism, historical institutionalism explores how temporal processes and events shape the origins and transformations of institutions that govern political and economic relations (Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016). By examining historical contexts, it seeks to identify the influential paths and events that have shaped the development of these institutions. Moreover, historical institutionalism emphasizes that initial decisions over institutional preferences tend to have long-lasting effects, determining the trajectory of future institutional development (Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016). Historical institutionalists differentiate themselves from both rational choice and sociological institutionalists. As Adcock and colleagues posit, they do so by placing a strong emphasis on the idea that the motives and actions of actors are influenced by socio-historical institutional settings (James 2016). Additionally, historical institutionalists prioritize power as a central concern in their analysis, which distinguishes them from sociological institutionalists (James 2016).

Like rational choice institutionalism, earlier studies in the tradition of historical institutionalism focused primarily on explaining stability, rather than change. Earlier studies on the origins of electoral systems are widely cited as being pioneers of this research tradition. For instance, Fioretos and colleagues (2016) state that Collier and Collier developed the concept of critical juncture by drawing on Lipset and Rokkan (1967) and Rokkan (1970). Collier and Collier (1991, 29) define critical juncture “as a period of significant change, which typically occurs in distinct ways in different countries, and which is hypothesized to produce distinct legacies”. They argue that unlike other historical causes, critical junctures generate legacies that can continue to shape political outcomes without the need for the recurring presence of originating causes. Critical junctures are seen as the starting point for path-dependent processes, which means that the choices made during these pivotal moments can set the trajectory for future developments (Cappocia (Capoccia and Kelemen 2007; Fioretos, Falleti, and Sheingate 2016)and Kelemen 2011; Fiorestos et. al. 2016).

Historical institutionalism characterizes institutions “by relatively long periods of path-dependent institutional stability that are punctuated occasionally brief phases of institutional flux-referred to as critical junctures-during which more dramatic change is possible (Cappocia and Kelemen 2011). According to Cappocia and Kelemen (2011, 341) “the causal logic behind such argument emphasizes the lasting impact of choices made during those critical junctures in history. These choices close off alternative options and lead to the establishment of institutions that generate self-reinforcing-path-dependent processes. [...] junctures are ‘critical’ because they place institutional arrangements on paths or trajectories, which are then very difficult to alter”. The long periods of stability. Path dependencies, therefore, are thought to be so resilient that change can only occur during critical junctures.

The electoral reform wave of the 1990s, which shook the discipline (Norris 2011), resulted in scholars looking for explanations for these reform incidents that occurred in the absence of an exogenous shock. A huge number of scholars adopted a more historical view and benefited from the concept of historical institutionalism to explain major reform in the context of normal politics. In order to explain this discrepancy, later studies gave attention to historical context, emphasizing that existing institutions condition the nature and limitation of institutional change. With this renewed focus, this research tradition has started to be called “historical comparative approach”. (Streeck and Thelen 2005, 8), argues that “far-reaching change can be accomplished through the accumulation of small, often seemingly insignificant adjustments which creates tipping points” (p. 8). They argue that change can therefore be endogenous to institutions as it “can emanate from inherent ambigu-

ties and ‘gaps’ that exist by design or emerge over time between formal institutions and their actual implementation or enforcement” (Streeck and Thelen 2005, 19). In order to explain this gradual transformative changes (Mahoney and Thelen 2009, 16-18) (2009, 16-18) develop four types of institutional change: displacement, layering, drift, and conversion.

They suggest that these different types of change arise from an interplay between three key factors: the agent seeking change, their discretionary power/ability in interpreting and enforcing existing rules, and the relative influence or power of other veto players (Mahoney and Thelen 2009, 2015). By understanding these dynamics, researchers can analyze and explain the mechanisms behind different forms of institutional change over time. (i) Displacement refers to a replacement of existing rules with new ones. Few veto possibilities and low levels of discretion in interpreting or enforcing existing rules led to displacement. (ii) Layering refers to the process of adding new rules or institutions alongside existing ones, resulting in a more complex institutional framework. This type of change occurs when agents seeking change have low-level discretion in interpreting and enforcing existing institutions and they face strong veto possibilities. (iii) Drift occurs when the outcomes of the rules gradually change over time, even though the rules themselves remain unchanged. This could be due to shifts in societal expectations, informal practices, or evolving interpretations of the rules. This type of change requires strong veto possibilities and high levels of discretionary power. (iv) Conversion, finally, refers to a type of gradual institutional change where the existing rules remain intact, but their interpretation and application undergo substantial transformations. While this approach has not been widely used in the literature of electoral system change there are some very recent examples. For example, by using the process-tracing method McKay (2022) provides an example of the application of layering and conversion types of gradual changes by providing an example from New Zealand’s two-stage referendums on electoral reform:

“In the 1980s, New Zealand faced increasing demands for electoral system reform motivated in part by 1979 and 1981 elections held under the existing FPTP. Both the Labour Party and National Party promised a referendum in the 1990 election campaign. National party won the 1990 elections. The party opposed MMP. National Party’s referendum promise had been “vague”, and as a result the government enjoyed considerable discretion in the design of referendum process. Having just won a majority of seats in a unicameral legislative system, National Party faced weak veto possibilities. National party thus acted as an opportunist change-agent that sought to avoid the costs of avoiding a referendum by reinterpreting the existing rules to their advantage. The

result was a process of conversion in which National Party altered the meaning of referendum as an institution. Rather than a single vote on two or three choices, they designed a two-stage process. The first referendum was nonbinding and featured two questions. The first question asked voters whether they wanted to retain FPTP or change the electoral system. The second question asked voters to choose their preferred alternative voting system from a list of four: MMP, SM, STV, Alternative Vote. The winning option for the second question was to be placed on the ballot against FPTP in the second, binding referendum. This referendum was widely seen as an attempt by National Party government to reduce the odds that MMP win. The first question on the first referendum provided a possible advantage to the government since a vote for FPTP would lead the government to abandon plans for the second, binding referendum, while a vote for change would give FPTP a second chance to prevail. The provisions of four alternative systems allowed National Party to include options that they perceived as less harmful to their electoral prospects while potentially splitting pro-reform vote. Ultimately, a majority of voters in both referendums preferred MMP and National Party found itself in opposition for nearly a decade, a period in which it repeatedly promised another referendum on electoral reform.

In 2008, many National party politicians, perceiving MMP as barrier to electoral success, decided to schedule another referendum. However, available options for the National Party were limited by the precedent set by the previous referendum on the same issue as well as strong veto possibilities. As they knew that upcoming election held under MMP and electoral reform was not supported by the public. As a result, the government was left to act as a subversive change-agent that had an interest in changing the existing referendum process but had to minimize their open pursuit of this goal. As a result, National Party adopted a strategy of layering. First, they added a requirement that MMP be reviewed if it won in the referendum, correctly anticipating that it could later ignore any resulting recommendations. Second, National promised that if MMP lost, there would be a second referendum held at the next election, in which voters could choose to retain the winning system and return to MMP. ”.

Process tracing method has also been used by other scholars who seek to explain electoral system changes in different times and countries (Renwick 2009; Kruzer, 2009). For instance, Renwick (2009) provides another analysis for the 1990 electoral reform in New Zealand. Kruzer (Kreuzer 2009) employs process tracing to explain the adoption of proportional representation in 1953 in Germany. Ong (2018) explores the conditions through which the opposition initiates successful electoral reform in undemocratic contexts against authoritarian regimes. Building on a comparison of electoral reform incidents in Malaysia, Singapore, and Cambodia, she shows that

public understanding of electoral manipulation is vital for the success of the electoral reform initiated by the opposition. Others, adopt a historical comparative approach (Renwick 2010, 2011; Pilon 2013) to explain electoral system change.

3.3 Hypotheses

The following two subsections propose hypotheses of this dissertation based on rational choice explanations of reform and historical institutionalism.

3.3.1 Rational Choice

In this dissertation, I employ the rational choice framework, which suggests that political parties seek to maximize their seat share and express a preference for electoral reform accordingly. However, the extent of this preference for altering electoral rules depends on the presence of an incentive to initiate change and the ability to modify the election law. Such an incentive arises from the significant changes within the party system, which may pose a potential threat of future seat loss. Consequently, parties may seek to alter the existing electoral rules as a means of adapting to or addressing these changes in the party system. However, implementing electoral reform also requires a sufficient parliamentary majority. Therefore, parties who seek a change in the election law should control enough numbers of seats in parliament that is needed to implement electoral reform.¹

Party System Fragmentation

Following the assumptions above, I believe that changes in the institutional regulation of pre-electoral coordination have resulted when existing rules have failed to reduce the level of party system fragmentation which can lead to challenges such as unstable coalition governments or limitations in the effectiveness of the legislative process. Hence, I propose the following hypothesis:

¹Given that this dissertation concentrates on successful reform proposals that have overcome all barriers and entered into force, it is reasonable to assume that the electoral rule changes of interest in this dissertation reflect the preferences of parliamentary parties capable of making and changing laws.

H1: Effective number of parties increases the probability of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination.

However, we should acknowledge that changes or realignments in the party system may not affect all parties in the same way. A high level of party system fragmentation may signal an increasing number and weight of small parties, which may lead to vote transfers from the larger and more established parties (i.e. the largest incumbent and the largest opposition party) to smaller ones. Whether and how parties respond to instabilities in the party system, therefore, depends on whether these new or small parties draw votes from their vote base. In order to consider modifying the electoral system, therefore, it is crucial for the incumbent parties to anticipate which parties will lose votes to smaller ones. In this scenario, the emergence of small parties that share a similar ideological orientation with the incumbent party may signal future vote shifts towards small parties if the existing rules are maintained. This is primarily because fragmentation or proliferation in the number of parties close to the incumbent party's ideology may significantly increase the degree of competition in this ideological bloc. Under the current electoral rules, this heightened competition may result in future vote shifts towards these small and new parties while decreasing the seat potential of the incumbent party. In such a context, the incumbent party may have incentives to respond to these realignments in the party system through institutional means, such as initiating a change in the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances.

According to the scenario outlined above, incumbent parties are not expected to opt for a permissive reform since permissive rules would enable small parties to enter the parliament and consequently reduce the legislative power of the incumbent party. Alternatively, however, incumbent parties might view fragmentation within their ideological bloc as an opportunity to attract a broader range of voters by forming electoral alliances with smaller parties in their ideological cluster. In this context, incumbent parties may consider implementing permissive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation, aiming to increase its overall political appeal and legislative power. Based on these considerations, I propose the following hypothesis:

H2: Effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster increases the probability of permissive change.

As outlined above, permissive changes are likely to increase the number of small parties. This type of reform would also serve to weaken an already fragmented opposition bloc. For instance, in Italy, one of the goals of the center-right coalition over the 2005 electoral reform, which allows parties to run with a joint candidate

list, was to make the center-left coalition more dependent on smaller pre-electoral alliance partners (Renwick 2010). Therefore, incumbents might opt for permissive changes to prevent the consolidation of the opposition by increasing the degree of competition in the opposition party's ideological cluster. But this would be a risky decision and likely to backfire if the incumbent bloc is too fragmented. Therefore, adopting permissive rules would only be a good strategy if the opposition bloc is more fragmented than the incumbent block.

Occasionally, the fragmentation within the opposition bloc may also motivate the governing parties to opt for restrictive changes in the rules in governing pre-electoral coordination. Modifications of this nature can occur in the party system is characterized by what Cox (1997) refers to as lopsided bipolarity. In the case of a lopsided bipolar party system, two major parties dominate the political landscape, but their electoral supports are unevenly distributed. The stronger party typically enjoys a more stable pre-electoral alliance, while the weaker party struggles to find allies and therefore fails to gain substantial support. If this situation changes turns against the incumbent party (or coalition), implementing restrictive rules for pre-electoral alliance formation would be a reasonable option for the incumbents. The situations in Slovakia in 1998 and Romania in 2000 are examples of lopsided bipolarity (Nikolenyi 2014). In both cases, the ruling coalition (the HZDS and its allies in Slovakia and the Democratic Convention and its allies in Romania) confronted a fragmented opposition that was in the process of coordination to present a joint nomination against the incumbents in the upcoming elections. To prevent the opposition's coordination attempt, the government in both countries implemented a restrictive electoral reform that raised the threshold for pre-electoral alliances. As demonstrated in the previous chapter, a similar, yet more severe attempt to hinder opposition coordination was observed in Turkey in 1954 when the incumbent DP banned political parties run with a joint candidate list. Hence, I propose the following hypothesis:

H3: Effective number of parties in the 2nd largest parties' ideological cluster increases the probability of restrictive change.

Electoral Volatility

The existing instabilities within the party system, regardless of their underlying causes, combined with the proliferation of electoral and parliamentary parties, often require parties to make prospective cost-benefit evaluations. However, parties may lack this long-term vision to proactively modify electoral rules as a means to avoid

potential vote loss. It is when their concerns become the reality that parties are more likely to take action. In other words, when parties already experienced other parties drawing votes from their support base, they respond accordingly. Hence, electoral volatility, defined as the “net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers [from one election to another]” (Pedersen 1979, 3), may serve as a stronger indicator (than party system fragmentation) for predicting changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

The effect of volatility on electoral reform remains a subject of contention in the existing literature. One group of studies suggests that volatility reduces the likelihood of electoral reform. According to these studies, higher levels of volatility are associated with increased uncertainty and create challenges for political parties in anticipating electoral reform outcomes. Since reforms would lead to unintended consequences, it is hard to predict or foresee their effects accurately. Therefore, parties should avoid adding even more uncertainty by changing the rules of the game (Mainwaring and Zoco 2007; Renwick 2010). The second group of studies suggests that electoral volatility “undermines the effectiveness of parties’ strategic behavior” (Andrews and Jackman 2005, 66). According to these studies, increased levels of electoral volatility make electoral outcomes less predictable and create ambiguity regarding the party’s strategic interests. Hence, parties only develop clear vested interests that prevent them from changing the rules by which they were elected when the party system remains stable. In the presence of volatility, which erodes information, therefore, parties may attempt to restore stability by modifying the electoral system (Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017).

Several empirical studies support that electoral volatility has a significant impact on the likelihood of electoral reform. Remmer (2008) examines the case of Latin America between 1978 and 2002 and finds a positive relationship between electoral volatility and the probability of electoral reform. According to her, increased volatility undermines the ability of incumbents to develop and implement rational strategies, thus prompting the need for electoral reform. Similarly, Bedock (2016) also shows that volatility as a source of uncertainty triggers electoral reform. Núñez, Simón, and Pilet (2017) contribute to this group of studies by providing further information about the direction of electoral reform under high levels of electoral volatility. Following these studies, I suggest the following hypothesis:

H4: Electoral volatility increases the probability of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination.

Nevertheless, as in the case of party system fragmentation, we cannot simply assume that all parties are affected by electoral volatility in the same way. Earlier studies

demonstrate that how voters express their discontent towards parties in the ballot may vary. Some voters may support the main opposition party whereas others may vote for new parties. Acknowledging this variation is crucial in terms of an assessment of the effect of volatility on electoral reform. Earlier studies have explored differentiated effects of various volatility types (Nunez and Jacobs 2016; Bértoa, Deegan-Krause, and Haughton 2017), which contributes to formulating propositions regarding the relationship between volatility and the change in the rules governing PEC formation. For instance, Núñez, Simón, and Pilet (2017) distinguish between two types of volatility: old-party and new-party volatility. They find that when volatility favors new parties, meaning that these parties attract votes from established parties' support bases, it disrupts the party system equilibrium and increases the likelihood of electoral reform. Conversely, when volatility benefits other established parties, the likelihood of electoral reform decreases (Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017).

Building on the reasoning presented in the preceding section on party system fragmentation, I believe that parties do not uniformly respond to either total or new party volatility. I believe that governing parties are less likely to make restrictive changes if parties are influenced by volatility are in the opposition cluster. Similarly, if new parties draw votes from their vote base, governing parties are more likely to make restrictive changes in order to prevent further vote losses towards smaller or newer parties in their own ideological cluster. Therefore, I put forth the following hypotheses:

H5: Volatility towards new parties in the largest party's ideological cluster increases the probability of restrictive change.

H6: Volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest opposition party's ideological cluster increases the probability of permissive change.

Disproportionality

How do governing parties, respond to the fragmentation of the party system in terms of proportionality? Predicting the response of governing parties to an increased number of parties in terms of proportionality of the electoral system is a challenging task. It remains uncertain whether they would be more inclined to pursue greater proportionality, or conversely, to raise thresholds in order to mitigate the impact of newcomers. However, we can confidently argue that governing parties, who have already won under the existing electoral rules, are less likely to implement reforms that enhance the proportionality of the electoral system. We can also reasonably

argue that these governing parties may be more motivated to pursue such reforms if they anticipate that the existing disproportionality could potentially result in their electoral defeat.

The existing body of literature on the adoption of proportional representation in Europe provides support for this latter proposition by demonstrating that governing parties adopted proportional representation as a strategic response to ensure their political survival in response to instabilities in the party system triggered by the expansion of suffrage. The key here is the level of uncertainty resulting from electoral volatility. Riera (2013:23) argues that a willingness to make the system more proportional exceptionally goes hand in hand with contexts of high volatility. Parties face the overwhelming challenge of guaranteeing their own survival and the difficulties of doing this in highly volatile contexts. Therefore, they may follow a maximin approach, which minimizes their risk of losing the status quo situation (Renwick 2010, 56-57). Therefore I believe that under such circumstances they either do not make any changes and if they do they opt for permissive changes.

H7: Under high levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility increases the probability of permissive change.

However, in response to an increase in the number or relative strength of the new or smaller parties, established parties may also prefer to make restrictive changes by raising electoral thresholds or incorporating majoritarian elements such as smaller district magnitudes that limit the influence of these parties. This proposition is supported by Bielasiak (2006, 421), who studied electoral reform in Eastern European countries, argues:

“These reforms conform to the fact that the extensive fragmentation and volatility of party systems in many former communist states create pressures to trim the permissive nature of the formula by imposing constraints through other procedures. This trend is especially evident in threshold and assembly size reforms that restrict access.”

Furthermore, such reforms can be implemented as efficiency measures aimed at reducing party system fragmentation and facilitating the coalition bargaining process Riera (2013, 272). From a self-interested perspective, restrictive electoral reforms can be seen as a manifestation of parties' self-preservation strategies aimed at maintaining a predictable pattern of competition safeguarding their electoral credibility (Mair 2002, 99). Therefore, if established parties perceive a threat from newcomers, they are more likely to favor restrictive reforms.

3.3.2 Permissiveness, Path Dependency, and Institutional Consolidation

The second group of hypotheses explores the role of institutional consolidation and path dependency on the likelihood of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination. As it is outlined in the literature review chapter, path dependency refers to the idea that choices and decisions made in the past shape and constrain future developments. In the context of electoral reform, path dependency suggests that the existing electoral system and its historical development play a significant role in shaping the possibilities and constraints for reform. According to path dependency, the initial choice of an electoral system often becomes deeply embedded in a country's culture and institutions. Over time, this system may become seen as the norm, making it difficult to introduce significant changes. The existing electoral system, therefore, may have become institutionalized, making it resistant to reform. Additionally, existing electoral systems and electoral rules create vested interests and coalitions that benefit from its continuation. Political parties and other actors may have been already benefiting from the current system, and they may resist reforms that could potentially undermine their positions. Following these considerations, I propose the following hypotheses:

H8: Established democracies are less likely to change the election rules that regulate how parties coordinate their pre-electoral strategies.

But if change occurs, I expect them to be towards more restrictive rules, rather than towards more permissive rules. Therefore, I put forth the following hypothesis:

H9: Age of democracy increases the probability of restrictive change in the rules governing inter-party pre-electoral coordination.

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented a literature review of rational choice and historical institutionalism in order to derive theoretical expectations for the hypotheses of the study. Rational choice theory suggests that electoral actors seek to maximize their interests and achieve their goals in the most efficient and effective way possible. Rational choice theory views institutions as systems of rules and incentives that shape and constrain behavior of the political actors. Explanations for incidences

of electoral reform, therefore, assume that electoral system reform and stability are outcomes of the actions taken by political elites, who weigh the costs and benefits of existing electoral systems against alternative ones and favor those that maximize their self-interest in terms of seats, office, or policies. Historical institutionalism has emerged as another valuable approach for studying the dynamics of electoral system change. By examining historical contexts and their influence on the initial adoption of electoral over time, this approach emphasizes the lasting effects of initial decisions and the role of critical junctures in shaping future institutional development. This dissertation draws upon both of these approaches in order to address the research questions. the second part of the chapter, therefore, presents the hypotheses of the dissertation.

4. INSTITUTIONAL REGULATION OF PRE-ELECTORAL COORDINATION IN TURKEY

This section presents a case study on institutional regulation of interparty pre-electoral coordination in Turkey with a broader focus on the politics of electoral reform.

Turkey made its transition to multiparty elections in 1946, and to democracy in 1950 with free competition and turnover. Since then, electoral laws in Turkey have undergone four substantial changes, each introducing a distinct electoral system that combined elements of its predecessor while also introducing new electoral system features. Additionally, these four laws have gone through numerous amendments, which have not replaced the fundamentals of the electoral system but have left significant imprints on the overall political system.

The current electoral law in Turkey, Law No. 2839 - *Milletvekili Seçimi Kanunu*, was enacted in 1983, following the 1980 military coup. Since its implementation, this law has undergone numerous changes, primarily in the form of amendments, which did not alter its fundamental principles but had significant implications for the country's political system. One of the most recent modifications occurred on 13 March 2018, with the introduction of Law No. 7102. This amendment introduced several modifications to the election law, including the institutional regulation of electoral coordination between political parties. One of the provisions of the amendment allows political parties to coordinate their pre-electoral strategies through alliances in the form of *apparentement* (Article 12). This means that parties would form pre-electoral alliances while maintaining separate candidate lists on the ballot. The amendment was interesting in the sense that while introducing a novel type of pre-electoral interparty coordination, it maintains the ban on joint lists (Article 16), a practice that was previously permitted until 1954. The new electoral system with *apparentements* was first implemented in the 2018 elections, which were the first elections following Turkey's transition to a presidential system in 2017.

On 31 March 2022, the Turkish parliament ratified another law, Law No. 7393,

which made several changes to the election law. First of all, the law lowered the 10 percent nationwide threshold to 7 percent (Article 1). The 10 percent threshold was first adopted in 1983 by the military as a precaution against fragmentation among parliamentary parties which lead to unstable coalition governments. Since 1983, however, it has been the most controversial electoral system attribute in Turkey most often blamed for the higher levels of disproportionality of the system. Since its adoption, 41 proposals were made to lower or abolish it once and for all.¹ However, none of these proposals were taken into serious consideration until the initiative came from members of the incumbent alliance, AKP, and MHP, in 2022. Another change was made on the apparentement provision. The amendment abolished the rule of considering the total votes of the alliance during the initial allocation of parliamentary seats (Article 2).

This section aims to assess these laws; minor and major changes in them, with a particular focus on the articles about the institutional regulation of electoral coordination between political parties. Through this assessment, this chapter also pays special attention to the following features of the changes in the laws: Who asked for the change in the law? Who had the power to change the law? What were the motivations and justifications of the actors for the change? How did other political actors respond to the change?

This section argues that disproportionality, ideological polarization, party system fragmentation, and volatility (especially towards newcomers in the party system) are important in explaining various experiences regarding minor and major changes in the electoral laws of Turkey. Whereas major changes (introduction of new electoral laws) were made by mostly undemocratic actors with the intention of designing an electoral system that is able to deliver particular goals such as achieving a parliamentary majority in 1950² proportionality in 1961, and parliamentary majority in 1982; minor changes such as changing the institutional regulation of interparty electoral coordination were, mainly initiated and even forced by the incumbent parties. These minor changes aimed to curtail the influence of specific opposition figures who were perceived as a hindrance to attaining or maintaining a parliamentary majority. With very few exceptions, this seems to be the pattern for minor changes in electoral laws in Turkey. These changes are mainly initiated and even forced by the incumbent parties and are aimed at reducing the influence of specific opposition figures perceived as a hindrance to attaining or maintaining a parliamentary majority.

¹ Author's calculation based on parliamentary minutes.

² While retaining the majoritarian system, the 1950 electoral reform introduced democratic means such as the adoption of secret ballot open counting principle and judicial supervision. These changes classify it as a major reform.

4.1 Electoral Systems in Turkey

The Turkish Republic was established in 1923, and the first election law of the Republican era was enacted in 1942. This law, which primarily retained the majoritarian electoral system established in 1908 after the second enactment of the Ottoman Constitution, underwent only minor modifications until 1946 when it was replaced with a new law. The 1942 law was only employed for the 1943 elections, which marked the end of the single-party era.

Following a failed attempt in 1946, Turkey made its transition to multiparty democracy in 1950. This transition was initiated by the adoption of a new electoral law that maintained the majoritarian electoral system while abolishing indirect elections. Following the 1960 military coup, a new election law was introduced, leading to the adoption of proportional representation. The 1961 election law was amended several times until the 1980 military coup. In the aftermath of the coup, another election law was ratified, maintaining the PR system but with a 10 percent nationwide electoral threshold. Since then, several electoral reform incidences took place, with the most recent change occurring in 2022. The latest reform included a reduction of the electoral threshold to 7 percent.

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the electoral systems used in Turkey between 1946 and 2023.³ This table reveals that, due to amendments made to the election laws, Turkey has witnessed eight different electoral systems during this period. The 2023 elections introduced yet another system following the recent lowering of the electoral threshold in 2022. The fifth column in Table 4.1 illustrates the increase in the number of political parties participating in elections between 1946 and 2023. However, this proliferation does not always reflect a bottom-up demand for a new political movement. Rather, many of these political parties were founded as splinter parties including the very first opposition party in the history of the multiparty democracy in Turkey. In most cases, these splinter parties have minor ideological and grammatical differences compared to the parties they were split.

³Information about the years between 1950 and 2015 is adapted from Cop (2017, 70-71); Information about 2018 and 2023 is collected by the author.

Table 4.1 Electoral systems in Turkey, 1946 - 2023

Election Year	Electoral System	Number of Districts	Assembly Size	Number of Electoral Parties	Number of Parliamentary Parties	Type of Government
1946	Multimember district - Plurality	63	465	2	2	Single Party
1950	Multimember district - Plurality	63	487	3	3	Single Party
1954	Multimember district - Plurality	64	541	4	3	Single Party
1957	Multimember district - Plurality	67	610	4	4	Single Party
1961	D'hondt with District Threshold	67	450	4	4	Coalition
1965	D'hondt with National Remainder	67	450	6	6	Single Party
1969	D'hondt with No Threshold	67	450	8	8	Single Party
1973	D'hondt with No Threshold	67	450	8	7	Coalition
1977	D'hondt with No Threshold	67	450	8	6	Coalition
1983	D'hondt with Double Threshold (10% National Threshold + District Threshold)	83	400	3	3	Single Party
1987	D'hondt with Double Threshold (10% National Threshold + District Threshold) and Quota	104	450	7	3	Single Party
1991	D'hondt with Double Threshold (10% National Threshold + District Threshold) and Quota	107	450	6	5	Coalition
1995	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	83	550	12	5	Coalition
1999	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	84	550	20	5	Coalition
2002	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	85	550	18	2	Single Party
2007	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	85	550	14	3	Single Party
2011	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	85	550	15	3	Single Party
June 2015	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	85	550	20	4	Provisional
November 2015	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	85	550	16	4	Single Party
2018	D'hondt with 10% National Threshold	87	600	8	6	Single Party
2023	D'hondt with 7% National Threshold	87	600	33	15	Single Party

4.2 The 1950 Electoral Reform

In 1946, Turkey conducted its first competitive, albeit limited, elections as part of an ongoing democratization process initiated by the Republican People's Party (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi, CHP) which had maintained a single-party rule for 23 years. However, these elections were unfair due to the absence of two crucial principles necessary for democratic elections: open ballot secret counting and impartial observers. The competition was also constrained because, among several others, only one party managed to gain approval from the CHP to be established. Instead of evolving from popular support, the Democrat Party (Demokrat Parti, DP) emerged through the formation of a dissident group within the CHP, following a long-standing tradition in Turkish politics where parties created directly within the parliament rather than through grassroots development (Karpaz 1959, 151). Most of the political parties in Turkey have been formed through what Duverger refers to as "internal party" formation through which cadre parties are established (Duverger 1959). Unlike mass parties, cadre parties emerge from within the existing party system. These parties are typically established by party professionals who decided to split their parties due to ideological differences, conflicts over leadership, or discontent with the party's management.

According to the 1942 law, elections were indirect. There was no guarantee for electoral security either. The DP immediately forced the CHP to change the election law to adopt direct elections along with arrangements to secure elections. The CHP's response to the DP's demand indicated the former's efforts to keep the democratization process under its control. Approaching the end of the legislative term, the CHP government proposed two bills to make changes in the electoral legislation. First, the government changed the municipal elections law in a hurry and decided to hold snap municipal elections. According to the 1942 law, electoral councils consisted of mayors and councilors. Therefore, winning municipal elections would mean having supremacy over electoral councils and therefore better monitoring elections (Eroğul 2013). By holding early municipal elections, the CHP also calculated that the DP either would not participate in the elections or it would participate in a limited number of constituencies since the party did not complete organizing its local branches yet. Thus, the earlier the municipal elections would be, the greater number of electoral councils would be headed by the CHP municipalities in the upcoming parliamentary elections (Eroğul, 2013). As anticipated by the CHP, DP did not participate in the 1946 local elections which resulted in the former's electoral victory (Eroğul, 2013; Temür, 2022).

The second government bill proposed changes in the rules governing parliamentary elections. It proposed abolishing indirect elections but not adopting any principle that guarantees the security of the elections. One of the opposition MPs, Adnan Menderes, also criticized the government for their decision to retain the majoritarian system which gave no chance for the smaller parties (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi, 31.05.1946, 248). The CHP government enacted the bill without any efforts to reach a consensus on the controversial issues and called for early parliamentary elections. The undemocratic 1946 election results were a huge disappointment to the opposition. The DP had nominated 273 candidates for 465 deputyships, but only 62 of them were elected, yet it was clear that the DP had much greater support than that (Eroğul 2013, 23). After the elections, the DP increased their pressure on the CHP to make them change the election law and replace it with a democratic one.

Before the 1950 elections, CHP and DP cooperated on the adoption of a more democratic election law that would promote free and fair elections (Karpat, 1959, 237). In 1949, the CHP government authorized a council of experts consisting of judges, university professors, and representatives of bar associations for drafting the new law (Ülman 1957). As in the case of the 1946 electoral reform, some proposals suggesting the adoption of the PR system were made to the Council. However, these proposals were rejected by the governmentally appointed Council on the grounds that “as of 1949 party programs were not clearly identifiable, and the electorate was not mature enough to vote for parties’ programs instead of voting for ‘individuals’ and that PR could cause instability at parliamentary level” (Cop 2017, 119-120). Unlike the case of the 1946 electoral reform, however, the DP was not in favor of the adoption of PR anymore. During the floor debates, the adoption of PR was supported only by the MPs of the Nation Party (NP), the smallest party represented in the parliament. As a result, the draft prepared by the governmentally appointed council of experts became law on 16 February 1950 and was in force for the next ten years. The principle of the secret ballot, open counting, and supervision by the judiciary were introduced as crucial measures for conducting fair elections, but the election formula, plurality system in multi-member districts, was retained (Karpat 1959, 237).

The general elections were held on 14 May 1950 and resulted in an electoral victory for DP which ended the 27 years of single-party CHP government. Although CHP won 39.4 percent of the votes, the party got only 69 seats due to the majoritarian formula (TÜİK 2012, 25). On the other hand, DP won more than 85 percent of the seats with 52.7 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012, 25). In fact, retaining the majoritarian system was a huge miscalculation for the CHP.

4.2.1 The Ban on Join List in 1954

Despite its growing popularity and public support⁴, the incumbent DP had to deal with severe internal opposition between 1950 and 1954 (Temür 2022). To tackle these challenges, the party leadership resorted to authoritarian measures that enforced its stance upon the rest of the party organization (Karpas 1959). Instead of strengthening party unity, however, these oppressive actions led to further crises and divisions within both the government and the party. For instance, as early as 1951, the first Menderes government had to resign due to policy disagreements between technocrat ministers and PM Menderes (Temür 2022, 239-241). As a consequence of the power struggles among party factions, numerous MPs either resigned or were forced to step down over the years. These MPs established TKP (Türkiye Köylü Partisi - Peasant's Party of Turkey) in 1952 (Temür 2022). The authoritarian measures also affected the two opposition parties, CHP and MP (Millet Partisi - Nation Party). For example, the CHP faced serious restrictions, including confiscating their party assets by the DP government (Eroğul, 2013). Approaching to the 1954 elections, the MP was dissolved due to its anti-secular standpoints (Karpas 1959). The opposition parties in the parliament -including CHP- all criticized the government over its undemocratic decision to shut down the MP. The party re-established itself under the name of CMP (Cumhuriyetçi Millet Partisi - Republican Nation Party) and participated in the 1954 general elections. As the 1954 elections approached, the DP was faced with three opposition parties two of which were DP splinters.

In the 1954 elections, the DP secured a significant victory by winning 503 out of 541 seats with 58.4 percent of the votes. In contrast, the CHP only managed to secure 31 seats, receiving 35 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012, 25). CMP also achieved representation in parliament by securing 5 seats with 5.3 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012, 25).

After the elections, the government made some changes to Law No. 5545. The draft was submitted to the TGNA on 13 June 1954, only eleven days after the election, and was justified by the DP government as being 'urgent'(Güngör 2005). According to these changes, the right of a candidate of a political party from a certain electoral district to be included on the list of another political party or to become an independent candidate for a different district was to be abolished (Law No. 6428, Article 35). However, a party could still nominate a candidate from two different districts. Political parties were prohibited from participating in the

⁴In the local elections on 1950, the DP won 560 out of 600 municipalities (Eroğul 2013, 92-93). Additionally, in the 1951 by-elections, the DP won 15 out of 17 vacant seats (Eroğul 2013, 99).

election with a joint list (Article 35). With this law, the DP aimed to prevent any attempt that might threaten their parliamentary majority (Eroğul 2013, 155). It was however not only aimed at opposition parties but also served as a precaution against the potential internal dissent within the party (Temür 2022, 294).

