Rejuvenation or renomination? Corruption and candidate turnover in Central and Eastern Europe

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A number of recent studies have analysed the electoral impact of political corruption and effectiveness of elections in holding implicated politicians to account. However, high levels of corruption or publicised cases of political malfeasance also influence parties' strategies before elections, particularly considerations about candidate (de-)selection. While some studies have shown that political scandals can significantly affect renomination rates and electoral fortunes of incumbent candidates, others suggest that parties will stick to established candidates rather than replacing them with new ones when corruption increases. We put these conflicting arguments to the test by studying candidate turnover on party lists in 9 EU member states in Central and Eastern Europe. Based on the literature, we formulate two competing hypotheses on the impact of corruption (perception) on candidate turnover: 1) *Rejuvenation* (parties renew their candidate lists in response to corruption), and 2) *Renomination* (corruption leads to renomination of old candidates and stagnation of the candidate pool). Our analysis is based on a newly created data set covering most of the elections during the last two decades in the region and ca. 200,000 candidates. We find significant support for the *Renomination* hypothesis - increased levels of corruption lead to a decrease in candidate turnover. However, the effect is only evident and statistically significant among governing parties. Turnover in other parties is best explained by party size.

Key words: Elections, Voting, Candidate, Political Parties, Europe (Central and Eastern), Governance

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Regular elections are one the most important accountability mechanisms in a modern representative democracy. Electoral contests allow the public to evaluate their representatives and governing personnel, voters can reward parties for satisfactory performance or punish them if they fell short of their expectations (Kriesi 2012). Punishment can be motivated by a multitude of reasons including party's failure to implement their campaign promises or manifesto, underperformance on economic issues but also by scandals or revelations about political malfeasance and corruption. Over the last two decades, research on political corruption has become abundant in political science scholarship and a growing number of studies investigate its determinants, working mechanisms, and effects (see e.g. Heywood 1997; Heidenheimer and Johnston 2011). In analysing the political effects of corruption, one stream of the literature has devoted particular attention to its electoral impact and the effectiveness of elections as mechanisms of vertical accountability (Peters and Welch 1980; Banducci and Karp 1994; Ferraz and Finan 2008; Chang, Golden and Hill 2010; Costas-Pérez, Solé-Ollé and Sorribas-Navarro 2012; Pattie and Johnston 2012; Kauder and Potrafke 2014). The majority of studies thereby investigates to what extent voters actually punish corrupt parties or individual politicians and 'throw out the rascals' (Bågenholm 2013b). Overwhelmingly, authors find that almost irrespective of national context and/or level of government voters do so considerably less severely or much less frequently than expected. Yet in this context, not only are comparative approaches largely missing (large-N studies such as Bågenholm [2013b] remain the exception) but research has also failed to systematically address the influence of corruption on parties' strategies before they face voters at the polls.

Parties' pre-election strategies encompass numerous activities, including programmatic adjustments and planning of the campaign. However, one of parties' most important activities before elections – and arguable one of the most important functions of political parties in in general – is the selection and presentation of candidates for public office (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Hazan and Rahat 2010). Candidates are not only important because they implement a party's policies once elected, but also because they are the literal 'face' of a party and present the physical link between voters and the state. Candidate selection mechanisms as well as the effect of quotas and other legal regulations have been widely researched both theoretically and empirically (e.g. Lundell 2004; Rahat 2007; Hazan and Rahat 2010). However, the determinants of candidate renomination and candidate turnover (in contrast to legislative turnover) have hitherto received little scholarly attention. The effect of corruption on candidate turnover presents an ideal starting point for exploring these

mechanisms. Voters' perception of corruption in political parties has been demonstrated to be an important factor in determining party support and voting decisions (Deegan-Krause, Klasnja and Tucker 2011; Slomczynski and Shabad 2012; Ecker et al. 2015). Furthermore, high and increasing levels of (perceived) corruption can be seen as crucial for the break-through of new, anti-establishment parties in Central and Eastern Europe (Hanley and Sikk 2014). The abovementioned studies all suggest that corruption (or lack thereof) creates specific opportunities and incentives for parties to change their candidate line-up. However, their findings suggest two different working mechanisms with diametrically opposed effects. While some studies have shown that political scandals can significantly decrease renomination rates and hamper electoral fortunes of incumbents, others suggest that parties will stick to established candidates rather than replacing them with new faces when corruption increases.

