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Explaining electoral volatility in Central and Eastern Europe : a party organizational approach

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Chapter 5 | The Continuity of Representation: MP Renomination Rates and Electoral Volatility

Introduction

The low levels of confidence vested by citizens in the legislature and the effective loss of its competencies in favor of executive agencies (Mishler and Rose 1994; Newton and Norris 2000; Loewenberg et al. 2002; 2010; Mezey, 2008, 181) does not alter the importance of parliamentary representation for democracy. Following the breakdown of communism, most CEE countries placed Parliaments at the core of their institutional setting (Lijphart 1992; Elster et al. 1998). In this sense, previous studies reveal the dominance held by the legislature in relationship with the other state actors (Gherghina 2007; Elgie and Moestrup 2008). Two features of the post-communist legislatures are observable. First, they start as transitional legislatures: with the exception of Poland, they were in place before the drafting of constitutions. They lacked regulations on internal procedures and their effects on behavior and policy occurred at a later stage. Second, as a consequence of the central role played by Parliaments in the institutional design, the CEE legislatures became the major stage where politicians met and where political parties made their presence visible (Olson 1998b). In the words of Polsby (1975) – who differentiates between Parliaments as transformative institutions and as arenas – the newly emerged CEE legislatures appear to be part of the latter category. Whereas the transformative legislatures imply that the internal institutional structures and procedures influence MPs' behavior and the legislative outcomes, the Parliaments as arenas offer platforms for governments and political parties to exert their influence.

The importance of Parliaments in the decision-making process raises the stake of representation for political parties. They are more interested to secure their presence into powerful legislatures than in those playing symbolic roles. Such incentives are even stronger as the CEE Parliaments appear to be stable and consolidated institutions in an environment characterized by turbulent political and economic developments. Rich literature focuses on the institutional determinants of turnover – electoral system (Rosenthal 1974; Niemi and Winsky 1987), term limits (Francis and Kenny 2000), and separation of powers (Persson et al. 1997) – and on economic failures or decisions of the incumbents (Chubb 1988; Sobel 1998). All these factors lead to specific quantities and qualities of information that reach the voters and influence their choice. Additionally, there are numerous studies (see Chapter 1) emphasizing

the linkage created between voters and MPs to ensure the reelection of the latter. However, earlier research ignored the potential influence of incumbent MPs on voters' choice. On the basis of the theoretical arguments outlined in Chapter 1, this chapter tests the hypothesis according to which political parties that renominate more MPs are likely to have lower levels of electoral volatility than the parties renominating less MPs (H₃).

The first section operationalizes renomination and proposes a formula for its measurement. The formula is sensitive to both the total number of candidates in elections and to the number of MPs from which the party renominates. The second section uses aggregate data to discuss the patterns of competition and renomination rates at country level. The following section includes the statistical analysis of the relationship between renomination rates and electoral volatility at party level. Drawing on an original dataset including more than 5,000 MPs and 60,000 candidates, it shows empirical support for the hypothesized relationship. Departing from the results of the quantitative analysis, the fourth section discusses the differences between political parties from the same party system. The final section includes two single case studies meant to shed light on the way in which renomination can influence electoral volatility in specific contexts.

The Renomination Rates: Operational Issues

The renomination rate refers to the percentage of MPs that candidate for their parties in the elections following their term in office. As the size of parties and number of candidates differ, the operationalization of this concept needs to be relative. Accordingly, the renomination rate is calculated as the simple average of two ratios: 1) that of incumbent MP candidates from the total number of candidates selected by the political party in the subsequent election and 2) that of incumbent MP candidates from the total number of MPs that party had in the previous term.

The formula (2) reflects these issues and uses two different weighting measures to control for biases. First, the number of incumbent MPs is divided by the total number of candidates as the latter varies greatly among parties. Some parties have lists with more candidates than seats and others do not have enough people to run for every available seat. In fact, with the exception of Slovakia in 2002, the political parties within the same country do not have an equal number of candidates. Additionally, the cross national variation in the number of candidates is also covered. Second, the number of seats accounts for the size of the party, thus standardizing the obtained rates. Consequently, the formula is sensitive to both the total number of candidates in elections and to the number of MPs from which the party re-nominates. Such an index produces values on a 0-1 scale with the maximum value corresponding to the

situation in which a party uses as candidates for the coming elections only its MPs – all of them – from the previous term.

Formula (2): The MP Renomination Rate

$$R_j = \frac{1}{2} \left[\frac{IC_{t1}}{TC_{t1}} + \frac{IC_{t1}}{S_{t0}} \right] \times 100$$

R_j = renomination rate for party j ,

IC_t = the total number of incumbent MPs renominated by party j in election $t1$,

TC_t = total number of candidates of party j in election $t1$,

S_{t-1} = number of seats held by party j in the previous term $t0$.

This rate is calculated for each term in which the party had access in Parliament. Its value ranges between 0 and 100 and it is interpreted in the analysis in percentage points. The reference point for the incumbents is the previous election.⁵⁰ Formula (2) is the basis for the statistical analysis from this chapter and for all the graphical representations with the exception of Figure 5.1 that is calculated on the basis of another formula (see below).

When employing Formula (2), there are two methodological aspects that require special attention. First, the incumbency can be calculated only if the party secures seats in consecutive terms. However, there are instances in which although the party did not gain access to Parliament, the incumbency rate can still be calculated. It is usually the case of parties resulting from a split. Using the same complicated example of the Romanian FSN and its 1992 split, it secured 263 seats in the 1990 national election. The parties resulting from the split (PSD and PDL) promoted in the 1992 elections MPs from the previous legislature. Although both parties were new from an institutional point of view, they relied on old representatives to earn votes. Second, the calculations take into account the initial political affiliation of the MPs and the number of mandates at the beginning of the legislative term. In doing so, I avoid the switches in political affiliation and the modifications of seats. Using the same example of the PDL, during the 2004-2008 term it jumped from 48 initial seats to 67 seats.

Before testing the hypothesis, a macro-perspective on the development of the CEE Parliament in the past two decades is useful for two

⁵⁰ I refer to the MPs renominated on the candidate list in the election following their mandate. Absolute incumbents (i.e. with a continuous presence in all post-communist legislatures) are not considered.

reasons. On the one hand, it describes the dynamics of the process of representation within the legislatures. The number of parliamentary parties discussed in the next section accounts for the longitudinal and cross-country variations.⁵¹ On the other hand, such an approach allows substantial observations about the process of representation. In this respect, the following section accounts for the re-nomination rates at country level and compares them with the dynamic of competition.

Aggregate Dynamics of Competition and Renomination Rates

In general, the fragmentation of the political space in the CEE countries decreases with every new election. The composition of the legislature clearly reflects such a pattern. Previous studies indicate the existence of a decreasing trend from the first post-communist decade, the effective number of parties being on a descending slope (Fillipov 1999). Table 1 illustrates that in four of the examined countries the number of competitors diminishes over time from extreme values – 29 parties in the 1991 Polish Parliament and 17 in the 1990 Romanian legislature to approximately six political parties in the second post-communist decade. In part, this dynamic is determined by the electoral threshold – inexistent in the initial Polish and Romanian elections – which require political competitors to achieve electoral support to gain access to seat distribution. In many post-communist countries the threshold was repeatedly modified and quite often it differentiates between political parties and coalitions. For example, the Czech threshold for the 1996 and 1998 elections used a threshold of 5% for one political party, 7% for a coalition of two or three parties, and 11% for a coalition of at least four parties. In 2002, even the coalitions of multiple parties were discouraged by changing the thresholds: 10% for a coalition of two parties, 15% for a coalition of three parties, and 20% in the case of a coalition made of at least four parties.

However, the restrictions in the form of electoral threshold are feared mostly by small and less popular parties that decide to run into electoral alliances or coalitions. This justifies the genesis of the Liberal Social Union (LSU) coalition in the Czech 1992 elections (formed by parties failing to gain access in the 1990 elections) or the appearance of the AWS in the 1997 Polish elections following the failure of five parties to gain access in the 1993 Parliament. A similar example is the SDK formed by Christian-democrats, Social-democrats and Greens out of which solely the KDH survived in the subsequent elections. In fact, this is the major problem of most CEE coalitions. Once they dissolve – and it happens almost all the time – there is only one party that manages to gain access to Parliament on its own. Quite often, other parties of the coalitions

⁵¹ This indicator is preferred to the effective number of parliamentary parties as the following section focuses on the decreasing number of competitors - not on their strength.

reorient after disintegration and form new alliances. This is the case with the Common Choice (SV) formed in 1994 by the Party of the Democratic Left (SDL), the Social Democratic Party of Slovakia (SDSS), the Farmers Movement of the Slovak Republic (HPS), and the Green Party of Slovakia (SZ). In the 1998 elections, only the SDL ran independently, whereas SDSS and SZ joined the emerging SDK.