Why then did the DP modify the election law, which helped them win two consecutive elections with an overwhelming margin of votes and secure a powerful parliamentary majority? Perhaps one reason for the DP's decision to modify the election law to make it unfavorable to opposition coordination is that the party had a low level of institutionalization. In other words, because the DP was not well-established as an organization, it might be more difficult for them to win elections if the dissidents split the party and join opposition forces and especially if the opposition is able to coordinate their efforts. The DP leadership faced opposition from both its political rival, the CHP, and from within the party itself. This intra-party opposition had been a concern since the party's establishment and had grown increasingly severe, highlighting the DP leadership's inability to uphold party cohesion and unity. The leadership failed to provide party unity, and dissidents either quit or were expelled but reappeared eventually under a new party name. By 1955, four parties had emerged, all of which were founded by individuals who had left the DP, including prominent figures from the inner circle of the DP leadership.⁵

4.2.2 The 1957 Amendment

The electoral victory of the 1954 elections, coupled with the worsening economic conditions led to the DP government to further consolidate its authoritarian stance. It continued to suppress press freedom and target the opposition in various ways. As a result, the relatively liberal wing of the DP split and established the HP (Hürriyet Partisi - Freedom Party). Prior to the 1957 elections, the three opposition parties, which were highly uncomfortable with the DP's authoritarian rule, attempted at coordinating their electoral strategies (Eroğul 2013, 186-187). The CHP, the CMP, and the HP held meetings for electoral cooperation and they agreed on the following points: (i) Each party run for the constituencies in they were the most powerful and others would support the party in that constituency; (ii) if the first option would not be available, then, only one of them would compete in the elections and the other

⁵These parties were MP (Millet Partisi - Nation Party) founded in 1948, TDP (Öz Demokratlar Partisi - True Democrats Party) founded in 1948, TPP (Türkiye Köylü Partisi - Turkish Peasant Party) founded in 1952, LP (Hürriyet Partisi - Liberty Party) founded in 1955 (Temür 2022)

two parties would withdraw from the elections and provide support for the party running for the elections (Eroğul 2013, 190; Sezen 1994). If they won the elections, the three parties agreed to change the constitution and the election law as soon as possible and to adopt a proportional representation system (Sezen 1994).

However, just before the 1957 parliamentary elections, the government modified the election law that made it extremely difficult for the opposition to cooperate (Eroğul 2013, 189-190). According to these amendments, political parties were now obliged to nominate a number of candidates equal to the number of deputies to be elected in any given electoral constituency. If political parties did not conform to this rule, they would be considered to have lost the elections in all electoral constituencies. Additionally, individuals who left their party less than six months before the elections were also prohibited from running for another party. The former criteria for nomination were introduced by the DP government to prevent the opposition parties from coordinating their electoral strategies. The latter criteria were introduced by the Government to prevent newly established HP from running for elections and from strategic party switching solely for electoral purposes (Sezen 1994).

Consequently, the attempts of the opposition to cooperate in the 1957 elections failed (Eroğul 2013, 189-190). According to the elections results, which were held on 27 October 1957, the DP's votes had decreased from 58.4 percent in 1954 to 48.6 percent in 1957, whereas the CHP had increased its vote share from 35 percent in 1954 to 41.4 percent in 1957 (TÜİK 2012, 25).

Following the election, the DP government found itself in an even more challenging position due to deteriorating economic conditions and escalating political tension. The popular unrest and hostility towards the DP continued to grow steadily between 1957 and 1960. These developments led eventually to a military intervention on 27 May 1960. As a result, all political activity was suspended until the military's decision to restore democracy in 1961.

4.3 The 1961 Electoral Reform

After the coup, a constituent assembly was formed in January 1961 with the aim of drafting a new Constitution and the election law (Kalaycioglu 2005, 87-88). The constituent assembly, members of which were selected among political parties (except the Democrat Party), bar associations, universities, and NGOs, drafted the

most liberal constitution in Turkish history and submitted it to a referendum on 9 July 1961 and adopted with a 62 percent affirmative vote by the electorate (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 88). While stipulating that “voting will be based on the principles of freedom, equality, and human rights”, the 1961 Constitution did not have any provisions regarding the specifics of election laws (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 88). To design a new electoral law, a specific body called ‘the Electoral Law Commission’ was established. The commission prepared a draft that would adopt a PR system based on d’Hondt with a district threshold.⁶

The members of the civilian chamber of the constituent assembly, the Assembly of Representatives (Temsilciler Meclisi, TM), were mainly pro-CHP (Cop 2017). The non-partisan members of the assembly, however, were from different backgrounds. Apart from those appointed by the head of the State (Cemal Gürsel, the junta leader), the assembly of representatives was comprised of the National Unity Council (Milli Birlik Komitesi, MBK), the governors of cities and representatives from bar associations, universities, the judiciary, the media, and youth. Such a representative model was obviously a corporative one, and what was crucial about the assembly of representatives was that many of these people (especially those coming from academia and judiciary) were in line with the CHP’s policies (Cop 2017).

The electoral law commission wrote a report that explains as well as justifies the objectives behind the preference over the design of the 1961 law (Cop 2017) Overall, it can be understood from the report that the proportional representation system was supported with the intention of achieving fairness and proportionality (Cop 2017, 142-3). Following the debates, two new election laws were ratified on 26 April 1961, before the elections which were scheduled to be held on October 15, 1961: Act No. 298 and Act No. 306. While the former was about the regulation of the fundamentals of elections and electoral registers, the latter was made to regulate the fundamentals of the parliamentary elections. These two new electoral laws brought about a new electoral system with proportional representation by abolishing the previous majoritarian system. In terms of party entry to the elections, the new law retained the ban on political parties to participate in the election with a joint list (Act No 306, Article 14). This decision to maintain the ban, however, was of a different nature. Lawmakers did not believe that joint lists were in accordance with the proportional representation system. They argued that, since it is crucial for every idea and opinion to be represented in proportional representation, the creation of joint lists by political parties was rejected due to the reasoning that it does not align with the structure of the system (Hatipoğlu and Parlar 2002,

⁶District threshold was the Hare quota which is calculated by the number of votes divided by the number of seats in each district (Özbudun 1995, 528-529)

639). Regarding candidate nominations, this time, political parties were required to nominate a number of candidates equal to the number of deputies to be elected only in fifteen electoral constituencies (Act No. 306, Article 10).

The 1961 elections were the first election under the PR formula. Four parties contested the election: CHP, newly established AP (Adalet Partisi – Justice Party), newly established YTP (Yeni Türkiye Partisi – YTP), and CMKP (Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi – Republican Peasant’s Nation Party), which was founded in 1958 as a merger of TKP and CMP. Although having gained a plurality of votes, the CHP was not able to form a government alone. The first coalition government thus came into existence following the election and the CHP formed with its “archrival” the AP (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 96). The CHP-AP government did not survive long because of the “internal disputes over the delicate issue of amnesty for former Democrat Party members and parties’ different views on economic policies” (Cop 2017, 153). The collapse of the first coalition government was followed by several other short-lived coalition governments until 1965 (Kalaycıoğlu 2002, 59).

In 1965, two changes were made to the election law. The first of these changes was introduced to the parliament nine months before the elections. The initiative came from the CHP and was supported by the minor parties but it was challenged by the AP (Sezen 1994). The amendment modified the election formula by adopting the ‘National Remainder’ (Milli Bakiye) system. This was an extremely proportional system based on the use of the Hare quota on both district and national levels and therefore was in favor of small parties (Kalaycıoğlu 2005). During the negotiation process, the AP failed to prevent the adoption of the national remainder system (Cop 2017). Consequently, all the opposition parties, except the AP voted in favor of the proposal. As a result, the 1965 elections, therefore, were held under a new electoral system. In the 1965 elections, six parties, including the TİP (Türkiye İşçi Partisi - Worker’s Party of Turkey, participated in the elections and all of them managed to secure seats in the parliament.⁷ The results also proved an exceptional success for the AP and a definite defeat for the CHP. The former obtained the majority of the votes alone whereas the latter achieved its lowest percentage of votes in any competitive elections it had participated in since 1950. Thanks to this overwhelming victory, the AP established itself as the true successor of the DP (Cop 2017).

The AP had been critical of the national remainder system (Kalaycıoğlu 2002; Cop 2017). Prior to the 1969 elections, the AP included in its election manifesto the intention to modify the electoral system (Cop 2017). As a result, seven months before

⁷ Adoption of national remainder system enabled the leftist TİP to win enough seats to be represented in the parliament.

the elections, the AP brought a bill in order to bring back the system introduced in 1961, namely the D'hondt system with district threshold, "which served the goals of the AP, by favoring the front-runner in the electoral competition" (Kalaycıoğlu 2002, 60). All the opposition parties, however, even those not in favor of the national remainder system, objected to the AP's endeavor to reintroduce the d'Hondt system with a district threshold (Cop 2017). The AP managed to pass the law using the votes of its own MPs and senators. The TİP took the matter to the constitutional court, seeking the annulment of the new law reinstating the system adopted in 1961. The court invalidated the district threshold while retaining the d'Hondt system (TBMM 1982, 109).

Between 1968 and 1980, elections were conducted using a d'Hondt system without thresholds. The results of the 1969 elections allowed the AP to control the parliamentary majority and established a single-party government (Kalaycıoğlu 2002). Nevertheless, within a year, the stability of the government was undermined when dissidents quit the AP and established the DP (Demokrat Parti - Democratic Party)⁸. This new party, composed of former right-wing members of the AP obtained 11.9 percent of the votes in 1973 and emerged as a significant political actor until 1975 (Cop 2017). In this period, the AP's dominance was further challenged by the rise of the two extremist right-wing political parties representing Islam and Turkish nationalism respectively. In 1969, MNP (Milli Nizam Partisi, Nationalist Order Party) was established by Necmettin Erbakan with an Islamist stance. According to him, the purpose of establishing this party "was to fill the void left on the Right by the drift of the Justice Party to the Left" (Sunar and Toprak 1979, 432).⁹ Turkish nationalism, on the other hand, was represented by the CMKP (Cumhuriyetçi Köylü Millet Partisi - Republican Peasant's Nation Party). Between 1965 and 1969, Alparslan Türkeş led the transformation of the CMKP from a secular Turkish nationalist party into the MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi - Nationalist Action Party), shifting towards a nationalist-conservative stance (Şanlı 2023).

In the 1973 and 1977 elections, none of the parties managed to secure a parliamentary majority. In the 1973 elections, the DP, MHP, and MSP performed relatively well whereas the votes of the AP dropped from 46.5 percent in 1969 to 30 percent in 1973 (Özbudun and Tachau 1975, 460-1). The electoral performances of the DP, MHP and MSP in the 1973 elections indicated that the right-wing votes were split, which negatively affected the AP. On the Left, the CHP, as the winner of both

⁸It should be noted that the DP in the 1960s was not the same party as the DP in the late 1940s and the 1950s

⁹The MNP was closed down by the Constitutional Court a year later for violating the Political Party Law. In 1972, however, the party was re-established as the NSP with Erbakan again as its leader (Sunar and Toprak 1979)

elections, gained 33.3 and 41.4 percent of the votes respectively but failed to form the government alone (Özbudun and Tachau 1975; Landau 1982). In 1975, two MPs from the AP, İlhami Ertem and İ. Fehmi Cumalhoğlu introduced two separate bills proposing to permit parties to form pre-electoral alliances (TBMM Tutanak Dergisi 13.5.1975, 82). However, neither of these bills was taken into consideration and consequently became invalid. The lack of any floor debates and any consideration by the parliamentary committees regarding these bills implies that the idea of forming pre-electoral alliances with other parties did not have significant support among parliamentarians. This lack of interest in pre-electoral coordination among parties could be attributed to the reluctance of party elites to cooperate. As an illustration of this indifference is seen in the aftermath of the 1973 elections, where the CHP leader Ecevit was unsuccessful in forming a coalition government due to the other parties' refusal to join a government under the CHP's leadership. After several failed negotiations and President Cemal Gürsel's interventions, a CHP-MSP government was eventually established after 103 days of the elections (Gülbay 2017, 132-139).

CHP and AP-led governments ruled from 1974 to 1979, followed by an AP minority government from November 1979 to September 1980 Military Coup (Sayarı 2002). The 1970s, particularly the period between 1977 and 1980 were characterized by political instability, escalating political violence approaching the limits of civil war (especially starting from late 1978), severe economic problems such as high inflation and foreign exchange shortages, and significant social unrest (Kalaycioglu 2005). As a result, the military once again intervened and overthrown the democratically elected government on September 12, 1980.

4.4 The 1983 Electoral Reform

Following the Coup, a Constitutive Assembly was established to design a new Constitution and election law. The Advisory Assembly (Danışma Meclisi, DM), consisting of civilians, was responsible for drafting laws, while the non-civilian chamber, National Security Council (Milli Güvenlik Konseyi, MGK), composed of non-civilians and orchestrators of the coup, had the real authority to revise and approve the drafts. This meant that transition to democracy was initiated through a process in which civilian politicians had no say over the design of the fundamental political institutions. The Advisory Assembly drafted a constitution and passed it to the National Security Council. The council refined the draft and subjected it to a ref-

erendum. The referendum took place on 7 October 1982 and received approval by the electorate with 92 percent of the votes (Kalaycıoğlu 2002, 126).

The Advisory Council designed a new electoral system that maintained the proportional representation system based on the d'Hondt formula but introduced a 10 percent nationwide threshold. The commission's report, outlining the purpose of the draft emphasized stability as the major objective of the new electoral system (Cop 2017, 189). The report justified the adoption of the 10 percent nationwide threshold by asserting that it prevents the representation of small parties (Cop 2017, 189). The report also elaborated on the commission's preference to reduce district size, aiming to decrease the likelihood of regional parties gaining seats (Cop 2017, 189). Ratified on 10 June 1983, Act No. 2839, maintained the PR system based on the d'Hondt formula with a district threshold (votes divided by seats as in 1961), with a maximum district size of 7. However, an even more disproportional element emerged in the new system: parties were required to surpass a 10 percent nationwide threshold secure representation in the parliament. Regarding party entry to elections, the 1982 law did not make any significant changes. Political parties were still prohibited from participating in elections with a joint candidate list (Article 16). In addition, political parties were required to field candidates in at least half of the total number of provinces (Articles 12-13). If political parties do not conform to this rule, they would be considered as having lost the elections in all electoral constituencies (Articles 12-14).

The newly established system was set to be implemented for the first time in elections on November 6, 1983, marking the return to civilian rule. The 1983 general elections were "more like the 1946 elections, which were neither fair nor free" (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 127). Despite the emergence of several new parties throughout 1983, the military permitted only three of them to participate in the elections: the MDP (Milliyetçi Demokrasi Partisi - Nationalist Democracy Party), HP (Halkçı Parti - Populist Party) and ANAP (Anavatan Partisi - Motherland Party) (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 127). The elections led to the formation of a single-party government by ANAP, securing 45 percent of the votes. Shortly before the 1984 local elections, two parties were established both claiming to be the successor of previous parties: the SODEP (Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi - Social Democrat Party) as the successor of the CHP and the DYP (Doğru Yol Partisi - True Path Party) as the successor of the AP (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 133). According to the election results, the ANAP came first by maintaining its vote share by securing 45 percent of the votes, SODEP came second with 22 percent of the votes and DYP emerged as the third party with 13 percent of the votes.

Between 1983 and 1987, the electoral legislation in Turkey has gone through significant modifications by eleven amendments (Erdem 2013).¹⁰ On 28 March 1986, the ANAP government ratified Act No. 3270 which initiated a series of changes in the election system and called for early general elections on November 29, 1987. One of the key changes was the introduction of quota candidacy as a majoritarian element. According to this, the provinces electing up to six deputies were treated as one single electoral district, while those with more seats were divided into multiple districts (Article 27). The quota candidacy would be applied to districts electing five, six or seven deputies (Article 10). In such districts, the district threshold is calculated as votes divided by seats minus one (Article 33). Under this system, the quota candidate of the political party with the most valid votes secures the parliamentary seat, regardless of whether it exceeds the district threshold (Article 33). The establishment of the quota, therefore, transformed the election system into a somewhat mixed-member system (Cop 2017). This was because the simple plurality method would be used for districts with quota seats, while the d'Hondt system would continue to allocate the remaining seats to parties (Cop 2017). Ratified on 28 May 1987, another amendment, Act No. 3377 modified the district magnitude, reducing the maximum number of seats in a district from seven to six. This change would be applied to districts with four, five, or six seats, which were the ones designated for quota seats. Ratified on 10 September 1987, Act No. 3505 abolished the provision calculating the district threshold by dividing votes by seats minus one (Article 5).

4.4.1 Pre-Electoral Alliances and Coalition Governments in the 1990s

The Turkish party system in the 1990s is marked by high electoral volatility, ideological polarization, and fragmentation (Sayarı 2002; Dikici Bilgin 2011). In addition to the significant modifications in the election law, Turkish politics was complicated further in 1987 when the political bans on former party leaders were lifted as a result of the 1987 Referendum (Tachau 2002; Kalaycioglu 2005). The four main party leaders from before the military intervention reemerged in the political arena, with the potential to regain their previous positions within their new parties (Kalaycioglu 2005). Anticipating that the return of these former party leaders might challenge his party's position, the leader of the ANAP, Turgut Özal campaigned for a "no" vote in the referendum. Although the difference between yes and no votes was only 75.066, Özal interpreted this result as a failure for his party and called for early

¹⁰ Authors calculation based on Tarhan Erdem's book.

elections (Oder 2016). As a result, ANAP, SHP (Sosyaldemokrat Halkçı Parti- Social Democrat Populist Party), DYP (Doğru Yol Partisi - True Path Party), RP (Refah Partisi - Welfare Party), MÇP (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi - Nationalist Labor Party), IDP (Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi - Reformist Democracy Party), and independents participated in the 1987 general elections. With only 36.3 percent of the vote, the ANAP received 292 of the 450 seats and represented 64.9 percent of the seats in the parliament, and provided the majority required to form the government (TÜİK 2012, 25). The SHP took second place in the parliament with 24.8 percent of the votes and 99 seats (TÜİK 2012, 25). The DYP won 59 seats by receiving 19.2 percent of the votes and took part in parliament as a third party (TÜİK 2012, 25). Other parties failed to pass the 10 percent threshold. Moreover, 46 deputies were elected by a majoritarian formula as quota candidates (Sezen 1994, 268). Hence, it would be reasonable to argue that the ANAP's electoral success could be attributed, at least partially, to the implementation of the revised election law.

On the eve of the 1991 elections, the electoral system was further modified. Ratified on 24 August 1991, Act No. 3757 established a local threshold of 25 percent in the districts with two, three, or four seats and 20 percent in the districts with five or six seats (Article 7). The district threshold for the districts with four, five, or six seats remained unchanged, but for the 2 seat districts, it dropped from 50 percent to 25 percent, and likewise for 3 seat districts, it dropped from 33.3 percent to again 25 percent (Cop 2017, 212-213). This amendment also introduced a preferential voting system, where candidates were nominated at twice the number of seats to be elected in a given electoral district, allowing voters to express their preference for a specific candidate (Article 9).

In November 1990, PM Mesut Yılmaz decided to call for early elections after his meetings with other party leaders and, the early general elections were scheduled for 20 October 1991 (Sezen 1994). On the eve of the elections, several political parties decided to coordinate their pre-electoral strategies (Sezen 1994; Çakır 1992). This was the first time since the failed attempt in the 1957 elections. On the right, MÇP (Milliyetçi Çalışma Partisi- The Nationalist Work Party), which failed to surpass the 10 percent threshold in the 1987 elections, and the IDP (Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi- Reformist Democracy Party) merged with the RP (Refah Partisi - Welfare Party). This alliance was called the 'holly alliance' (Kutsal Ittifak) (Çakır 1991). On the left, the SHP (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti - Social Democratic People's Party), formed an alliance with the HKP (Halkın Emek Partisi - People's Labor Party) that was founded in 1990. Moreover, SHP also wanted to cooperate with the SBP (Solda Birlik Partisi - Socialist Union Party) founded in 1991 by Sadun Aren. But they failed to agree on the principles (Kahraman 1993, 88-89). Finally, the

DMP (Demokratik Merkez Partisi - Democratic Central Party) decided to merge with the DYP (Doğru Yol Partisi - True Path Party).

According to the results of the 1991 elections, the DYP was the first party with 27 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012). The ANAP came second by winning 24 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012). On the other hand, the real losers were the divided social democrats. The SHP, the most popular party in 1989, had slumped to third place with 20.8 percent of the vote while Ecevit's DSP won 10.8 percent of the vote (TÜİK 2012). And finally, the RP as the representative of the "holly alliance" between RP, MÇP, and IDP received 16.9 percent of the votes (TÜİK 2012). The 1991 elections, therefore, indicated "a transition from a moderate multipartism with a dominant party (1983-1991) to an extreme multipartism with no dominant party" in Turkey (Sayarı 2002, 22).

Similar pre-electoral coordination attempts have been occasionally observed in various elections since the 1991 elections. Although they were similar to joint candidate lists, they were not. This is primarily because smaller parties whose members run on the list of other (typically larger) parties were not allowed to maintain their party logos. In order to differentiate them from the joint candidate lists, this dissertation refers to these types of alliances as "mixed lists". Table 4.2 presents a list of successful pre-electoral alliance attempts that have taken place since the 1990s.¹¹

Between the 1991 and 1999 elections, there were indications of collapse within center-right parties (Dikici-Bilgin 2011). Experiences with unstable coalition governments from 1991 to 1995, led to yet another early election in 1995. Prior to the elections, ratified on 28 October 1995, Act No. 4125 further modified the election law by the joint efforts of DYP and CHP. First, the quota candidacy was abolished. Second, the district magnitude was increased significantly. Provinces with up to 18 seats were now considered a single district, provinces with 19 to 35 seats were divided into two districts, and provinces with more than 35 seats were divided into three districts. Lastly, a new category of 'National Electoral District' with 100 seats was introduced. According to this arrangement, these seats would be allocated to the parties that surpass the 10 percent nationwide threshold, and MPs elected from this category called 'MPs of Turkey'. Soon after the amendments, however, the Constitutional Court annulled the district threshold and national electoral district, declaring that these arrangements were against the Constitution.

Soon before the 1995 elections, another pre-electoral alliance in the form of party mergers took place. The BBP decided to merge with the ANAP (Sabah 1997).

¹¹A more detailed description of these pre-electoral alliances can be found in Appendix C.

Table 4.2 Parties forming pre-electoral alliances in Turkey, 1991 - 2018

Election Year	Member Parties
1991	Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party) Demokratik Merkez Partisi (Democratic Center Party) Refah Partisi (Welfare Party)
1991	Milli Çalışma Partisi (Nationalist Labour Party) Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi (Reformist Democracy Party)
1991	Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti (Social Democrat Labour Party) Halkın Emek Partisi (People's Labor Party)
1995	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party) Büyük Birlik Partisi (Great Unity Party)
1995	Halkın Demokrasi Partisi (People's Democracy Party) BSP - DDP - SİP
2002	Demokratik Halk Partisi (Democratic People's Party) Emek ve Demokrasi Partisi (Labour and Democracy Party) Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi (Social Democracy Party) Doğru Yol Partisi (True Path Party)
2002	Demokratik Türkiye Partisi (Democratic Turkey Party) Aydınlık Türkiye Partisi (Bright Turkey Party)
2007	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party) Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party) Demokratik Toplum Partisi (Democratic Society Party)
2007	Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi - (Freedom and Democracy Party) Emek ve Demokrasi Partisi (Labour and Democracy Party) Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi (Social Democracy Party)
2011	BDP and smaller Kurdish parties
2011	Demokrat Parti (Democratic Party) Bağımsız Türkiye Partisi (Independent Turkey Party)
June 2015	Saadet Partisi (Felicity Party) Büyük Birlik Partisi (Great Unity Party)

According to the results, ANAP increased its number of seats, but its vote share declined by 4 percent, and the winner of the alliance was BBP with 7 seats in the parliament (Sabah 1997). By failing to provide a clear winner, the 1995 elections brought about a fragmented political landscape once again (Kalaycıoğlu 2005, 157). Following four short-lived coalition governments, Turkey held early elections in 1999, leading to yet another unstable coalition government. This situation ultimately prompted the scheduling of early elections in 2002.

4.4.2 AKP's coming to power in 2002

The 2002 early general elections were a turning point in terms of party system and electoral dynamics in Turkish politics. After a period of unstable coalition governments, the Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, AKP), as one of the successors of the RP, won a clear majority and formed a single-party government for the first time since 1987 (Özbudun 2013; Çarkoğlu 2002). AKP won 34 percent of the votes compared to 20 percent for CHP. As such, the AKP controlled nearly two-thirds of the seats with about one-third of the votes (Kalaycıoğlu 2021). In a sense, the previous failure to decrease the 10 percent threshold has led to the electoral victory of the AKP which would dominate the electoral scene in the following 20-plus years.

After 2002, AKP's electoral support continuously rose to 47 percent in 2007 and 50 percent in 2011 securing an absolute majority in both elections. Therefore, by increasing its vote shares for three elections in a row, AKP established its predominance in the Turkish party system (Gumuscu 2013). These years marked a decrease in volatility and fragmentation of electoral support "which have long been a defining characteristic of the Turkish party system" (Çarkoğlu 2011, 50).

In the 2015 June elections, however, AKP lost its parliamentary majority for the first time since its coming to power in 2002 (Kemahloğlu 2015; Kalaycıoğlu 2018). However, the efforts to establish a coalition government failed and the country moved to a snap election on November 1, 2015 (Kalaycıoğlu 2018). In the elections, "the AKP warded off the challenge posed by the opposition, re-established its parliamentary majority, and remained the pivotal actor in Turkey's predominant party system" (Sayarı 2020, 265). In less than nine months after the November 2015 elections, a faction within the military attempted to overthrow the AKP government (Caliskan 2017; Esen and Gumuscu 2018; Yavuz and Koç 2016). The aftermath of the failed coup attempt "came with a strong purge under the framework of a state of emer-

gency declaration that effectively restricts many fundamental democratic rights and freedoms” (Kalaycıoğlu 2021, 3). As a result, “many started to question whether Turkey remains to be a democracy or not” (Kalaycıoğlu 2021, 3).

On April 16, 2017, Turkish voters ratified several constitutional amendments that would replace the existing parliamentary regime with a presidential system with very limited checks and balances (Esen and Gumuscu 2018). This major political regime change “installed a partisan President, who functions as the leader of a political party, chief executive, head of state and elected on a political party ticket” (Kalaycıoğlu 2021, 13). This presidential regime made several changes in the election laws and their administration in the upcoming years.

4.4.3 Introduction of Apparentements in 2018

Following a joint proposal by AKP and MHP, on 20 April 2018, the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi, TBMM), announced snap elections for 24 June 2018 that was initially scheduled for November 2019. The elections were going to be held under an ongoing state of emergency that was declared after the failed coup attempt. For these elections, the amendments adopted during the 2017 Constitutional Referendum suspended the Article 67 of the Constitution, which stated that “amendments to the electoral laws shall not apply to the elections to be held within one year from their into force date of amendments”. This enabled legal amendments to be made shortly before the elections, which undermined the stability of the legal framework contrary to international good practice (OSCE/ODIHR 2018)

On 13 March 2018, therefore, TBMM introduced a new law, Act. No 7102, which makes several significant changes on the administration of elections as well as the regulation of political parties. AKP and MHP drafted the bill jointly and brought it to the TGNA on 21 February 2018. The Commission started to debate the bill on 27 February and completed its report on 9 March 2018. Through the joint efforts of AKP and MHP, the draft bill was pushed forward during the floor meetings, debated immediately, and took effect.

The new law made several changes to the Act. No 298 primarily concerns the administration of the elections. These amendments are crucial in the sense that they have changed the electoral practices that have been in force since 1950. As such they have been considered as undermining electoral integrity (OSCE/ODIHR

2018, 8). Since the 1950 electoral reform, for instance, electoral administration has been supervised by the judiciary as an impartial observer. However, ratified on 13 March 2018, Act No. 7102 has changed this practice by allowing governors (valis and kaymakams), who are appointed public authorities, to appoint public officials as election council members in each constituency. Second, the amendment enables the voters to request law enforcement in case of violence or threat of violence (Article 8). Finally, the amendment also allows unsealed ballots to be considered as valid. When the Supreme Election Council (YSK) made such a decision in the 2017 Constitutional referendum it was harshly criticized as a violation of the election law (Kalaycıoğlu 2021).

The Act. No 7102 also made several changes in the Act. No 2830 which regulates parliamentary elections since 1983. The most significant change was the introduction of pre-electoral alliances in the form of apparentements as a technical arrangement among political parties in the alliance. Specifically, political parties participate in elections with separate lists, but they should publicly declare their alliance name beforehand and register the name of the alliance to the YSK. In the ballot, both the parties' names as well as the alliance name take place separately. Voters have one vote, and they could either vote for the alliance or they could indicate their preference for a specific party in the alliance by sealing the designated area for the party. The allocation of votes and seats to an alliance is completed in two steps. First, total alliance votes are calculated. If the vote total passes 10 percent threshold, the number of seats an alliance receives is calculated using the PR D'hondt formula. In the second step, alliance votes are distributed to the parties in the alliance.

In response to the proposal, introducing apparentement, opposition CHP and HDP called for the use of joint lists, or not to allocate votes to parties if they are not specifically for a party as is the method under the amendment (OSCE 2018). However, the law did not make any changes regarding joint lists. Parties are still prohibited from participating in elections with joint lists. As a result, despite the opposition's suggestions, "the amendment was adopted in a hasty manner without genuine parliamentary debate or public consultations, the amendments were widely criticized by opposition parties and civil society for jeopardizing the integrity of election process and results" (OSCE 2018, 6). The CHP challenged some of the amendments in the Constitutional Court, but it was not successful.

In terms of the objectives behind these changes, Kalaycıoğlu makes the following points: "With these new amendments, the elections seemed not to provide a level playing field for all the political parties involved in the election process. Indeed, the parties with smaller vote shares continued to be kept out of the TBMM. Yet

if the same party(ies) participated in an alliance that garners more votes than the national threshold, they were able to receive parliamentary seats. What began to matter more than the people's vote choice for the smaller parties in obtaining a parliamentary seat in the 2018 general elections turned out to be the negotiation acumen of the smaller party leadership." (Kalaycıoğlu 2021, 14)

As a result of these changes, Turkish voters went to the polls for both parliamentary and presidential elections for the first time in the history of the Turkish Republic on 24 June 2018. The MHP and the BBP formed an alliance on the side of the incumbent AKP under the title of *Cumhur İttifakı* (CI), whereas the İYİP (İyi Party - Good Party) which had been formed in 2017 after splitting from MHP and the SP formed another alliance on the side of the opposition party, CHP, under the title of *Millet İttifakı* (MI). Winning 42.56 percent of the votes, the AKP lost the parliamentary majority but achieved to remain as the largest party whereas the MHP did well by winning 9.96 percent of the votes (YSK 2022). On the other hand, the CHP received 22.65 percent of the votes whereas the İYİP won 10 percent of the votes (YSK, 2018). Moreover, HDP, which was not a member of any electoral alliance, received 11,70 percent of the votes. Finally, other minor alliance members such as the SP, BBP, and DP secured one seat for each by merging with larger parties. Even though the incumbent *Cumhur Alliance* achieved a parliamentary majority, recent studies have shown that the main beneficiary of the new legislation was the opposition alliance due to the unintended consequences of such institutional arrangements (Evcı and Kaminski 2021; Moral 2021).

How can we explain the preference of the AKP and its political ally MHP over the introduction of *apparentement* rather than lifting the ban on the joint list? First of all, this rule change needs to be considered in conjunction with the newly established presidential system. The adoption of consecutive parliamentary and presidential elections and the requirement of obtaining 50 percent plus 1 of the votes in the first round for winning the presidency have significantly increased the leverage of the smaller parties against larger parties. In order to protect their party brand, smaller parties prefer less costly pre-electoral alliance types since the extent of their blackmail potential is dependent on their power as a separate and autonomous political party. Another reason for the decision to introduce *apparentement* could be the increase in the number of parties within the AKP's ideological cluster, particularly with the establishment of the İYİP. The AKP may have sought to involve these smaller parties in an alliance under its leadership and therefore benefiting from their vote bases and consolidating its electoral strength.

This decision to introduce *apparentements*, therefore, can be explained by the dis-

tinct nature of the two alliance categories and the political costs they impose on political parties. As outlined in Section 2, apparentements provide parties with more flexibility by enabling them to maintain their individual party identity while still benefiting from the pre-electoral coordination that increases their chances to gain representation. However, making a joint list with a larger party is a risky decision for smaller parties since such lists may lead to the dissolution of smaller parties within larger parties, resulting in the loss of party identity.

4.4.4 Change in the rules governing Apparentement formation in 2022

Despite the uneven playing field, that resulted from the developments summarized above, in the 2019 local elections, the AKP lost municipal governments in key major metropolitan provinces such as İstanbul, and Ankara, whereas its coalition partner MHP lost one of its strongholds Adana to CHP (Esen and Gumuscu 2019). This historical defeat was followed by another amendment in the election law in 2022. On 31 March 2022, the Turkish Parliament ratified a new law, Act No. 7393 a little more than a year before the general elections scheduled for 18 June 2023 which actually took place on May 14. The amendment made significant changes in the Act No. 298 and Act No. 2839. The most fundamental change the new law brings about is the lowering of the 10 percent nationwide threshold to 7 percent (Article 1) Apart from being the highest among the members of the Council of Europe, the 10 percent has been the most controversial electoral system attribute since its adoption in 1983. Since then, 41 proposals most of which were sponsored by the opposition parties were made to the parliament to lower the threshold, however, none of them had been taken into consideration by the governments.¹² In March 2022 however, the initiative came from the incumbent People’s Alliance and was immediately debated in the parliament and took effect. The new law also changed the application of the seat allocation method to the electoral alliances. The amendment replaces the two-stage seat allocation with a single-stage allocation while the threshold will be applied to all alliances/parties regardless of their alliance membership (Article 2). This change has reduced the primary motivations and incentives for parties to join apparentements solely for surpassing the electoral threshold.

Two other significant changes were made the Act No. 298 creating further concerns over the integrity of the elections in Turkey (OSCE/ODIHR 2022). First,

¹² Author’s calculation based on previous legislative proposals

the amendment exempts the president from restrictions during the election propaganda periods. Second, the amendment changes the system through which judicial members of electoral boards are determined. Prior to the amendments, these were determined according to the seniority principle: the most senior judges were automatically appointed as members of boards in both districts and provinces. However, the amendment replaced this seniority principle with a lottery system, according to which judicial members of the boards were determined by drawing lots among eligible judges (Article 5). The opposition has criticized the amendment by arguing that it will endanger the security of elections and make them more susceptible to political pressure and manipulation (BBC 2022).