The aim of this paper is to put these two competing notions to the test and provide a more general overview of patterns of candidate turnover by studying the effect of corruption on candidate turnover on party lists in 9 Central and East European (CEE) EU member states during the last 20 years. We formulate two competing hypotheses on the impact of corruption (perception) on candidate turnover: 1) *Rejuvenation* (parties renew their candidate lists in response to corruption), and 2) *Renomination* (corruption leads to renomination of old candidates and stagnation of the candidate pool). We find significant support for the *Renomination* hypothesis – increased levels of corruption lead to a decrease in candidate turnover. However, the effect is only evident and statistically significant among governing parties. Turnover in other parties in other parties is best explained by party size.

Mechanisms of candidate turnover

Regular turnover of parliamentary elites is a defining characteristic of and a necessity for any democracy (Putnam 1976; Petracca 1996; Goodin and Lepora 2015). Legislative turnover rates are determined by a variety of factors, ranging from the electoral system to parties' performance in elections. They naturally also depend on how many members of parliament run again and who parties decide to nominate (Matland and Studlar 2004; Rahat 2007). Turnover of candidates, however, is a largely understudied subject so far. Existing scholarship focusses for the most part on the renomination (and deselection) of incumbents rather than previously unsuccessful candidates. This can largely be attributed to the fact that studies tend to focus on (patterns of) candidate selection in general (Gallagher and Marsh

1988; Hazan and Rahat 2010). Alternatively, they concern election pairs in countries with single mandate districts or very small multi-mandate districts (e.g. U.S., the UK and Italy) rather than elections in list-based electoral systems.[1] Availability of adequate data, too, has contributed to the persistence of this gap in the literature. However, parties regularly nominate more candidates than they could reasonably get into office in any given election so that incumbents usually only occupy a fraction of places on party lists. Thus, there is considerable scope for candidate turnover in want of study and explanation – even if we assume that the majority of incumbents is renominated (a trend visible in most Western democracies; see also discussion below).

There are generally two types of candidate turnover, which are similar to those identified by Matland and Studlar (2004) in their study of legislative turnover. Candidate turnover can be due to *voluntary* resignation of candidates, i.e. the decision not to run again for personal reasons (e.g. age, family, general dissatisfaction with party/office, or to pursue a career outside of politics).[2] Although some factors – such as redrawing of constituency borders and the introduction/phasing out of more beneficial retirement options – have been shown to increase the rate at which incumbents retire from office (Banducci and Karp 1994), party list turnover should be significantly less affected by this. Such (dis)incentives almost only relate to incumbents and legislative turnover otherwise tends to be comparatively stable (albeit on country-specific levels; Mattland and Studlar 2004).

On the other hand, party list turnover can also be caused by the *involuntary* removal of candidates from party lists. Thereby, a candidate is either denied renomination by the party or is forced to give up their list place. Although it is not always obvious whether incumbents resign of their own accord or are (informally) pressured into doing so, the impetus for involuntary removal should lie in their inability to win elections or adverse effect of the candidacy on the party as a whole. Health issues or death present another form of involuntary removal from party lists. As mentioned above, comparative studies of candidate list turnover are still very rare so that providing a preliminary analysis of wider patterns of candidate turnover is part of the rationale of this paper.

Studies of candidate selection in Western Europe and the United States have shown that most incumbent deputies generally seek renomination by their party and tend to be nominated

[1] Exceptions are Kreuzer and Pettai (1999; 2003) and Shabad and Slomczynski (2004) who look at several countries and elections, yet even they are eventually mostly concerned with inter-party mobility of incumbents between elections.

[2] Party-specific voluntary list turnover can also be caused by political tourism, i.e. candidates' deliberate decision to run for another party in the next election. Nevertheless, this has no effect on general levels of candidate turnover.

again without problems (see chapters in Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Matland and Studlar 2004). At the same time, targeted deselection of incumbents – denial of renomination or forced retirement – appears to be an uncommon occurrence. Yet as Matland and Studlar (2004) suggest, it may only appear rare as 'incumbents who face a serious danger of being deselected [by the party leadership or through intra-party defeat] may opt for "voluntary" retirement instead' (ibid. 97). This notion is supported by the majority of studies, most prominently those of the UK expenses scandal in 2009 (Eggers and Fisher 2011; Pattie and Johnston 2012; Larcinese and Sinclair 2013) and corruption scandals affecting members of Congress (Basinger 2013; Banducci and Karp 1994). However, in each case other factors were also shown to have significantly contributed to higher retirement rates and findings from similar studies on Italian deputies (Chang, Golden and Hill 2010; Asquer 2013; 2014) are mixed.