Table 5.1: Number of Parties in the CEE Parliaments by Term

	Parliamentary Terms					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
Bulgaria	3	5	5	4	7	
Czech Republic	8	6	5	5	5	
Hungary	7	7	6	5	4	
Poland	29	7	5	7	6	6
Romania	17	8	6	5	6	5
Slovakia	5	7	6	7	6	

Notes: Electoral alliances and coalitions are treated differently when calculating the number of parties in Parliament: for alliances I account for the number of component parties, whereas the coalition is considered a monolith.

The terms are: Bulgaria (1991, 1993, 1997, 2001, and 2005), the Czech Republic (1992, 1996, 1998, 2002, and 2006), Hungary (1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006), Poland (1991, 1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2007), Romania (1990, 1992, 1996, 2000, 2004, and 2008), and Slovakia (1992, 1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006).

All over the region, the reduced number of parties in Parliament implies either the existence of umbrella organizations (the case of the elections in the first term) or the formation of electoral alliances and political coalitions with the aim to increase the chances for representation (starting with the second term). There were special circumstances in which the presence of umbrella organizations, in the absence of an electoral threshold, did not limit the number of parties (e.g. Poland and Romania). Bulgaria and Slovakia are marked by oscillations of the number of parties in the legislature. The surprising fact, compared with the other four countries, is that they both start with quite reduced numbers (three in Bulgaria and five in Slovakia) and progressively increase the number of parties up to seven in the case of Bulgaria, the highest from the fifth term and among the highest in the region from the second term onwards (only Romania had eight parties in its 1992 elections). Their trends can be explained by analyzing the domestic structure of competition.

In Bulgaria, the 1991 elections were marked by the rivalry between the BSP and the ODS clustering the anti-communist parties (SDS was part of it). Preferences were thus divided between these competitors, the third actor being the party representing the Turkish minority. By 1994 two other political

formations - the Bulgarian Business Bloc (BBB) and People's Union (NS) – managed to channel particular preferences drawing their success particularly on people disappointed with the successors. They have both played episodic roles in the Bulgarian politics, NS being solely an electoral coalition that failed to exist for a longer period of time. The presence of short-term alliances in Parliament reduces the number of successful competitors and provides an impression of stability. However, the situation changes if we consider that only three parties secured seats on a continuous basis in the Bulgarian legislatures. Moreover, when we account for the structure of consecutive Parliaments, the numerous entries and exits are quite striking, the most in the CEE region. Around 14 parties and coalitions were part of the Parliament between 1991 and 2005, figures contrasting sharply with eight parties in Romania between 1992 and 2008 or seven parties in Hungary between 1990 and 2006.

Aggregate Renomination Rates at Party Level

Although the number of parties in Parliament is a useful indicator of the dynamics of representation, it has inherent limitations. For example, it does not capture the composition of the legislature, being insensitive to entries and exits. As a result, there is an overestimation of the stability of competition. These are the reasons for which the renomination rate adds information about the dynamic of competition within and across party systems. In this respect, it accounts for the extent to which successful candidates are supported by their parties on a continuous basis.⁵² As this analysis is broader than the party level, formula (3) is useful. It reflects a relative renomination rate at legislature level by dividing the number of incumbent MPs renominated as candidates in the coming elections by the total number of MPs belonging to the analyzed parties.

Formula (3): The Relative Renomination Rate

$$R_p = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^n IC_j}{\sum_{j=1}^n S_j}$$

R_p = renomination rate at parliamentary level (aggregated),

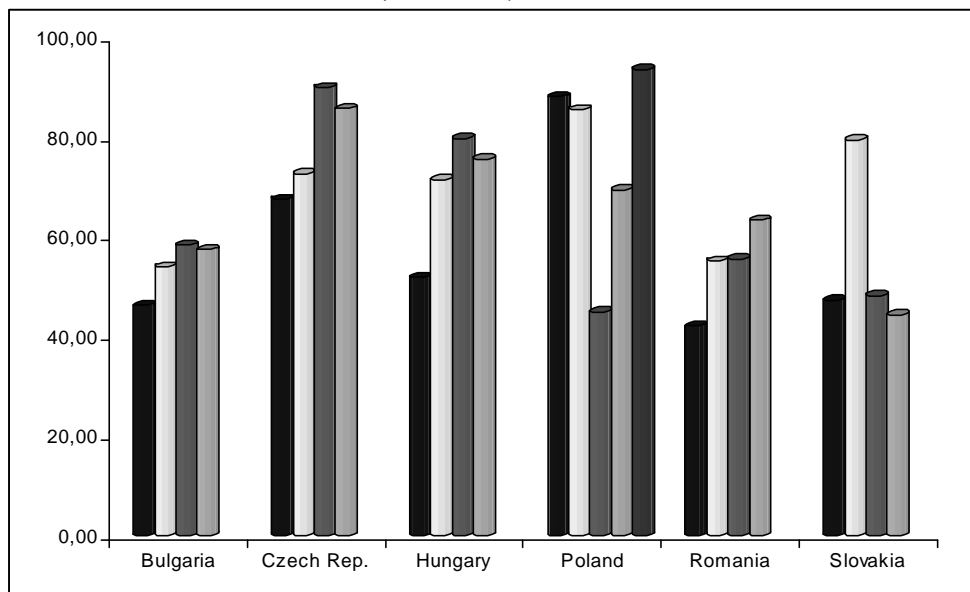
IC_j = the number of incumbent MPs renominated by parliamentary party j ,

S_{t-1} = the number of seats held by party j .

⁵² For reasons connected with the employed mechanism at theoretical level, my operationalization excludes those MPs elected in consecutive terms that belong to different parties.

Based on Formula (3), Figure 5.1 depicts the evolution of the aggregated incumbency rates in the Parliaments of the investigated countries. Each bar represents an election and they are arranged chronologically: Each country, with the exception of Poland with five elections, has four elections ordered from left to right. For example, in each country the dark grey bar to the left marks the first election (see the note under the graph), the light grey bar to its right the second election and so on. At the same time, the colors are used to reflect similar moments of elections in each country. For example, the above mentioned dark grey bar corresponds to the first term in each country.

Figure 5.1: Levels of Renomination Rates in the CEE Parliaments in Consecutive Terms (1991-2008)



Notes: The terms are: Bulgaria (1993, 1997, 2001, and 2005), the Czech Republic (1996, 1998, 2002, and 2006), Hungary (1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006), Poland (1993, 1997, 2001, 2005, and 2007), Romania (1992, 1996, 2004, and 2008), and Slovakia (1994, 1998, 2002, and 2006).

There is a similar evolution of the aggregated renomination rates in four out of the six countries. The Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, and Romanian parties increase the rate of MPs they renominate for a new seat in legislature with every new election. There are cross-country differences in the percentage of renominated MPs with Bulgaria and Romania at a low level and the Czech Republic peaking in 2002 and 2006 when more than 80% of the existing MPs were placed on lists for reelection. With the exception of Romania where we observe progressive increase, the other three countries display a small

drawback between their third and fourth election. At a glance the time factor appears to be relevant, being visible a positive association between the periods passed from the first elections and the renomination rates. However, the decreasing number of competitors presented in Table 5.1 may also represent a valid explanation.

A dual connection can be identified between the number of parties in Parliament and the incumbency rates. On the one hand, political parties often rely on the same candidates for numerous reasons: the quality of representation, the candidates' capacity to attract votes, the network established by the MPs within the party (e.g. their positions within intra-party politics). High rates of incumbency may structure the competition by limiting the share of available votes. In other words, by proposing the same MPs as in the previous elections, parties encapsulate preferences of specific voters – those who voted with the candidate in the previous term are expected to cast a similar vote – and thus decrease the available voting basis for the rest of the parties.⁵³ On the other hand, experienced MPs may represent the life vests of parties in the insecure electoral environment especially when competitors gradually disappear.

The Slovak and Polish legislatures deserve closer inspection as they have particular dynamics. Both countries have a symmetric situation in their elections. In Slovakia, out of the four elections the first two terms are marked by an increase of the renomination rates, whereas the most recent two elections show a steady decrease in which the levels are the lowest in the region. In Poland there is a descending trend of renominations until 2001 followed by dramatic increases with a peak reached in 2007 of almost 95%. The previous high level was registered in 1993, whereas the minimum point of around 42% corresponds to the election in which two important parties emerged on the political scene (PIS and PO) and one disappeared (PD). This is the country in which different parties were successful in different decades. Until 2001, the SLD, the PSL and the PD were the prominent political actors. PIS and PO emerged and in 2005 they have both gathered more than 50% of votes. This sudden shift in which the SLD lost numerous MPs and the PIS and the PO promoted new faces in Parliament resulted in the lowest incumbency rate in post-communist Polish legislatures. As a comparison, it is lower than in the 1993 term when reelection was quite small due to the previously fragmented Parliament (with 29 parties). Despite such oscillations, the Polish Parliament has among the highest renomination rates in the CEE region.