4.4.5 2023 Turkish General Elections

On 14 May 2023, consecutive parliamentary and presidential elections were held in Turkey. The presidential election went into a second round since none of the presidential candidates secured 50 percent plus 1 of the votes. Despite various challenges, including the severity of the economic crisis and the AKP government's inadequate handling of the February Earthquake, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the AKP won both the presidential and parliamentary elections (Esen and Gumuscu 2023). This result was surprising, given the widespread expectation that the opposition candidate Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu was likely to win. Ugur-Cinar (2023) examines the role of the use of state apparatus in favor of Erdoğan and the AKP, along with the relations between the EU and the AKP resulting from the refugee deal. She argues that this deal has enabled Erdoğan to leverage the refugee issue as a means of threatening the EU and receiving implicit support for his political regime in return (Ugur-Cinar 2023). This unexpected outcome, coupled with changes in the party's vote and seat shares necessitates an assessment of the alliances.

The change in the election law that removed the requirement to count the alliance's total votes for seat allocation has weakened the effectiveness of apparentements in helping smaller parties to gain seats. This has also reduced the importance of alliances in surpassing the 7 percent nationwide electoral threshold. Therefore, this recent modification has resulted in a complex alliance structure prior to the 2023 general elections. Just like the 2018 general elections, the *Cumhur* and *Millet* alliances remained the largest alliances led by AKP and CHP respectively. In comparison to the 2018 elections, both alliances have grown in size due to an increase in the number of parties they include. Two new far-right parties, YRP (*Yeniden Refah*

Partisi - New Welfare Party) and Hda-Par (Hr Dava Partisi, Free Cause Party), joined the Cumhuriyet alliance. As an Islamist political party, YRP is the successor of the RP (Refah Partisi, Welfare Party) which was banned in 1998. It was founded by Fatih Erbakan, the son of the former Prime Minister and RP leader Necmettin Erbakan. After receiving an invitation by the AKP, the party presented several conditions for joining the alliance, one of which is the repeal of Act No. 6284 Law on Protection of the Family, and Prevention of Violence Against Women. This move led to a notable backlash, even within the AKP. Both Derya Yanık, the Minister of Family and Social Services as well as zlem Zengin, the group deputy chairperson of the AKP voiced their support for the law by emphasizing its importance in the struggle against violence against women (Bianet 2023). After a while, YRP decided to join the alliance while retaining its individual party logo. The other new member of the Cumhuriyet Alliance, Hda Par, is a Kurdish political party recognized for its strongly Islamist and anti-secular position, which has further raised concerns among young women supporters of the AKP (Girit 2023). In contrast to YRP, Hda Par contested the election in the AKP lists.

The Millet alliance, initially composed of CHP, İYİP, SP, and DP, was joined by two newcomers, the DEVA (Demokrasi ve Atılım Partisi - Democracy and Progress Party) and the GP (Gelecek Partisi - Future Party). Both DEVA and GP were established by prominent AKP figures who had split from the party. DEVA was established in 2020 by Ali Babacan, a former economy minister within the AKP. GP, on the other hand, was founded by Ahmet Davutođlu, who became a member of the AKP government in 2011 as the Minister of Foreign Affairs and later served as Prime Minister between 2014 and 2016.

The third alliance, Emek ve zgrlk alliance, was a new alliance formed by Kurdish, leftist political parties who were previously members of the political initiative People's Democratic Congress (Halkların Demokratik Kongresi, HDK) which was instrumental in founding of the HDP. This alliance consisted of HDP and YSP (Yeşil Sol Parti - Green Left Party), TİP (Trkiye İőçi Partisi - Workers' Party of Turkey) and EMEP (Emek Partisi - Labor Party). Because of the ongoing shutdown case, the candidates of the HDP had to run under the name of the YSP. However, TİP was not among the participants of the HDK. Erkan Baő, initially a member of HDP, resigned and went on to found TİP in 2017. Later on, two other HDP MPs (Ahmet Őık and Barıő Atay) along with Sera Kadıgil, a CHP MP, left their respective parties and joined TİP.

The fourth alliance, Socialist Gc Birliđi was established by smaller socialist and communist political parties who refused to join Emek ve zgrlk alliance. Finally,

the Ata alliance is led by the far-right Victory Party (Zafer Partisi, ZP), whose founder Ümit Özdağ is known for his ultranationalist and anti-immigrant statements. The minor member of this alliance was the Justice Party (Adalet Partisi, AP) founded in 2015 by Vecdet Öz, a former member of the CHP.

In addition to an uneven playing field, the election process has been marked by several controversies. Among these, the most significant ones were the disputes regarding the composition of the candidate list. As previously stated, the recent amendment has weakened the effectiveness of apparentements, especially in helping smaller parties to gain seats. Hence, smaller parties needed to run under the name of the larger parties within an alliance if they perceived little chance of exceeding the 7 percent threshold. Before YRP and Huda Par joined the Cumhur alliance, AKP and MHP were considering the possibility of making a mixed candidate list, in which the MHP run under the name of the AKP. However, when the YRP and BBP announced their intention to run with their respective party logos, however, the MHP leader Bahçeli switched his tone and immediately declared that the MHP would run with its own party logo in all 81 electoral districts (Sayın 2023).

Within the Millet Alliance, this process was more intense. The alliance did not publicly announce its presidential candidate until less than two and a half months before the elections. During one of the final negotiations among the six party leaders, Meral Akşener, the leader of the İYİP, left the table, leading to a crisis within the alliance. Although she returned after just two days, this decision undermined the credibility of Akşener and İYİP, affecting not only their standing but also casting doubts on the credibility of the Millet alliance as a whole. Due to the alliance's composition of various ideologies and lack of a detailed common policy program, doubts arose about member parties' ability to cooperate effectively. Akşener's move further reinforced these doubts. Consequently, the alliance announced the CHP leader Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu as their presidential candidate. This negotiation process, along with reluctance within the alliance to accept Kılıçdaroğlu as the presidential candidate, had a significant impact on the negotiations over the composition of the candidate lists. In 16 electoral districts, CHP and İYİP, two largest members of the alliance fielded mixed candidate lists (Euronews 2023). In some other districts, these two parties strategically withdrew in favor of one another (Euronews 2023). The smaller members of the alliance, namely DEVA, Gelecek, SP and the DP contested the election on the lists of the CHP (Cumhuriyet 2023). This resulted in only the CHP and the İYİP party logos appearing on the ballot paper, making it impossible to discern the presence of other parties in the alliance. Consequently, the CHP included a total of 76 candidates from the DEVA, the Gelecek, the SP, and the DP on its candidate lists, along with 5 İYİP members who were not placed on mixed

lists (Sayın 2023b). Out of these 79 candidates, 39 were elected, including some controversial figures such as Sadullah Ergin, the former Minister of Justice under AKP (Euronews 2023b; BBC 2023). The electoral defeat led to resignations and internal turmoil within parties. Following the elections, some alliance members such as İYİP leader Meral Akşener and DEVA spokesperson İdris Şahin even expressed their regret on several occasions about their decision to join the alliance (T24 2023; Cumhuriyet 2023b).

A similar intense negotiation process also took place in Emek ve Özgürlük alliance, as another opposition alliance. Initially, the HDP proposed that all parties in the alliance enter by making mixed candidate lists under YSP. However, TİP declined this proposal, stating that the constituencies addressed by HDP, TİP, and EMEP might vary in different cities (Çelik 2023). Despite TİP expecting 3 percent of the votes, they received 1.73 percent, resulting in 4 seats, while HDP's vote share dropped from 11.7 in 2018 to 8.8 in 2023 (YSK 2022; YSK 2023). As a result, the alliance was blamed for causing HDP (YSP) to lose while helping TİP to surpass the 7 percent threshold (Euronews 2023c).

The summarized developments indicate that, currently, the cost of establishing alliances, particularly in the form of mixed lists, where parties run under the logo of another party has seemed to be high for both major and minor members of the opposition alliances. Aside from generating internal disputes within the parties, the alliances have also seemed to deteriorate relations among alliance members, further diminishing the likelihood of future pre-electoral alliances. One of the critical questions regarding the evaluation of election results today should consider the degree of understanding of the alliance system by local party organizations and their success in effectively communicating it to the voters. Furthermore, it is crucial to assess how effectively the parties' alliance preferences reflect the voters' will at the ballot box. The results of the 2023 Turkish General Elections highlight the need for parties to carefully examine this matter in the future and consider these various dynamics when seeking alliances for upcoming elections.

4.5 Conclusion

After a failed attempt in 1946, Turkey made its transition to multiparty democracy in 1950. Since 1946, the electoral law of Turkey has gone through four major changes each of which brought about a completely new electoral system incorporating both changes and continuities with the previous one. These four laws have also gone through many minor changes that have not replaced the fundamentals of the electoral system with another one but have left significant imprints on the parties, party system, and governments.

Qualitatively assessing the electoral laws in Turkey between 1946 and 2022, and the minor and major changes in them, this chapter aims to uncover the political dynamics affecting or motivating political parties to change election laws. The paper identifies three patterns in political electoral reform in Turkey. First, (i) all four instances of electoral reform were initiated under limited party competition when reformers were not democratic politicians; (ii) Second, unlike advanced democracies, the dominant actors who initiate the reform are not always politicians; Third, instead of designing a brand-new electoral system which reflects the demands of wider segments of the society politicians prefer to amend the existing laws. However, their preferences over specific electoral system attributes are most often dominated by their short-term, strategic, and even manipulative decisions. During the relatively democratic periods, the changes in the electoral legislation in Turkey were mainly initiated and even forced by the incumbent parties, in order to restrict the actions of the specific actors in the party system who were seen as obstacles to achieving or sustaining a parliamentary majority. With very few exceptions, this seems to be the pattern for minor changes in electoral laws in Turkey.

However, this chapter also argues that the electoral reform process that was initiated in 2018, following the 2017 Constitutional amendments that turned the parliamentary regime of the country into an executive presidential one, has seemed to be following a different pattern. Along with having short-term strategic manipulative objectives to prevent entry of the specific actors into the elections, recent amendments also have an objective to redesign the established practices regarding the administration of elections. The latter objective, however, may have disruptive outcomes in terms of the integrity of the elections since they have resulted in an uneven playing field.

Building this categorization, this dissertation provides a single case study on Turkey to address the second research question of this dissertation. Joint candidate list,

whereby multiple political parties compete with a single list of candidates under a common alliance name, has been prohibited in Turkey since 1954. This prohibition was originally established by the incumbent DP (Democrat Party) in 1954 for two reasons. The first and most obvious reason was to prevent any pre-electoral opposition coordination in the upcoming elections. Secondly, the DP leadership aimed to foster party unity by discouraging party dissidents from splitting the party. Given that the majoritarian electoral system provided smaller parties with very limited opportunities to gain representation, the ban on joint lists further diminished incentives for these parties to pursue separate political paths. On multiple occasions, various small opposition parties made proposals to abolish the ban on joint lists. However, these proposals were not given serious consideration by the governing parties at the time. Consequently, the provision prohibiting parties from running with a joint candidate list remained unchanged in the subsequent election laws.

In 2018, *apparentements* were introduced by the joint effort of the incumbent AKP and its political ally MHP. Despite calls from opposition parties such as CHP and HDP, the AKP-MHP alliance made their decisions to introduce *apparentement* while keeping the ban on joint lists in effect. According to this law provision allowing *apparentements*, political parties that meet the eligibility requirements for participation in elections are granted the opportunity to participate in elections by formally linking their candidate lists. In the ballot, both the parties' names as well as the alliance name take place separately. Voters have one vote, and they could either vote for the alliance or they could indicate their preference for a specific party in the alliance by sealing the designated area for the party. In the initial seat allocation step, alliances are treated as single parties if their vote total surpasses the 10 percent national threshold.

Building on the discussion on different types of pre-electoral alliances proposed in Chapter 2, this chapter also argues that the preference of the AKP and its political ally MHP over the adoption of *apparentement* rather than joint candidate lists can be explained by two reasons. First of all, this rule change needs to be considered in conjunction with the establishment of a presidential system in 2017. The adoption of consecutive parliamentary and presidential elections and the requirement of obtaining 50 percent plus of the votes in the first round for winning the presidency have significantly increased the leverage of the smaller parties against larger parties. In order to protect their party brand smaller parties prefer less costly pre-electoral alliance types since the extent of their blackmail potential is dependent on their power as a separate and autonomous political party. Another reason for the decision to introduce *apparentement* could be the increase in the number of parties within the AKP's ideological cluster, particularly with the establishment of

the IYIP. The AKP may have sought to involve these smaller parties in an alliance under its leadership and therefore benefiting from their vote bases and consolidating its electoral strength. Moreover, the decision to introduce apparentements can be attributed to the distinct nature of the two alliance categories and the associated political costs they impose on political parties. Apparentements provide parties with more flexibility by enabling them to maintain their individual party identity while still benefiting from the pre-electoral coordination that increases their chances to gain representation. However, making a joint list with a larger party is a risky decision for smaller parties since such lists may lead to the dissolution of smaller parties within larger parties, resulting in the loss of party identity.

Although the idea of modifying electoral institutions might be appealing to incumbents with enough parliamentary power, the consequences may not be entirely foreseeable. The results of the 2018 elections revealed that the main beneficiaries of the new apparentement rule were the opposition. In response, the AKP-MHP introduced another amendment, eliminating the consideration of total apparentment vote for the initial seat allocation and lowering the 10 percent threshold to 7 percent. These changes possibly aimed to reduce the possibility of another opposition pre-electoral coordination. Conversely, prior to the 2023 elections, opposition pre-electoral alliances grew in both quantity and size. However, these changes have seemed to significantly increase the cost of joining such alliances, which could potentially worsen both intra-party and inter-party dynamics.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, RESEARCH DESIGN AND VARIABLES

The central research question of this dissertation is: Why and how do governments change the rules that regulate interparty pre-electoral coordination? Because the current literature does not adequately consider changes in those rules that regulate how parties coordinate their pre-electoral strategies as minor reforms, it does not offer a satisfactory answer. By considering permissive and restrictive changes in the rules that regulate the formation of pre-electoral alliances in the forms of joint lists, vote transfer instructions, dual ballot instructions, nomination agreements, and apparentements, this dissertation represents an important step towards answering this question.

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows. The next section outlines the way in which the dependent variable (change in the rules that institutionally regulate pre-electoral interparty coordination) has been defined for the purposes of this project. Building on this, Section 4.2 introduces a new conceptual framework that distinguishes between two different types of change.

5.1 Dependent Variable(s)

As discussed previously, the literature on electoral reform is almost exclusively focuses on what is called "major electoral reforms". Despite their unpopularity in the literature, minor electoral reforms can and do have important political implications (Lijphart 1994, 78-94). Lijphart (1994) defines major electoral reform based on the degree of proportionality and includes any changes involving the electoral formula as well as any change of at least 20 percent in district magnitude, legal threshold, or assembly size. Less significant changes in these electoral system attributes or the changes in other features of electoral systems are referred to as "minor" in the

literature (Lijphart 1994; Katz 2005). Leyenaar and Hazan (2011), examining minor electoral reforms, argue that there is no substantive difference between so-called major and minor reforms, making the distinction unhelpful and restrictive. Instead, Jacobs and Leyenaar (2011) have proposed an ordinal scale featuring major, minor, and technical reforms along several dimensions: proportionality, election levels, inclusiveness, ballot structure, and election procedures. Following this recent trend in the literature, the dependent variable in this dissertation is defined as the change in the election laws that regulate whether and how political parties coordinate their pre-electoral strategies. The scope of this dependent variable is restricted to the electoral rules used to elect members to national legislatures (lower chambers).

5.2 Conceptual Framework

This dissertation conceptualizes change as a process with two distinct outcomes: (i) rules permitting political parties to coordinate their pre-electoral strategies by diversifying or multiplying available options in the form of various types of pre-electoral coalitions; (ii) rules restricting political parties to coordinate their pre-electoral strategies by diminishing available options in the form of various types of pre-electoral coalitions. In order to clarify these outcomes, Table 4.1 illustrates a typology. The table unpacks the binary group of “Reform occurs” in order to distinguish between two types of changes that show the direction of change in the law.

The first group of interest “permissive changes” includes those minor reforms (typically in the form of amendment) that diversify available pre-electoral coordination options for parties by allowing them to form pre-electoral alliances in a variety of forms. This category includes cases in which:

The election law is amended to abolish a previously inserted ban.

The election law is inserted as a provision that allows parties to run joint lists or candidates.

The election law inserted a provision that allows parties to withdraw their lists/candidates prior to the second round of elections (in cases where the second round of elections is available)

A provision that introduces extra entry or seat distribution requirements for parties in pre-electoral coalitions such as increased thresholds, and increased amounts of

Table 5.1 Conceptual framework

Binary	Categorical	Description
Change occurs	Permissive	A provision that bans parties from running with joint lists/candidates is abolished.
		A provision that allows parties to link their lists/candidates is inserted into the law (apparentement provision).
		A provision that allows parties to withdraw their lists/candidates prior to the second round of elections is inserted into the law.
		A provision that introduces extra requirements for parties in pre-electoral coalitions (whether joint lists or apparantements) such as increased thresholds, and increased amounts of deposit to pay is either abolished or decreased the previously depicted amounts quantitatively.
	Restrictive	A provision that bans parties from running with joint lists/candidates is inserted into the law.
		A provision that allows parties to link their lists/candidates is abrogated.
		A provision that allows parties to withdraw their lists/candidates prior to the second round of elections is abrogated.
		A provision that introduces extra requirements for parties in pre-electoral coalitions such as increased thresholds, increased amounts of deposit to pay is either inserted or increases the previously depicted amounts quantitatively.
Change does not occur		No change in the rules

deposit to pay is abolished. Or the amendment decreases the necessary amounts quantitatively.

Following a similar line, the second group of interest, “restrictive changes” includes those minor reforms that diminish available pre-electoral coordination options for parties by introducing provisions making pre-electoral alliances either costly or impossible. This category includes cases in which:

A provision that bans parties from running with joint lists/candidates is inserted into the law.

A provision that allows parties to link their lists/candidates is abrogated.

A provision that allows parties to withdraw their lists/candidates prior to the second round of elections is abrogated.

A provision that introduces extra requirements for parties in pre-electoral coalitions such as increased thresholds, and increased amounts of deposits for candidacy. Or the amendment increases the necessary amounts quantitatively, which increases the cost of pre-electoral coalitions.

The purpose of this study is to provide an explanation both for the occurrence and the direction of change in the rules governing pre-electoral interparty coordination. To achieve this, this typology is developed. Additionally, I have developed an additive index of permissiveness building on this typology. The index calculates scores for country and election year observation and indicates the level of permissiveness (or restrictiveness) of a country for that particular election year. The values of the index range from 0 (least permissive) to 8 (most permissive). This index allows for an analysis to of whether patterns towards permissiveness (or restrictiveness) across countries and time periods could be identified.

5.3 Case Selection and Construction of the Dataset

This dissertation aims to fill the gap in the literature on electoral reform and pre-electoral coalitions, which have neglected the importance of electoral rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances and resulting in various alliance types. Studying electoral rules that regulate how parties form pre-electoral alliances requires a rigorous examination of election law texts. However, finding the texts of election law that are not in force anymore is difficult. Therefore, I have decided to build on an already constructed dataset on electoral reform, *Electoral System Changes in Eu-*

rope since 1945 (Pilet et al. 2016). This dataset was developed with the assistance of country experts who provided information for 31 European countries regarding features of the electoral systems they have been using since their first democratic elections for the lower chamber. On the website of the dataset, a country report as well as election law texts -both initial laws and subsequent amendments- are provided for each country case examined in the study. The availability of the original election law texts on the database's website has been a significant advantage for this dissertation, as it provides the primary data source for this research.

However, the election laws are provided in their original language on the dataset's website, which requires the translation of these laws for coding the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances. Understanding law texts that are written with specialized terminology requires expertise in the respective field of subject matter, which I do not have since I am not a law scholar. Acknowledging the challenging nature of my chosen method for collecting data, I have decided to drop two country cases (which are included in the ESCE dataset), Greece and Cyprus, which use the Roman alphabet, in order to avoid further limitations imposed by the language barrier. During the later stages of the data collection period, I encountered additional challenges where I had to drop two more countries, Luxembourg and Malta, from the analysis. This was due to missing law texts on the ESCE dataset's website, and my inability to find them online.¹ I have incorporated Turkey in the dataset as an additional country case. Periods of authoritarian or non-democratic rule have been excluded from the dataset.

The data are organized in election-year format with lagged independent variables. I have chosen to incorporate lagged independent variables because they allow us to examine the influence of past conditions on current outcomes, enabling us to uncover potential patterns and temporal dynamics. I have preferred one-term election lag since my aim in this dissertation is to capture the most immediate and recent historical political context that motivates politicians to modify electoral rules. The first observation in each case represents the first democratic elections following the transition to democracy. Consequently, the dataset includes a total of 340 observations for the 27 European countries, covering lower chamber elections that took place between 1945-2018 (Table 5.2). Some countries had multiple elections in certain years. For example, Denmark had two elections in 1953 (21 April and 22 September), Iceland had two elections in 1959 (28 June and 25 October), Ireland had two elections in 1982 (18 February and 24 November), and UK had two elections in 1974

¹I might have considered contacting authorities or country experts to obtain the missing texts, however, I decided not to spend additional time on this endeavor since my earlier attempts to consult foreign experts during the initial stages of the dissertation were mainly inconclusive.

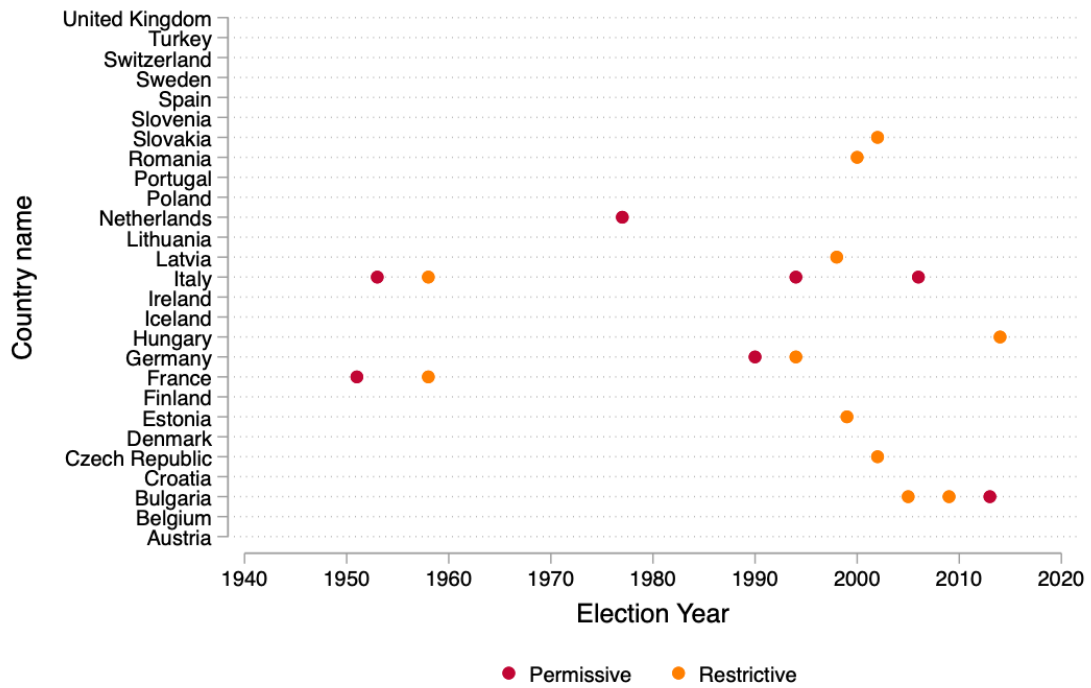
Table 5.2 Countries and lower chamber elections covered in the dataset

Country	Date of First Election	Date of Last Election	Number of Elections
Austria	13-May-56	15-Oct-17	19
Belgium	4-Jun-50	25-May-14	20
Bulgaria	18-Dec-94	26-Mar-17	8
Croatia	23-Nov-03	11-Sep-16	5
Czech Republic	31-May-96	21-Oct-17	7
Denmark	5-Sep-50	18-Jun-15	25
Estonia	7-Mar-99	1-Mar-15	5
Finland	3-Jul-51	19-Apr-15	18
France	17-Jun-51	11-Jun-17	17
Germany	15-Sep-57	24-Sep-17	17
Hungary	10-May-98	6-Apr-14	5
Iceland	24-Jun-56	28-Oct-17	17
Ireland	18-May-54	26-Feb-16	17
Italy	7-Jun-53	4-Mar-18	17
Latvia	3-Oct-98	6-Oct-18	7
Lithuania	8-Oct-00	9-Oct-16	5
Poland	21-Sep-97	25-Oct-15	6
Portugal	2-Dec-79	4-Oct-15	13
Romania	3-May-96	11-Dec-16	3
Slovakia	26-Sep-98	5-Mar-16	6
Slovenia	15-Oct-00	3-Jun-18	6
Spain	28-Oct-82	26-Jun-16	11
Sweden	26-Sep-56	9-Sep-18	20
Switzerland	30-Oct-55	18-Oct-15	16
Netherlands	25-Jun-52	15-Mar-17	20
United Kingdom	25-Oct-51	8-Jun-17	17
Turkey	12-Oct-69	12-Jun-11	10

(28 February and 10 October).

During the study period of 1945 and 2018, a total of 18 changes were made to the rules governing interparty electoral coordination. It is important to note that certain countries initiated multiple changes, contributing to this overall figure. With an average of 0.66 changes per country, the observed variations in the number of incidences of change per case range from zero (0) for Austria, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK, to five (4) for Italy. These figures shed light on the dynamic nature of rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination and underscore the significance of understanding the diverse experiences and approaches to electoral system change among the included countries. Figure 5.1 provides a summary of the incidences of change, restrictive changes, and permissive changes in the dataset.

Figure 5.1 Number of permissive and restrictive changes by country



The figure shows that out of 18 incidences of change, 11 were restrictive whereas 7 were permissive changes. Some countries made no changes. Some countries made only restrictive changes whereas others implemented both restrictive and permissive changes. The only country that made only a permissive change is the Netherlands. The table also demonstrates a proliferation in the number of incidences of change after the 1990s. This is primarily due to the democratization of the post-communist countries. One might consider excluding all cases in which not a single instance of change occurred during the study period. However, this would not be a good idea for several reasons. Excluding cases with no incidence of change could lead to a biased sample which only includes countries with incidence of change. This might result in reaching wrong conclusions since cases with no incidence of change could provide important information regarding factors affecting the likelihood of change. Keeping cases with no instances of change also helps us to understand the barriers and constraints that restrict the feasible option for politicians to implement change.

5.4 Operationalizing Hypotheses

5.4.1 Party System Fragmentation

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 examine the effect of party system fragmentation on the likelihood of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. While the first hypothesis focuses on the undifferentiated effect of party system fragmentation on parties, subsequent hypotheses focus on the differentiated effect of party system fragmentation based on different ideological clusters. For the purpose of the study, therefore, party system fragmentation is measured using the effective number of electoral parties (denoted as ENEP). Following (Laakso and Taagepera 1979), the effective number of electoral parties is defined as being equal to the inverse sum of the squared values representing each party's proportion of the votes (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). This formula can be mathematically expressed as follows:

$$(5.1) \quad \frac{1}{\sum v_i^2}$$

Where v_i is the percentage of the legislative seats won by the i th party.

The 2nd, 3rd and 4th hypotheses assess the differentiated effects of party system fragmentation on parliamentary parties in different ideological clusters. In order to measure this I followed the procedure proposed by Issever-Ekinici (2023, 10) which she referred to as the 'effective number of parties in ideological clusters':

“First, the main government party (the party with the highest vote share) and the main opposition party (the runner up) are identified in an election. Then, other parties are categorised according to their ideological distance from the main government party and the main opposition party. That is, if Party A is closer to the party in government, then Party A is included in the government party's ideological bloc. The rationale here is that voters of Party A are potentially more willing to vote for the party in government than the main opposition party. After assigning parties to the ideological blocs of main party government and opposition, the vote share of each party is weighted by the total vote of parties in a given bloc, except for the main parties. Finally, the effective number

of parties for the governing party (and for the main opposition party) cluster is calculated where the vote share of each party is normalised by the total vote received by all parties in the same ideological bloc.”

The formula is mathematically expressed as follows (Issever-Ekinci 2023, 11):

$$(5.2) \quad \frac{1}{\sum_{n=1}^{NG} \hat{P}_n^2}$$

Where NG is the number of parties belonging to an ideological bloc G in an election. The same formula is used for calculating both the effective number of parties in the largest party and the 2nd largest party ideological clusters. The variable of the effective number of parties is adopted from the *Manifesto Project Dataset (MPD)* (MPD, 2023). The effective number of parties by ideological blocs is calculated by the author using the *Parliaments and Governments Database, (ParlGov)* (Döring 2022).

5.4.2 Electoral Volatility

Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 assess the effect of electoral volatility on the likelihood of changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. Hypothesis 4 focuses on the effect of total volatility while Hypotheses 5 and 6 examine the differentiated effect of electoral volatility on parties based on ideological clusters. For these purposes, therefore, two different measures of electoral volatility are calculated: Total volatility, and new party volatility within ideological clusters.

In order to assess the effect of total volatility, I employ the Pedersen Index (Pedersen 1979), as one of the most common measures of aggregate stability and variation in the party system, calculated as follows (Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017):

“all the votes (p) received by each party (w) at election t (pwt) are subtracted from all the votes received by each party at election t – 1 (pwt–1). The differences are turned into absolute numbers and then summed up and divided by two. The result gives an idea of the size of the change in votes among parties when comparing election t + 1 and election t.”

The Pedersen Index can be mathematically expressed as follows:

$$(5.3) \quad \frac{\sum |V_{i,t-1} - V_{i,t}|}{2}$$

The second measure of volatility, new party volatility in ideological clusters is measured following Nunez and Jacobs (2016, 386) formula of the new party volatility index, which “reflects only the share of votes for parties which compete in election t but not run in election t-1”. The formula for the New Volatility Index is mathematically expressed as follows:

$$(5.4) \quad \frac{\sum |V_{i,t}|}{2}$$

The next step involved calculating electoral volatility in ideological clusters. After calculating party system fragmentation in ideological clusters according to the formula outlined previously, I calculated new party volatility by ideological cluster. Even though the formula of electoral volatility is straightforward, calculating it requires consideration over which parties are counted as new. Bértoa, Deegan-Krause, and Haughton (2017) demonstrate how various decisions over how to decide successors after a party split and predecessors over a party merger affect the results a researcher can get. Since the purpose of this study to measure new party volatility in ideological clusters and assess the extent of vote shifts from the largest party within a cluster to new parties, a flexible criterion was adopted. All new parties that run in time ‘t’ but not in time ‘t-1’ are coded as new parties. This categorization was done after careful consideration to determine whether they are genuinely new parties or pre-electoral coalitions of older parties with different names. The total volatility scores are obtained from Alan Siaroff’s book, *Comparative European Party Systems* (Siaroff 2018) since available datasets have too many missing values for the countries in the dataset of this dissertation.² New party volatility is calculated by the author using the *Parliaments and Governments Database, (ParlGov)* (Döring 2022). Since I have adopted a flexible criterion for calculating volatility, it is important to note that this measure is not different from simply taking the vote share of the new parties into consideration. The only benefit of using volatility rather than the vote share of the new parties therefore would be to maintain a terminological similarity between binomial and multinomial analyses.

²A logical and more appropriate option would be calculating total volatility scores myself. However, as outlined above calculating volatility score requires a careful examination of parties in order to identify party splits and mergers. However, this was not a feasible option for due to time constraints.

5.4.3 Disproportionality

Hypotheses 7 focus on the effect of electoral system disproportionality on the likelihood of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. The level of disproportionality is measured using the Gallagher Index also referred to as the Least Square Index (Gallagher and Mitchell 2005). The index calculates difference between a party's seat share and vote share, and can be mathematically expressed as follows:

$$(5.5) \quad \sqrt{\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n (V_i - S_i^2)}$$

5.4.4 Age of Democracy

The age of democracy refers to the duration in years since a country made its transition to a democratic system. If multiple transitions occur in a given country, the year from the most recent transition is taken into consideration. This variable is adopted from the Polity Project, PolityV Dataset (Marshall 2021). The PolityV Dataset categorizes regimes as with a polity score between -10 to -6 as autocracies, -5 to 5 as democracies, and 6 to 10 as democracies (Marshall 2021). Since the purpose of this study is to see whether the age of democracy changes the probability of change as well as the direction of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination, polity scores lower than 6 are coded as zero.

5.5 Control Variables

I use two control variables in the empirical analyses. The first one is economic performance, measured as the annual change in the real GDP per capita. By including GDP as a control variable, my aim is to account for the potential influence of economic factors on the relationship between independent and dependent variables in

this study. The literature shows that the economic performance of governing parties may result in vote shifts to other parties. This possibility may affect their decision over changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

I also use the Political Constraints Index which measures whether a change in the preferences of any political actor led to a change in government policy (Henisz 2022). The index is composed of the following information: the number of independent branches of government with veto power over policy change, counting the executive and the presence of an effective lower and upper house in the legislature (more branches leading to more constraint); the extent of party alignment across branches of government, measured as the extent to which the same party or coalition of parties control each branch (decreasing the level of constraint); and the extent of preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch, measured as legislative fractionalization in the relevant house (increasing constraint for aligned executives, decreasing it for opposed executives). The index scores range from 0 to 1, with higher scores indicating more political constraint and thus less feasibility of policy change. I use this index because it is important to assess the relative power of potential veto players in a given country who have enough power to resist a change in the election rules.

5.6 The Model(s): Logistic Regression with MLE

To assess the effects of the independent variables described earlier, logistic regression is employed as the most suitable estimator for categorical dependent variables (Long and Freese 2006). Specifically, the binary logit model is used for the change variable, while the multinomial logit model is applied for the type of change variable. This choice is informed by the fact that the dependent variables consist of categories without an ordering, making ordinary least square estimation inappropriate. In Appendix B, a comparison of analysis for the dependent variable change through three different logit procedures is made available.

6. FINDINGS

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the dissertation. Table 6.1 presents the descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analyses. Before exploring the direction of change in the rules governing inter-party pre-electoral coordination, Section 6.1 presents the results of the analyses on change to understand whether, first and foremost, the explanatory variables of the dissertation have any impact on the probability of change. Section 6.2 presents the results of the analyses on the direction of change to discuss further the effects of explanatory variables on the incidents of permissive and restrictive changes.

6.1 Change in the Rules Governing Pre-electoral Alliance Formation

Table 6.2 presents the result of multivariate logistic regression analysis for four separate models. Model 1 measures the effect of the effective number of parties, electoral volatility, and disproportionality. Model 2 and Model 3 sequentially introduce ideological polarization and democratic age. Model 4 is the full model with control variables GDP and Political Constraints Index.