In any case, one should always expect some 'natural' candidate turnover in all parties as a number of candidates resign voluntarily and are replaced with new aspirants for political office. Nevertheless, it is yet unclear to what extent the above findings can be applied to explaining variations in candidate turnover. Studies have so far focussed almost exclusively on plurality voting systems with comparatively decentralised systems of candidate selection. List-based electoral systems tend to be more centralised and exclusive, giving more power to central party organisations or regional leaders in the selection process (Hazan and Rahat 2010). In addition, incumbent candidates seeking re-nomination and 'ordinary' candidates differ in so far as the cost of removing the former is far greater. As Larcinese and Sinclair (2013) show, parties do not remove MPs whose voting behaviour frequently deviates from the party line due to their ability to win elections. Ordinary list candidates on the other hand are considerably less costly to remove and their replacement might even be beneficial for the party. Incumbents implicated in scandals might thus simply be banished to an unwinnable place on the party list rather than being de-selected while 'ordinary' candidates are removed. Nevertheless, there is so far only some anecdotal news reporting of cases in which political malfeasance also affected 'ordinary' parliamentary candidates (e.g. Lalani 2015). Furthermore, ordinary candidates might themselves be considerably less interested in running again than incumbents given costs of campaigning and uncertainty about the outcome.

Finally, note that in addition to being a potentially important indicator of political corruption, candidate turnover is also a relevant variable for the study of other issues. For example, Kreuzer and Pettai (1999) argue that lowering levels of candidate turnover can be seen as an indicator of parties' institutionalisation and development of effective recruitment

channels (which favour stability). In a similar vein, Sikk and Köker (n.d) and Barnea & Rahat (2011) use it as an indicator of party novelty, the use of which could improve our understanding of party system dynamics, promising more reliable electoral volatility indices.

Candidate turnover and corruption: Rejuvenation vs. Renomination

Until now, candidate turnover and its determinants remain greatly understudied and findings on legislative turnover are not fully applicable. Such problems notwithstanding, in this paper we offer a first step towards explaining candidate turnover by considering the relationship between candidate turnover and corruption. Studies on the impact of corruption on electoral outcomes and political recruitment often address the issue of candidate (de-)selection and turnover, although rarely in much depth. Interestingly, the existing literature suggests two mechanisms of effect which lead to diametrically opposed outcomes. One the one hand, corruption can be linked to an increase in candidate turnover as implicated candidates resign or are involuntarily removed by parties trying to increase their electoral appeal. On the other hand, corruption can also be associated with a rise and strengthening of clientelist structures which hinder turnover and decrease the pool of potential candidates. Thus, studying the relationship between corruption and candidate turnover not only offers a promising avenue in explaining wider patterns of elite rotation but also presents the opportunity to solve an intriguing theoretical puzzle. In the following, we review both arguments and formulate two competing hypotheses. These are then tested on a novel data set of candidate turnover in 39 elections in 9 Central and East European democracies.

Relegation, de-selection and strategic newness: The case for rejuvenation

Corruption plays an important role in voters' decision-making before elections. Although other factors naturally play an equally substantial role, corruption significantly affects citizens' inclination to vote for a particular party (Deegan-Krause, Klasnja and Tucker 2011; Slomczynski and Shabad 2012; Ecker et al. 2015). Voters are overall more likely to vote for parties and candidates who they perceive as less corrupt (or not corrupt at all).[3] It is thus in parties' best interest to appear as 'clean' as they can. There are a multitude of measures parties might employ to this end and prevent losses on election day (or maybe even increase their vote share), ranging from programmatic reorientation to structural changes (including splits and mergers with other parties to obscure their past). Yet, the most straightforward way

[3] Nevertheless, this mechanism can be mitigated by individual party loyalty or overall political leaning.

to disassociate themselves with a corrupt image is to 'throw out the rascals'. Despite some mixed findings in the case of Italian members of parliament (Chang, Golden and Hill 2010; Asquer 2013; 2014) and state deputies in Bavaria (Kauder and Potrafke 2014), this notion is supported by a great number of studies, most prominently those of the UK expenses scandal in 2009 (Eggers and Fisher 2011; Pattie and Johnston 2012; Larcinese and Sinclair 2013) and corruption scandals affecting members of Congress (Banducci and Karp 1994; Basinger 2013). Voters tend to see individual politicians rather than political parties as such as corrupt (Slomczynski and Shabad 2011), so that replacing old and ostensibly corrupt candidates would appear to be an effective way for a party to distance itself from the wrongdoings of previous representatives.