This country level perspective provides an accurate assessment of the longitudinal evolution of the renomination rates. However, it overlooks the

⁵³ The entire reasoning is based on the assumption that parties seek to maximize their votes and offices and their candidate renominations are not often driven by corruption incentives.

similarities between political parties either within the same party system or across countries. Figure 5.2 depicts the average renomination rates for each analyzed party.⁵⁴ Most CEE political parties nominate more than one third of their MPs on candidate lists for future elections. There are a few political parties (e.g. KDNP, FKGP, MDF, or SDS) that rely on approximately one quarter of their MPs in the future elections. Similarly, there are a few parties that place approximately half of their MPs (e.g. KDU-CSL, PIS, PSL, SLD, or FIDESZ) on the lists of candidates.

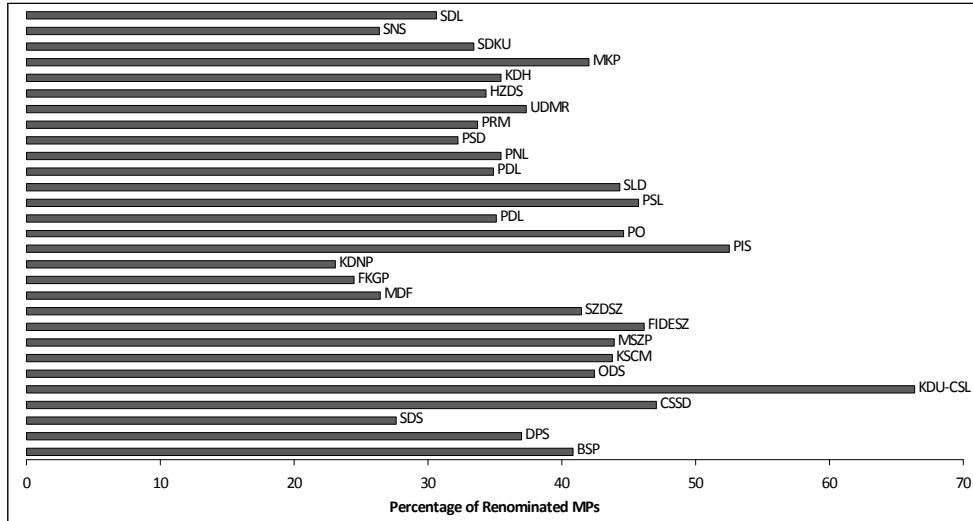
Aggregate Renomination Rates at Party Level

There is great variation in the degree to which MPs are renominated by parties. Such variation is observed both across parties from different countries and within the same party system. Figure 5.2 graphically depicts the aggregated levels of renomination rates, using Formula (2) as a basis for calculus. The Czech and Romanian parties partially cluster more than the rest in terms of their renomination rates. The broadest variation is observed within the Polish and Slovak party systems. Some young CEE parties renominate more MPs than the rest of political actors. They have to do so for a number of reasons such as credibility or continuing with the elite that formed the party. For example, PIS and PO have among the highest rates of renominated MPs. At the same time, some traditional parties (KDNP and FKGP) or political parties with origins in the last days of communism (MDF) have the lowest renomination rates. One motivation for higher renewal rates among the old parties is the desire of such political actors to send their voters a message of openness (i.e. different from an oligarchic organization) and adaptation potential.

One further theoretical reason behind this empirical observation is related to the recruitment pool. Old parties are likely to have a broader recruitment pool than the new ones since they generally benefit of larger membership organizations (see Chapter 4). In this situation, they are able to fill in the candidate lists without appealing to their MPs especially if these were unsuccessful during their term in office. One final observation refers to the level of renomination within countries. In general, in each party system, the parties with large presence in Parliament during the post-communist period renominate more MPs on their lists of candidates compared to the rest. In this respect, the BSP in Bulgaria, the FIDESZ and the MSZP in Hungary, and the PIS and the PSL in Poland are the political parties with highest renomination rates. One exception to this trend is Romania where the PSD relies the least on its MPs when drafting the lists of candidates. A similar situation is observed in Slovakia where the HZDS – with major electoral performance in the ‘90s – comes after the MKP and the KDH.

⁵⁴ The average percentages are calculated based on the results from Tables 5.3-5.8.

Figure 5.2: Percentages of MPs Renominated across the CEE Political Parties (averages)



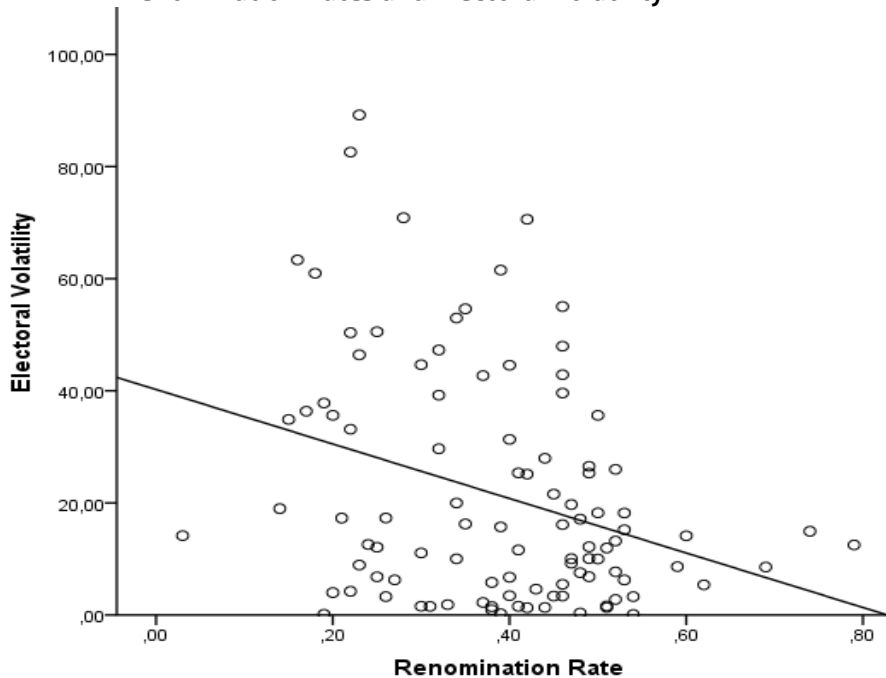
Summing up, this section revealed three general tendencies. First, the number of competitors in the legislatures decreases across the CEE countries with voters being oriented towards fewer parties. Second, the percentage of MP renominations on the lists of candidates generally increases as time passes by. Third, political parties use at least one third of their MPs in drafting the electoral lists for the next elections. There is great variation in the percentages of renominated MPs across parties. The following section builds on these observations to identify the statistical relationship between the renomination rates and electoral volatility.

Renomination Matters

This section includes the empirical results of the hypothesis testing both at general and country level. The analysis takes into account more than 5,000 MPs and 60,000 candidates from six countries over the past two decades. The data about the candidates from the legislative elections from Romania in 2000 are not available. At the same time, for Hungary in 1994 I had access only to those candidates renominated for 176 out of the 386 seats of the Parliament. It had to be standardized in order to provide comparable data with the rest of the years. The most common problem was encountered in the case of the MPs who got elected at the beginning of one term, but ended their term in office – for various reasons – before the next elections. Their replacements were considered incumbents. Figure 5.3 reflects the distribution of the political parties from each country based on their renomination rates (Tables 5.3-5.8) and electoral volatility. On the renomination dimension, most parties have

average rates situated between 0.4 and 0.6, with very few parties having less than 0.2. The maximum renomination rate is close to 0.8. One such example is of the Czech KDU-CSL in 1996 and 2002 that got a relatively constant number of seats in Parliament and renominated many of the former MPs. In fact, quite a few of those are the same over a sequence of elections.

Figure 5.3: The Distribution of the CEE Political Parties According to the Renomination Rates and Electoral Volatility



Overall, the clustering of points indicates that higher renomination rates correspond to lower electoral volatility. Such a negative relationship provides empirical support for the formulated hypothesis. These visual components are complemented by the results of the statistical analysis (Table 5.2). There are no parties with high volatility and high renomination rates. However, there are a few outliers with high levels of volatility and low renomination rates. One such example is the FKGP in 2002, after joining for four years the coalition government, decided to renominate less than half of its MPs (20 out of 48), but suffered a major electoral loses. Thus, it failed to enter Parliament and never returned on the Hungarian political scene ever since.