One of the main independent variables of this dissertation is the effective number of parties as the measure of party system fragmentation. Hypothesis 1 suggests that an increase in the effective number of parties increases the likelihood of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination. However, the effect of this variable is not statistically significant in none of the four models, indicating that the effective number of parties is not a good predictor of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

Another main independent variable of this dissertation is electoral volatility. Hypothesis 4 posits that an increase in the level of electoral volatility increases the

Table 6.1 Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Change	340	0.053	0.224	0	1
Type of change	340	0.085	0.378	0	2
ENEP	340	4.098	1.348	1.98	9.13
Electoral Volatility	340	14.162	10.76	0.5	63.9
Disproportionality	340	5.157	4.725	0.31	26.35
ENEP in the largest party' ideological cluster	340	2.11	0.991	1	6.133
ENEP in the 2nd largest party' ideological cluster	340	2.559	1.171	1	8.062
New Party Volatility in the Largest Party's Ideological Cluster	340	1.976	4.952	0	26.935
New Party Volatility in the 2nd Largest Party's Ideological Cluster	340	2.203	4.622	0	25
Ideological Polarization	340	1.593	0.785	0.23	3.97
Age of Democracy (logged)	340	3.418	0.939	0.693	5.106
Permissiveness Index					
0- Least permissive	340	0.168	0.374	0	1
1	340	0.026	0.161	0	1
2	340	0.065	0.246	0	1
3	340	0.041	0.199	0	1
4	340	0.421	0.494	0	1
5	340	0.021	0.142	0	1
6	340	0.059	0.236	0	1
7	340	0.015	0.121	0	1
8- Most Permissive	340	0.185	0.389	0	1
Political Constraints Index	340	0.45	0.113	0	0.691
GDP (logged)	340	9.85	0.507	8.479	10.98

likelihood of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination. Unlike the effective number of parties, the effect of electoral volatility is significant across four models, suggesting that electoral volatility is a predictor of change in the rules that regulate how parties form pre-electoral alliances. This result supports one of the theoretical expectations of the dissertation: parties are more likely to respond to the instabilities within the party system when these instabilities are resulted by electoral volatility. Building on rational choice theory, I have previously stated that the existing instabilities within the party system, regardless of their underlying causes, combined with the proliferation of electoral and parliamentary parties, often require parties to make prospective cost-benefit evaluations. However, parties may lack this long-term vision to proactively modify electoral rules to avoid potential vote loss. It is when their concerns become reality that parties are more likely to act. In other words, when parties already experienced other parties drawing votes from their support base, they respond accordingly. Hence, electoral volatility, defined as the “net change within the electoral party system resulting from individual vote transfers [from one election to another]” (Pedersen 1979, 3), may serve as a stronger indicator (than party system fragmentation) for predicting changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

Although electoral volatility is a strong predictor of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation, its strength varies across models. Model 3 intro-

Table 6.2 Change in the rules that regulate interparty pre-electoral coordination: maximum likelihood model

	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)
ENEP	-.069 (.206)	-.042 (.197)	.068 (.25)	.088 (.254)
Electoral Volatility	.74*** (.02)	.07*** (.022)	.055** (.025)	.056** (.026)
Disproportionality	-.145** (.07)	-.148** (.07)	-.228** (.114)	-.266** (.128)
Ideological Polarization		-.251 (.319)	-.054 (.338)	-.161 (.335)
Democratic Age (logged)			-1.143*** (.302)	-.84** (.424)
GDP (logged)				-1.068 (.97)
Political Constraints Index				.861 (3.075)
Constant	-3.267*** (.91)	-2.927*** (1.082)	.262 (1.524)	9.532 (8.305)
Observations	340	340	340	340
Pseudo R²	.109	.112	.222	.236

Notes: Robust standard errors are in parentheses

*** p<.01, ** p<.05, * p<.1

duces one additional variable, democratic age. When controlled for democratic age, the positive effect of electoral volatility remains statistically significant; however, it slightly weakens from Model 1 to Model 3, and remains almost the same in Model 4 when two control variables, GDP and Political Constraints Index, are introduced into the model.

As discussed before, electoral reform literature often associates electoral volatility with being a source of uncertainty. To take uncertainties created by electoral volatility into consideration, Hypothesis 7 suggests that electoral volatility increases the likelihood of permissive change (or decreases the likelihood of change at all) under high levels of disproportionality. To examine this hypothesis on the conditional relationship between disproportionality and electoral volatility, one would consider introducing an interaction term to the model. Berry and his colleagues, however, argue that in non-linear models, the effect of one variable on the outcome is influenced by the presence and values of other variables in the model (Berry, DeMeritt, and Esarey 2010, 244). Therefore, this inherent interactivity may make introducing additional interaction terms redundant (Berry, DeMeritt, and Esarey 2010, 253). To decide whether to introduce an interaction term into a given model, other scholars suggest comparing the model fit statistics of models with and without an interaction term (Zhirnov, Moral, and Sedashov 2023; Moral 2022). Following the approach of Zhirnov, Moral, and Sedashov (2023), I conducted a similar comparison and concluded that introducing an interaction term to the model was unnecessary. The comparison revealed no significant difference in the model fit between the two versions (see Appendix B for model fit statistics for the model with and without interaction terms).

Moreover, all four models show a significant negative effect of disproportionality. Even though the main focus of this dissertation is its conditioning effect, the direct effect of disproportionality on the probability of change is also worthy of further explanation. Its significance is not only evident across four models, but the negative effect of disproportionality on the likelihood of change demonstrates increasing strength from Model 1 to Model 4.

Using the effective number of parties and electoral volatility as the primary independent variables in this dissertation, I analyze my theoretical expectations formulated based on rational choice theory. Additionally, I employ the variable of the democratic age to examine the theoretical expectations concerning historical institutionalism. Hypothesis 8 suggests that established democracies are less likely to change the election rules that regulate how parties form pre-electoral alliances. The variable of democratic age has a significant negative effect on the likelihood of rule change in

Models 2 and 3, thereby confirming my theoretical expectations.

While Table 6.2 provides information about the relationship between variables, this information should be approached with caution. This is primarily because the magnitude of the effects of the variables cannot be explored by looking at the coefficients in logistic regression (Long and Freese 2006, 228). One of the most common methods to explore the magnitude of the effects of the variables in logistic regression is to compute and plot the marginal effects, holding other variables constant at their mean values.¹ Marginal effects, therefore, provide an interpretable measure of the effect size. Moreover, the results of the regression analyses do not provide any insight into whether the main independent variables have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of change in the rules regulating pre-electoral alliance formation at different values of the other independent variables. Therefore, graphical illustrations of the effects are necessary.

Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.1 plots the predicted probability of change at different values of electoral volatility, holding other variables constant at their mean values. The graph shows how the probability of rule change increases with electoral volatility. In order to plot predicted probabilities, Stata requires first to calculate adjusted predictions (aka predictive margins) (Uberti 2022). Adjusted predictions show the predicted probability of observing the outcome variable at different values of the explanatory variable(s).

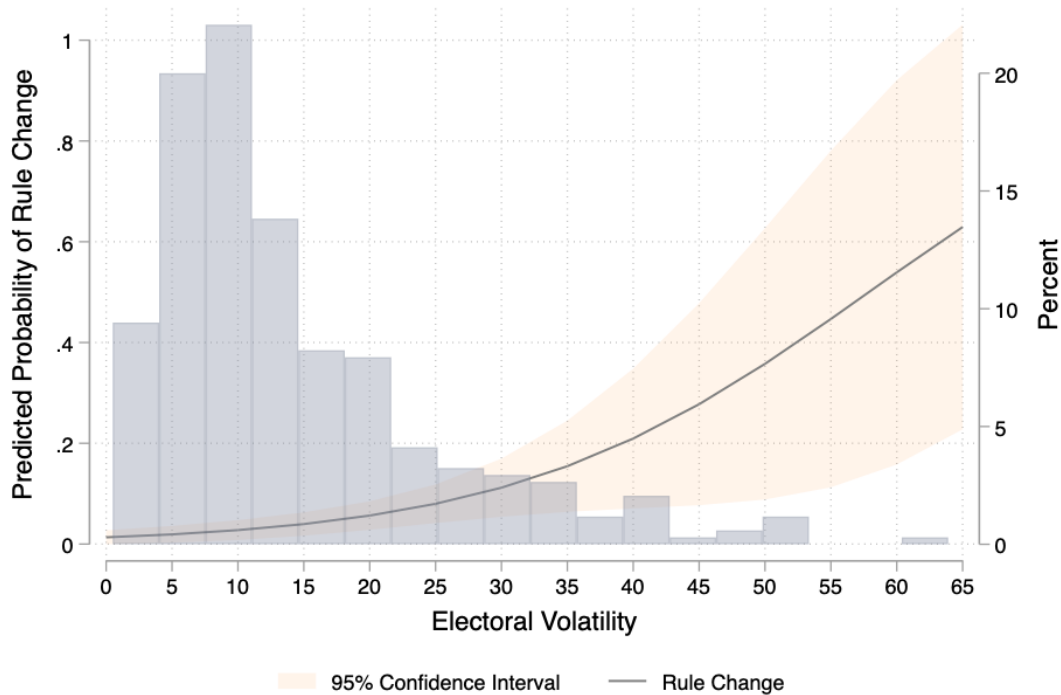
“Adjusted predictions can make these [logistic regression] results more tangible. With adjusted prediction, you specify values for each of the independent variables in the model and then compute the probability of the event occurring for an individual who has those values” (Williams 2012, 311).

Probability plots allow us to determine the probability of the outcome variable at specific values of the explanatory variable(s) by reading from the vertical axis (Uberti 2022, 63). In our case, predictive margins show the probability of rule change at different levels of electoral volatility. As the figure demonstrates, when the level of electoral volatility is 5 percent, the predicted probability of change is .0192879 (1.93 percent). When the level of electoral volatility increases to 35 percent, the predicted probability of change increases to .1544764 (15.45 percent). Since there are very few observations when electoral volatility is higher than 40 percent, the

¹While calculating marginal effects, the common practice in the field is to hold other independent variables constant at their mean, median or mode values. However, Zhirnov and colleagues (2023) suggest computing distributed average marginal effect especially when there is a multiplicative interaction term in the model.

confidence intervals become larger, and make it difficult to interpret the probability of change when volatility is higher than 40 percent. Nevertheless, this graph clearly demonstrates the positive effect of electoral volatility on the predicted probability of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

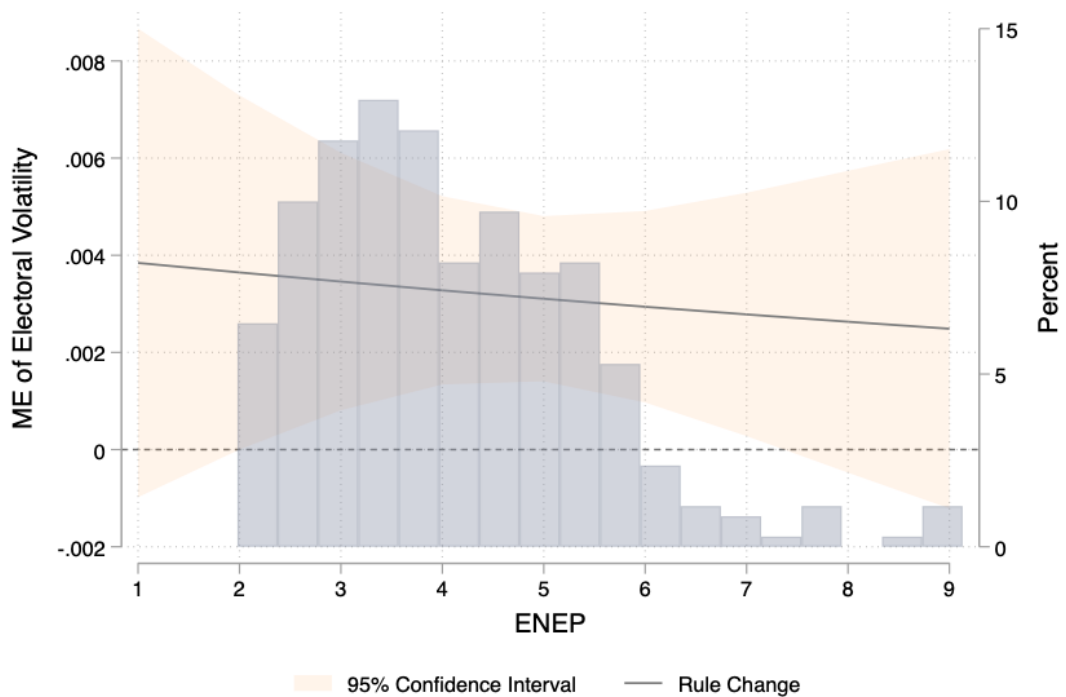
Figure 6.1 Predicted probability of rule change as electoral volatility changes



Average marginal effect is defined as “the mean of the marginal effect computed at the observed values for all observations in the estimation sample” (Long and Freese 2006, 243). The average marginal effect of electoral volatility is .0023684 (Estimated from Model 4). Marginal effects, however, “vary by the level of the variables” (Long and Freese 2006, 244). Therefore, building on previous scholars, Long and Freese (2006, 244) suggest calculating “marginal effects at different levels of the explanatory variables to get an idea of the range of variation of the resulting changes in probabilities”. The subsequent four figures, therefore, plot the marginal effect of electoral volatility as the effective number of parties changes, as the level of disproportionality changes, as democracies get older, and as political constraints solidify respectively. Estimated from Model 1, Figure 6.2 presents the average marginal effect of electoral volatility on rule change at different values of effective number of parties while holding other independent variables in the model at their mean values. The figure shows that electoral volatility has a statistically significant negative effect on rule change when the effective number of parties is between 2 and 8. This effect, however, does not significantly vary along different values of the effective number

of parties. When the effective number of parties is 2, for instance, the marginal effect of electoral volatility is .0036472 (0.36 percent). When the effective number of parties increases to 6, the marginal effect of electoral volatility slightly decreases to .0029409 (0.29 percent). Therefore, we should note that the marginal effect of electoral volatility does not vary much at different values of the effective number of parties.

Figure 6.2 Average marginal effect of electoral volatility as effective number of parties changes

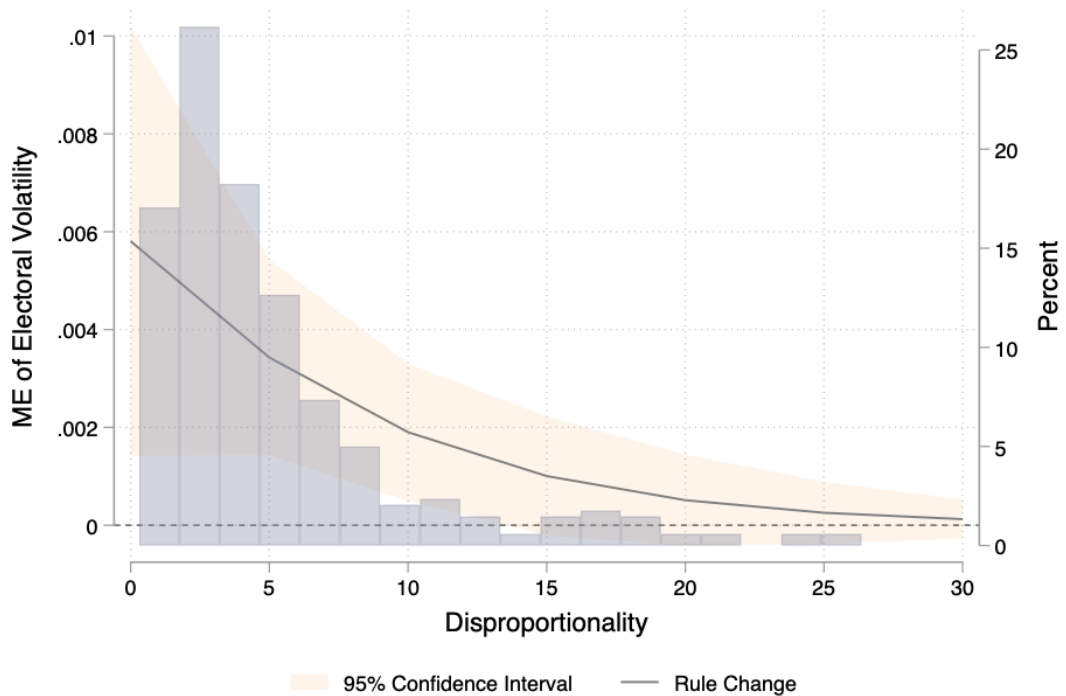


Estimated from Model 1, the next figure, Figure 6.3, plots the marginal effect of electoral volatility at different values of disproportionality. The graph shows that electoral volatility has a statistically significant positive marginal effect on change when the level of disproportionality is less than 13 percent. However, this effect declines as the level of disproportionality increases. Electoral volatility stops having a statistically significant effect on change once the level of disproportionality is more than 13 percent. Roughly 75 percent of observations in the sample have produced a disproportionality lower than this. Hence, the results presented here clearly indicate that electoral volatility has a statistically significant effect on change when the disproportionality is moderate.

This result provides support for my theoretical expectations of the effect of electoral volatility on the likelihood of change under higher levels of disproportionality. I have previously suggested that under high levels of electoral disproportionality, it is

difficult to predict parties' responses to the instabilities in the party system. The key here is the level of uncertainty resulting from electoral volatility. Riera (2013, 23) argues that a willingness to make the system more proportional exceptionally goes hand in hand with contexts of high volatility. Parties face the overwhelming challenge of guaranteeing their own survival and the difficulties of doing this in highly volatile contexts. Therefore, they may follow a maximin approach, which minimizes their risk of losing the status quo situation (Renwick 2010, 56-7). The figure clearly demonstrates that under higher levels of disproportionality, the marginal effect of electoral volatility decreases. For instance, when the level of disproportionality is around 1 percent, the marginal effect of electoral volatility is .0058062 (0.58 percent). When the level of disproportionality is around 13 percent, however, the marginal effect of electoral volatility decreases to .0013045 (0.13 percent).

Figure 6.3 Average marginal effect of electoral volatility as disproportionality changes



Estimated from Model 3, the next figure (Figure 6.4) plots the marginal effect of electoral volatility on rule change at different levels of democratic experience. According to the figure, electoral volatility has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on change as the democratic experience is lower than 19 years. When the democratic experience is 2 years, for instance, the marginal effect of electoral volatility on change is .0118158 (1.18 percent). When the democratic experience is 19 years, however, the marginal effect of electoral volatility decreases to .0019618 (0.20 percent).

Figure 6.4 Average marginal effect of electoral volatility as democratic age changes

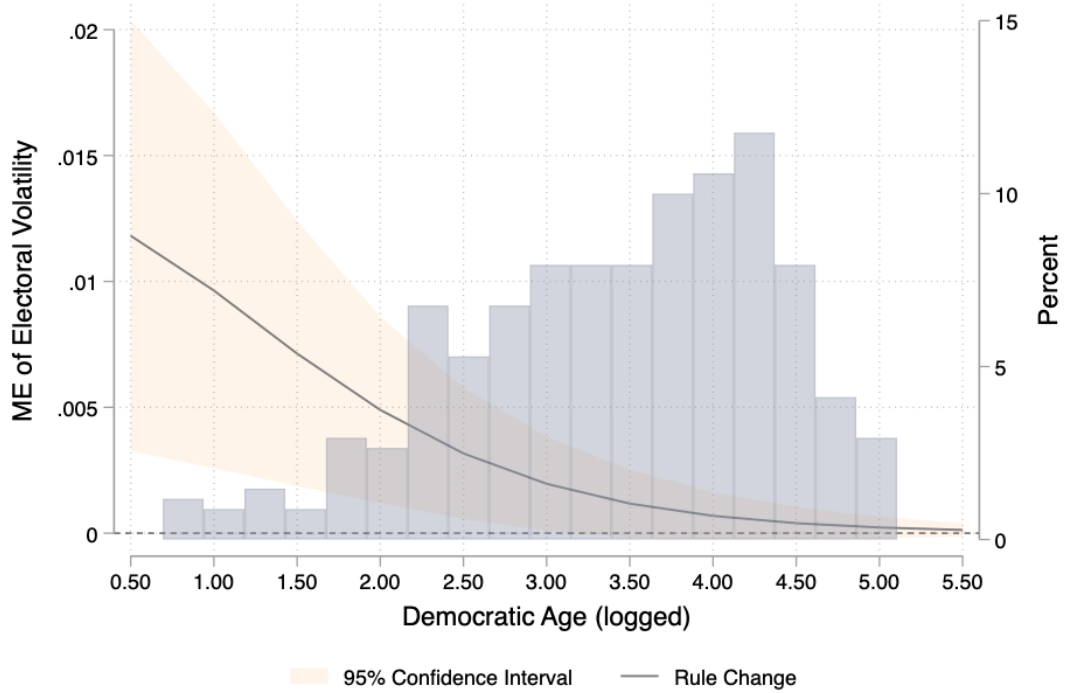
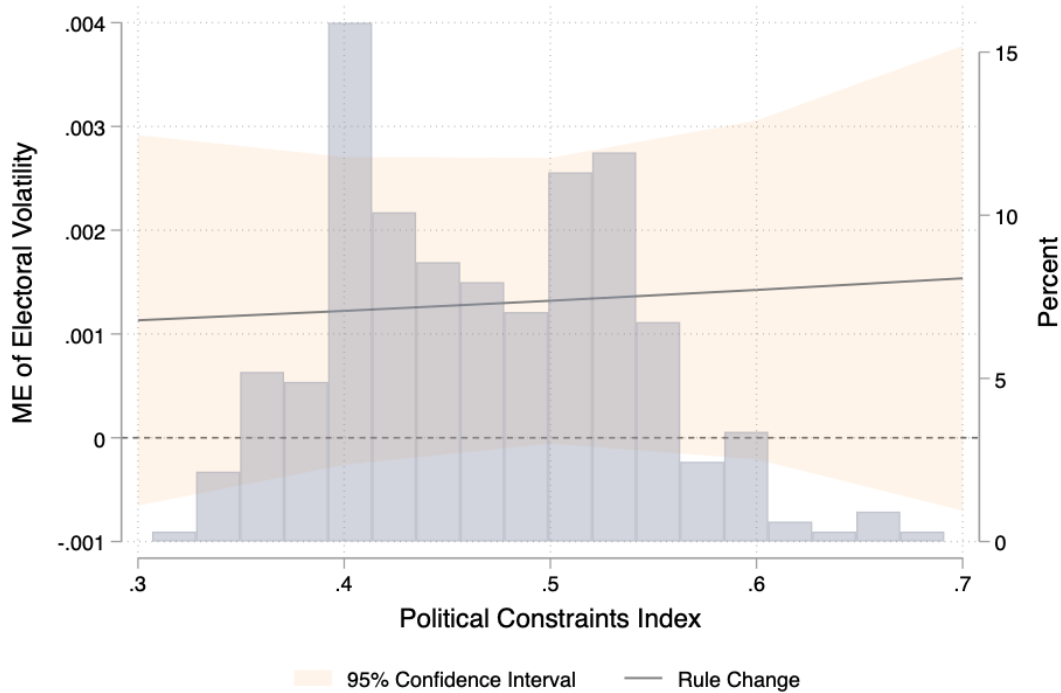


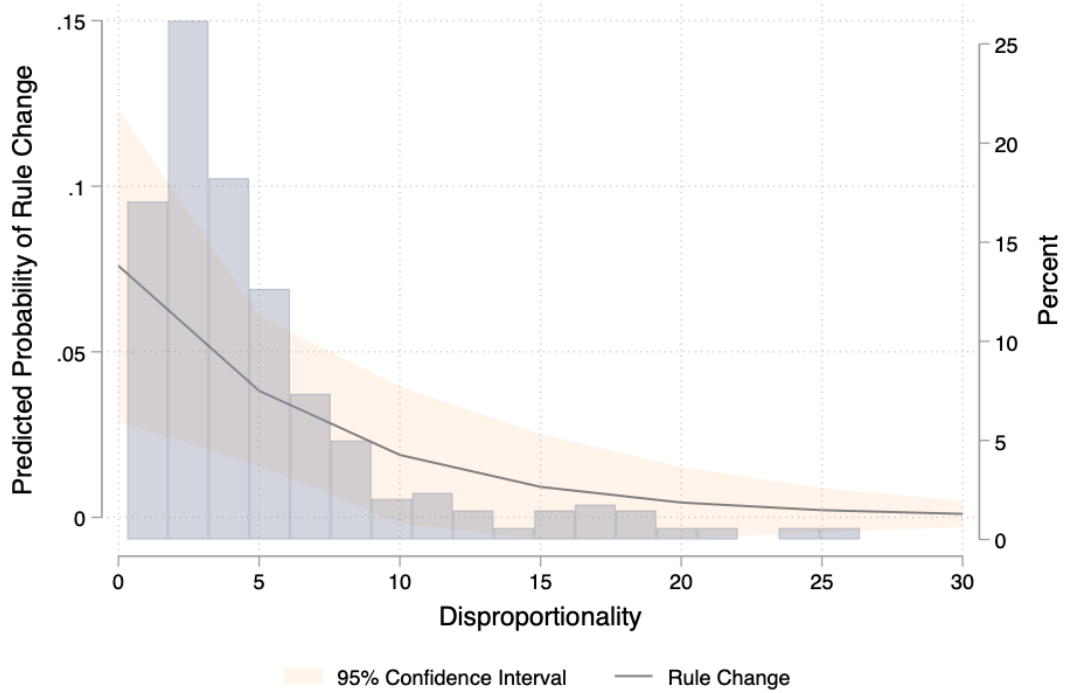
Figure 6.5 plots the marginal effect of electoral volatility as political constraints solidify. The figure shows no statistically significant marginal effect of electoral volatility on rule change as political constraints change.

Figure 6.5 Average marginal effect of electoral volatility as political constraints solidify



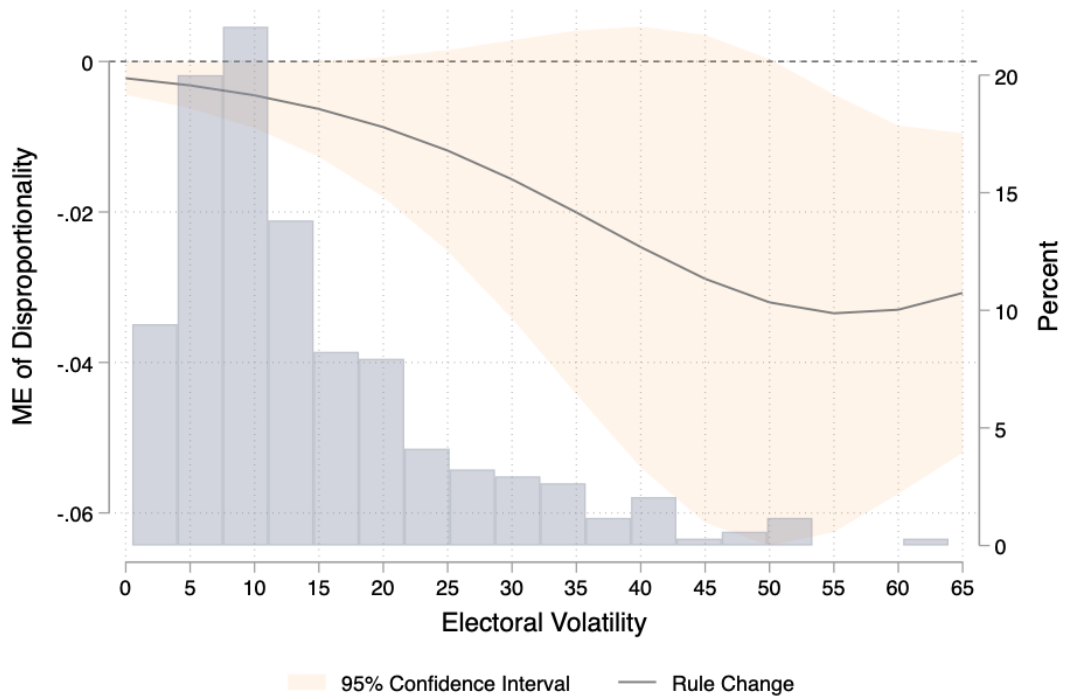
As stated before, disproportionality has a statistically significant negative effect across all four models. The following graphs explore the magnitude of this effect. Estimated from Model 1, Figure 6.6 plots the predicted probability of rule change as the level of disproportionality changes. The graph shows how the probability of rule change decreases with disproportionality. When the level of disproportionality is around 2 percent, for instance, the predicted probability of change is .0579146 (5.79 percent). When the level of disproportionality increases to 9 percent, the probability of rule change decreases to .0217386 (2.17 percent).

Figure 6.6 Predicted probability of rule change as disproportionality changes



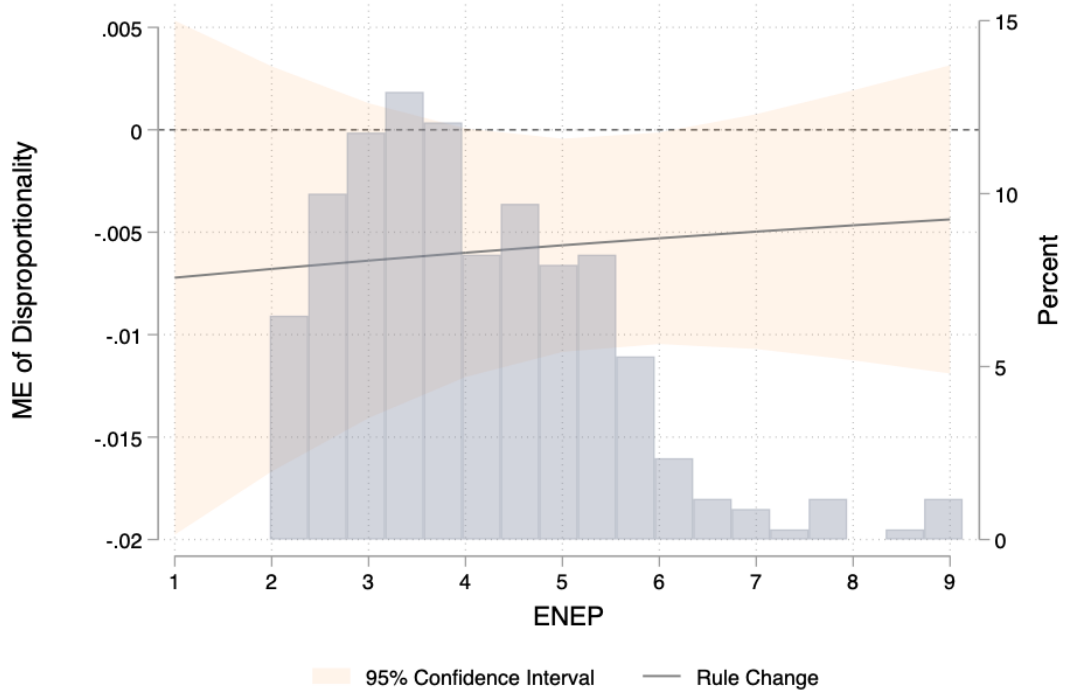
The average marginal effect of disproportionality is $-.0112945$ (Estimated from Model 4). Since marginal effects vary at different values of the explanatory variables, the following figures explore the marginal effect of disproportionality as the level of volatility changes, as the effective number of parties changes, as democracies get older, and as political constraints solidify. Estimated from Model 1 Figure 6.7 plots the marginal effect of disproportionality on rule change as electoral volatility changes. The figure shows no statistically significant effect of disproportionality at different values of electoral volatility.

Figure 6.7 Marginal effect of disproportionality as electoral volatility changes



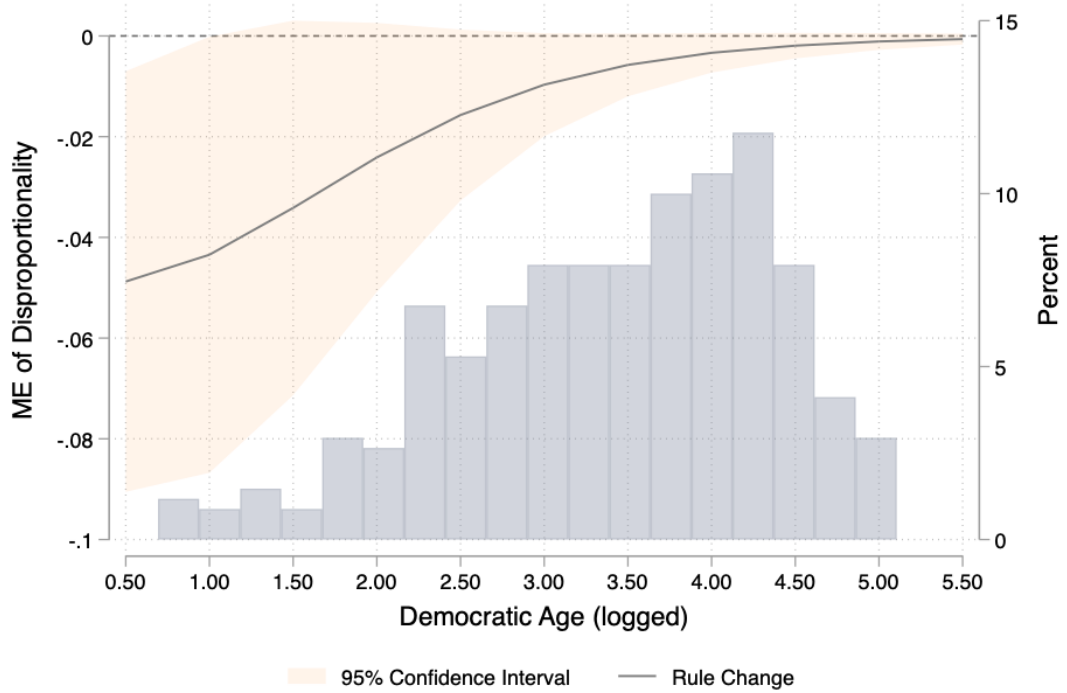
Estimated from Model 1, Figure 6.8 plots the marginal effect of disproportionality as the effective number of parties changes. Disproportionality has a barely significant marginal effect only when the effective number of parties is between 5 and 6. When the effective number of parties is 5, the marginal effect of disproportionality is $-.005637$. When the effective number of parties is 6, the marginal effect of disproportionality is $-.0052933$. However, as the figure also demonstrates, the effect does not vary too much across different values of the effective number of parties. Since the marginal effect of disproportionality at different values of the effective number of parties is so small and does not vary significantly, we should note that it is not a substantial effect.