The presentation of a novel set of candidates untainted by political scandals has been linked the success of new anti-corruption parties in Europe (Bågenholm 2013a). Furthermore, 'newness' can also present a general strategy for parties to break into the electoral market or to increase their vote share (Sikk 2012). Thus, even if a party or its candidates have not been involved in any scandals, voters' perceptions of rising levels of corruption (and increased awareness of the potential for malfeasance by established politicians) still present incentives for parties to change their line-up. Party lists are rejuvenated in order to increase electoral appeal. Thereby, party leaders can either elevate relatively unknown (and previously unsuccessful) candidates to higher and more promising list places or they recruit genuinely new candidates, without any political experience and/or with specific appeal to their electorate[4], from outside the party. Incumbents and previous top candidates on the other hand can either be relegated to 'unwinnable' list places or districts or they are entirely purged from the lists, respectively. From this follows our *rejuvenation* hypothesis:

> H 1: Increasing corruption is associated with greater candidate turnover as parties try to anticipate punishment by the electorate and/or increase their electoral appeal by rejuvenating their candidate lists.

Clientelist structures and recruitment problems: The case for renomination

Places on electoral lists – particularly those with a reasonable chance to get the respective candidate into parliament – are pricy goods. Political hopefuls usually have to proof their

[4] Examples of this would be labour union activists running on social-democratic/socialist party lists or representatives of employer organisations on the lists of economically liberal parties. This might also happen, albeit to a lesser degree, if corruption is absent or declining.

loyalty by long-standing commitment to the party, by engaging in grass-roots activism, canvassing and committee work, if they want to ascend in the party hierarchy and land one of these coveted positions (Gallagher and Marsh 1988; Norris 1997; Protsyk and Matichescu 2011; Matichescu and Protsyk 2011; Manow 2013). The further parties institutionalise, they also develop more stable and effective recruitment channels (Kreuzer and Pettai 1999; Bolleyer and Bytzek). Thus, one's political pedigree becomes more important for recruitment into 'winnable' list places, although it should not be prohibitive to recruitment of genuinely new candidates. While these arguments are still compatible with the *rejuvenation* hypothesis presented above, it can also be argued that a rise in corruption will change the incentive structure governing parties' recruitment strategies to the effect that *less* rather than more new candidates are recruited. This effect is amplified by a lack of potential new candidates, leading to a stagnation and decrease in candidate turnover.

Political corruption is often associated with the existence and rise in clientelist structures and practices in the electoral arena. In the context of candidate selection, a rise in clientelist practices means that regular channels of meritocratic recruitment – which would still allow for the recruitment of party outsiders whose merits stem from a different field – become less permeable. As Protsyk and Matichescu (2011) show, parties will trade high-ranking/sage list places for potential financial contributions to parties' budgets and recruit specifically with the aim of increasing their revenue (Protsyk and Matichescu 2011; Matichescu and Protsyk 2011). Potential candidates who do not possess sufficient material or immaterial resources are at a disadvantage compared to others who can use their wealth and influence to fill the party' coffers. Candidates who already competed for a party in the previous election (not only incumbents) are particularly advantaged as they are even more likely to command resources for the benefit of the party and its networks. Yet there are further reasons why increasing corruption should decrease parties' incentives to replace old candidates. While a new set of candidates may be appealing to voters, studies of the UK expenses scandal have shown that even incumbents who have been implicated in will almost always achieve a better than entirely new candidates due to name recognition and track record of getting elected/the incumbency effect (Larcinese and Sircar 2013). At the same time, removing old candidates from candidate lists amid a climate of increasing occurrence of corrupt practices, might equal an 'admission of guilt' on behalf of the party, highlighting the practices and deterring voters. Highly publicised cases of political malfeasance also tend to be rather individualised and are therefore unlikely to account for large variations in overall candidate turnover. Furthermore, the more wide-spread clientelist practices are, the more likely it is that parties will try to

protect their top candidates from prosecution by keeping them in high (and secure) list places (Protsyk and Matichescu 2011; Matichescu and Protsyk 2011).[5]

A last point is that even if the value of 'newness' would outweigh the disincentives described above, parties will likely have difficulties to find new and politically 'clean' candidates to replace any dropouts when corruption increases. Indeed, it is likely that new candidates may also not necessarily want to join lists of governing parties if corruption perception is increasing. Parties may have to stick to the candidates that they have as they *cannot* (rather than will not) rejuvenate when they stagnate under increasing corruption. From this follows our *renomination* hypothesis:

> H 2: Increasing corruption leads to a decrease in candidate turnover because parties prefer to protect established candidates, previous candidates are able to offer more benefits to the party, and because the pool of 'clean' candidates is limited.