Table 5.2 includes the correlation coefficients between the renomination rates and electoral volatility. The general correlation between the two variables is -0.30, statistically significant at the 0.01 level; it indicates a medium and robust relationship between the two. The sign of the coefficient

indicates that parties renominating more MPs have less volatility compared with the rest. The strongest correlation is observed in Poland (-0.50) and Slovakia (-0.39).

Table 5.2: The Correlation between the MP Renomination Rates and Volatility across CEE Political Parties

	Correlation coefficients	Number of cases
General	-0.30**	101
Bulgaria	-0.13	12
Czech Republic	0.16	16
Hungary	-0.36	19
Poland	-0.50*	17
Romania	-0.25	17
Slovakia	-0.39	20

Notes: The partial correlations included the government incumbency as control variable.

** Statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

* Statistical significance at the 0.05 level.

The correlation coefficient for all the parties in the region indicates empirical support for the hypothesized relationship. There is a moderate negative correlation between the renomination rates and electoral volatility. Parties that place more MPs on their electoral lists have more loyal votes compared to the rest. This relationship is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. Within each country, with the exception of the Czech Republic, there is empirical evidence in the same direction. The strongest is in Poland where the relationship is quite high (-0.50), statistically significant at the 0.05 level. In the Czech Republic the relationship is weak (0.16) and goes against the initial expectation. One empirical explanation for this result may be the structure of the Czech party system in which greater parties renominate less MPs but are more stable from an electoral perspective than the minor parties (see Table 5.4). This aggregate picture indicates that small and large parties have contrasting approaches towards renomination in the Czech Republic. Small political parties renominate a large percentage of their MPs to send a message of credibility and unity to their voters. The Czech parties with high electoral performances renominate less candidates to ensure a similar message of credibility; in their case, the elite renewal is at the core of the message.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ A parallel can be drawn between this observation and the case in which age created a difference between political parties (the previous section).

The observation at aggregated level indicates the presence of a mediated or non-linear relationship between renominations rates and electoral volatility. The statistical analysis and longitudinal descriptions from the following section illustrate that this seldom happens at party level. To statistically test for mediation, I run partial correlations⁵⁶ to observe the intervening effect of age or party size on the hypothesized relationship. The results indicate that none of the two variables influences the strength or level of significance of the relationship. The statistical test for non-linear effects involved the comparison of linear and non-linear models (e.g. curvilinear, cubic, quadratic etc.) for the effect of renomination rate on electoral volatility. The cubic model appears to be the only that predicts slightly better (with marginally higher parameter estimates) than the linear model; this comes at the cost of lower statistical significance. Empirically, this non-linear effect was mainly driven by a few outliers visible in Figure 5.3. When including the cubic effect in the multivariate analysis from Chapter 6, its results are similar to those of the linear effect. On the basis of these methodological observations, the concerns regarding the existence of a non-linear effect should be minor. Moreover, such an effect does not add substantial knowledge to the already described linear effect. To further clarify the developments taking place at party level, the following section discusses in detail the differences between the parties from the same country.

Insights into the Party Systems: Comparing the Renomination Rates of Political Parties

The aggregate renomination rates (Figure 5.2) indicated some general trends observable between the CEE political parties. Insights into the party systems are useful for the longitudinal and cross-party comparison of renomination rates. This section reflects the extent to which political parties relied on their MPs when drafting the lists of candidates. In doing so, it provides details regarding the relationship between renomination and electoral performance or volatility; thus, it complements the general picture observed in Figure 5.1. A supplementary reason to analyze the developments of political parties within the same party system is the possibility to observe different manners in which parties react to the similar constraints of the political environment.

Bulgaria

The three Bulgarian political parties investigated in this study reflect different approaches towards the renomination of their MPs. This difference is visible at aggregate level: the BSP is among the parties with the highest renomination rates in CEE, the DPS has an average position, whereas the SDS is among the

⁵⁶ For details regarding the use and interpretation of partial correlation, see Field (2009).

political parties with the smallest number of MPs running on candidate lists in the subsequent elections (Figure 5.2). In this respect, the distribution of the Bulgarian parties on the renomination variable is representative for the post-communist world. Table 5.3 nuances this observation by providing supplementary information regarding the decision of the Bulgarian political parties in each election. The longitudinal trend of renomination rates differs across parties. The BSP starts with a high rate of 40%, drops to 32% in the year marking its first major electoral defeat and increased to 45 and 46% in 2001 and 2005. The DPS is characterized by an oscillation of its renominations: an increase from 35% in 1994 to 42% in 1997, followed by a decrease to 33% in 2001, and an increase to 37% in 2005. The SDS reached the apogee of its renominations in 1997, the only time when it was in government. The following two elections marked a severe drop of the renomination until a level lower than the one from the beginning of the '90s.

Table 5.3: The MP Renomination Rates of the Bulgarian Parties (%)

	1994	1997	2001	2005
BSP	40	32	45	46
DPS	35	42	33	37
SDS	21	42	32	15

Based on these different longitudinal developments, time does not influence the variation in renomination rates. Similarly, the presence in government does not explain the variations across parties. For example, when the BSP was incumbent (i.e. before the 1994 and 1997 elections) it put less MPs on the candidate lists than when it was in opposition. The DPS renominated more MPs when it was a government party before the elections. The percentage of renominated MPs in 2001 (i.e. the party was in opposition) is the smallest compared to the other years. When in government, before the 2001 elections, the SDS has an intermediary percentage of renominated MPs, situated between the value recorded before the 1997 win of elections and the 1994 and 2005 poor results.

One possible explanation for the variation of renomination rates is the performance of individual MPs and their relationship with the party. For example, some MPs were notorious for corruption acts or formed a negative image throughout the years in office; both situations resulted in no renomination. In other cases, mostly encountered at the SDS, the MPs were undisciplined in crucial votes and they were no longer supported by the party for reelection. MPs with controversial statements and activities were also punished by their parties and not being offered a position on the candidate lists. These reasons are often encountered for other countries. However, the occurrence in Bulgaria was higher than usual. Especially in the mid '90s there

were numerous politicians involved in corruption scandals and controversial activities.

In addition, the variation of renomination over time for each political party has particular causes. As explained in the case study section in Chapter 4, BSP underwent a major internal change. Starting 2001, the organization and discourse started to differ. This also coincides with the starting moment of increased renomination of MPs. In the case of the SDS, the initial low rate of renominated MPs (1994) corresponded to a reorganization of the party. Following the 1991 failure to enter government, the SDS modified its strategy and hoped that new candidates will bring more benefits. DPS is known for its centralized decision making evolving around the leader of the party. This concentration of power and the pursuit of an image of disciplined party lead to the exclusion of those MPs who did not toe the party line during the terms in government or even opposition. In spite of all these reasons to change the composition of candidate lists, the placement of party leadership or high echelon elites on candidate lists was not subject to variation. It appears almost as a sufficient condition for an MP to be part of the party elite in order to get the renomination. All three Bulgarian parties filled the first positions of their lists in elections with prominent members of their parties.

Although the quantitative analysis indicates a weak relationship between the renomination rate and the electoral volatility of Bulgarian parties, the reasons presented above follow the theoretical arguments of this chapter. With a few exceptions, the Bulgarian parties place more than one third of their MPs on the lists of candidates in elections. They tried to keep away from the public eyes those candidates who – with their deeds in office – could have harmed their electoral appeal. One empirical reason for the weak statistical relationship is that the party with a moderate renomination of its MPs (DPS) has lower electoral volatility compared to the other two parties. Why? The rewarding and punishing strategies can be based more on MPs behavior and performances than in the other two parties. Quite often, the high positions in the intra-party hierarchy are not affected by such decisions. An MP who is among the leaders of the party has an almost ensured renomination. For example, the BSP placed a few problematic MPs on its lists of candidates in the 2001 elections although some of them were involved in scandals during the 1997-2001 period.

Czech Republic

The Czech Republic is the only political system in which the relationship between MP renomination and electoral volatility is positive: A high percentage of MPs on the lists of candidates implies more electoral volatility. The aggregate figures can be misleading as they indicate the contrary. Table 2.2 indicates that the KDU-CSL has the lowest electoral volatility within the Czech

Party system throughout the post-communist period. At the same time, figure 5.2 illustrates that the KDU-CSL has the highest rate of renomination among all the CEE political parties. Consequently, we might expect that the Czech political parties placing more of their MPs in the next electoral competition to have lower volatility. The examination of the longitudinal development of renomination rates makes clear why this is not the case. For the KDU-CSL the highest renomination rates (79% in 2002 and 73% in 1996) correspond to its highest volatilities. Moreover, the CSSD, the Czech party with the highest electoral volatility (see Table 2.2), has among the highest rates of renomination in CEE.