Figure 6.8 Marginal effect of disproportionality as effective number of parties changes



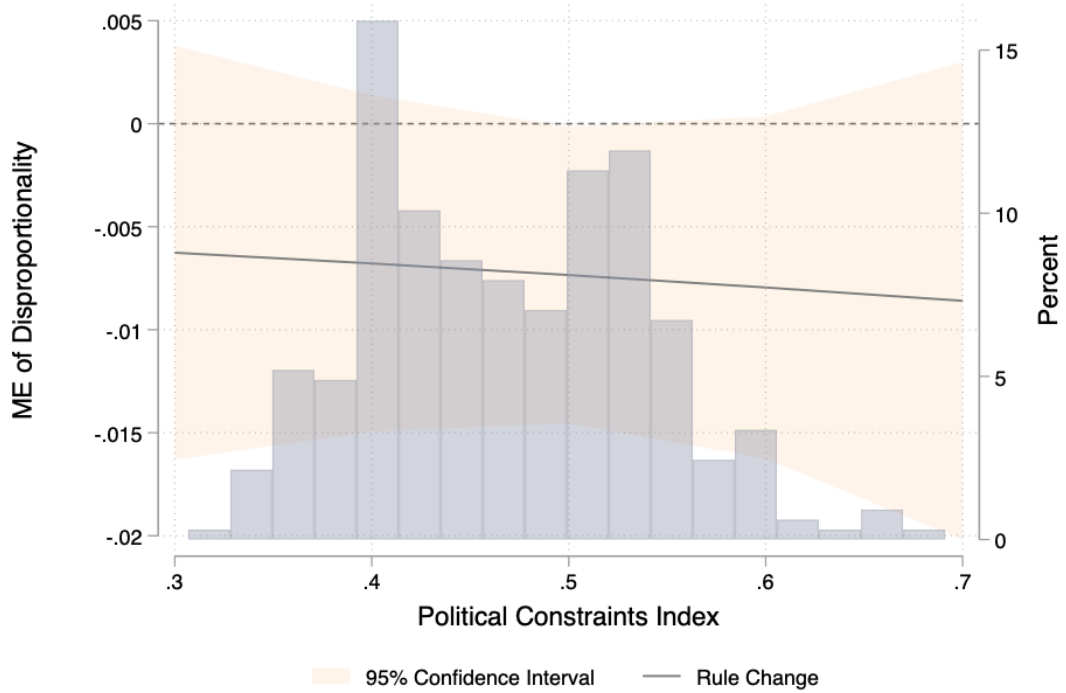
Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.9 plots the marginal effect of disproportionality on rule change as democracies get older. It has a statistically significant negative marginal effect only when countries have less than and equal to one year of democratic experience. Since there are very few observations when countries have such a limited democratic experience, as confidence intervals demonstrate, this marginal effect is neither substantial nor insightful for the analysis.

Figure 6.9 Marginal effect of disproportionality as democratic age changes



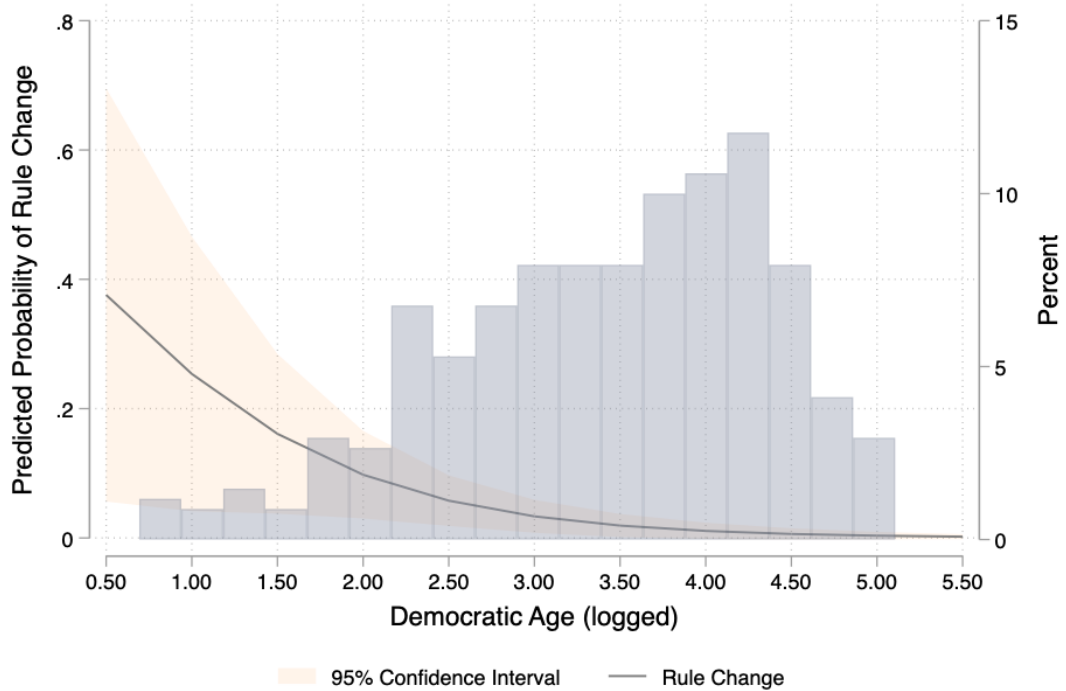
Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.10 plots the marginal effect of disproportionality on rule change as political constraints solidify. The figure demonstrates that the marginal effect of disproportionality is statistically significant when the level of political constraints is around .5. At this value of the political constraints index, the marginal effect of disproportionality is $-.0074833$.

Figure 6.10 Marginal effect of disproportionality as political constraints change



The third independent variable of the dissertation is the democratic age. Model 3 and Model 4 in Table 6.2 demonstrate that the democratic age has a significant negative effect on the probability of rule change. The subsequent figures explore the magnitude of this effect. Figure 6.11 illustrates how the predicted probability of rule change decreases as the democratic age increases. When the democratic age is 5 (corresponds to the logged value of 1.79), the probability of rule change is .1198781 (11.99 percent). When the democratic age increases to 30 (corresponds to the logged value of 3.43), however, the probability of rule change decreases to .0213948 (2.14 percent). This substantial effect confirms the theoretical expectations of this dissertation on the relationship between democratic experience and the probability of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

Figure 6.11 Predicted probability of rule change as democratic age changes



As estimated from Model 3, the average marginal effect of the democratic age is -0.0491402 . The next figure, Figure 6.12 plots the marginal effect of the democratic age on rule change as the effective number of parties changes. The figure shows that the marginal effect of the democratic age is statistically significant when the effective number of parties is equal to lower than 5. However, this effect does not vary significantly according to the different number of parties. When the effective number of parties is 2, for instance, the marginal effect is -0.0316046 . When the effective number of parties increases to 5, the marginal effect decreases to -0.0374159 , indicating that the marginal effect of the democratic age does not vary too much by the effective number of parties.

Figure 6.12 Marginal effect of democratic age as effective number of parties changes

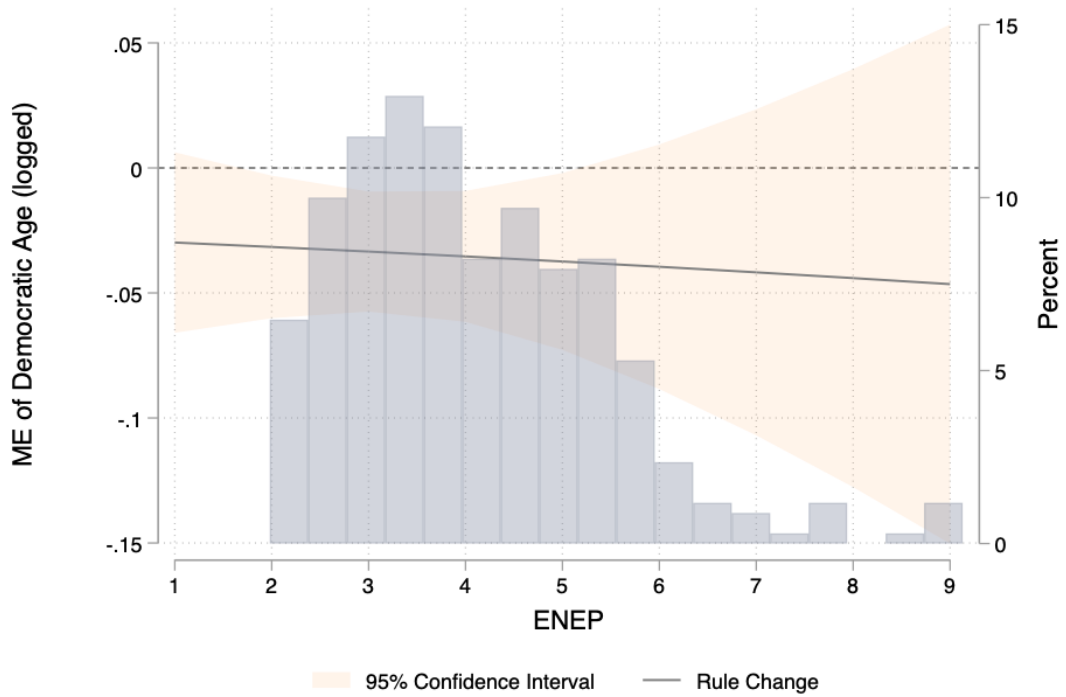


Figure 6.13 plots the marginal effect of the democratic age as electoral volatility changes. The figure demonstrates that the democratic age has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on rule change at different values of electoral volatility. Notably, this effect becomes statistically significant when electoral volatility is higher than 10 percent. At a level of electoral volatility of 15 percent, the marginal effect is -0.0369484 . As electoral volatility increases to 35 percent, the marginal effect further changes to -0.0830943 . This result demonstrates the negative marginal effect of the democratic age on rule change under conditions of higher levels of electoral volatility, with the effect becoming stronger in volatile party systems.

Figure 6.13 Marginal effect of democratic age as volatility changes

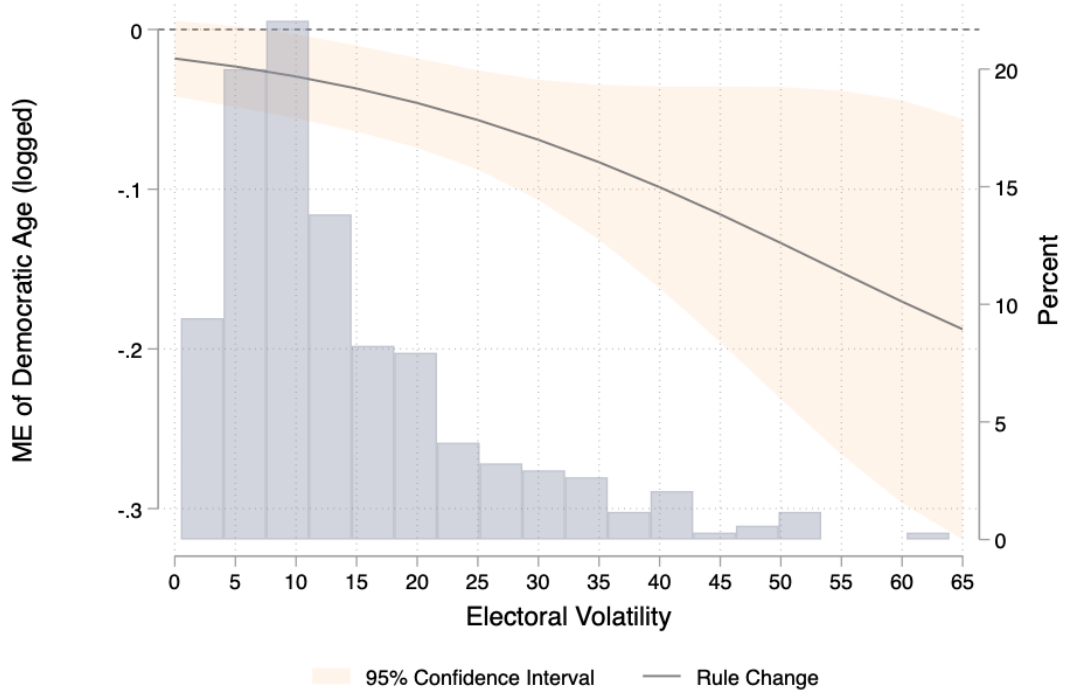
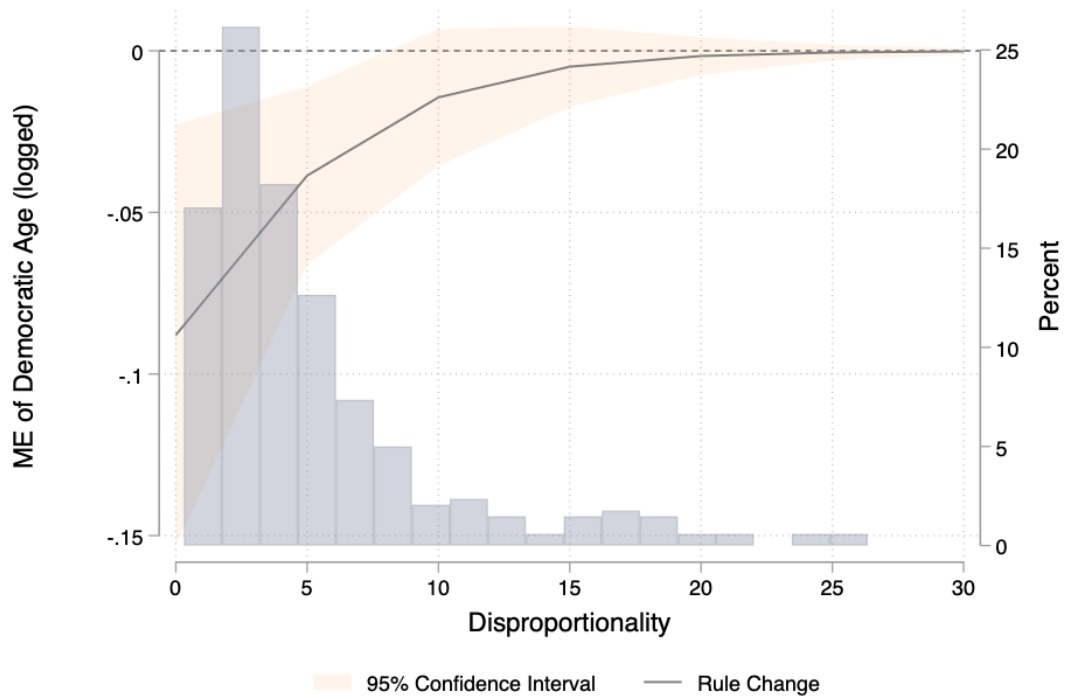


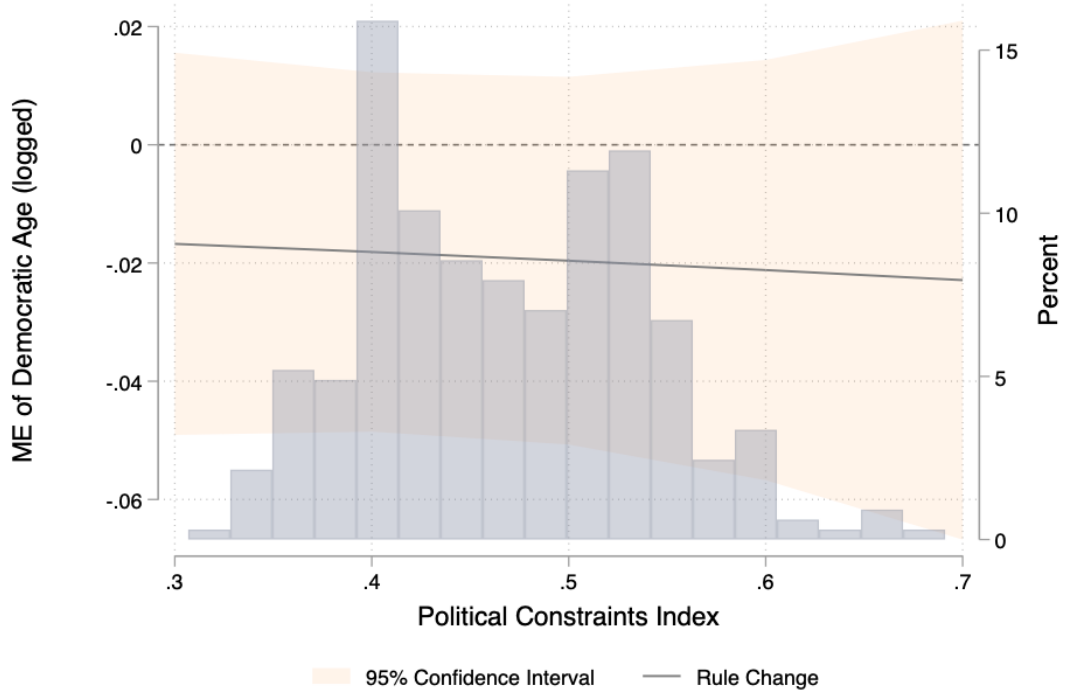
Figure 6.14 plots the marginal effect of democratic age on rule change at different levels of disproportionality. The figure reveals a statistically significant effect of democratic age when the level of disproportionality remains below 8 percent. Specifically, when it is 2 percent, the marginal effect of the democratic age is -0.0758261 , suggesting a substantial negative marginal effect on rule change as the democratic age increases. However, as the level of disproportionality increases to 7 percent, the marginal effect of the democratic age decreases to -0.0320521 . This result suggests that the marginal effect of the democratic age on rule change gets weaker as the level of disproportionality increases.

Figure 6.14 Marginal effect of democratic age as disproportionality changes



Finally, Figure 6.15 displays the marginal effect of the democratic age concerning changes in the levels of political constraints index. However, the figure depicts no statistically significant marginal effect of democratic age on rule change in response to changes in the strength of political constraints.

Figure 6.15 Marginal effect of democratic age as political constraints solidify



6.2 Direction of Change

The previous section investigates the effects of party system fragmentation, disproportionality, electoral volatility, and democratic age on the probability of change. The dependent variable, change, indicates whether change occurs or not. This section enhances the depth of the analysis from the previous section by employing different approaches to the two key issues. Firstly, it examines how party system fragmentation and volatility affect ideological clusters led by the largest and second largest parties. Secondly, it explores the nature of change -whether it is permissive or restrictive- by analyzing its direction.

Table 6.3 presents the results of the multinomial logistic regression analysis across five separate models. Similar to the previous section, Model 1 measures the effect of the effective number of parties, electoral volatility, and disproportionality but with a new approach that separates the effective number of parties and electoral volatility into ideological families. Model 2 introduces total electoral volatility to examine whether it would lead to permissive rule changes under higher levels of

disproportionality as hypothesis 7 suggests. Models 3 and 4 sequentially introduce the democratic age and permissiveness index. Model 5 is the full model with control variables GDP and Political Constraints Index.

Hypotheses 2 and 3 examine the effect of party system fragmentation based on ideological clusters. Hypothesis 2 posits that an increase in the effective number of parties within the largest party's ideological cluster increases the probability of permissive change. However, fragmentation in the largest party's ideological block does not have a statistically significant effect on either the probability of restrictive changes or permissive changes, thus failing to provide support for this hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that an increase in the effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases the probability of restrictive change. In three out of five models (Model 1 and Models 3-4), the fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological block depicts a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of restrictive change, while demonstrating no significant effect on the probability of permissive change. This finding provides support for the theoretical expectations I have posited.

While hypotheses 2 and 3 examine the effect of fragmentation, hypotheses 5 and 6 focus on the effect of volatility towards new parties within ideological clusters. Hypothesis 5 suggests that volatility towards new parties in the largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of restrictive change. Unlike fragmentation, volatility in the largest party's ideological cluster seems to have some effect on the likelihood of change. In partial support of my theoretical expectations, Model 1 reveals that volatility towards new parties in the largest party's ideological cluster has a statistically significant effect on the probability of restrictive change. When controlled for other independent variables, however, this significant effect disappears in other models. Hypothesis 6 posits that volatility toward new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases the probability of permissive change. Providing support for my theoretical expectations, volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of permissive change across all five models.

Hypothesis 7 investigates the conditional effect of disproportionality and suggests that under high levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility increases the probability of permissive change. However, when both variables are included in the model together, volatility has a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of restrictive change. Disproportionality does not have a statistically significant effect in this model. The graph illustrating its conditional effect will be presented below.

Table 6.3 Multinomial logistic regression on the direction of change

	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)	Model (5)
Permissive Change					
ENEP in largest party's ideological cluster	-0.056 (0.183)	-0.181 (0.228)	-0.055 (0.220)	-0.060 (0.225)	-0.073 (0.298)
ENEP in 2nd largest party's ideological cluster	-0.456 (0.360)	-0.602 (0.434)	-0.419 (0.357)	-0.460 (0.449)	-0.401 (0.468)
New party volatility in largest party's ideological cluster	0.045 (0.036)	0.022 (0.038)	0.037 (0.040)	0.038 (0.040)	0.039 (0.043)
New party volatility in 2nd largest party's ideological cluster	0.137*** (0.043)	0.132*** (0.045)	0.129*** (0.046)	0.133*** (0.050)	0.153** (0.061)
Disproportionality	-0.091 (0.091)	-0.146 (0.105)	-0.120 (0.127)	-0.110 (0.125)	-0.158 (0.139)
Electoral Volatility		0.045 (0.045)			0.035 (0.057)
Age of Democracy (logged)			-0.559 (0.553)	-0.534 (0.631)	-0.156 (0.575)
Permissiveness Index				-0.068 (0.179)	-0.011 (0.145)
Political Constraints Index					-4.091 (2.930)
GDP (logged)					-0.401 (1.012)
Constant	-2.891*** (0.950)	-2.692*** (1.036)	-1.048 (2.018)	-0.834 (2.062)	2.780 (10.081)
Restrictive Change					
ENEP in largest party's ideological cluster	-0.078 (0.208)	-0.262 (0.318)	0.247 (0.290)	0.179 (0.290)	-0.241 (0.475)
ENEP in 2nd largest party's ideological cluster	0.453** (0.231)	0.202 (0.288)	0.650*** (0.242)	0.642** (0.255)	0.264 (0.357)
New party volatility in largest party's ideological cluster	0.110*** (0.042)	0.065 (0.043)	0.069 (0.051)	0.073 (0.060)	0.019 (0.061)
New party volatility in 2nd largest party's ideological cluster	0.008 (0.051)	-0.017 (0.056)	-0.062 (0.073)	-0.054 (0.077)	-0.101 (0.100)
Disproportionality	-0.088 (0.066)	-0.157 (0.105)	-0.172* (0.098)	-0.213* (0.120)	-0.442** (0.205)
Electoral Volatility		0.076*** (0.029)			0.100** (0.047)
Age of Democracy (logged)			-1.649*** (0.314)	-1.751*** (0.354)	-1.647** (0.718)
Permissiveness Index				0.356 (0.219)	0.384* (0.222)
Political Constraints Index					7.405 (4.884)
GDP (logged)					-1.616 (1.628)
Constant	-4.507*** (1.000)	-4.328*** (1.105)	-0.435 (1.170)	-1.255 (1.288)	11.376 (13.180)
Observations	340	340	340	340	340
R^2					
AIC	170.045	165.402	152.894	152.916	151.360

Standard errors in parentheses
 * $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

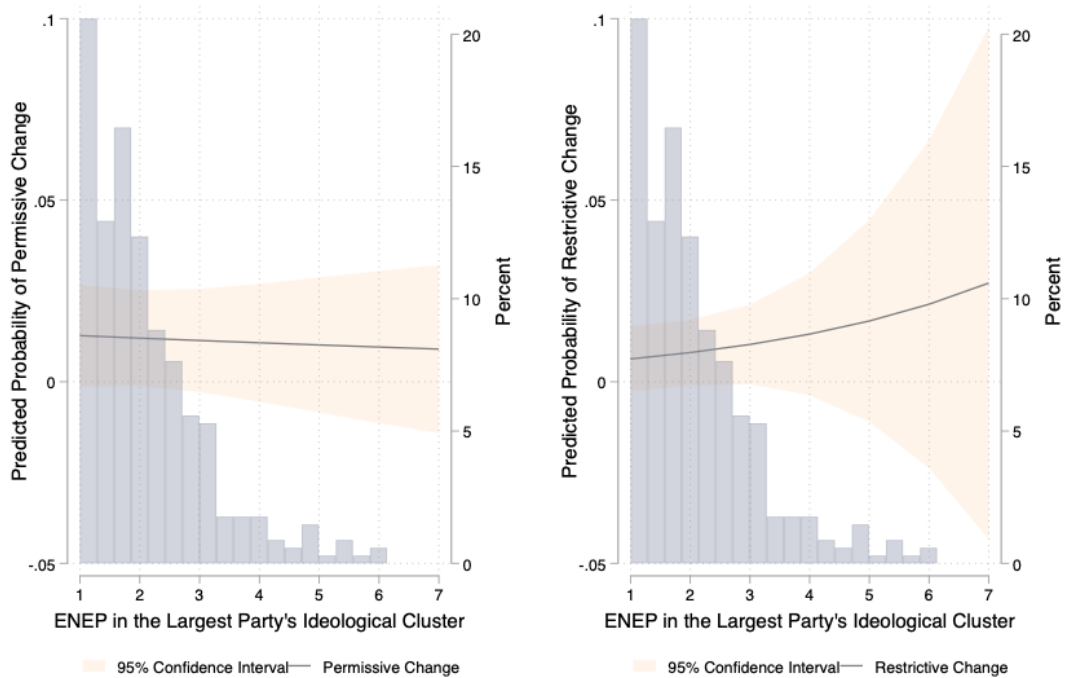
Hypothesis 9 examines the theoretical expectations of this dissertation with respect to historical institutionalism. It investigates the effect of a democratic age on the likelihood of (permissive and restrictive) change and suggests that an older democratic age increases the probability of introducing restrictive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. Across all models incorporating this variable (Models 3-5), contrary to my theoretical expectations, democratic age exhibits a statistically significant negative effect on the probability of restrictive change. Permissiveness Index, however, does not demonstrate a statistically significant effect on the probability of either permissive or restrictive change.

Like the previous analysis, the rest of the section delves into the magnitude of the effects summarized in Table 6.3 through graphical representations. The effect of each of the explanatory variables is explored by plotting their predicted probabilities and

marginal effects on permissive and restrictive change.

Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.16 plots the predicted probability of permissive and restrictive change as the effective number of parties (ENEP) in the largest party's ideological cluster changes. Similar to Table 6.3, the figure shows no statistically significant effect of fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster on the probability of either permissive or restrictive changes as ENEP in this cluster varies. The variable, fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster, does not exhibit a statistically significant average marginal effect either.

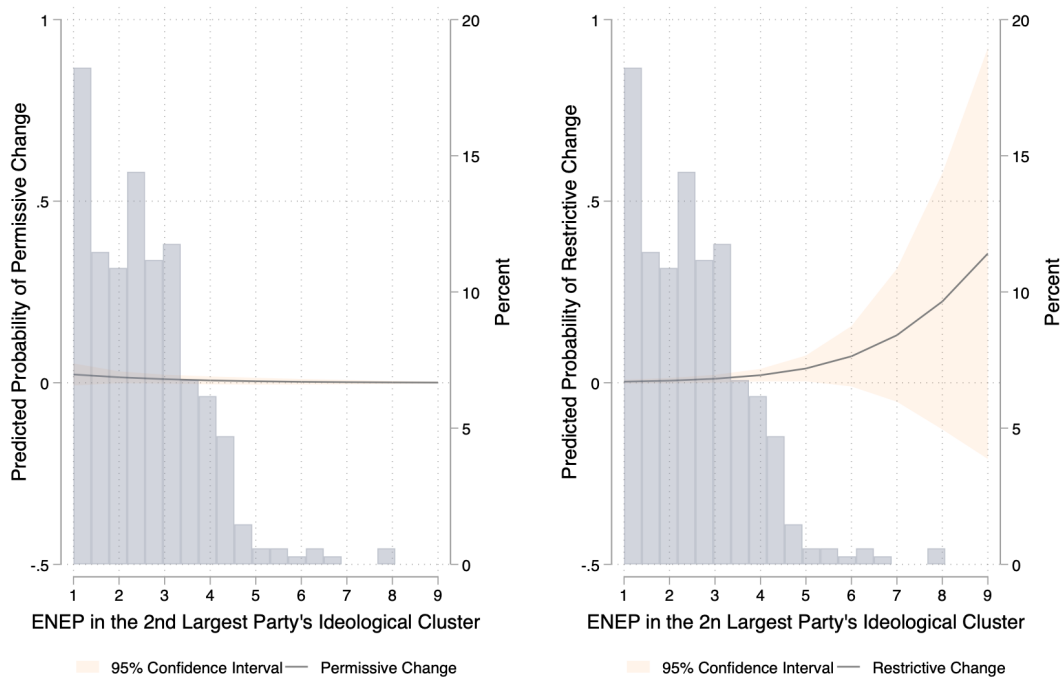
Figure 6.16 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change as effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster changes



Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.17 plots the predicted probability of both permissive and restrictive change as the effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes. The figure shows that the effective number of parties (ENEP) in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has no statistically significant effect on the probability of permissive rule change. However, it does have a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of restrictive rule change. The graph on the right side of the figure illustrates how the probability of restrictive change increases with fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster. Specifically, when ENEP is 3, the probability of change is .0109838 (1.09 percent). As ENEP within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases to 5, the probability of change also increases to .0393493 (3.93 percent). However, due

to the limited number of observations when ENEP in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster is greater than 5, the confidence intervals become wider, making it difficult to interpret the probability of change in such cases. Nevertheless, roughly 85 percent of the observations in the sample have 5 or less effective number of parties within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party. Therefore, this graph clearly demonstrates the positive effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on the probability of adopting a restrictive change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

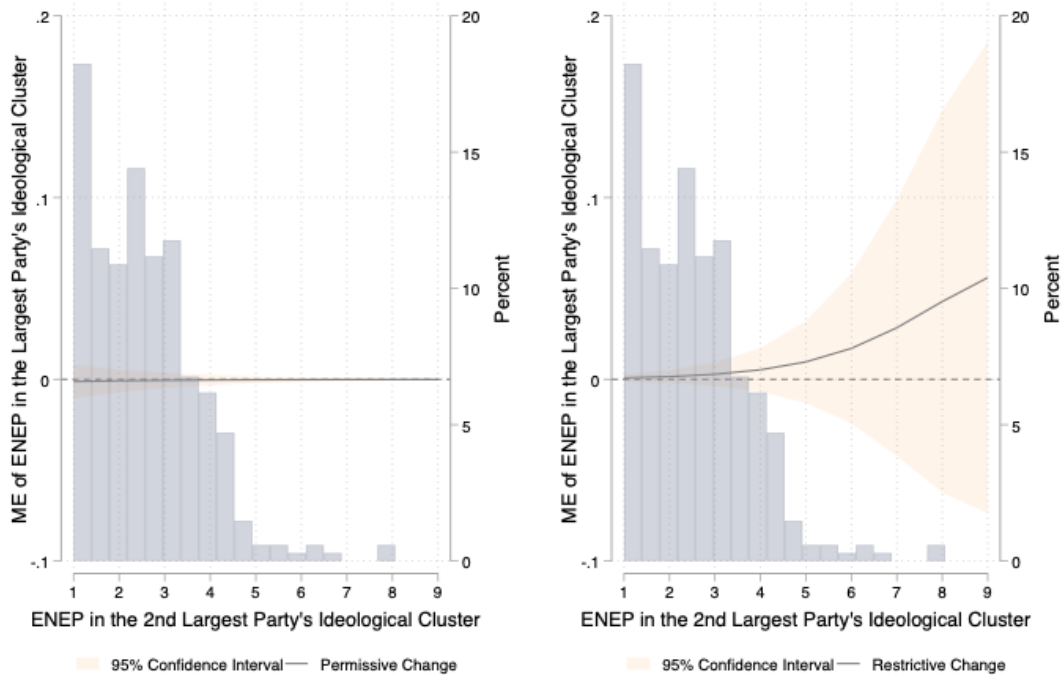
Figure 6.17 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change as effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes



As outlined before, making a permissive change is a risky decision for parties, and they only make such a decision if their rival's ideological cluster is more fragmented than theirs. This proposition suggests a conditional relationship between fragmentation in the largest party's and fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological clusters. To examine this conditional relationship, one would consider introducing an interaction term to the model. In order to decide whether to incorporate an interaction term into the given model, I compared the model fit statistics of models with and without an interaction term. After this comparison, I concluded that introducing an interaction term into the model was unnecessary. The comparison revealed no significant difference in the model fit between the two versions (refer to Appendix B for model fit statistics for the model with and without interaction

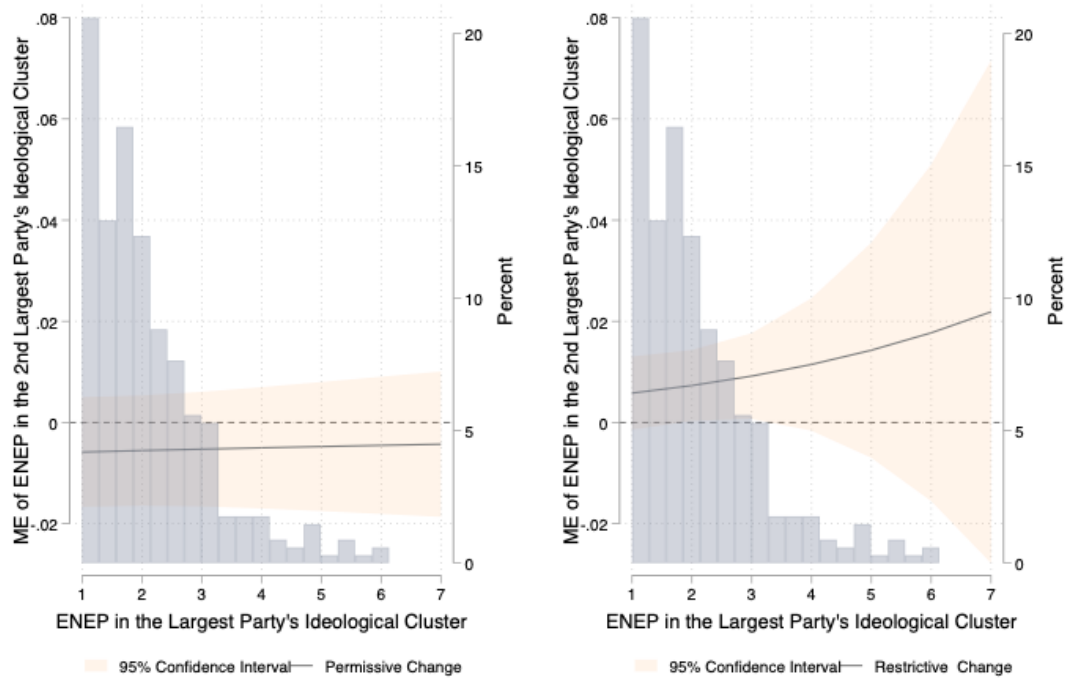
terms). Figure 6.18 demonstrates that there is no statistically significant marginal effect of fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster on either permissive or restrictive changes, as ENEP in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster varies.