The role of party leadership and government participation

Irrespective of which of the two competing hypothesis proves true, the role of party leadership and government participation by political parties should remain equal. All electoral systems employed for parliamentary elections in Central and East European democracies are based on lists or at least have a strong list-based component (i.e. Hungary, Lithuania). In such systems, candidate selection tends to be more centralized, thus giving party leaders more influence over candidate (de-)selection (Hazan and Rahat 2010; Protsyk and Matichescu 2011; Matichescu and Protsyk 2011). Candidate selection is further concentrated in the hands of party leadership in younger and less institutionalised democracies, which we are particularly interested in as our data stems from Central and Eastern Europe. Here, the lack of established party structures which could otherwise restrict leadership autonomy and the strategic complexity produced by the high number of competitors strengthens party leaders and should lead to more centralized selection procedures (Field and Siavelis 2008, 630-32). In case parties choose *rejuvenation* as a strategy, this leverage would give party leaders the possibility to rid the party of old candidates and politicians associated with corruption. Should corruption rather lead to *renomination*, party leaders would be able to prevent the de-selection of ostensibly corrupt candidates and protect them by giving them the most promising list places, leaving

[5] N.B. that deputies in all parliaments under considerations in this study enjoy immunity from prosecution for the duration of their mandate which can only be lifted by a parliamentary majority.

significantly less scope for turnover. This makes both *rejuvenation* and *renomination* not only plausible but also feasible party strategies.

Parties' participation in government, too, should amplify the effect of rising levels of corruption irrespective of its outcome. Parties who hold responsibility in government have the easiest access to public goods and determine their mode of distribution. On the one hand, representatives of these parties could be more likely to be involved in clientelistic exchanges where these goods are diverted from their intended use, thus strengthening corrupt networks and favouring *renomination* over *rejuvenation*. On the other hand, government parties should also be under greater pressure to renew their candidate lists if corruption is increasing. As argued by Ecker et al. (2015), voters evaluate government parties not only on the basis of economic performance (economy, unemployment rate etc.) but also on the existence and level of corruption. This should particularly be true in the countries of CEE where corruption tends to be among the most important issues for voters (ibid., Singer et al 2011).

Irrespective of corruption scandals among other (opposition) parties, governing parties will be under particular pressure to renominate or to rejuvenate. Governing parties not only have access to public goods but also the power to prevent its misuse for private gain. High or increasing levels of corruption will put greater pressure on these parties either to rejuvenate their candidates lists in a bid to anticipate punishment by the electorate[6] or to renominate previous candidates to benefit from their resources and shield them from prosecution.

Data and variable coding

In our analysis, we use a novel data set on electoral candidates and party lists from 9 Central and East European democracies and 39 elections between and 1996 and 2015 (see Table 1), i.e. all current EU member states in the region with the exception of Romania and Croatia where the data has been more difficult to analyse or obtain, respectively.[7] Candidate lists and electoral results were obtained from public sources, primarily those available online (e.g. the websites of national electoral commissions, parliaments and ministries). As far as available, we incorporated data from the 'Political Transformation and the Electoral Process in Post-Communist Europe' database at the University of Essex. Data from the Comparative Manifesto Project and the *Political Science Data Yearbook* were used to complement the data

6 Admittedly, this mechanism of punishment is likely mediated by individual voters' political/party preferences (Eckert et al 2015; see also Anderson and Tverkova 2003).

[7] We have already obtained further data and will include these countries as well as some of the earlier elections in the future.

set and code variables on government participation, electoral performance and party change. Overall out data set contains close to 200,000 candidate-election combinations.

To calculate candidate turnover between elections, we developed a computerised matching function implemented in R which compares individual candidates on party lists within a given pair of subsequent elections.

Table 1. Elections included in the data set and current analysis

Election number	BG	CZ	EE	HU	LT	LV	PL	SI	SK
1			1992	1990	1992	1993	1991*		
2		1992	1995	1994	1996	1995	1993		
3	1994*	1996	1999	1998	2000	1998	1997		1994
4	1997*	1998	2003	2002	2004	2002	2001	2000	1998
5	2001	2002	2007	2006	2008	2006	2005	2004	2002
6	2005	2006	2011	2010	2012	2010	2007	2008	2006
7	2009	2010	2015	2014	-	2011	2011	2011	2010
8	2013	2013	-	-	-	2014	2015	2014	2012
9	2014	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2016

* Only parties that entered parliament.