Table 5.4 shows that the CSSD makes regular use of approximately half of its MPs to fill the lists of candidates. Moreover, the ODS has low volatility throughout the post-communist period, comparable to that of the KDU-CSL, and displays lower renomination rates than the CSSD or the KSCM. At the same time, the high renomination rates brought with them high volatility. For example, the 2002 and 2006 elections were the most volatile for the ODS (6.26% and 18.23%). They also correspond to the highest percentages of MPs running in the following elections.

Table 5.4: The MP Renomination Rates of the Czech Parties (%)

	1996	1998	2002	2006
CSSD	46	50	45	46
KDU-CSL	73	62	79	51
ODS	40	26	53	50
KSCM	19	54	49	53

Although it goes in the opposite direction than hypothesized, the statistical relationship between renomination and electoral volatility is not strong. This happens primarily due to the mixed evidence in the case of most parties. For example, the KSCM has a similar level of renominations for two elections with completely different volatility – the 1998 (low) and the 2006 (relatively high). The same happens with the ODS and the KDU-CSL. Moreover, the Czech parties are quite homogenous in terms of volatility (Table 2.2) and renomination rates (Figure 5.2). Such observations are valuable for the broader comparisons at CEE level. However, problems occur when attempting to differentiate between these parties with the help of party level data (Table 5.4). This is where the theoretical underpinnings appear to collapse. The only similarity between them is that the renomination rates oscillate – every increase in the percentage of renominations is followed by a decrease. It is puzzling that this dynamic does not follow a general pattern. Similarly to Bulgaria, time and government incumbency are not valid explanations for differences in renomination rates.

Apart from the broad framework of using their MPs for a better communication with their voters, the Czech parties have specific decisions that make the difference. One such example is represented by the different strategies of parties before the elections. On the one hand, the CSSD, irrespective of its electoral performances, constantly relies on approximately half of its MPs when making the candidate lists. On the other hand, mostly resulted from the split (as in the SDS case in Bulgaria), the ODS dramatically altered the percentages of renominated MPs. Another explanation for the reverse relationship is that the size of the parties limits the possibilities for renomination. In the case of the KDU-CSL, its electoral support increased whenever the party used a high percentage of its MPs on the lists of candidates. As the party has a relatively small support in the electorate (approximately 10%), the floor-crossing of a few MPs makes impossible the high renomination rates in the following elections. \

A further reason for the direction of the linear relationship between renomination rates and electoral volatility is weak in the Czech Republic is represented by the approach towards candidate lists in times of internal reform. When the KDU-CSL undertook such a reform – before the 2002 elections – it relied heavily on its MPs to draft the lists of candidates (79%). However, the KSCM before the 1994 elections and the ODS before the 1998 elections decided to use as few as possible of their MPs, promoting instead new figures on the lists. Although it had renomination rates, the volatility of the KDU-CSL was higher than that of the ODS or the KSCM.

Hungary

The Hungarian political parties are characterized by low renomination rates at the beginning of the transition to democratization. On average, one out of five representatives from the legislature elected in 1990 ran for the 1994 elections. An exception to this share was the FKGP that renominated only 3% of its MPs. This represents by far the lowest percentage in CEE and has a particular cause. The FKGP lost 40 of its deputies elected in 1990 – 36 switched to the EKGP. As a result, the few MPs who were left in the party received were renominated for the 1994 elections. The general low percentage of renominated MPs had a few general causes across the Hungarian parties. First, most political parties decided to alter the composition of their lists of candidates to alter the relatively poor electoral result from 1990. For example, the FIDESZ and the MSZP underperformed. The former, as one of the fierce opponents of the communist regime, expected to win more seats in the first post-communist elections. The MSZP is a successor party and its initial failure was mostly based on the negative attitudes of the Hungarian voters towards the communist past. As the party spent the first term in opposition, a change was initiated among the candidate composition.

Second, the numerous party switchers in the first Hungarian legislature affected a few parties such as the FKGP (losing 40 MPs), the MDF (losing 39 MPs), and the SZDSZ (losing 10 MPs) (Nikolenyi 2011, 24). Finally, related to the second cause, there is the issue of a relatively weak relationship between the party and its representatives (Chiru 2010). Apart from floor-crossing, one feature of such a relationship was the voting unity. The first post-communist government of Jozsef Antall had a surplus member in the coalition government (i.e. large majorities)⁵⁷, MPs could defect from the party line without a visible effect for the passing of the laws. Some controversies within the small governing parties (FKGP and KDNP) in the 1990-1994 legislative term (Korosenyi 1998) indicate that there were problems related to voting unity.

Table 5.5: The MP Renomination Rates of the Hungarian Parties (%)

	1994	1998	2002	2006
MSZP	22	54	49	51
FIDESZ	25	39	69	52
SZDSZ	20	40	53	52
MDF	20	n/a	-	32
FKGP	3	47	23	-
KDNP	22	25	-	-

Following these observations and the gradual increase of renomination rates in the subsequent elections from Table 5.5, time appears to play a role in the decision of Hungarian parties to use more MPs to fill their candidate lists. In the next elections of 1998, the renomination rates differed significantly. Some parties were witnessed dramatic increases of their renomination rates (e.g. MSZP, FKGP). The other parties had a progressive increase of their share (e.g. KDNP, FIDESZ and SZDSZ). Further differences can be observed with respect to the trajectories followed by parties. Some did not gain seats in all the elections and thus no renomination was possible (MDF, FKGP, and KDNP); the MSZP was characterized by oscillatory percentages of renominations; whereas the FIDESZ and the SZDSZ registered a continuous increase of the percentages of MPs running on candidate lists in the first three elections, having a drop to a similar level of 52% in 2006.

One further observable difference between the levels of renomination is that parties in government have the tendency to renominate more MPs than the parties in opposition. Similarly, when a party is in government, it renominates more MPs than when it is in the opposition. For example, in the 1998 elections the FIDESZ had 39% of its MPs running for a new term in office. Until then, the FIDESZ was in opposition. Four years later, following a term in

⁵⁷ In fact, the first three Hungarian cabinets had surplus members in the coalition governments.

government, the FIDESZ had 69% of its MPs on the ballot. In 2002, following a new term in opposition, this percentage decreased to 52%. A similar trend is observable for the other large party in Hungary – the MSZP – and partially for the SZDSZ and the FKGP. Moreover, size appears to make a difference in renominating MPs. The large Hungarian parties rely on a much higher percentage of their MPs in the subsequent elections compared to the small parties. Apparently, this is a key for increased electoral stability. Unlike the small KDNP and FKGP, both FIDESZ⁵⁸ and MSZP have low volatility and continue to persist on the political scene.

These are the reasons behind the sign and strength of the quantitative analysis from the previous section. The aggregate percentages from Figure 5.2 and the previous descriptions of party trajectories in Chapters 3 and 4 also pointed in the direction indicated by the correlation coefficient. The medium relationship between renomination and electoral volatility could have been stronger if the SZDSZ, the political party with the lowest level of volatility, would have renominated more MPs. On the average, its renomination rates come after those of the FIDESZ and the MSZP.

Poland

In general, the Polish parties have among the largest renomination rates in CEE. Four out of the five examined political parties have averages above 45% (Figure 5.2). The fifth, the PD – extensively discussed in the case study section of the chapter – had until 2001 a similar renomination rate. In this particular case, the explanation is straightforward: the PO split from the PD and the renomination rates of dropped dramatically. Two other general similarities are observable at the Polish parties. First, unlike in Hungary, they start with high renomination rates. In the 1993 elections, following a very divided legislature, the PD, the PSL, and the SLD placed approximately half of their MPs on the candidate lists.

Second, the dynamic of the renomination rates across time indicate large discrepancies between elections. The longitudinal trajectories are rarely linear (e.g. PD), the most visible feature being the high discrepancies between the percentages of MPs placed on candidate lists. For example, even in the case of the parties formed after 2000 – the PIS and the PO – the renomination rate increased by approximately 10% between the 2005 and 2007 early elections.⁵⁹ This finding is counter-intuitive given the exchange of political elites

⁵⁸ In 2006, KDNP ran on the lists of FIDESZ and this is how it made it into Parliament after a break of eight years.

⁵⁹ This increase can also be caused by the features of the 2007 elections. The early elections are the usual suspect for high renomination rates. The MPs hold strategic positions and political parties rarely have the time and capacity to mobilize candidates that may turn successful. This mechanism does not discriminate between government and opposition parties, it is applicable to both.

between the two parties at that time. The reason behind the increase of renomination rates may be the character of elections. Without having time to prepare the selection of candidates, both parties relied more on the prominent members of their parties – those remaining after the desertions.