Figure 6.18 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster as effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes



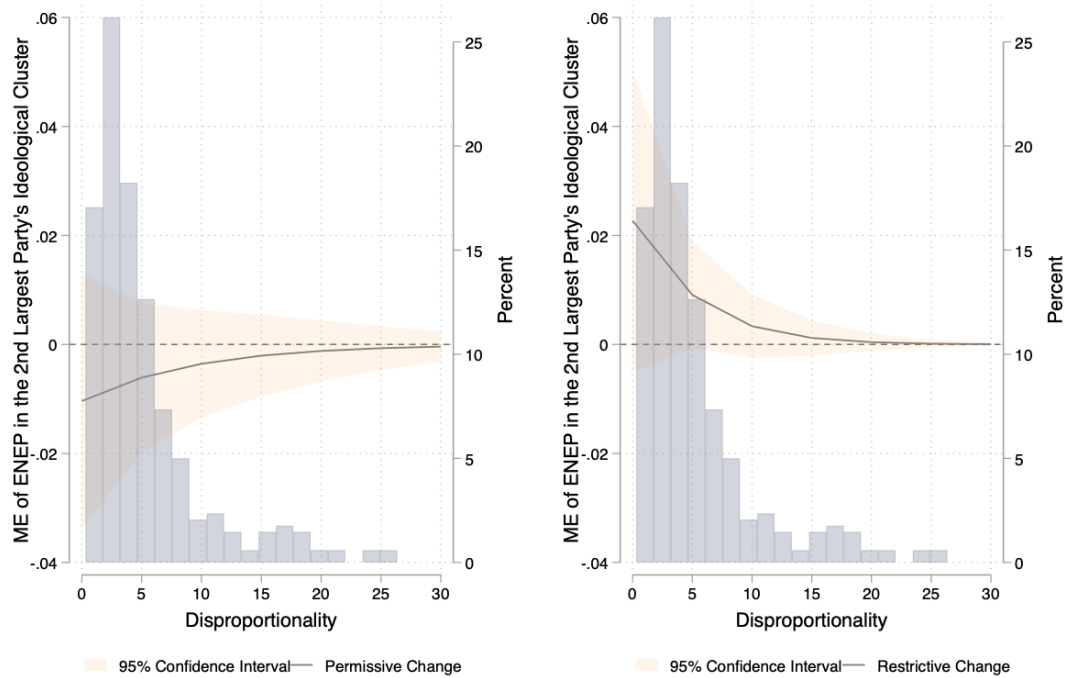
What about the marginal effect of fragmentation within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party? Figure 6.19 plots the marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as ENEP in the largest party's ideological cluster varies. Fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on permissive rule change. However, it does have a statistically significant positive marginal effect on restrictive change. When ENEP in the largest party's ideological cluster is 2, the marginal effect on restrictive rule change is .0073153 (0.7 percent). When ENEP increases to 3, the marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on restrictive rule change increases to .0091795 (0.9 percent). When ENEP within the ideological cluster of the largest party is greater than 3, the fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster stops having a statistically significant marginal effect. This is primarily due to the limited number of observations in the sample when the value of the variable is greater than 3.

Figure 6.19 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster changes



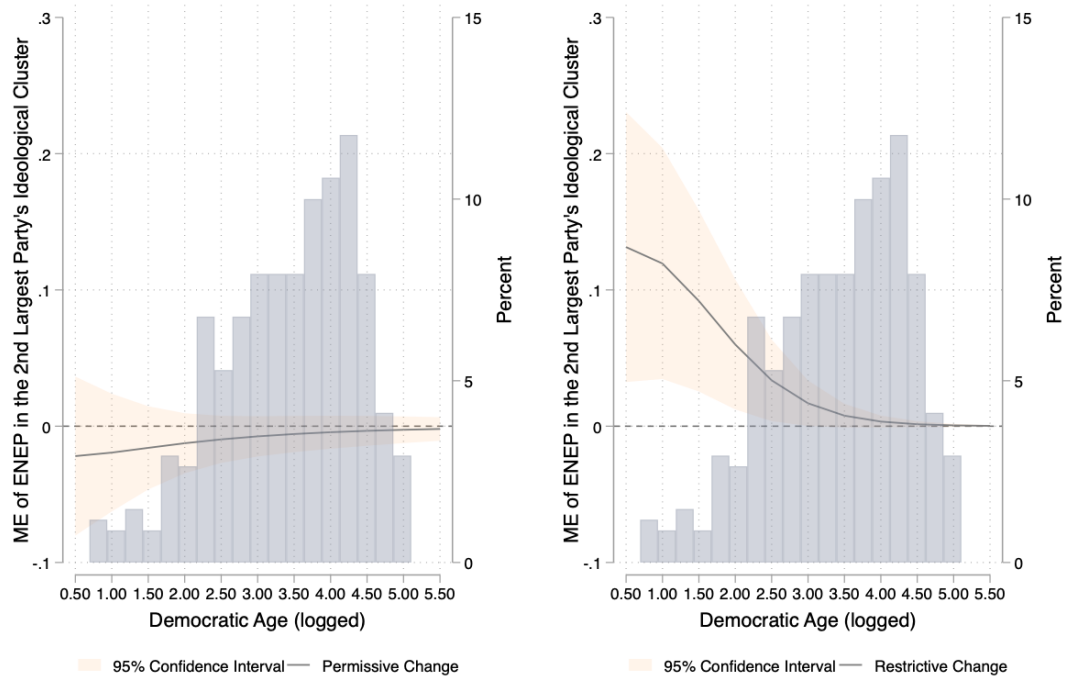
Fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a statistically significant average marginal effect of .0169545 on restrictive change (Estimated from Model 3). Its average marginal effect on permissive change, however, is not statistically significant. The subsequent figures explore the marginal effect of fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different values of the other explanatory variables. Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.20 illustrates the marginal effect of fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of disproportionality changes. However, there is no statistically significant marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on either permissive or restrictive change as the level of disproportionality varies.

Figure 6.20 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of disproportionality changes



Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.21 plots the marginal effect of fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different levels of democratic experience. The figure shows that fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on permissive rule change. However, it does have a strong positive effect on restrictive change when countries have relatively limited democratic experience. However, this effect declines as democracies get older. Fragmentation within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party stops having a statistically significant effect on restrictive change once the democratic age is more than 19. Specifically, when the democratic experience is 2 years, the marginal effect of fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster is .1194138. When the democratic age increases to 11 years, the marginal effect decreases to .0336683.

Figure 6.21 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as democratic age changes



Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.22 plots the marginal effect of fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different levels of the permissiveness index. As the figure demonstrates, this variable has no statistically significant marginal effect on either permissive or restrictive rule change as the level of permissiveness varies.

Figure 6.22 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of permissiveness changes

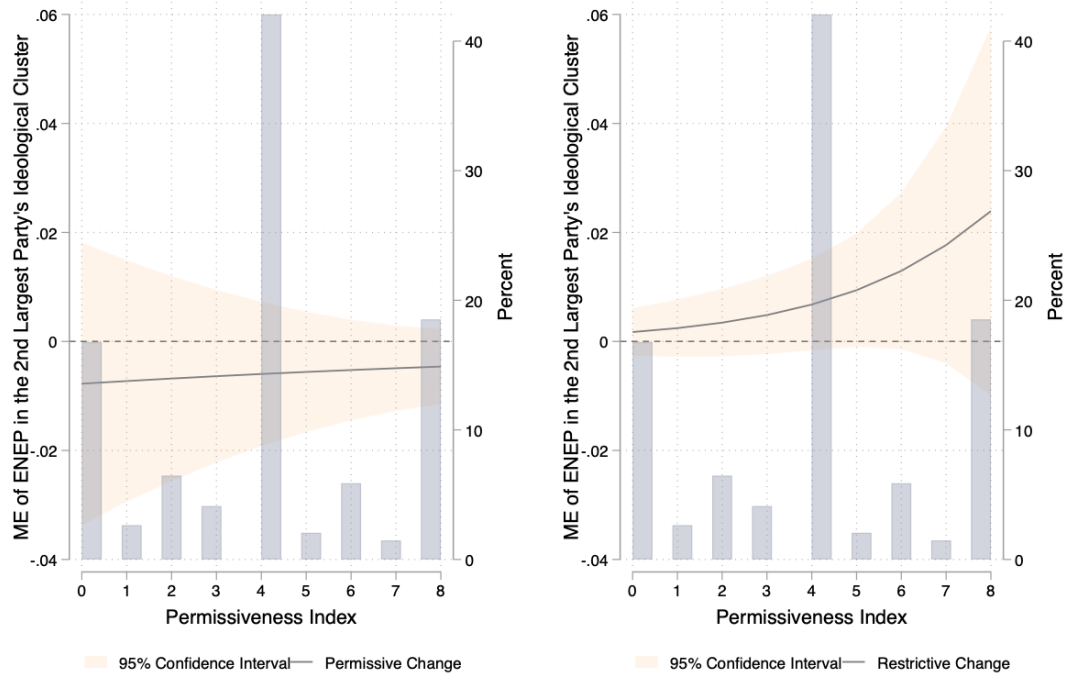
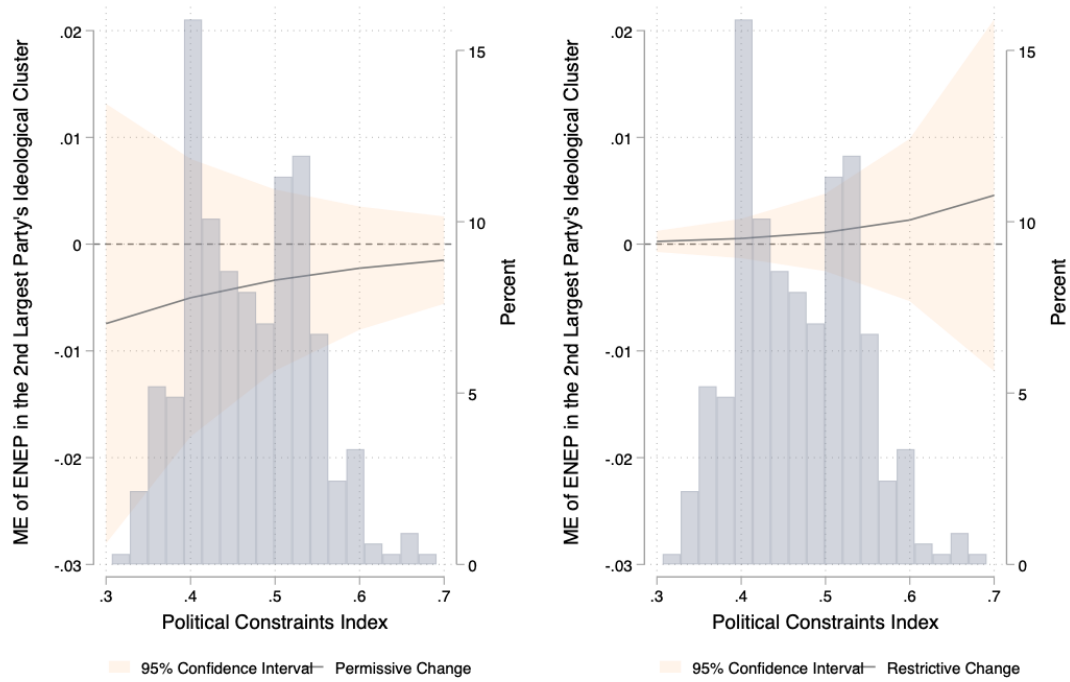


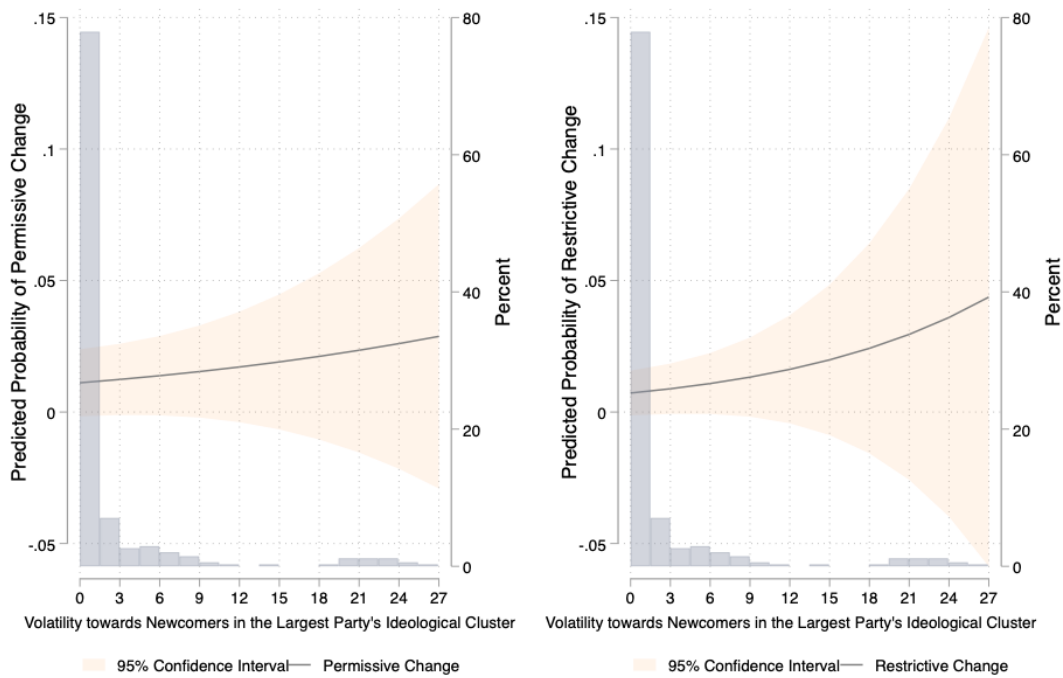
Figure 6.23 illustrates the marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different levels of the political constraints index. As the figure demonstrates, fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on either permissive or restrictive change.

Figure 6.23 Marginal effect of fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of political constraints changes



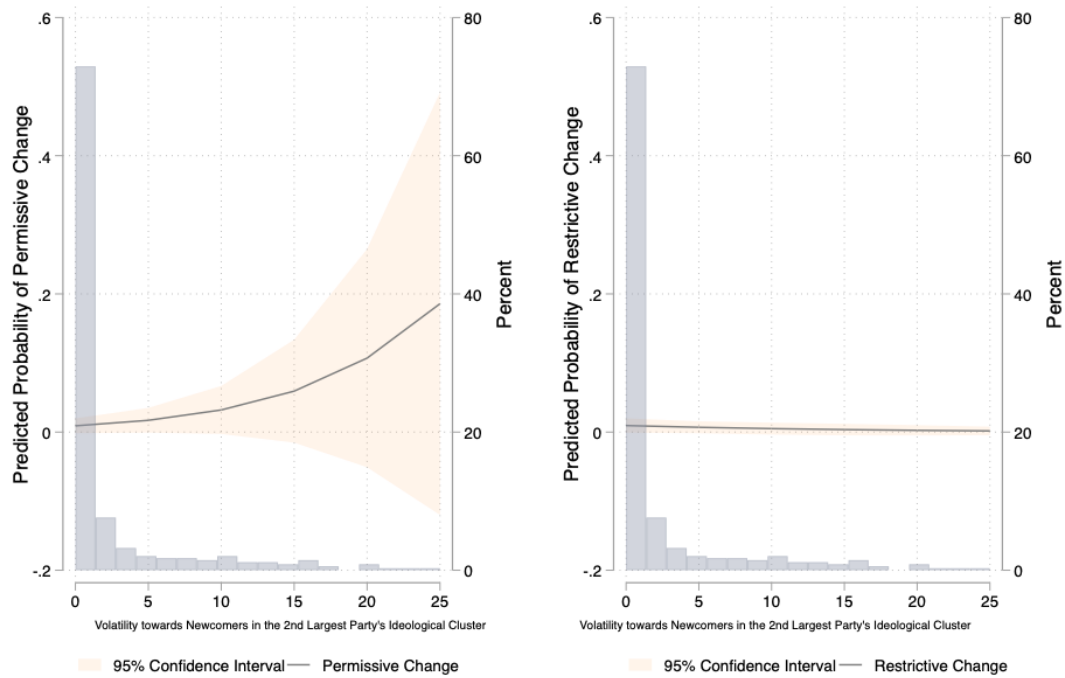
The subsequent figures examine the effect of electoral volatility towards new parties across ideological clusters. According to Table 6.3, the effect of volatility towards newcomers in the largest party's ideological cluster has a statistically significant positive effect on the likelihood of restrictive change only in Model 1. However, when controlled for disproportionality, electoral volatility, democratic age, permissiveness index, political constraints index, and GDP, this significant effect disappears. Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.24 illustrates this absence of a significant effect on the predicted probability of either permissive or restrictive change.

Figure 6.24 Predicted probability of (permissive/ restrictive) change as volatility towards newcomers in the largest party's ideological cluster changes



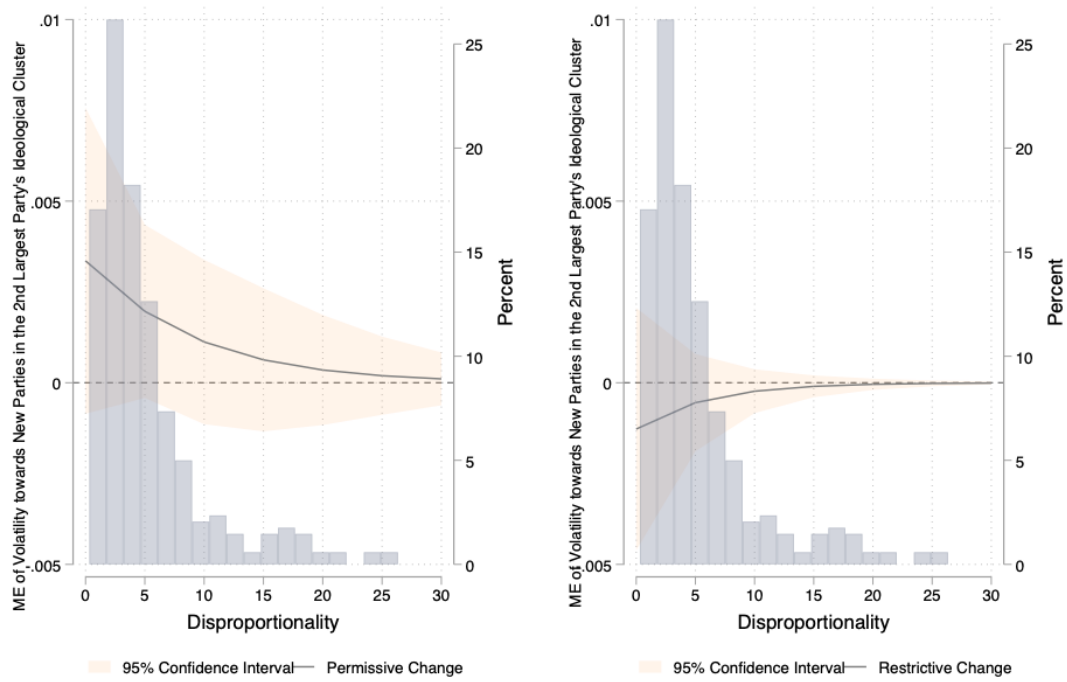
Volatility towards newcomers within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster, however, has a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of permissive change across all five models. However, it does not exhibit a statistically significant effect on the probability of restrictive change. Figure 6.25 plots the predicted probability of change at different levels of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster. The figure demonstrates that volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a positive effect on the probability of permissive change. Since there are very few observations when the level of volatility is greater than 5 percent, confidence intervals become wider and make it difficult to interpret the probability of permissive change when electoral volatility is greater than 5 percent. Nevertheless, the figure clearly demonstrates how the probability of permissive change increases with volatility towards newcomers within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster. Conversely, volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster does not exhibit an effect on the probability of restrictive change.

Figure 6.25 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change as volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes



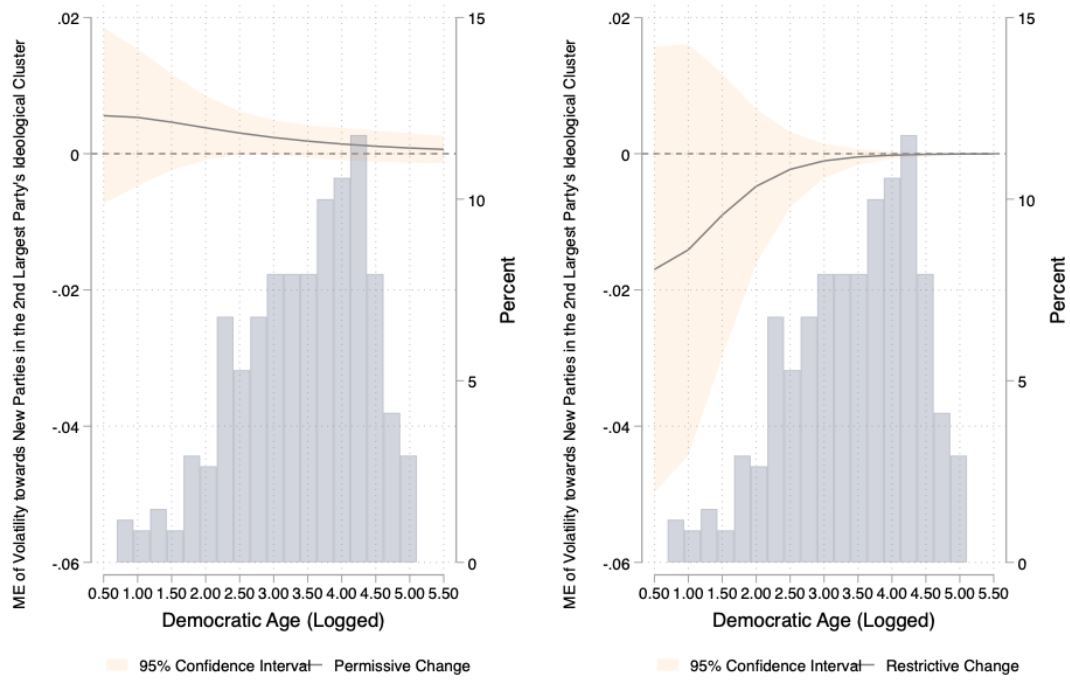
The average marginal effect of the volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on permissive change is .0024698 (Estimated from Model 3). The following figures illustrate the marginal effect of volatility towards new parties within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different values of other explanatory variables. Figure 6.26 plots the marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest ideological cluster as the level of disproportionality changes. Nevertheless, as shown in the figure, there is no statistically significant marginal effect of volatility toward newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on either permissive or restrictive change.

Figure 6.26 Marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of disproportionality changes



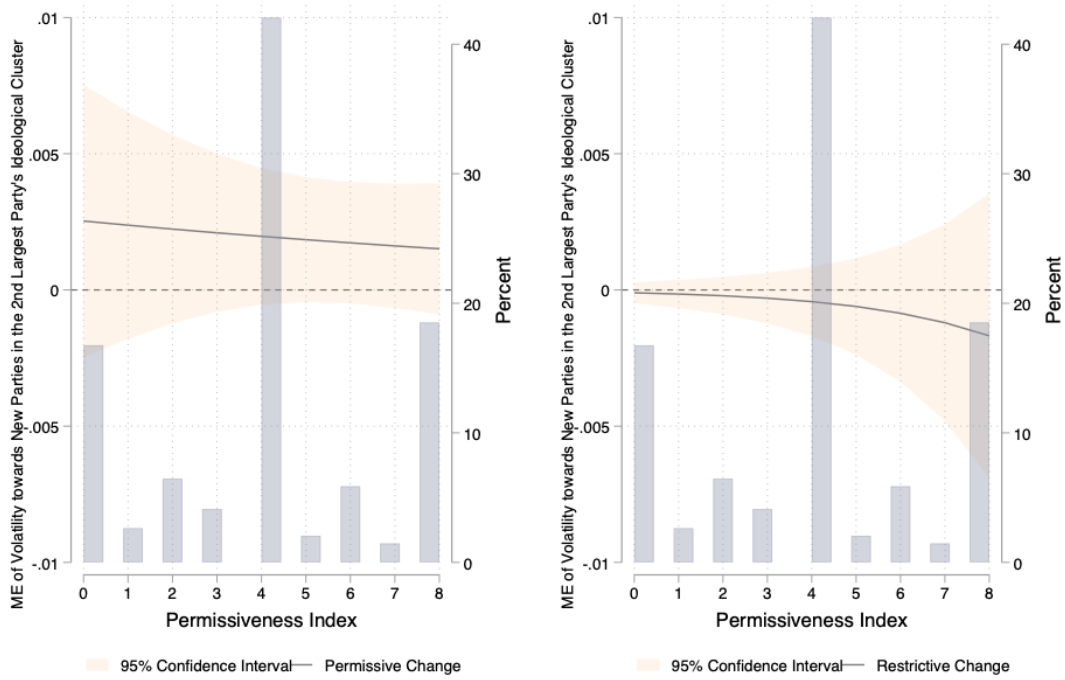
Estimated from Model 3, Figure 6.27 displays the marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest ideological cluster at various levels of the democratic age. However, as illustrated in the figure, there is no statistically significant marginal effect of volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of democratic experience changes.

Figure 6.27 Marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as democratic age changes



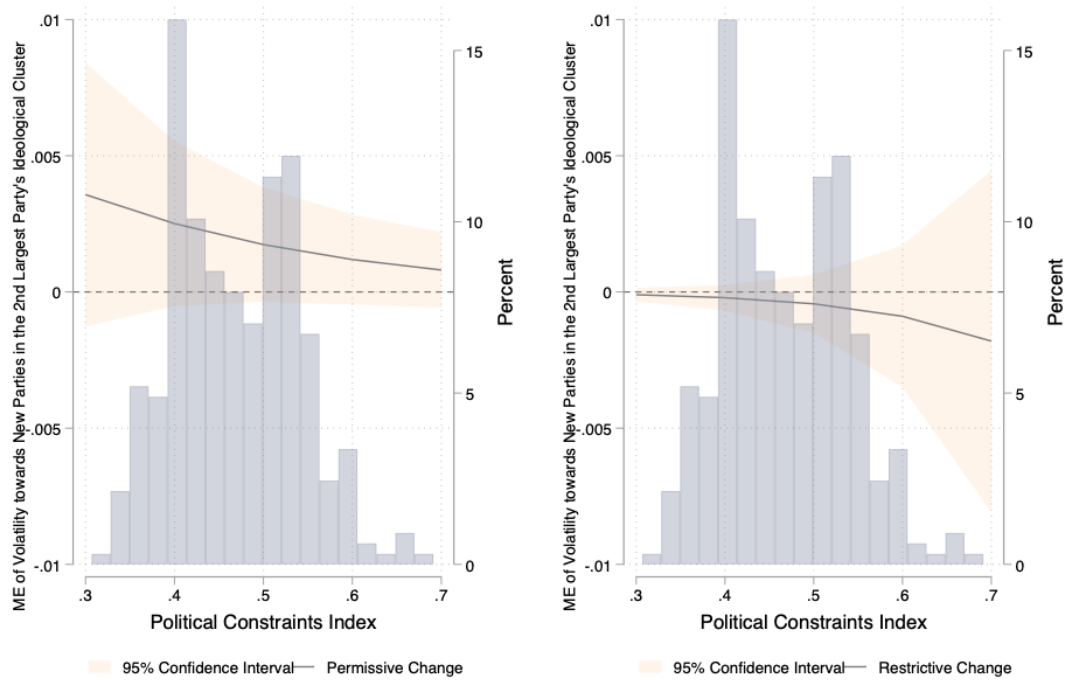
Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.28 displays the marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest ideological cluster at different levels of the permissiveness index. However, as depicted in the figure, there is no statistically significant marginal effect of volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on either permissive or restrictive change, regardless of the changes in the permissiveness level.

Figure 6.28 Marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster as the level of permissiveness changes



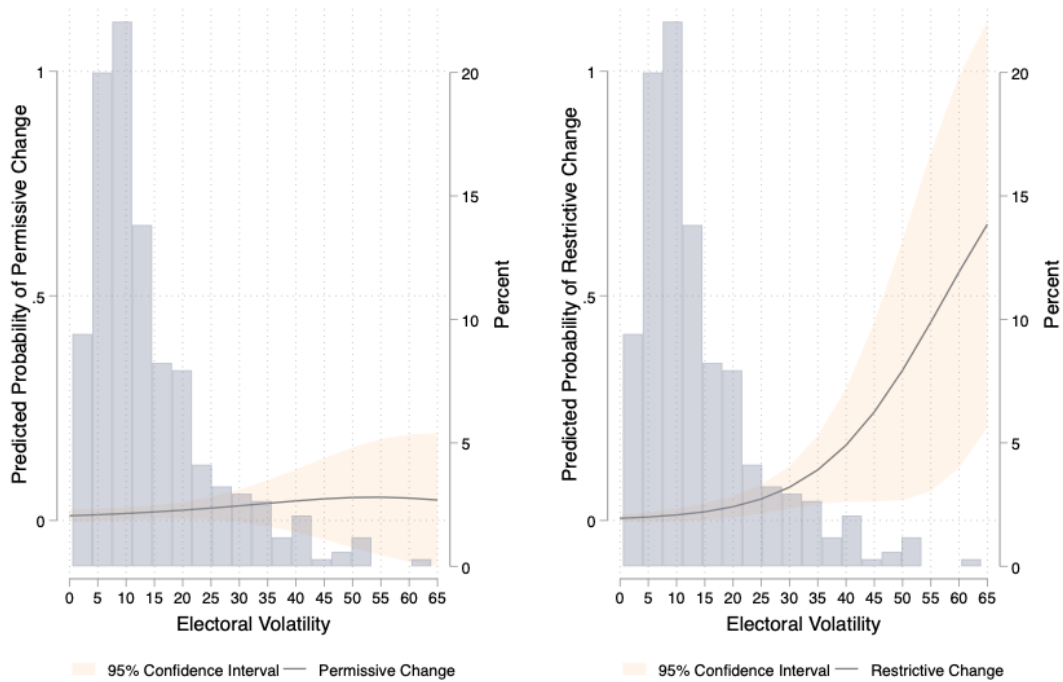
Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.29 displays the marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different levels of the political constraints index. However, as depicted in the figure, there is no statistically significant marginal effect of volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster on either permissive or restrictive change, at different levels of the political constraints index.

Figure 6.29 Marginal effect of volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster at different levels of political constraints index



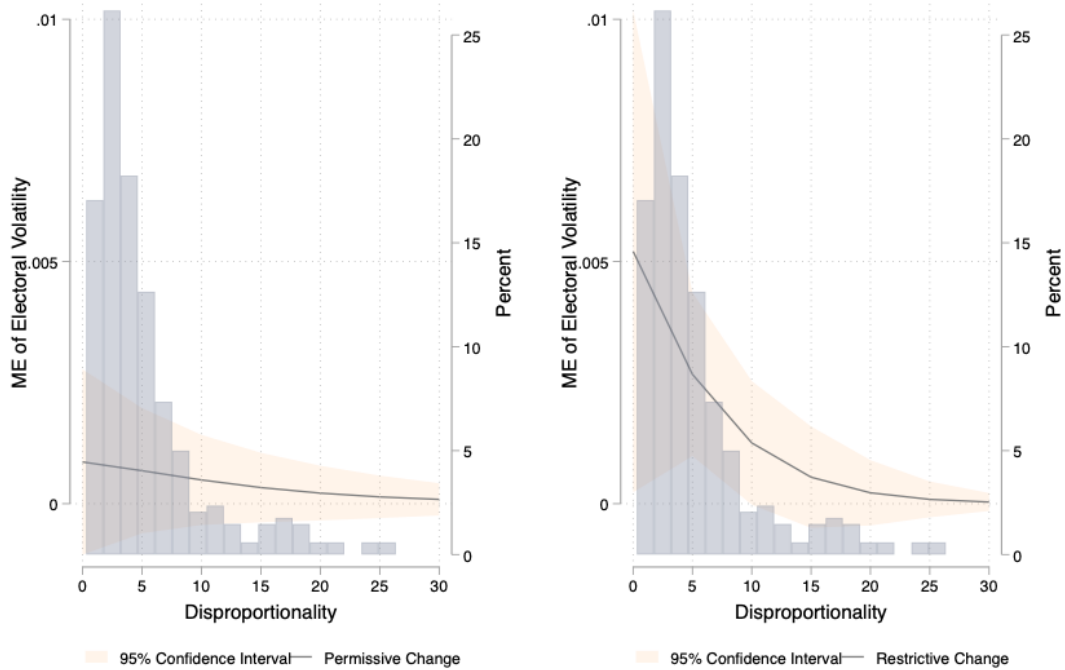
Hypothesis 7 suggests that under higher levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility increases the likelihood of permissive change. This conditional hypothesis is tested without introducing an interaction term into the model, relying on a comparison of the model fit statistics (see Appendix B). According to Table 6.3, total electoral volatility has a statistically significant positive effect on the probability of restrictive rule change. Estimated from Model 2, Figure 6.30 illustrates the effect of volatility on the probability of both permissive and restrictive changes at its various values. While electoral volatility has a positive effect on the probability of restrictive change as the level of volatility varies, it does not have an effect on the probability of permissive change. The graph on the right side of the figure displays how this significant positive effect on restrictive change varies at different levels of electoral volatility.