- included in analysis of new candidate and dropped candidate analysis

- included in either new candidate (later elections) or dropped candidate analysis (earlier elections)

Pre-1997 data is available but cannot be used due to restricted availability of our corruption indicator

Dependent variable: Candidate Turnover

Candidate turnover can be thought of in two distinct ways – the percentage of new candidates who did not compete in the previous election as well as the percentage of candidates who competed in the previous election but failed to run again (dropouts). Although similar, the two measures reflect different processes – namely the recruitment of new candidates on the one hand and the removal of old candidates on the other – which do not necessarily go hand-in-hand. It is therefore sensible to use both indicators and compare the results; our hypotheses should generally apply equally to both indicators. Some adjustments to the raw percentages of new and dropped candidates and their measurement were necessary for our statistical analysis; these are outlined in more detailed at a later point in this paper.

Independent variables

Corruption/Clientelism. We use Transparency International's corruption perception index (CPI) to operationalize corruption. Although the index does not reflects actual/'real' levels of

corruption or clientelism, it can be argued to a meaningful indicator of the persistence of corruption and clientelistic exchanges in a society including political parties. In our models, we include CPI scores in two ways. First, we include the change in the CPI score over the past four years (i.e. the length of a typical legislative term). Our rationale here is that a trend should represent the public relevance and pressure for political parties better than the average CPI score over the last parliamentary term (cf. Eckert et al. 2015). Following Hanley and Sikk (2014), we also include the CPI score for the year before the election – given that data is collected in the year preceding the headline year, this is more appropriate than taking the CPI score of the election year; particularly as some of the elections took place in the first half of the year.

Government participation. Particularly in the early years of democratization the new democracies in CEE often experienced several governments during one parliamentary term, making it difficult to code which parties participated in the government, and should according to our hypotheses be associated with either much greater or significantly lower rates of candidate turnover. We therefore follow a midway approach similar to Bågenholm (2013b), i.e. parties which were part of the government at least 18 months before the election are coded as a government parties whereas all others are not coded as such.[8]

Party size/vote share. In our analysis, we control for party size operationalized as a party's vote share. Thereby, we expect the same effect of party size on candidate turnover irrespective of the applicability *renomination* and *rejuvenation* hypotheses. Under a renomination scenario, larger parties (those with a larger voter base) will have wider and stronger networks and are therefore able to provide more goods for their voters in exchange for their support. They are also more likely to be part of the government, granting them access to even more potential for patronage. Even in the face of allegations of corruption, these parties are under less pressure to deselect their candidates. Slomczynski and Shabad (2011) and Ecker et al. (2015) find that party supporters are less likely to see their preferred party as corrupt, so that parties with a larger voter base can count on their supporters' votes regardless of any scandals. Larger parties also tend to be associated with larger organisational structures (or more complicated ones in the case of alliances). Under a rejuvenation scenario, the larger party organisation thus helps parties to reach out to people outside their existing structures and offer an attractive and relatively low-risk opportunity to run for parliament

[8] Unfortunately, this strict criterion meant that in some cases (particularly in most recent Czech elections) no party could be coded as governing. We will include a more precise coding of government participation and its duration in future iterations of this paper.

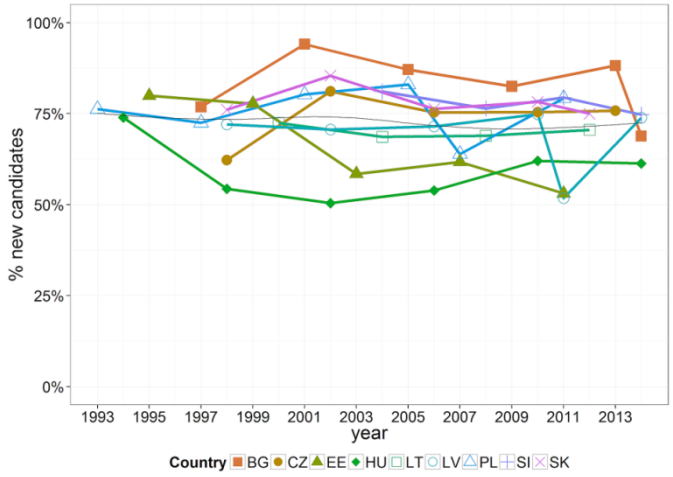
(higher chances of election means that associated costs of candidacies can be recuperated – through state party financing – more easily). We enter the variable as its common logarithm (base of 10) to ensure that the relative differences in party sizes is reflected more accurately.[9]