Table 5.6: The MP Renomination Rates of the Polish Parties (%)

	1993	1997	2001	2005	2007
PIS				46	59
PO				40	49
PD	48	41	16	-	-
PSL	44	50	30	52	51
SLD	52	60	26	35	48

In longitudinal terms, there is a moderate tendency of some Polish parties to have higher renomination rates when they are in government. For example, the PSL in 1997 renominated more MPs than in 1993. The same happened in 2005 compared to 2001. However, there are more contextual explanations that justify the differences rather than general factors. In the case of the SLD the modification of renomination rates between the 1997 and 2001 elections may be due to its transformation from coalition to political party. During this transformation, the legitimacy of the SLD was questioned by some members (political parties) of the former coalition. To diminish discontent, the SLD allowed these parties to propose their own candidates in the upcoming elections. Consequently, the renomination rate was low in the 2001 election.

Figures were again low in 2005 due to two reasons: 1) the split of the SDPL (the party of Marek Borowski) from the SLD and 2) the departure of leading party elite to the PD. These low renomination rates coincide with large oscillations in electoral support and high levels of volatility. The 2001 situation brought a steady increase of the electoral support. Apart from the failure of the AWS government, the SLD's composition of candidate lists contributed to this result. The party promoted promising candidates and did not renominate some MPs with negative image. In 2005, the low percentage of MPs from the lists of candidates was the result of migrations and splits. These also lead to a decrease of the electoral support.

Overall, there is a high negative correlation between the renomination rates of the Polish parties and their electoral volatility. This means that political parties that use more MPs to fill in their lists of candidates are less volatile than the rest. The relationship appears to be driven by three concurrent factors. First, the newly emerged parties rely more on their elite (also because they do not have a large pool of recruitment, see Chapter 4). They are less volatile than the parties established at the beginning of the transition to democracy. Second, the relationship is connected to the density of splits and desertions.

Under such circumstances, parties are forced to use new candidates. They can hardly choose for re-election candidates who can be recognized by voters; thus, they present a less credible continuity of representation. Finally, there is a tendency of Polish parties to renominate numerous MPs. This formed certain expectations of the public. When these expectations are no longer met (i.e. parties renominate less MPs than usual), the voters can shift their electoral preferences.

Romania

The Romanian parties have similar averages of MP renomination during the post-communist period (Figure 5.2). This relative homogeneity is observable also across time at party level. As shown in the lines to follow, size, government status, and time do not explain the variations in renomination rates. Similarly to the Hungarian parties, the initial levels of renomination were lower than those from the following elections. The two successor parties were differentiated by more than 10%: the PSD had less than a quarter of its MPs running in the 1992 elections, whereas the PDL promoted approximately one third of their representatives in the subsequent elections.

The UDMR started with a 30% renomination rate that was gradually increased to an average of 40% for the other three observed elections. Overall, there is no clear tendency of the Romanian parties to increase their percentages of renominated MPs over time. Three out of five parties are characterized by oscillations, as it was the case with most parties from the previously discussed party systems. The PSD and the PRM display contrasting trends over time. The PSD has a linear increase over time with renomination percentages ranging from 23% in the 1992 elections to a peak of 44% in the most recent elections from 2008. The PRM had its peak in the 1996 elections, following its only months in government. Since then, the party constantly reduced its renomination rates reaching a minimum level of 18%.

Table 5.7: The MP Renomination Rates of the Romanian Parties (%)

	1992	1996	2000	2004	2008
PSD	23	24	n/a	38	44
PDL	34	38	n/a	22	46
PNL	-	-	n/a	30	41
PRM		49	n/a	34	18
UDMR	30	38	n/a	43	39

The most volatile political party in Romania is the PRM (Table 2.2). The large variations in terms of electoral support coincide to the most dynamic evolution of the renomination rates. Given the highly centralized decision making and the few political elites held by the PRM, the expectation was to have the same

people as candidate in all elections. However, the strategic behaviors of candidates and elected MPs influenced the list composition. There were candidates running under the label of the party with the sole purpose of getting elected. The reasons for such a behavior varied from the absence of opportunities in other parties to the identification of the electoral potential of the PRM in specific elections (Gherghina 2008; Sum 2010). As soon as they got elected, the defection was imminent. This is the reason for which in the aftermath of the 2000 elections the parliamentary party group of the PRM reduced by one third in less than half a year after elections. This migration was often accompanied by exclusions of key members by the party leader for reasons ranging from indiscipline to the pursuit of private interests.

The PSD relies on a core of MPs in consecutive elections. These MPs are constantly renominated and most of them are highly disciplined in their voting (Gherghina and Chiru 2011). It is one of the political parties with most MPs present in almost all legislatures during the post-communist period. These MPs are usually the leaders of county organizations or politicians with strong electoral support in the territory. The emphasis on the territorial strongholds was especially visible in the 2008 elections when a new electoral system with voting in single member districts was in place. The primaries organized in 2004 to select the candidates for the legislative elections removed only a few of these core MPs to be renominated. All of those who lost their positions on lists in 2004 were allowed to run in the 2008 elections and most of them got reelected. This core of MPs may secure the stable electoral support that the PSD enjoys. In the most recent three elections its volatility is very small, having a high support around 35% of the votes.

Although it is also a successor party like the PSD, the PDL displays a different pattern. The dynamic of renomination has two phases separated by the organizational reform (leadership change). The first, until 2001, was characterized by a stable core of MPs who got reelected in consecutive elections. Following the leadership change, the renomination rates dropped to 22%. This critical juncture interrupted the communication established between parties and its voters; consequently, the electoral volatility increased. This moment represented the formation of a new core of stable MPs who were renominated in the 2008 elections, to a greater extent than before.

The UDMR is the party with the most stable electorate and renomination rate across time. The party constantly renominates one third of its MPs, most of them being the same across time. Similarly to the PSD, the UDMR has among the highest rates of absolute incumbents renominated (i.e. MPs in consecutive terms). This core of representatives established strong connections with the voters. Sometimes, these linkages were suspected of being formed on clientelistic bases generated mostly by the absence of contestation for many years.

Slovakia

The Slovak parties are heterogeneous in terms of their renominations. This is suggested by the aggregate data from Figure 5.2 and by the longitudinal evolutions captured in Table 5.8. Unlike other party systems, the level of renominations in the first studied elections varies greatly from 14% in the case of the SNS to 42% for the SDL. The common feature of the renomination rates is their oscillatory trends across time. With the exception of the SDL that displays a continuous decline over time, the other Slovak political parties alternate the low and high renomination rates.

Table 5.8: The MP Renomination Rates of the Slovak Parties (%)

	1994	1998	2002	2006
HZDS	25	47	46	19
KDH	27	33	31	48
MKP	39	46	47	37
SDKU⁶⁰		49	17	34
SNS	14	41	23	-
SDL	42	28	22	

Most of these oscillations were due to the internal splits or attempts to reform the party. The HZDS had low renomination rates before the 1994 elections due to a series of defections in 1993 and 1994 (Szajkowski 2005, 529). Its high renomination rates came as a result of a political domination of the HZDS in the Slovak politics. The HZDS won both the 1994 and 1998 elections although it was in opposition starting 1998. The “old guard” of the party was conservative and managed to keep dissent to a minimum despite the public scandals in which Meciar was involved (e.g. the open conflict with the President of Slovakia, his arrest etc.). The drop of renominations from 2006 was mainly the effect of the splits after the 2002 election. The attempt to re-brand the party by softening the nationalist discourse determined a few departures from the party.

For the SDKU, the dramatic drop of renominations in 2002 compared to 1998 was the result of the KDH leaving the coalition. This happened when the leaders of the former The SDK coalition decided to transform it into a political party. Most MPs belonging to the KDH and being elected in 1998 under the label of the SDK followed their party. This is the main reason for which the KDH renominated a similar percentage of MPs in the 1998 and 2002 elections. Returning to the SDKU, in 2006 the renomination rates were influenced by splits and MPs leaving the party. Similarly, the SNS witnessed a party split

⁶⁰ SDKU was founded in 1998 under the name of SDK and included five parties. The renomination rate is calculated on the basis on the founding members' MPs. The reference number of MPs for the 1998-2002 term was calculated after subtracting the number of MPs who returned to KDH.

before the 2002 elections and the renomination percentage dropped to half of its previous percentage.

More important, the relationship between the MP renomination rates and electoral volatility is quite relevant in Slovakia. The evidence indicates that high renominations lead to low electoral volatility. This is immediately visible if we refer to the most volatile party in CEE: the SDL. Its volatility increased with every election following also a dramatic drop in the renomination rates. The KDH and the MKP are the least volatile Slovak parties and their renomination rates are among the highest. Also, longitudinal comparisons indicate this relationship. The detailed case of the HZDS points in that direction. The high renomination rates from 1998 and 2002 coincide to electoral volatilities that are much lower than in 2006.