Figure 6.30 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change as the level of electoral volatility changes



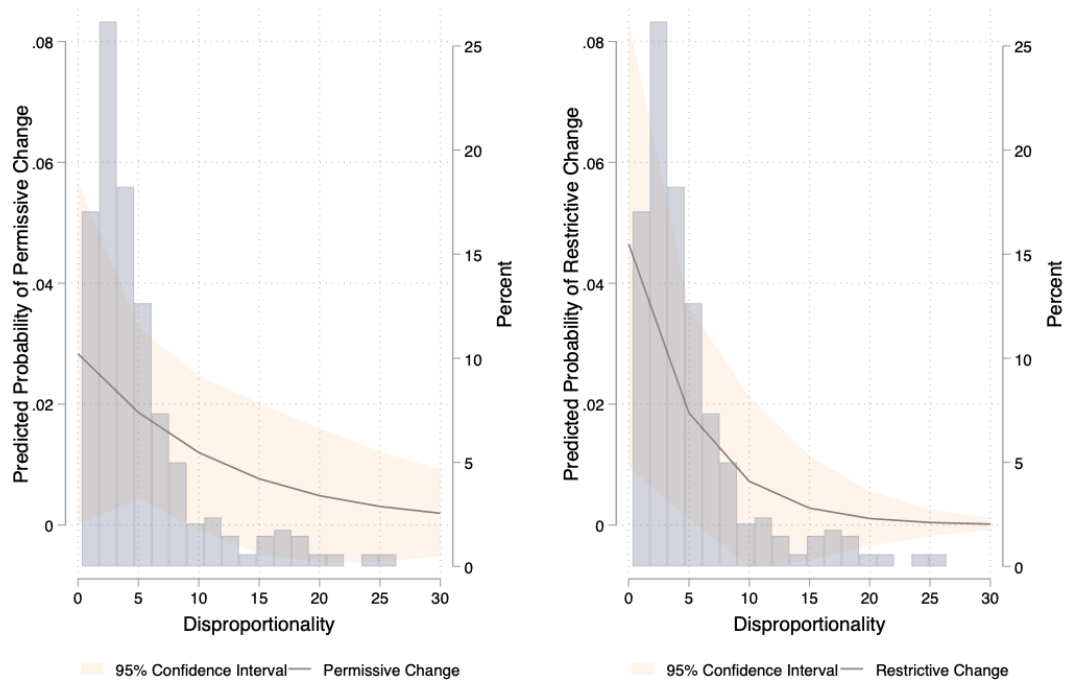
The average marginal effect of electoral volatility on the probability of restrictive change is .0026542. Figure 6.31 illustrates the marginal effect of volatility at varying levels of disproportionality. The objective is to determine whether disproportionality conditions the effect of electoral volatility. The figure shows that electoral volatility has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change when the level of disproportionality is equal to or below 10 percent. When the level of disproportionality is 5 percent, the marginal effect of volatility on restrictive change is .0026709. When the level of disproportionality increases to 10 percent, the marginal effect of volatility on restrictive change decreases to .0012554. These results partially support my theoretical expectations regarding the conditioning effect of disproportionality. Although there is no evidence demonstrating that under higher levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility leads to permissive change, it can be inferred that increased levels of disproportionality condition the effect of electoral volatility by reducing the likelihood of restrictive change.

Figure 6.31 Marginal effect of volatility as the level of disproportionality changes



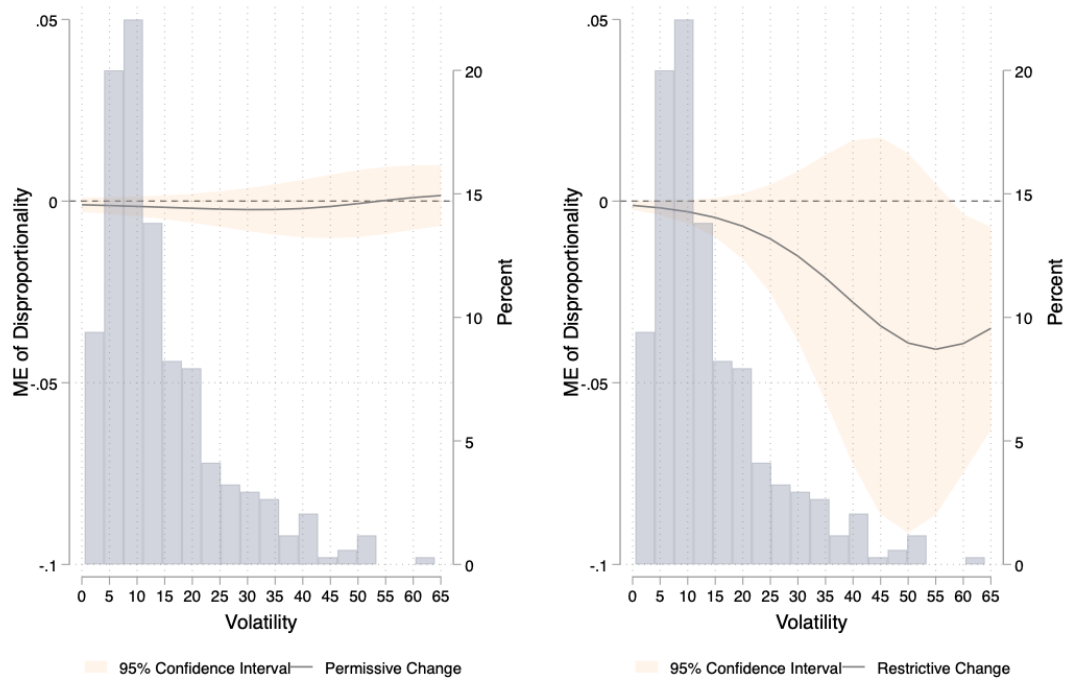
In three out of the five models (Models 3-5), disproportionality demonstrates a significant, average, negative effect on the probability of restrictive change. While the main focus of this dissertation is its conditioning effect, it is important to delve into the average effect of disproportionality on the probability of restrictive change. Estimated from Model 2, Figure 6.32 displays the effect of disproportionality on the probability of both permissive and restrictive change. As the figure shows, disproportionality has a negative effect on the probability of both restrictive changes. This positive effect, however, decreases as the level of disproportionality increases. However, as the figure shows, the effect of disproportionality on the probability of restrictive change is stronger than its effect on permissive change.

Figure 6.32 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change as the level of disproportionality changes



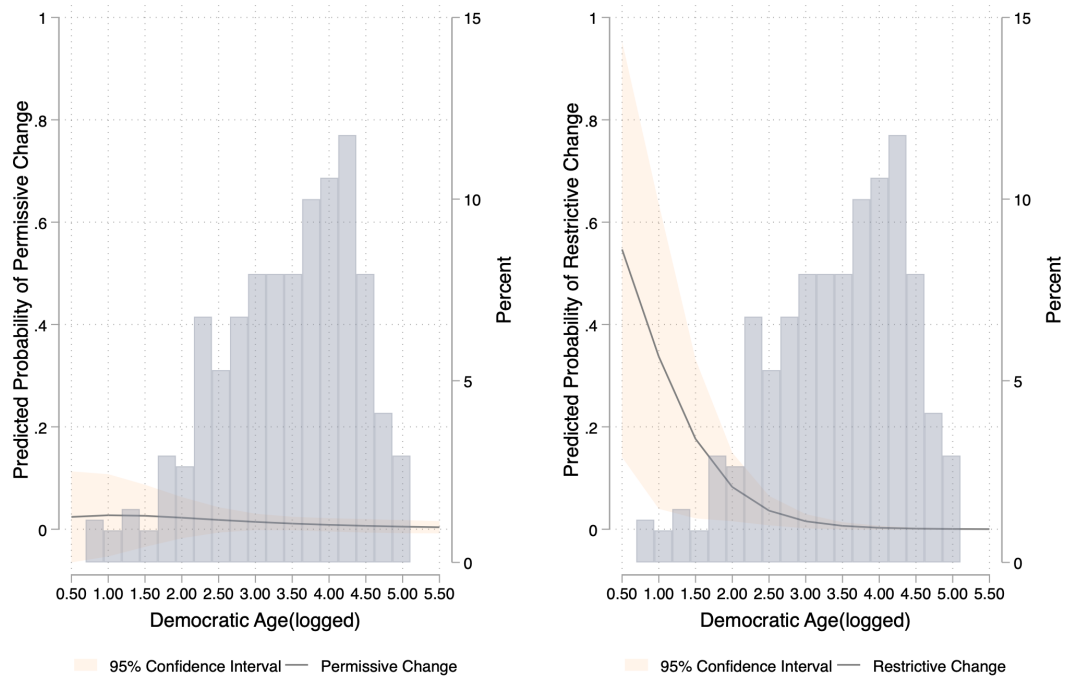
The average marginal effect of disproportionality on restrictive change is -0.0094554 . Figure 6.33 plots the marginal effect of disproportionality at different levels of electoral volatility. However, as the figure demonstrates its effect is not statistically significant.

Figure 6.33 Marginal effect of disproportionality as the level of electoral volatility changes



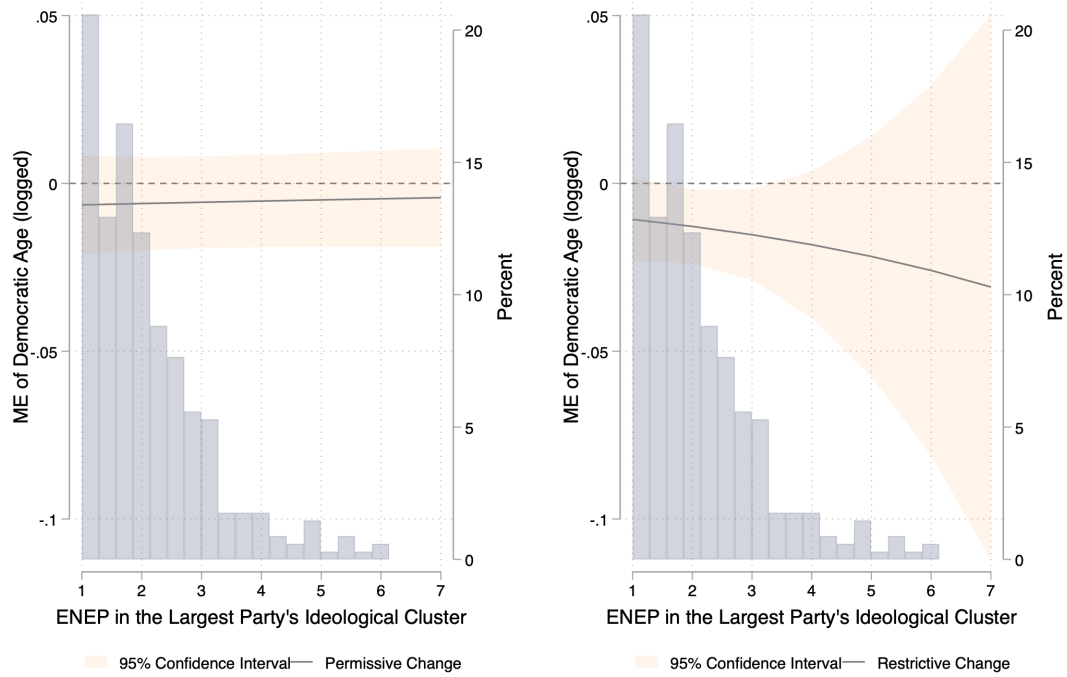
Hypothesis 9 suggests that the age of democracy increases the probability of restrictive change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination and decreases the probability of permissive change. According to Table 6.3, however, democratic age has a statistically significant negative effect on restrictive change in all three models that include this variable (Models 3-5). Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.34 plots the predicted probability of change at different levels of democratic experience. The figure shows no statistically significant effect of democratic age on the probability of permissive change. However, democratic age has a statistically significant negative effect on the probability of restrictive change when democratic experience equals to and less than 29 years. Specifically, when democratic experience is 5 years, the probability of restrictive change is .1129177. When democratic experience increases to 25 years, however, the probability of change decreases to .0092675.

Figure 6.34 Predicted probability of (permissive/ restrictive) change as democratic age changes



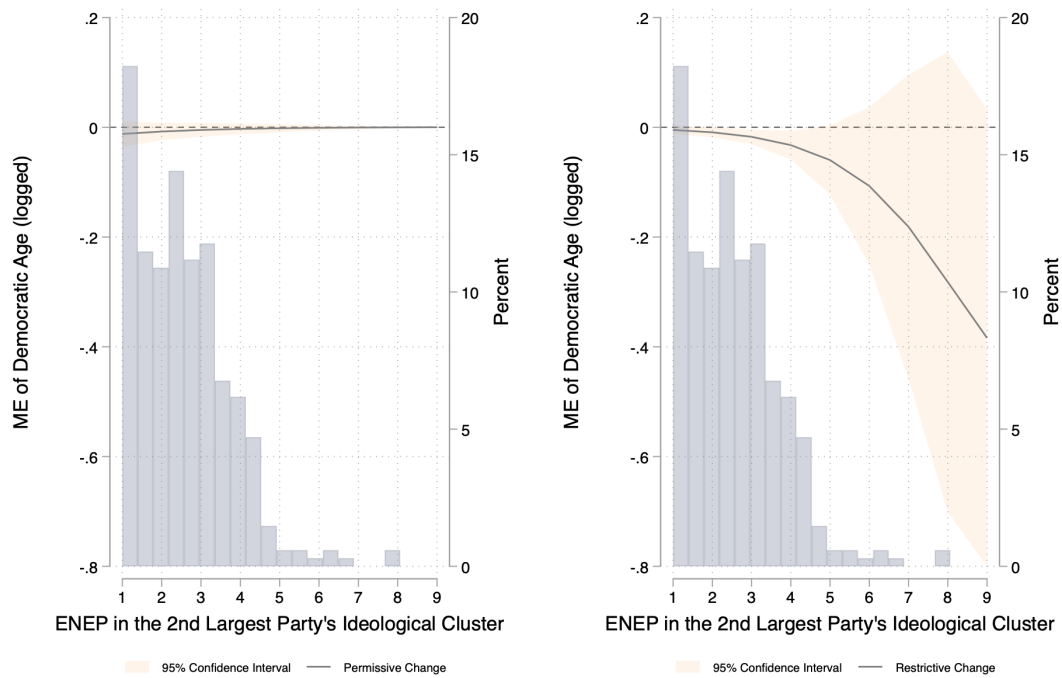
The average marginal effect of democratic age on the probability of restrictive change is -0.0413026 . Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.35 plots the marginal effect of democratic age as the effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster changes. As the figure demonstrates, democratic age has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change when the effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster is lower than 3.4. When the effective number of parties in this cluster is 2, the marginal effect is -0.0128083 . When the effective number of parties increases to 3, the marginal effect decreases to -0.0152932 . Conversely, democratic age does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on permissive change.

Figure 6.35 Marginal effect of democratic age as effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster changes



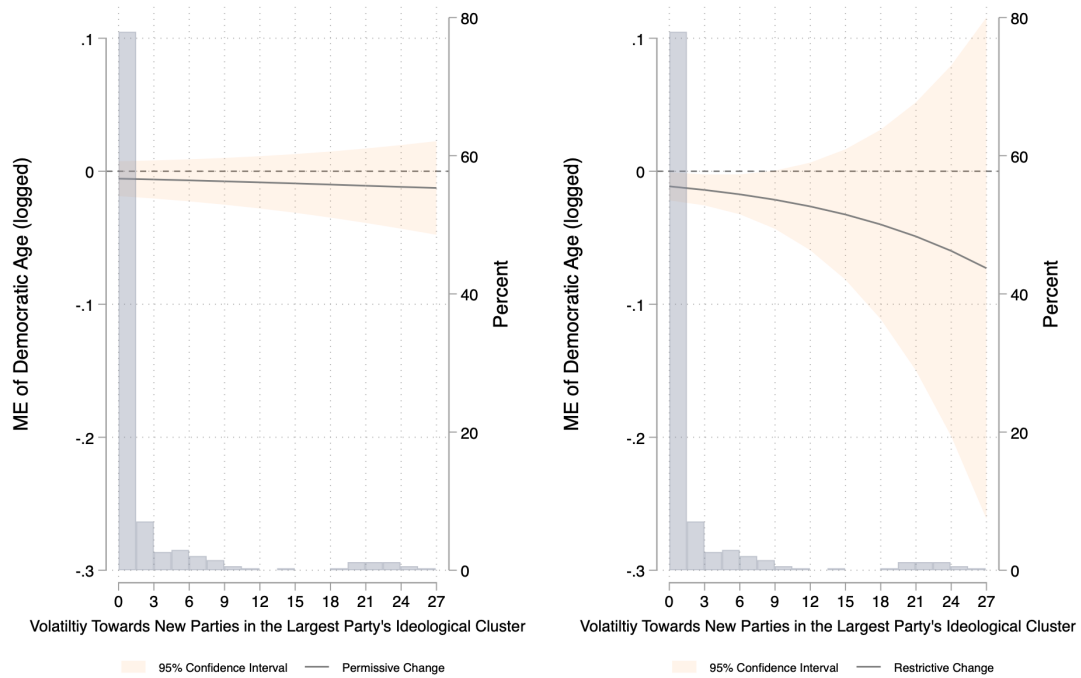
Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.36 plots the marginal effect of democratic age as the effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes. The figure demonstrates that democratic age has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change when an effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster is between 2.1 and 4.7. When the effective number of parties in this cluster is 3, the marginal effect is -0.0172965 . When, however, the effective number of parties is 4, the marginal effect decreases to -0.0324344 . Conversely, the democratic age does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on permissive change.

Figure 6.36 Marginal effect of democratic age as effective number of parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes



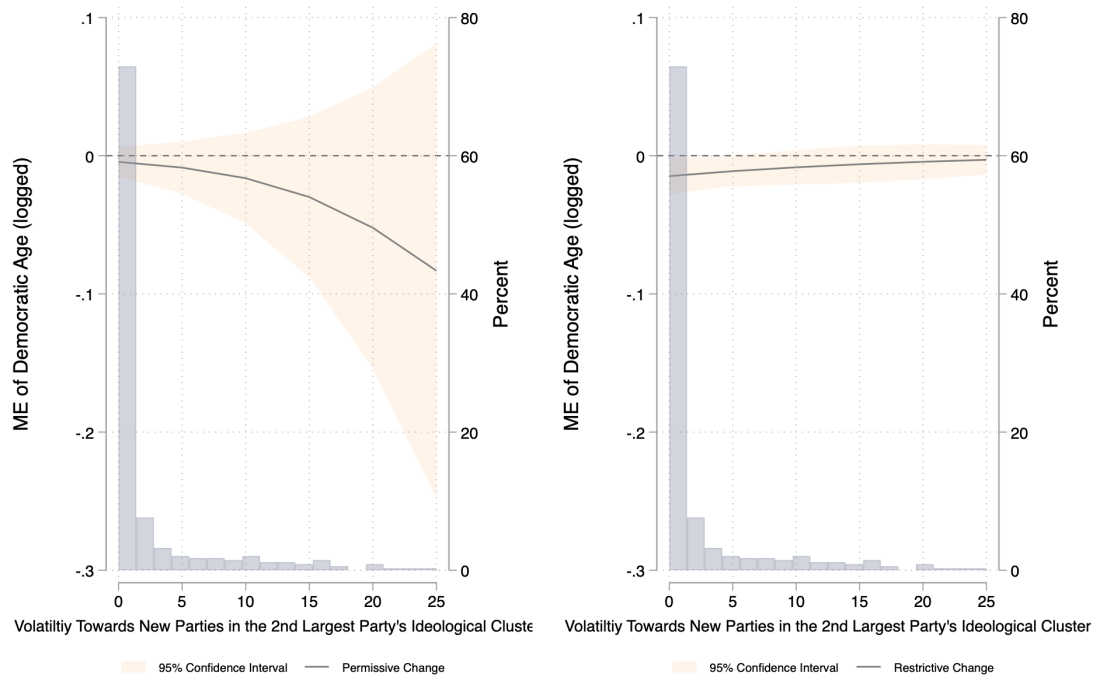
Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.37 plots the marginal effect of democratic age at different levels of volatility towards new parties within the largest party's ideological cluster. The figure demonstrates that democratic age has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change when the level of electoral volatility towards new parties within the largest party's ideological cluster is less than 9 percent. When the level of electoral volatility is 3 percent, the marginal effect is -0.0140444 . When the level of electoral volatility increases to 8 percent in this cluster, however, the marginal effect decreases to -0.0199882 .

Figure 6.37 Marginal effect of democratic age as the level of electoral volatility towards newcomers in the largest party's ideological cluster changes



Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.38 plots the marginal effect of democratic age as volatility towards new parties in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster changes. As the figure demonstrates, democratic age has a statistically significant negative effect on restrictive change when the level of volatility towards new parties within this cluster is equal to and less than 5 percent. However, this negative effect gets smaller (albeit slightly) as the level of volatility in this cluster increases. When the level of volatility towards new parties is 2 percent, the marginal effect is $-.0132085$. When the level of volatility towards new parties is 5 percent, the marginal effect changes to $-.0111741$.

Figure 6.38 Marginal effect of democratic age as the level of electoral volatility towards newcomers in the 2nd largest Party’s ideological cluster changes



It is important to highlight the differentiated marginal effect of the democratic age on restrictive change at different levels of volatility towards new parties. When volatility occurs within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party, the negative marginal effect democratic age on restrictive change gets smaller as volatility towards new parties increases. When it occurs in the largest party’s ideological cluster, however, the negative marginal effect democratic age on restrictive change gets larger as volatility towards new parties within this cluster increases.

Figure 6.39 displays the marginal effect of democratic age at different values of the permissiveness index. According to the figure, democratic age does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on permissive change. However, it does have a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change when the level of permissiveness is between 4 and 6.

Figure 6.39 Marginal effect of democratic age as the level of permissiveness changes

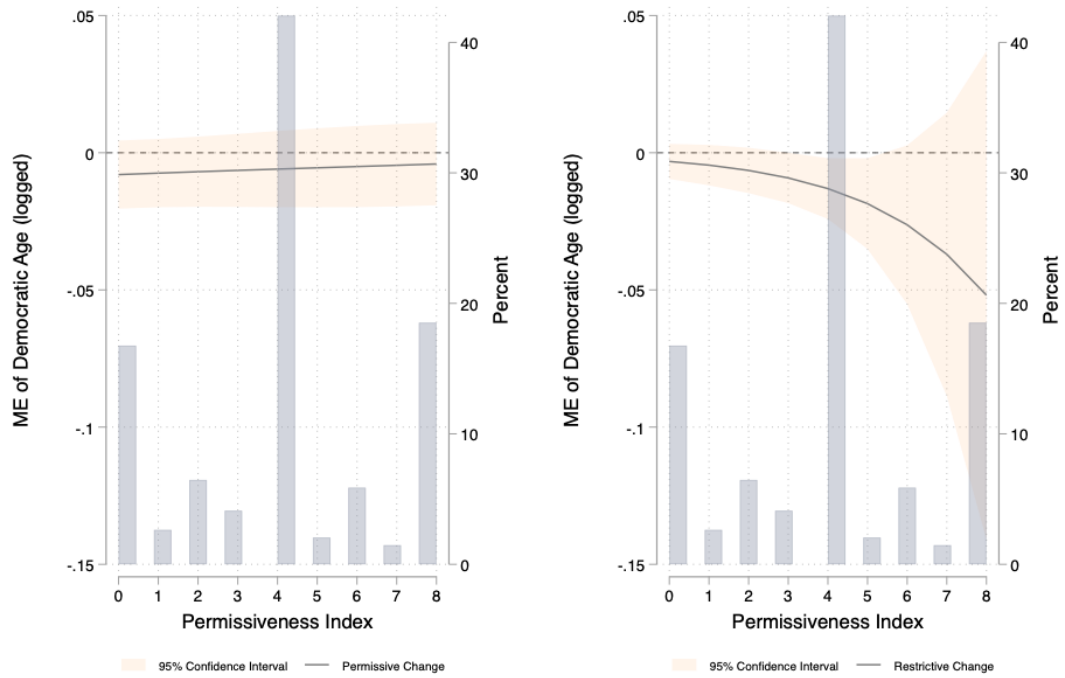
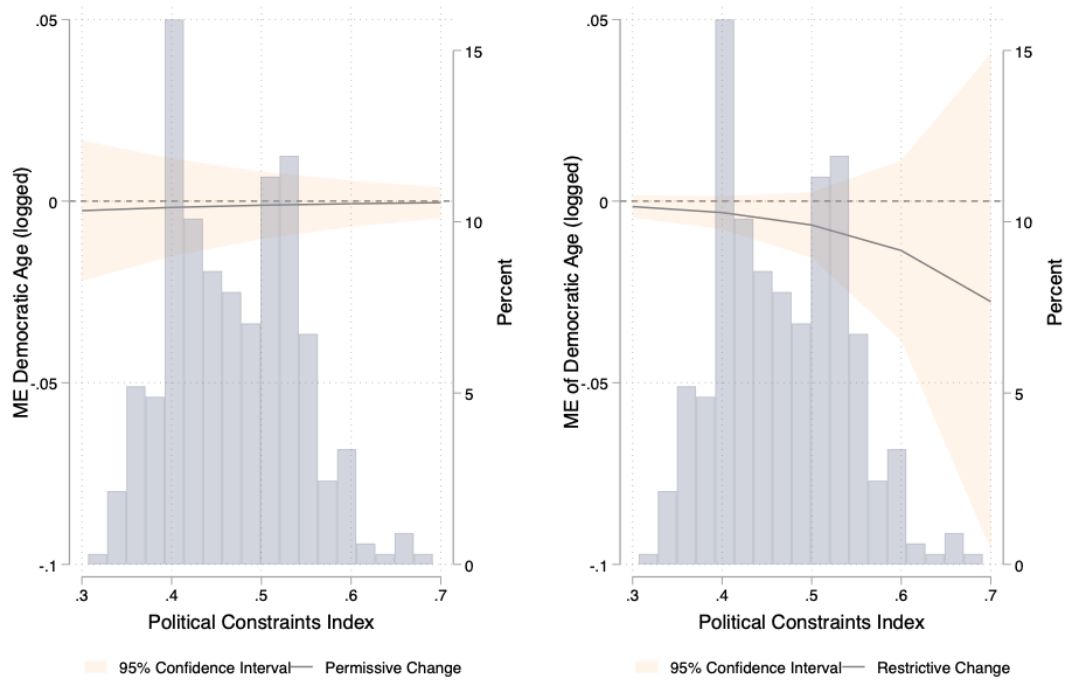


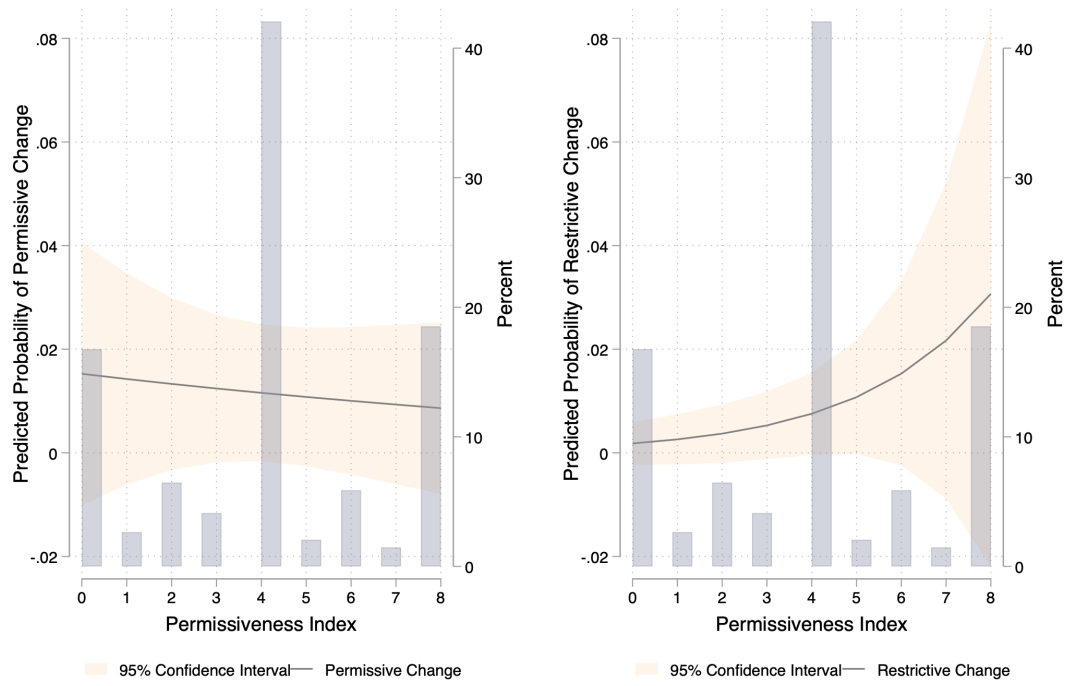
Figure 6.40 demonstrates the marginal effect of democratic age at different values of political constraints index. However, democratic age does not have a statistically significant marginal effect on either permissive or restrictive change.

Figure 6.40 Marginal effect of democratic age as the level of political constraints changes



Finally, Table 6.3 demonstrates that the permissiveness index does not have a statistically significant effect on the probability of either permissive or restrictive change. The average marginal effect of this variable is not significant either. Estimated from Model 4, Figure 6.41 shows no effect of the permissiveness index at different levels of permissiveness. The average marginal effect of this variable is not significant either.

Figure 6.41 Predicted probability of (permissive/restrictive) change at different levels of permissiveness Index



7. CONCLUSION

This chapter provides a summary of the key findings of the dissertation. To accomplish this, it begins by examining the theoretical expectations and evaluating their effectiveness in explaining the change in the rules that regulate the formation of pre-electoral alliances. Additionally, the chapter addresses the limitations of the dissertation. Finally, it outlines some directions for future work.

7.1 Summary and Discussion of the Main Findings

This dissertation proposes two research questions. The first research question delves into why countries modify their electoral rules that govern pre-electoral alliance formation? This question addresses the motivations of political parties in considering such changes. In providing answers to this question, this dissertation draws upon on rational choice and historical institutionalism- two prominent paradigms in electoral reform literature. Rational choice theory suggests that political parties seek to maximize their seat share and express a preference for electoral reform accordingly. The extent of this preference, however, depends on the presence of an incentive to initiate change and the ability to modify the election law. Such an incentive emerges from the significant instabilities within the party system, which may pose a potential threat of future seat loss. Consequently, parties may seek to modify the existing electoral rules as a means of adapting to or addressing these changes in the party system. However, implementing electoral reform also requires a sufficient parliamentary majority. Therefore, parties who seek a change in the election law must control enough numbers of seats in parliament that is required to implement electoral reform. Building on these assumptions, this dissertation suggests that changes in the institutional regulation of pre-electoral coordination have resulted when existing rules have failed to mitigate party system fragmentation.

The first hypothesis suggests that an increase in the effective number of parties increases the likelihood of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. However empirical analyses do not provide any support for this hypothesis, indicating that the effective number of parties alone is not a strong predictor for explaining the change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

The dissertation also asserts that changes or realignments in the party system may not affect all parties in the same way. A high level of party system fragmentation may signal an increase in the number and influence of small parties, which may lead to vote transfers from the larger and more established parties to smaller ones. Consequently, how parties react to instabilities within the party system, therefore, depends on whether these new or small parties draw votes from their vote base. In order to consider modifying the electoral system, therefore, it is crucial for the larger parties to anticipate which parties might lose votes to smaller ones. In this scenario, the emergence of small parties sharing similar ideological positions with the larger ones could signal future vote shifts towards these small parties, especially if the existing rules are maintained. This is primarily because fragmentation or proliferation in the number of parties close to the larger party's ideology can significantly increase the degree of competition in this ideological bloc. Under the current electoral rules, this intensified competition may result in future vote shifts towards these smaller and newer parties, while decreasing the seat potential of the larger parties. In such a context, the larger parties may have incentives to respond to these realignments in the party system through institutional means, such as initiating a change in the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliance formation.

Based on the scenario presented above, larger parties are not expected to opt for permissive change. Such changes would enable small parties to enter the parliament and potentially reduce the legislative power of the larger party. Alternatively, however, larger parties might view fragmentation within their ideological bloc as an opportunity to expand their vote base. This could be achieved by forming electoral alliances with smaller parties that share their ideological stance. In this context, larger parties may consider implementing permissive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. This strategic move aims to enhance the party's overall political appeal and legislative influence. Taking these considerations into account, Hypothesis 2 suggests fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of adopting permissive changes while decreasing the likelihood of restrictive change. Nonetheless, the empirical analysis does not find any support for this hypothesis. This indicates that fragmentation within the largest party's ideological bloc does not have a statistically significant effect on either the likelihood of restrictive changes or on the likelihood of permissive changes.

Adopting permissive changes would also serve the same objectives. As previously mentioned, permissive changes are likely to increase the number of small parties. This type of reform would also serve to weaken an already fragmented ideological bloc of parties. Consequently, larger parties might favor permissive changes to prevent the consolidation of the opposition forces by intensifying the degree of competition within their ideological cluster. However, this strategy carries risks for a party and could potentially backfire, especially if their ideological bloc is comparatively more fragmented. Therefore, adopting permissive rules would only be a good strategy if the rival party's ideological bloc is more fragmented. However, the empirical analyses do not provide support for this conditional relationship.

However, empirical analyses yield an interesting result regarding this issue. My initial expectation was to observe the marginal effect of fragmentation within the largest party's ideological cluster. On the contrary, analyses have shown that the variable that has a statistically significant marginal effect is fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster. When the effective number of parties in the largest party's ideological cluster is between 2 and 3, fragmentation within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a strong marginal effect on restrictive change. This suggests that when there are fewer parties within the ideological cluster of the largest party, fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of adopting restrictive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. This result provides further support for the effect of fragmentation within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party, which is discussed below.

Occasionally, the fragmentation within the rival ideological bloc may also motivate parties to opt for restrictive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral coordination. Such modifications can occur in a party system characterized by what Cox (1997) refers as "lopsided bipolarity". In the case of a lopsided bipolar party system, two major parties dominate the political landscape, but their electoral support is unevenly distributed. The stronger party usually enjoys a stable pre-electoral alliance, while the weaker party struggles to find allies and thus fails to gain substantial electoral support. If this situation changes and turns against the stronger party (or coalition), implementing restrictive rules for pre-electoral alliance formation would be a reasonable option. Building on these propositions, Hypothesis 3 suggests that fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of restrictive change while decreasing the likelihood of permissive change. Empirical analyses provide support for this hypothesis, demonstrating that fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a strong effect on the likelihood of restrictive change. Specifically, when the effective number of parties in the 2nd party's

ideological cluster is higher than 3, the likelihood of restrictive change increases significantly. However, this effect is not significant due to limited observations when the effective number of parties is greater than 5. Nevertheless, roughly 85 percent of the observations have 5 or less effective number of parties within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party. This result implies that fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a strong positive effect on the likelihood of adopting a restrictive change. Why is then the fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster a stronger predictor than fragmentation in the largest party's ideological cluster? This is primarily because an increase in the effective number of parties in the rival's ideological cluster can be perceived as a threat by the largest party. The largest party may fear potential electoral defeat resulting from a pre-electoral alliance and coordination within the rival's ideological cluster. This fear could prompt them to implement restrictive changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation as a precautionary measure.

It is also important to note that fragmentation in the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster has a strong positive effect on restrictive change when countries have limited democratic experience. However, this effect declines as democracies get older. Fragmentation within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party stops having a statistically significant effect on restrictive change once democratic age is more than 19.

In summary, the analyses regarding the effect of party system fragmentation suggest that while overall fragmentation in the party system lacks a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of change in the rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances, its effect becomes evident when examining fragmentation within ideological clusters separately. Notably, in a country with less than 20 years of democratic experience, when fragmentation occurs within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster, there is an observable increase in the likelihood of restrictive change. It is, therefore, noteworthy that in democracies whose democratic experience is less than two decades, parties in power seem to respond to party system fragmentation by enacting a restrictive change, particularly when fragmentation occurs within the ideological cluster of their rivals.