Unemployment. Last, we include a variable change in the unemployment rate in the three years preceding the election. In difficult economic times, candidates – particularly those in top/safe positions – will try their best to keep their place on the list to secure their (financial) status. This is once again unrelated to *renomination* and *rejuvenation* hypotheses. Furthermore, as Hanley and Sikk (2014) show, new parties tend to break through under favourable economic conditions and voters prefer tried and tested candidates over newcomers, leading to less candidate turnover. Due to the great variation in the rate across countries and the fact that even high levels of unemployment can quickly become accepted as the norm (ibid.), we include the change rather than the absolute level of unemployment as our indicator.[10]

Overall candidate turnover in CEE

We begin by looking at overall levels of candidate turnover in CEE. Figure 1 shows general trends in turnover by country by plotting the share of new candidates (those who did not contest in the previous election) for each election year. We can see that overall candidate novelty remains relatively stable in most countries with a very slight downward trend (fewer new candidates) in some countries.

Figure 1: Overall share of new candidates

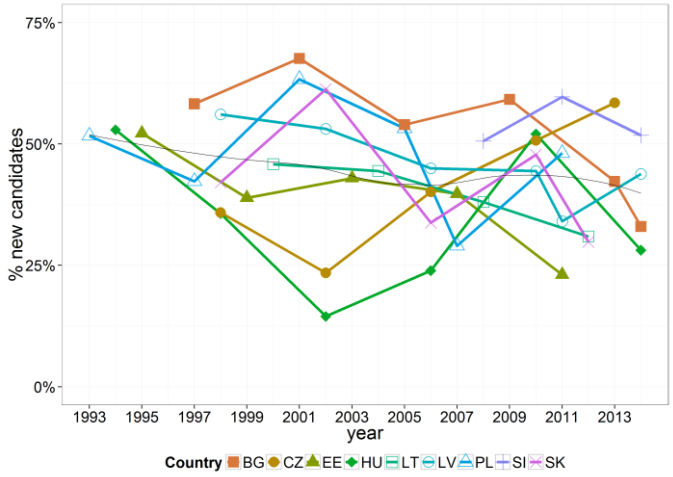


[9] For example, the logarithm ensures that a party with 20 percent of votes is equidistant from parties with 10 and 40 percent of votes, rather than 0 and 40 or 10 and 30 percent of votes. 20 percent is substantively closer to 40 than 0 and 30 is substantively closer to 20 than 10.

[10] The economic situation has also been linked to the salience of corruption as an issue for voters. We plan to include this relationship more adequately in future iterations of this paper.

Nevertheless, looking at these overall trends alone might be misleading as it includes many extra-parliamentary parties, which have limited political relevance together with the more established parties where we would expect significantly lower degrees of candidate novelty. Figure 2 focusses on candidate turnover in parties which received at least 5% of votes in the respective election (roughly a typical electoral threshold). Furthermore, we restrict our analysis here to the top 25% of party lists, i.e. the top quartile of a party's candidates in constituencies (national lists in Estonia, Lithuania and Hungary 2014) are compared with the full candidate lists (of all parties) in the previous election.[11] New candidate percentage thus refers to percentage among top 25 percent who did not contest the *preceding* election. Dropped candidate percentage – analysed below – on the other hand refers to the percentage among the top 25 percent of candidates who did not contest in the *following* election. We defined top 25 per cent based on party rankings in districts (or national lists, where available) – based on preference votes (post-election list placement) where open lists used.