These detailed discussions regarding the reasons behind MP renominations indicate mechanisms through which these can be connected to electoral volatility. For example, the internal splits and MP departures heavily influence the communication with voters. This section has shown how discontinuity of representation has consequences in the plan of electoral support for many parties. The following section takes this analysis one step further and illustrates how the renomination of MPs can influence the electoral volatility in two specific cases from different party systems.

Loyal Elites and Voters

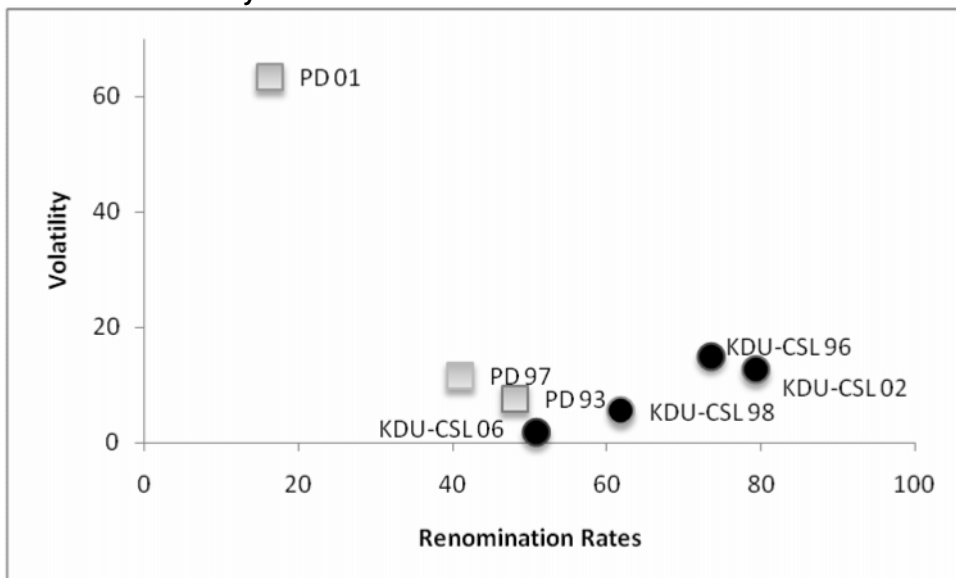
The two political parties analyzed in this section – the Czech KDU-CSL and the Polish PD – share a common feature: they are small parties, with an electoral support that rarely exceeds 10%. This limited electoral appeal did not allow them to play leading roles in government coalitions or to represent solid opposition actors. Nevertheless, their presence in the political life of their countries cannot be neglected. Given such a similar profile, their different persistence within the party systems of their countries raises a question mark. The following two sub-sections show how a combination of factors led to different outcomes: the KDU-CSL continued its existence in the Czech political life, whereas the PD gradually disappeared from the important political actors between 2001 and 2007.

These diverging trajectories were not indicated solely by the electoral performances, but also by the level of electoral volatility. The KDU-CSL is on average the least volatile Czech party (Table 2.2). On the average, the electoral volatility of the PD is three times larger than that of the KDU-CSL. This does not represent a surprise as the least volatile Polish party has higher volatility than the most volatile Czech party (see Chapter 2). One determinant of these different trajectories is represented by the MP renomination rates. As illustrated in Figure 5.2, the KDU-CSL is the champion of renominations in CEE

with an average situated around two thirds. The PD has one of the lowest renomination rates.

Figure 5.4 graphically depicts the distribution of the two parties according to their renomination rates and electoral volatility. The dark circles mark the position of the KDU-CSL, whereas the light gray squares represent the PD. The numbers represent the election years (e.g. 02 is 2002). In all elections the KDU-CSL has considerably higher renomination rates and lower electoral volatility than the PD. In terms of renomination rates, the KDU-CSL has used consistently more than half of its MPs to fill the lists of candidates. For the PD there is a clear negative relationship between renominations and electoral volatility. Starting 1993, the percentage of renominated MPs decreases considerably from approximately 50% to less than 20% in 2001. At the same time, the electoral volatility increases from 7.5% in 1993 to 66.4% in 2001. In 1993 and 1997, the electoral volatility of the PD was comparable to that of the KDU-CSL. This coincided with the fact that the renomination rates were still high, around 40%. Each of the following two sub-sections explores in detail the paths followed by the two parties and tries to explain the persistence of KDU-CSL and the temporary disappearance of the PD.

Figure 5.4: The Positioning of KDU-CSL and PD on the Renomination and Volatility Dimensions



The KDU-CSL: Shaping a Loyal Elite

The KDU-CSL is the successor of the Czechoslovak People’s Party (CSL) that was created in 1919 out of the merger of numerous Czech Catholic parties (Linek and Lyons 2009, 3). With a constant presence in all interwar

Czechoslovak government between 1921 and 1938, CSL was allowed as a satellite party under the communist regime. In the attempt to reaffirm its Christian Democratic ideology and to escape accusations of cooperation with the communist regime CSL joined in 1992 the Christian Democratic Union (KDU) to form the KDU-CSL. It soon became a relevant party on the political scene by having three presences in government between 1992 and 1998 and from 2002 (Saxonberg 2003).

The KDU-CSL registered consecutive increase of its electoral support until 2002. In the 1992 election the KDU-CSL obtained 15 seats and joined the government coalition. The following election from 1996 provided the party 18 seats and allowed its presence in the ODS governments (Klaus and Tosovsky). Although its 20 seats from 1998 allowed the party to get in government, the failure to reach a consensus with the CSSD sent the KDU-CSL in opposition next to the US, the DEU, and the ODA. The 2002 election brought 31 seats to the coalition formed by the KDU-CSL and the US-DEU (that merged before the election for reasons related to threshold). The KDU-CSL had 21 out of the 31 seats (Szajkowski 2005, 163). Both members of the coalition were included in the CSSD government. Although in 2006 the KDU-CSL obtained only 13 seats it still managed to participate in a coalition government next to the ODS and the SZ.

These results indicate a relatively stable electoral support for the KDU-CSL situated between 7 and 14% of the votes – corresponding to the described range of received seats. This stability was partially the result of a large proportion of candidates promoted in consecutive elections by the KDU-CSL (Table 5.4). Three main mechanisms lead to such high renomination rates: the involvement of MPs in the internal life of the party, reduced internal dissent in the party, and the usual presence in the government coalitions. Let us examine closely each of these factors.

First, the executive committee of the KDU-CSL incorporates five members of parliament, speakers and vice-speakers from the legislature, and all its government ministers (van Biezen 2003, 149; Linek and Lyons 2009, 7). Moreover, the leaders of the parliamentary party groups are granted full membership in the congress. All these reveal a thorough involvement of the high profile elite of the party in the decision making of the party organization. Apart from MPs in the national executive board and the national executive committee, the presidium consists almost exclusively of MPs (Linek and Lyons 2009, 7). The process of candidate selection explored in Chapter 4 revealed two different phases for the KDU-CSL. The first, until 1996, included a general control of the national executive committee over the candidates to be on party's lists. Practically, MPs and members of the cabinet were in charge of deciding upon the lists of candidates. The second phase includes primaries or decision reached by committees at local or regional level. Even under these

conditions, given the key role held by MPs in the central office, there is informal influence going on. Thus MPs had no difficulties in placing their names on eligible positions (Linek and Lyons 2009, 8).

Second, the existence of the KDU-CSL was marked by isolated internal dissent. The most dynamic period was before the 1992 formation of the KDU-CSL; the KDS left the KDU to form an alliance with the ODS. The few voices against the leadership of the party either did not leave the party or if they deserted it was not in an organized manner. For 14 years between the 1992 and 2006 elections the KDU-CSL witnessed no splits. The inclination of the KDU-CSL to favor cooperation with one of the two large actors from the Czech party system – the ODS or the CSSD – depended mostly on the style of leadership. For example, Cyril Svoboda was a known opponent of Vaclav Klaus and during his leadership the KDU-CSL entered the coalition government led by the CSSD. Four years before, when the party was chaired by Jan Kasal, the KDU-CSL refused cooperation with the CSSD due mostly to the ideological orientation of their leader. Despite these ideological turns, the elite remained loyal and did not question publicly the leaders' decisions. The situation of 1998 was one of the best moments to do so. The party gained more votes than in 1994, but decided to stay in the opposition. However, no voices were heard within the KDU-CSL. The high renomination rates can be a reward for such a behavior.