The prevailing instabilities within the party system often compel parties to make prospective cost-benefit evaluations. However, parties might lack the foresight to proactively modify electoral rules as a measure against potential vote loss. It is only when their concerns materialize that parties are more likely to take action. In other words, when parties have already experienced other parties drawing votes from their support base, they are more likely to respond. Consequently, this dissertation

argues that electoral volatility might serve as a stronger indicator (than party system fragmentation) for predicting changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. Thus, Hypothesis 4 posits that electoral volatility increases the likelihood of change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation. The empirical analyses provide support for this hypothesis. The findings demonstrate that the likelihood of change increases significantly when electoral volatility increases. More specifically, the predicted probability of change increases from 2 percent to 16 percent when electoral volatility increases from 5 percent to 35 percent. When examining the effect of volatility on the direction of change, the analysis reveals that higher levels of electoral volatility increase the likelihood of restrictive change whereas it does not have a statistically significant effect on the likelihood of permissive change. These findings suggest that under higher levels of electoral volatility adopting a restrictive change in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation is more likely.

Despite its significant effect on the likelihood of change, we cannot simply assume that all parties are affected by electoral volatility in the same way. Earlier studies demonstrate that voters' expressions of discontent vary, with some supporting the main opposition party while others vote for new parties. Acknowledging this variation is crucial for understanding the effect of volatility on electoral reform. For instance, Núñez, Simón, and Pilet (2017) distinguish between two types of volatility: old-party and new-party volatility. They find that when volatility favors new parties, meaning that these parties attract votes from established parties' support bases, it disrupts the party system equilibrium and increases the likelihood of electoral reform. Conversely, when volatility benefits other established parties, the likelihood of electoral reform decreases (Núñez, Simón, and Pilet 2017). Building on the reasoning on party system fragmentation outlined above, the dissertation argues that parties do not uniformly respond to either total or new party volatility. Larger parties are less likely to make restrictive changes if volatility affects their main rivals. On the other hand, if new parties draw votes from their vote base, larger parties are more likely to make restrictive changes in order to prevent further vote losses towards smaller or newer parties in their own ideological cluster. Building on these propositions, Hypothesis 5 suggests that new party volatility in the largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of restrictive change and decreases the likelihood of permissive change. However, empirical analyses provide partial support for this hypothesis. When controlled for other explanatory variables, the effect of this variable loses its significance.

Additionally, Hypothesis 6 suggests that an increase in volatility toward new parties within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster increases the likelihood of permissive change. Empirical analyses provide support for this hypothesis. The findings

suggest that permissive change is more likely under higher levels of volatility towards new parties within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party. Notably, this effect remains significant when the level of volatility in this cluster equals to or below 5 percent. However, due to the limited observations where the level of volatility is greater than 5 percent, confidence intervals become wider and make it difficult to interpret the probability of permissive change when electoral volatility is greater than 5 percent. Nevertheless, this result clearly demonstrates how the probability of permissive change increases with volatility towards newcomers within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster.

The response of political parties to instabilities within the party system, particularly concerning the proportionality of the electoral system, presents a challenging puzzle. Predicting how parties react to an increased number of parties in terms of proportionality of the electoral system requires careful consideration of various factors. It remains uncertain whether they would be more inclined to pursue greater proportionality, or conversely, to raise electoral thresholds to mitigate the potential impact of newcomers. It can be reasonable to argue that governing parties, who have already won under the existing electoral rules, are less likely to implement reforms that enhance the proportionality of the electoral system. However, these parties may be more motivated to pursue such reforms if they anticipate that the existing disproportionality could potentially result in their electoral defeat. The existing body of literature on the adoption of proportional representation in Europe provides support for this latter proposition by suggesting that governing parties adopted proportional representation as a strategic response to ensure their political survival in response to instabilities in the party system triggered by the expansion of suffrage. The key here is the level of uncertainty resulting from electoral volatility. Previous studies suggest that a willingness to make the system more proportional is often depends on contexts of high electoral volatility (Riera 2013, 23). Parties face the overwhelming challenge of guaranteeing their own survival and the difficulties of doing this in highly uncertain environments. Consequently, they may follow a maximin approach, which minimizes their risk of losing the status quo situation (Renwick 2010, 56-7). Building on these assumptions, the dissertation asserts that in such circumstances parties tend to either maintain the status quo or, if they choose to implement change, they opt for permissive changes. Hence, Hypothesis 7 suggests that under high levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility increases the likelihood of permissive change.

The empirical analyses of this conditional relationship demonstrate that the effect of electoral volatility on the likelihood of change is influenced by the level of disproportionality. Electoral volatility has a positive effect on change when there is low

disproportionality. However, this effect declines as the level of disproportionality increases. Electoral volatility stops having a statistically significant effect on change once the level of disproportionality is more than 13 percent. Roughly 75 percent of observations in the sample have produced a disproportionality lower than this. Hence, the results presented here clearly indicate that electoral volatility has a statistically significant effect on change when the disproportionality is at a moderate level. Similarly, when exploring the effect of volatility on the direction of change in the context of increased levels of disproportionality, a similar pattern emerges. At lower levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility has a positive effect on restrictive change. However, this effect becomes weaker as the level of disproportionality increases. Electoral volatility stops having a statistically significant effect on restrictive change once the level of disproportionality is higher than 10 percent. These results indirectly support my theoretical expectations regarding the conditioning effect of disproportionality. Although there is no evidence demonstrating that under higher levels of disproportionality, electoral volatility leads to a permissive change, it can be inferred that increased levels of disproportionality condition the effect of electoral volatility by reducing the likelihood of restrictive change. Overall, these results clearly indicate that electoral volatility has a statistically significant effect on restrictive change when the disproportionality is at moderate levels.

Even though the main focus of this dissertation is its conditioning effect, disproportionality has also an average, negative significant effect on the probability of change. Specifically, when the level of disproportionality increases from 2 percent to 9 percent, the probability of change decreases from 6 percent to 2 percent. Moreover, disproportionality has a statistically significant negative effect on the probability of restrictive change. However, this negative effect gets smaller as the level of disproportionality increases.

Employing a historical institutionalist approach, the second group of hypotheses explores the role of institutional consolidation and path dependency on the likelihood of change in the rules governing interparty pre-electoral coordination. As outlined in the literature review chapter, path dependency refers to the idea that choices and decisions made in the past shape and constrain future developments. In the context of electoral reform, path dependency suggests that the existing electoral system and its historical development play a significant role in shaping the possibilities and constraints for reform. According to path dependency, the initial choice of an electoral system often becomes deeply embedded in a country's culture and institutions. Over time, this system may become seen as the norm, making it difficult to introduce significant changes. The existing electoral system, therefore, may have become institutionalized, making it resistant to reform. Additionally, existing electoral sys-

tems and electoral rules create vested interests and coalitions that benefit from its continuation. Political parties and other actors may have already benefited from the current system, and they may resist reforms that could potentially undermine their positions. Following these considerations, Hypothesis 8 suggests that established democracies are less likely to change the election rules that regulate how parties coordinate their pre-electoral strategies. But if change occurs, I expect them to be towards more restrictive rules, rather than more permissive rules. Therefore, Hypothesis 9 suggests that the age of democracy increases the probability of restrictive change in the rules governing inter-party pre-electoral coordination and decreases the probability of permissive change. The empirical findings provide support for Hypothesis 8.

The empirical analyses suggest that the likelihood of change decreases as democracy gets older. Contrary to the theoretical expectations proposed in this dissertation, when democratic age increases from 5 years to 25 years, the probability of restrictive change decreases significantly from 11 percent to 1 percent. However, the effect of democratic age is influenced by fragmentation in the party system. When we look at the marginal effect of democratic age on change as overall fragmentation changes, the findings indicate that the reductive effect of democratic age seems to get stronger once ENEP increases.

However, when we look at ideological clusters separately, the marginal effect of democratic age becomes even more identifiable. Democratic age has a reductive effect on the likelihood of observing a restrictive change when both ideological clusters are fragmented. This reductive effect gets even stronger when the effective number of parties within both clusters increases. However, age of democracy stops having a significant effect on restrictive change when ENEP within the largest party's ideological cluster is more than 3 and when ENEP within the 2nd largest party's ideological cluster is more than 4.7.

Democratic age has also a reductive effect on change as the level of total electoral volatility changes. This effect of the democratic age gets stronger as the level of electoral volatility increases. Democratic age leads to different results considering its marginal effect on change when the level of volatility towards new parties varies. On the one hand, democratic age has a reductive effect on the likelihood of observing a restrictive change when volatility towards new parties occurs within the ideological cluster of the largest party. This effect gets stronger as the level of volatility towards newcomers within this cluster increases. On the other hand, when volatility towards newcomers occurs within the ideological cluster of the 2nd largest party, democratic age has a statistically significant negative effect on permissive change. This effect

gets even stronger when the levels of volatility toward new parties within this cluster increase. Democratic age has a statistically significant negative marginal effect on restrictive change.

In summary, democratic age decreases the probability of change. It also has a negative marginal effect on restrictive change as the effective number of parties and electoral volatility increases. However, this effect becomes more evident and significant once we look at the direction of change and ideological clusters separately.

The second research question of the dissertation is ‘Why do parties exhibit preferences over a specific type of pre-electoral alliance over others’. To address this question this dissertation proposes a classification of pre-electoral alliances into two main categories: joint nominations and combined nominations. This classification is based on two principles: the number of candidates lists within an alliance and the level of political cost that different pre-electoral alliance types may impose on political parties. This category consists of two subcategories based on the electoral system utilized in a specific country: joint lists and nomination agreements. The former is typical to electoral systems that employ multi-member districts whereas the latter is used when an electoral system utilizes single-member districts. The second category connected nominations is simply defined as the formal linking of several electoral candidate lists. This latter category includes interparty apparentements which impose lower levels of political costs on parties since parties do not necessarily drop any candidates from their candidate lists. While cross-country analyses explore both of the research questions, this dissertation provides a single case study on Turkey to address the second research question, which is outlined at the beginning of this paragraph, of this dissertation. Joint candidate list, whereby multiple political parties compete with a single list of candidates under a common alliance name, has been prohibited in Turkey since 1954. This prohibition was originally established by the incumbent DP (Democrat Party) in 1954 for two reasons. The first and most obvious reason was to prevent any pre-electoral opposition coordination in the upcoming elections. Secondly, the DP leadership aimed to foster party unity by discouraging party dissidents from splitting the party. Given that the majoritarian electoral system provided smaller parties with very limited opportunities to gain representation, the ban on joint lists further diminished incentives for these parties to pursue separate political paths. On several occasions, various small opposition parties made proposals to abolish the ban on joint lists. However, these proposals were not given serious consideration by the governing parties at the time. Consequently, the provision prohibiting parties from running with a joint candidate list has remained unchanged in the subsequent election laws.

In 2018, apparentements were introduced by the joint effort of the incumbent AKP and its political ally MHP. Despite calls from opposition parties such as CHP and HDP, the AKP-MHP alliance made their decisions to introduce apparentement while keeping the ban on joint lists in effect. According to this law provision allowing apparentements, political parties that meet the eligibility requirements for participation in elections are granted the opportunity to participate in elections by formally linking their candidate lists. In the ballot, both the parties' names as well as the alliance name take place separately. Voters have one vote, and they could either vote for the alliance or they could indicate their preference for a specific party in the alliance by sealing the designated area for the party. In the initial seat allocation step, alliances are treated as single parties if their vote total surpasses 10 percent national threshold. This system was only used in the 2018 elections where two apparentements contested the elections. In 2022 rules regulating the formation of pre-electoral alliances were amended once again. The change in the election law that removed the requirement to count the alliance's total votes for seat allocation has weakened the effectiveness of apparentements in helping smaller parties to gain seats.

The preference of the AKP and its political ally MHP over the adoption of apparentement over joint candidate lists can be explained by two reasons. First of all, this rule change needs to be considered in conjunction with the establishment of a presidential system in 2017. The adoption of consecutive parliamentary and presidential elections and the requirement of obtaining 50 percent plus 1 of the votes in the first round for winning the presidency have significantly increased the leverage of the smaller parties against larger parties. In order to protect their party brand smaller parties prefer less costly pre-electoral alliance types since the extent of their blackmail potential is dependent on their power as a separate and autonomous political party. Another reason for the decision to introduce apparentement could be the increase in the number of parties within the AKP's ideological cluster, particularly with the establishment of the IYIP, which however joined the opposition alliance. The AKP may have sought to involve these smaller parties in an alliance under its leadership and therefore benefiting from their vote bases and consolidating its electoral strength. Moreover, the decision to introduce apparentements can be attributed to the distinct nature of the two alliance categories and the associated political costs they impose on political parties. Apparentements provide parties with more flexibility by enabling them to maintain their individual party identity while still benefiting from the pre-electoral coordination that increases their chances to gain representation. However, making a joint list with a larger party is a risky decision for smaller parties since such lists may lead to the dissolution of smaller

parties within larger parties, resulting the loss of party identity. While the permissive change in 2018 could be seen as a survival strategy by the incumbent AKP, the restrictive change in 2022 has seemed to target to prevent future opposition coordination attempts. Conversely, prior to the 2023 elections, opposition pre-electoral alliances grew in both quantity and size. However, these changes have seemed to significantly increase the cost of joining such alliances, which could potentially worsen both intra-party and inter-party dynamics.

7.2 Main Contribution of the Dissertation

The main contribution of this dissertation lies in its efforts to address a significant gap in the existing research concerning the initial design and alteration of the formal institutional background of pre-electoral alliances. To fill this gap the dissertation presents the first systematic comparative study that examines the changes in the rules related to pre-electoral alliance formation. To accomplish this objective, an original dataset is developed, covering information from 27 European countries over a period between 1945 and 2018. Through a comprehensive empirical analysis of the election rules governing the formation of pre-electoral alliances and the modifications made on them, the dissertation provides a systematic and comparative analysis of these changes and reveals the factors and dynamics that drive them.

Moreover, the dissertation not only fills a gap in the existing research on the formal institutional background of pre-electoral alliance formation but also contributes to bridging the separate literatures of electoral reform and pre-electoral alliances.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research

The dissertation has some limitations. First of all, while examining a heterogeneous sample of countries, its primary focus is limited to Europe. This geographic restriction may lead to the omission of some different institutional practices governing how parties form pre-electoral alliances in regions outside of Europe. In a similar manner, the determinants explaining rule change in Europe would not be that strong in

explaining change in countries located in regions other than Europe. Thus, while it is important to recognize the contextual limitations of the study it would be intriguing to see whether the findings of the study are applicable to non-European regions. Thus, further research would extend the scope of geographical concentration in the dataset by including countries from different regions. On the one hand, such an extension could enhance our understanding of the variation in rule changes across different regional and political contexts and contribute to the overall knowledge in the field.

Furthermore, it is also important to note that the dissertation exclusively focuses on successful rule changes in the empirical analysis which has the potential to provide a partial understanding of political parties' motivations for changing the rules and their preference for specific types of pre-electoral alliances. As the single case study on Turkey reveals that the failed attempts, i.e. proposals made but not considered, enhance our understanding in terms of motivations, incentives, and preferences of the political actors other than governing parties. Therefore, future research could explore the failed attempts to change the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation.

Moreover, it is worth noting that one of the initial objectives of this dissertation was to explore the rules that shape and constrain political parties' options for strategic withdrawals. Strategic withdrawals refer to another type of pre-electoral alliance where one alliance member party withdraws from elections in order to support another party. During the data collection process, I realized that the rules regulating the formation of this specific alliance type require more caution as available options for withdrawal show great variety from country to country. In Turkey for example, the incumbent DP government eliminated this option in 1957 by amending the law which mandated parties to field candidates in each one of the electoral districts. In Bulgaria, the election law stipulates that one candidate list can only form a single parliamentary group. Once I recognized the potential omission of these country-specific practices governing strategic withdrawals in the study, I decided to leave the investigation of this specific type of pre-electoral alliance for future study.

This dissertation has a specific focus on parliamentary elections. Nevertheless, it would not be wrong to argue that parliamentary elections and presidential elections are very different types of elections. Presidential elections are single-office elections, which means that only one candidate would have the opportunity to occupy the office. Consequently, the transferability of the benefits and advantages of joining a pre-electoral alliance is quite limited. Therefore, in the context of presidential elections, political parties' motivations, and preferences to seek change in the rules

governing pre-electoral alliance would be very different from those in observed in parliamentary elections. As a result, future work should study changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliances in presidential elections.

In this dissertation, changes in the rules governing pre-electoral alliance formation are recognized as minor reforms. Future research could investigate the dynamic relationship between minor and major reforms. This could involve exploring how, for example, changes in the electoral formula and modifications to the rules governing pre-electoral alliances interact. By examining how major and minor reforms mutually affect each other, we could gain further insights into electoral institutions.

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APPENDIX A

Sample Ballot Papers Showing Different Pre-Electoral Alliance Types

Figure A.1 shows the sample ballot paper prepared for the 2019 Portuguese Parliamentary Elections. There are two joint candidate lists on the ballot paper: Partido Comunista dos Trabalhadores Portugueses (PCTP/MRPP) and CDU – Coligação Democrática Unitária (PCP – PEV). In both cases party names and logos within the alliance are presented to the voters.¹

¹<https://otava.embaixadaportugal.mne.gov.pt/pt/a-embaixada/noticias/ei%C3%A7%C3%B5es-legislativas-2019-especime-do-boletim-de-voto>, Retrieved on 24.02.2023

Figure A.1 Sample ballot paper - 2019 Portuguese Parliamentary Elections





















ELEIÇÃO DA ASSEMBLEIA DA REPÚBLICA			
Círculo eleitoral de Fora da Europa			
Partido Nacional Renovador	PNR		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Democrático Republicano	PDR		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Comunista dos Trabalhadores Portugueses	PCTP/MRPP		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Socialista	PS		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Popular Monárquico	PPM		<input type="checkbox"/>
Nós, Cidadãos!	NC		<input type="checkbox"/>
CHEGA	CH		<input type="checkbox"/>
Juntos pelo Povo	JPP		<input type="checkbox"/>
Iniciativa Liberal	IL		<input type="checkbox"/>
Bloco de Esquerda	B.E.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Aliança	A		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Social Democrata	PPD/PSD		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Trabalhista Português	PTP		<input type="checkbox"/>
Reagir Incluir Reciclar	R.I.R.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido Unido dos Reformados e Pensionistas	PURP		<input type="checkbox"/>
LIVRE	L		<input type="checkbox"/>
CDU - Coligação Democrática Unitária	PCP-PEV		<input type="checkbox"/>
Partido da Terra	MPT		<input type="checkbox"/>
PESSOAS-ANIMAIS-NATUREZA	PAN		<input type="checkbox"/>
CDS - Partido Popular	CDS-PP		<input type="checkbox"/>

Figure A.2 shows the ballot paper, prepared for the 2018 Hungarian Parliamentary Elections. On the ballot paper, there are two joint candidate lists: MSZP - Párbeszéd (No. 9) and Fidesz-KDNP (No. 13). In the designated spaces for these alliances, party names, and logos within the alliance are presented to the voters.²

²https://hvg.hu/itthon/20180314_Ilyen_lesz_a_szavazolap_aprilis_8an, Retrieved on 24.02.2023

Figure A.2 Sample ballot paper - 2018 Hungarian Parliamentary Elections

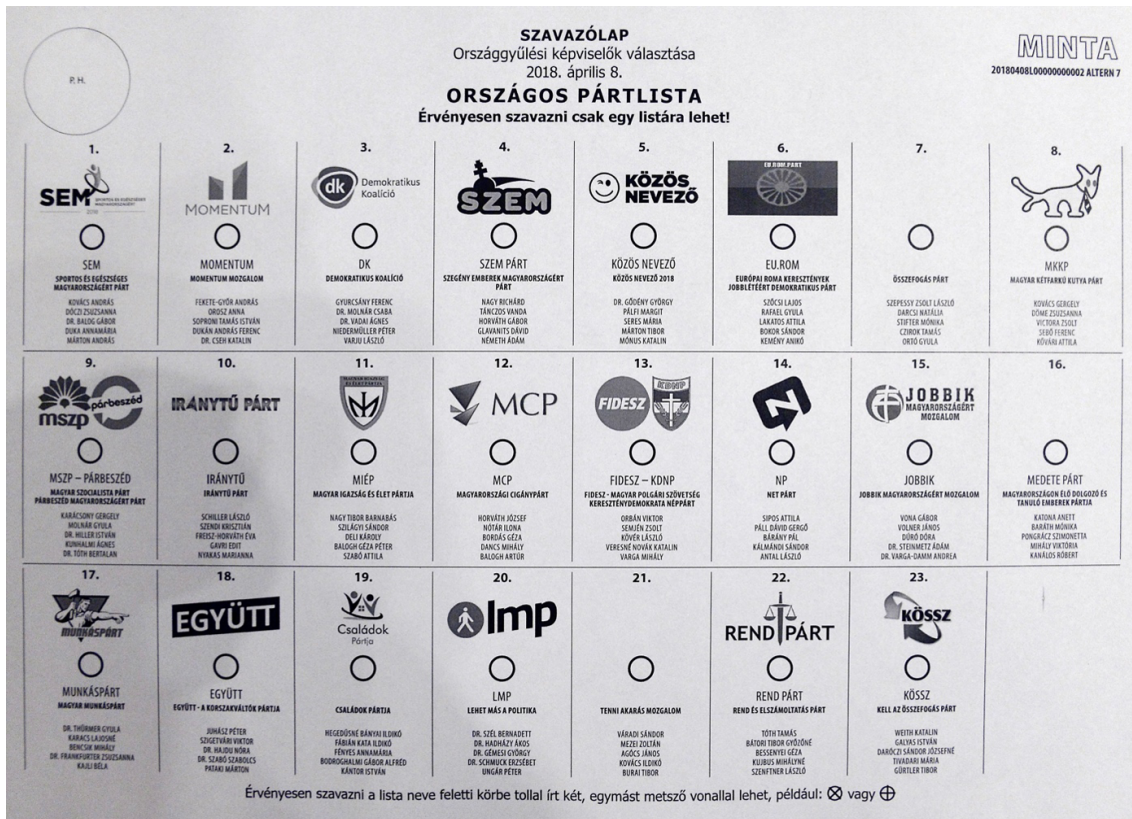


Figure A.3 shows the sample ballot paper prepared for the 2018 Italian Parliamentary Elections. The ballot paper shows two nomination agreements. Giorgio Silli and Benedetto Della Vedova were fielded in single party districts by pre-electoral alliances.³

³<https://www.po-net.prato.it/elezioni/2018/politiche/htm/scheda.htm>, Retrieved on 24.02.2023

Figure A.3 Sample ballot paper - 2018 Italian Parliamentary Elections

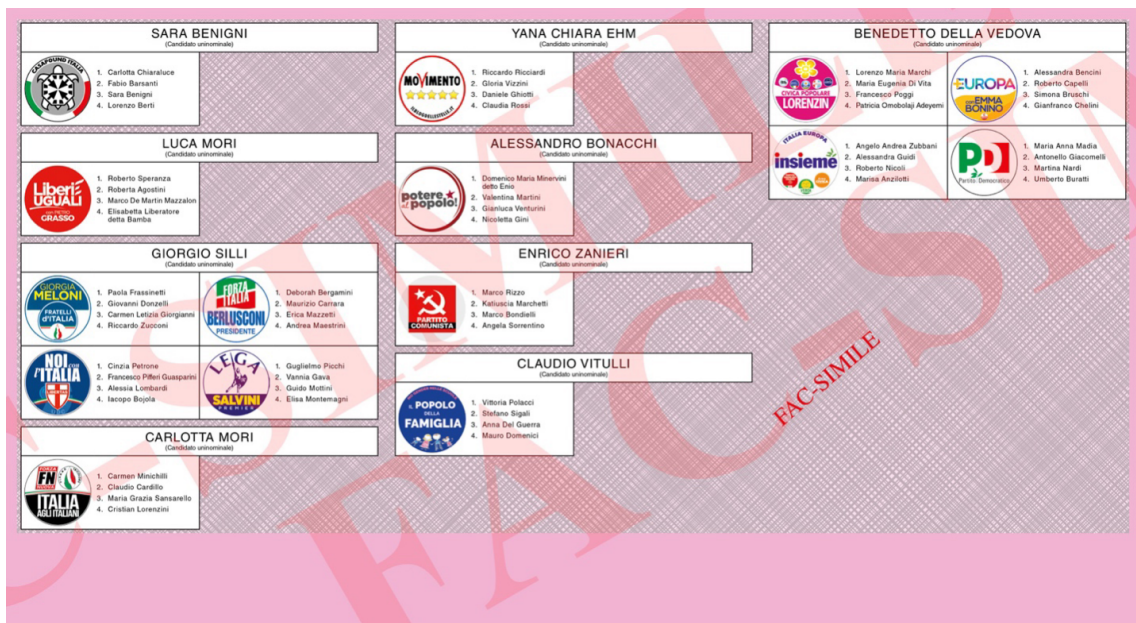
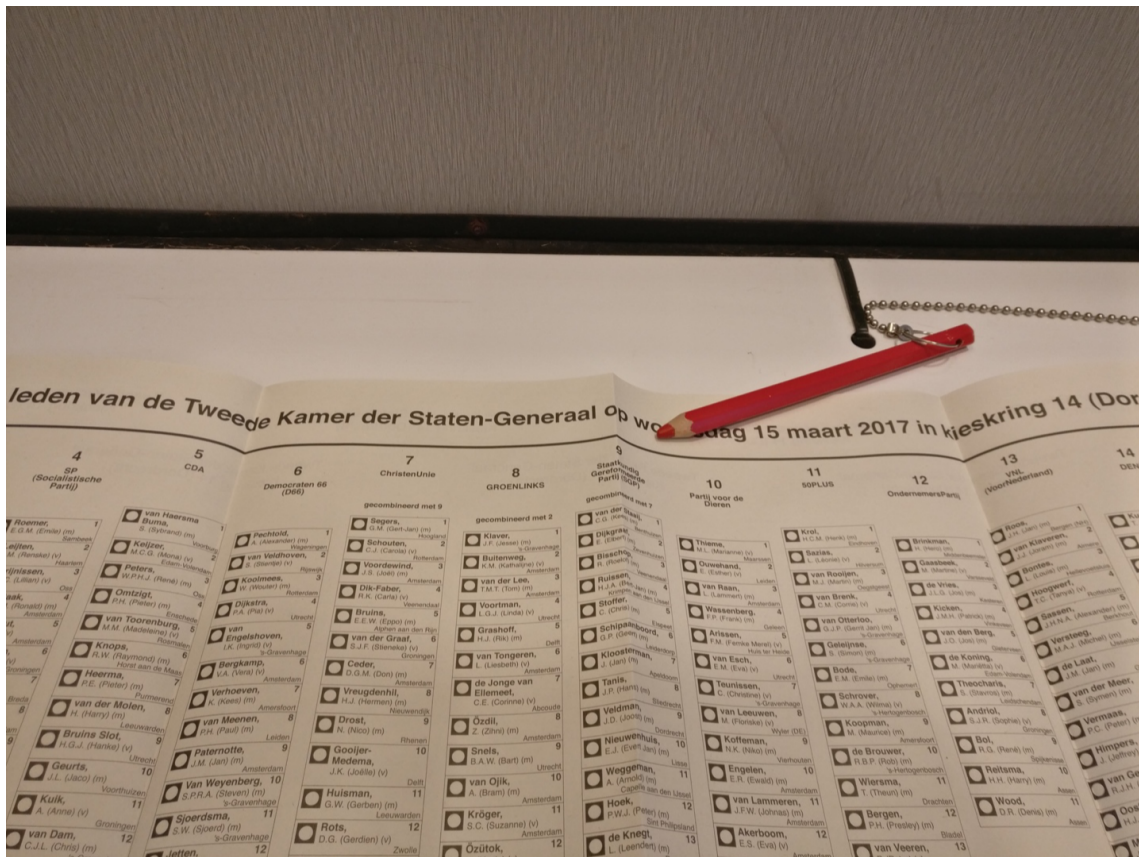


Figure A.4 shows the ballot paper prepared for the 2017 Dutch Parliamentary Elections. Ballot paper shows an apparentement linking two candidate lists (No.7 and No. 9). The phrase above these candidate lists, "gecombineerd met" states that these two lists are linked. This was the last election where apparentements were allowed in the Netherlands.⁴

⁴https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ballot_2017_Dutch_general_elections_-_2.jpg, Retrieved on 23.02.2023

Figure A.4 Sample ballot paper - 2017 Dutch Parliamentary Elections



APPENDIX B

Model Comparisons

Table B.1 Comparing different procedures of logistic regression for Model 1

	(Model 1)	(Model 2)	(Model 3)
	relogit	firthlogit	logit
ENEP	-0.050 (0.204)	-0.050 (0.197)	-0.069 (0.206)
Electoral Volatility	0.071*** (0.020)	0.071*** (0.019)	0.074*** (0.020)
Disproportionality	-0.118* (0.069)	-0.118 (0.085)	-0.145** (0.070)
Constant	-3.290*** (0.900)	-3.300*** (0.936)	-3.267*** (0.910)
Observations	340	340	340
<i>AIC</i>	.	114.156	133.402

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Table B. 2 Model comparisons with and without interaction terms: Electoral volatility and disproportionality

	(1)	(2)
	change	change
ENEP	0.001 (0.181)	-0.018 (0.185)
Electoral Volatility	0.062*** (0.018)	0.093** (0.037)
Disproportionality	-0.051 (0.058)	0.048 (0.074)
Electoral Volatility \times Disproportionality		-0.005 (0.005)
Constant	-3.670*** (0.880)	-4.148*** (0.887)
Observations	352	352
<i>AIC</i>	148.921	149.591

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Likelihood-ratio test

LR $\chi^2(1) = 1.33$

Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.2489$

Table B.3 Model comparisons with and without interaction terms: Fragmentation within the ideological clusters of the largest and second largest party

	(1)	(2)
	Type of Change	Type of Change
Permissive		
ENEP in largest party's cluster	-0.091 (0.401)	0.434 (1.043)
ENEP in 2nd largest party's cluster	-0.428 (0.394)	0.029 (0.904)
New party volatility in largest party's cluster	0.044 (0.056)	0.044 (0.056)
New party volatility in 2nd largest party's cluster	0.133** (0.052)	0.137** (0.053)
Disproportionality	-0.117 (0.131)	-0.117 (0.132)
ENEP in largest party's cluster × ENEP in 2nd largest party's cluster		-0.240 (0.450)
Constant	-2.831** (1.393)	-3.864* (2.348)
Restrictive		
ENEP in largest party's cluster	-0.081 (0.274)	-0.835 (0.774)
ENEP in 2nd largest party's cluster	0.649*** (0.189)	0.237 (0.432)
New party volatility in largest party's cluster	0.118*** (0.037)	0.119*** (0.037)
New party volatility in 2nd largest party's cluster	-0.007 (0.056)	-0.008 (0.055)
Disproportionality	-0.060 (0.077)	-0.049 (0.076)
ENEP in largest party's cluster × ENEP in 2nd largest party's cluster		0.223 (0.208)
Constant	-5.072*** (1.006)	-3.711** (1.620)
Observations	364	364
<i>AIC</i>	188.528	191.014

Standard errors in parentheses

* $p < 0.1$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$

Likelihood-ratio test

LR $\chi^2(2) = 1.51$

Prob $> \chi^2 = 0.4690$

APPENDIX C

Description of the Pre-Electoral Alliances in Turkey, 1991 - 2018¹

1991: DMP (Demokrat Merkez Partisi - Democrat Center Party) dissolved itself and merged with DYP (Doğru Yol Partisi - True Path Party). Only 2 out of 44 candidates (DMP leader Bedrettin Dalan and one of the founding members, Tınaz Titiz) were elected to the parliament from the DYP list.

1991: Members of the MÇP (Milli Çalışma Partisi - Nationalist Labour Party) and IDP (Islahatçı Demokrasi Partisi - Reformist Democracy Party) resigned from their parties and ran in the list of RP (Refah Partisi - Welfare Party).

1991: Members of the HEP (Halkın Emek Partisi - People's Labour Party) ran in the SHP (Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Party - Social Democrat Labour Party) list

1995: The leader and some members of the BBP (Büyük Birlik Partisi - Great Unity Party) resigned from their party and ran in the ANAP (Anavatan Partisi - Motherland Party) lists. BBP won 7 seats.

1995: Members from smaller socialist parties (SİP, BSP, DDP) ran in the HADEP (Halkın Demokrasi Partisi - People's Democracy Party) list.

2002: Members from smaller socialist parties (EMEP and SDP) ran in the DEHAP (Demokratik Halk Partisi - Democratic People's Party) list.

2002: Leader of the DTP (Demokratik Türkiye Partisi - Democratic Turkey Party) Mehmet Ali Bayar and leader of the ATP (Aydınlık Türkiye Partisi - Bright Turkey Party) resigned from their parties and ran in the DYP list.

2007: (Demokratik Sol Parti - Democratic Left Party) did not participate in the elections and its members ran in the high-ranking positions of the CHP (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi - Republican People's Party) lists

2007: Under the leadership of the DTP (Demokratik Toplum Parti - Democratic Left Party), a four-party bloc consisting of ÖDP (Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Partisi - Freedom and Democracy Party), EMEP (Emek ve Demokrasi Partisi - Labour and

¹This information has been compiled from Uzun (2018).

Democracy Party), and SDP (Sosyal Demokrasi Partisi - Social Democracy Party) supported 60 independent candidates in 43 provinces. DTP Co-Chairs Ahmet Türk and Aysel Tuğluk, who resigned from their party positions to run as independent candidates, ran from Mardin and Diyarbakır respectively. Other parties in the alliance bloc also had their leaders running as independent candidates: ÖDP leader Ufuk Uras from Istanbul, EMEP Leader Levent Türk from Izmir, and former SDP leader Akın Birdal from Diyarbakır. Of the independent candidates supported by the DTP-led alliance, 22 were elected as members of parliament. ÖDP General Chairman Ufuk Uras returned to his party, while the other 21 members rejoined DTP to form the party's parliamentary group.

2011: Under the leadership of the BDP (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi - Peace and Democracy Party), a group of left-wing socialist parties formed an independent candidate's platform under the name of "Labour, Democracy and Freedom Bloc (Emek Özgürlük ve Demokrasi Platformu)". The bloc supported 65 independent candidates in 41 provinces. 35 of the candidates supported by the alliance bloc were elected as deputies.

2011: (Bağımsız Türkiye Partisi - Independent Turkey Party) members ran in the DP (Demokrat Parti - Democrat Party) list.

June 2015: Members of the SP (Saadet Partisi - Felicity Party) ran in the BBP (Büyük Birlik Partisi - Great Unity Party) list.