Third, the high coalition potential of the KDU-CSL provides confidence both to the core electorate of the party and to the elite. For citizens, it is crucial to see that their votes are not wasted. The KDU-CSL often met their expectations having only one term outside government. When it was incumbent, the party lost support only in the 2006 election. With such governing presence, the party elite has supplementary reasons to be disciplined and loyal. This may partially justify the already discussed low level of dissent.

The KDU-CSL appears to be a typical case in which elite loyalty shapes the electoral stability of the party. The loyalty of the elite provides the organizational stability, allows homogeneity of actions, and ensures continuity and professionalization of representation. All these increase voters' confidence in the potential of the party to implement its promises. They contribute to a positive image of the party in the eyes of the voters. The reaction of voters is observable in the relatively stable core of supporters. These votes allow the party to play a pivotal role in the Czech party system. The primary reward for their behavior consists of renomination. Through loyalty MPs are able to continue the political game. This holds true especially in the situation of the KDU-CSL elites who can clearly envisage the results of their behavior.

PD: Strong Factionalism and Disloyal Elite

Similarly to many Polish parties present on the political scene in the '90s, the PD has its roots in the Solidarity movement. Its history is characterized by name changes, numerous internal fights, and elite loss. Its foundation took place in 1990 under the label of Democratic Union (UD). The political party was crucial for the first years of Polish transition to democracy and market economy. It was often identified with the person of the Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki and supported the economic shock therapy of Leszek Balcerowicz who proposed numerous reforms aimed to put an end to the hyperinflation occurred after the fall of communism and to balance the national budget. UD won the 1991 elections with a vote share of 12.3%, but given the failure of its leader (Bronislaw Geremek) to form a government coalition, the party got into opposition. In 1992, the SLD government led by Jan Olszewski fell and the caretaker government of Waldemar Pawlak (PSL) failed to gain a vote of confidence (Szczerbiak 2001a). Consequently, a seven party coalition led by PD supported Hanna Suchocka as prime minister. The 1993 early elections – generated by the fall of suchocka's cabinet – were won by the SLD (20.4%) and the PSL (15.4%) that formed the new government with Pawlak as prime minister. Coming after the failure to maintain a government, the UD got third in elections with 10.6% of the votes and had to move again in the opposition.

In March 1994, the UD merged with a small party called Liberal Democratic Congress (KLD) and created the Freedom Union (UW). The newly created party obtained 13.4% of the votes in the 1997 elections and joined the government coalition led by the AWS. However, the UW left the government due to the opposition of the AWS' populist wing against Balcerowicz's economic plans (Szajkowski 2005, 481). Until 2001, the UW witnessed numerous internal clashes between factions that eroded the perception of stable and enduring party with a core electorate (Millard 2004, 63). The first frictions occurred since UW's formation in 1994. The faction of Wladyslaw Frasyniuk and Zofia Kuratowska, the Democratic Forum, emerged within UW as a left wing faction. As the party statute prohibited internal factions, the UW leaders asked the executive council not to recognize the newly formed group. Such a decision found opposition even among some key leaders of the party (Geremek and Jan Lytinski) (Bugajski 2002, 177).

This first division was followed by subsequent fights for supremacy in the party as the leaders of factions took turns in leading the party. The faction led by Balcerowicz promoted a liberal socialism similar to that visible in the economic reforms proposed by him whenever in government or as President of the Polish Central Bank. When replacing Mazowiecki in 1995, Balcerowicz had the initial support of the liberal (right) wing of the party led by Jan Maria Rokita (Bugajski 2002, 176). A rupture intervened also within this initially unitary faction. In the aftermath of the 1995 presidential elections, Balcerowicz

accused Rokita of hurting Jacek Kuron's campaign – the presidential candidate of UW. Rokita was expelled from the presidium despite the fact that most leaders from the right wing faction threatened with their resignations. Following this decision, a split occurred in the party: the UW organizations from Gdansk formed a bloc with five other post-Solidarity parties to run independently in the 1997 elections (Bugajski 2002, 178).

Geremek and Mazowiecki, leaders of the party for a long time even when it was called UD, had an inclination towards Christian democracy, often promoting Catholic values in their discourses. Although not leaders of the party, Kuron and Donald Tusk (acting as a deputy chairman) had influence in the UW with their views and formed strong factions. Tusk, originating in the KLD, supported free market economy with minimal government interference. Such ideas were not supported within the UW and Tusk lost the competition for party's chairmanship against Geremek in the aftermath of the UW's departure from the government in 2000.

These internal fights, combined with the prospects of an electoral defeat for the parties in government since 1997, determined a massive exodus of the members from Tusk's faction. Tusk joined some members of the AWS to form the PO. As a result of these defections, in the 2001 general elections, the UW got 3.1% of the votes; it failed to cross the electoral threshold and thus did not gain entry to Parliament. Voters followed the well-known leaders who deserted the party and thus abandoned the UW for new offerings (Millard 2004, 101). UW did not recover since then. The immediate resignation of Geremek led to the election of Frasiński as chairman. Under the new rule, the UW abandoned its structuring as catch-all party (Jasiewicz 2007, 113) and continued to exist as a minor political actor outside Parliament. In 2005, it changed its name into the PD, but this did not improve its electoral result in the legislative elections from the same year (it got 2.5% of the votes). In 2007, it ran into a broader coalition called Left and Democrats (LID) next to the SLD, the SDPL, and the UP.

During its existence, the PD behaved like a pragmatic party grouping people and factions of different ideological backgrounds (Bugajski 2002, 176). It managed to accommodate these internal fights for one decade. Once torn apart, the party did not recover. On the background of numerous factions, internal struggles, leadership changes, elite defections, and organizational reforms, the PD could hardly use the same candidates in consecutive elections. The apogee was reached in the 1993 elections when almost half of the MPs elected in 1991 were placed on the electoral lists for the 1993 contest. Until 1997, this proportion dropped by 10%. This percentage is somewhat impressive given the internal dynamic of the party with factionalism becoming stronger and elites leaving the party or being expelled. The term in government was not benefic to PD. On top of the negative perception held by voters on the parties

from the governing coalition, the departure of Tusk and other prominent leaders created irreversible damage. As most MPs left the party, the PD could use only 16% of its representatives when drafting the electoral lists for the upcoming elections. Following these developments, in the eve of the 2001 elections the PD remained with the hard legacy of a bad perceived government and very few known politicians to determine the voters to maintain their previous preferences. As a result, the party failed to cross the electoral threshold: the same situation was observable in the 2005 elections.

To conclude, the PD is the illustrative case of the manner in which internal struggles and deserting elites can harm a party that looked good in the mid-'90s. Its broad ideology and central position on the political spectrum had the capacity to encapsulate voter preferences on the long term. Voters did not appear to be troubled by its name changes or partial failures in government (the early '90s). The leaders of the party had the capacity to mobilize the electorate on a regular basis. However, as soon as some of these readers no longer belonged to the PD, there was a change of preferences. The increased electoral volatility (see Figure 5.4) and the low result in the 2001 elections accurately reflect this drop.

Conclusions

The findings of this chapter are threefold. First, it shows a great diversity in renominating MPs across the CEE political parties. The averages of these rates range between 25% and 67%. Most parties renominate at least one third of their MPs as candidates in the following elections. At country level, the renomination rates increase with time. Both findings illustrate strong ties between parties and their representatives. Second, there is a moderate statistical relationship between the renomination rates and electoral volatility. Its direction indicates that political parties that use more MPs on the lists of candidates are less volatile than the rest. The chapter presented three intertwined mechanisms through which this connection is achieved: instrumental, communication, and socialization. Third, the comparative case studies brought empirical evidence that illustrates the ways in which MP renominations shape electoral volatility. In substantial terms, the analysis of KDU-CSL and PD show how the loyalty of elite enforces the loyalty of the voters.

There are two major implications of these results. In theoretical terms, this analysis adds new valences for the process of candidate nomination. Earlier research focused on the process, costs, and pressures faced by political parties when nominating the candidates for elections. The advantage brought by renominations in the form of stable electorates provides a new perspective. This may contribute to the rethinking of the advantages to promote the same representatives in consecutive elections. At empirical level, the renomination rates can be considered a useful explanation for variations of electoral volatility

across parties and even party systems. The relationship is observable in different electoral settings (e.g. within the party systems). At the same time, the correlations differ across countries and this may represent a fertile soil for further investigation.

The empirical testing of the relationship between the renomination rate and electoral volatility concludes the series of bivariate correlations started with Chapter 3. This series is complemented in the following chapter by a multivariate statistical analysis that includes all components of party organization – candidate selection, membership rates, and renomination rates – in a more complex assessment of their impact on electoral volatility. Based on theoretical expectations, I control for three additional variables (see Figure 1.3) that may also influence the variation of electoral volatility.