Figure 2: Share of new candidates (top 25%), parties with V% > 5%

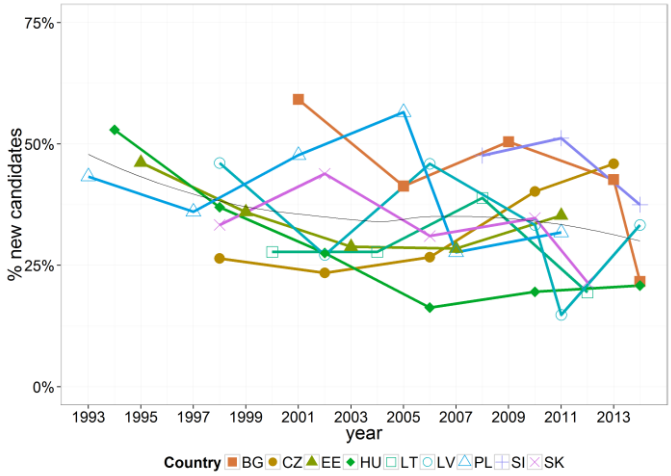


Among the leading candidates in main parties, turnover has slightly decreased during the last two decades, yet there are strong country-specific variations. Some of these are caused by *early elections* which restricted parties' ability to recruit new candidates (e.g. Poland 2007, Latvia 2011, Slovakia 2012, Bulgaria 2014), while others can be traced back to the breakthrough of genuinely new parties which fielded almost exclusively new candidates (see Sikk 2005). If we only look at established political parties, i.e. those we could code as

[11] To remedy the fact that parties ran oversized lists (listing up to twice as many candidates as seats in parliament; e.g. Estonia 1995), we define 'full lists' and 'top 25 per cent' using the district magnitude of electoral districts or the number of seats in parliament where national lists were used.

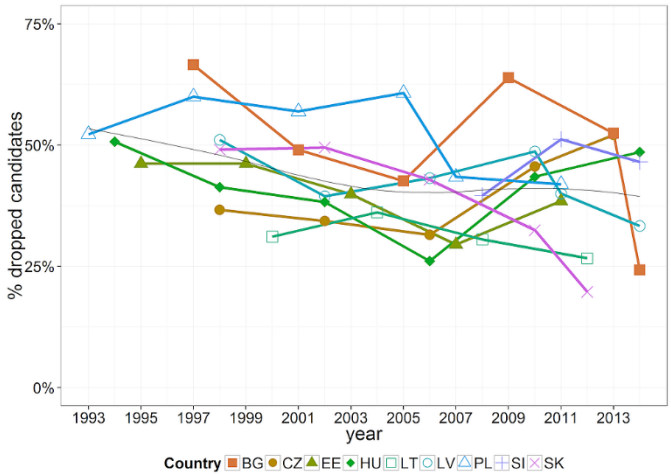
contesting subsequent elections using codes from the Manifesto Project[12], the trend towards less new candidates is somewhat more pronounced (see Figure 3). The average share of new candidates decreases from about 50% in the early years to 30% in the most recent elections. Nevertheless, significant variation remains within and between countries.

Figure 3: New candidates in established parties by country (top 25%)



Note: only parties that were not coded as new in Volkens et al. 2014 that received at least 5% of votes. The fine black line show loess trend.

Figure 4: Dropouts by country (top 25%), parties with at least 5% of votes in t-1



Finally, the trends for dropouts, i.e. candidates who did not run again in the subsequent election, appear to be fairly similar to those found for novelty (see Figure 4). Note that these two measures of candidate turnover can diverge as we are comparing the top quartile of a candidate list in one election to all full candidate lists in the subsequent election. Even if all top candidates drop out (e.g. due to scandals), it is unlikely that they will all be replaced with new candidates instead of candidates that ran already in the previous election.

[12] Unfortunately, some of the established parties – particularly electoral alliances with sometimes small shares of new candidates – are excluded here as they are assigned a different party code in the CMP dataset.

Candidate turnover and corruption

We now turn to the analysis of the relationship between candidate turnover and perception of corruption. Before proceeding with our statistical models, it needs to be noted that we mostly looked at parties that contested both in a pair of elections (and where it was reasonably straightforward to code party continuity). Furthermore, for reasons already outlined above we restricted our analysis of candidate turnover to the top 25 per cent of candidate lists. Similar to the descriptive analysis above, we focus our statistical models on two dimensions of candidate turnover: a) the percentage of candidates in the top 25 per cent at t who also ran for the party in t-1 irrespective of list placement ('old candidates'), and b) the percentage of top candidates in t-1 who remained in the top 25 per cent in t ('kept candidates'). The analysis of the former extends more recent elections than that of the latter as due to a high number of organisational changes among parties, 'kept candidates' can otherwise not be adequately included.[13]

Figure 5 shows the general relationship between two variables related to corruption (corruption perception index and its change in four years before an election) and mean new candidate percentage for main parties (V > 5%). There seems to be a weak negative relationship between CPI / CPI change and new candidate percentage as there are more larger markers in the bottom-left quadrant of the scatterplot (high and increasing corruption), but there are also outliers.[14] The relationship is weak and needs to be analysed in depth looking at individual parties. In preliminary analyses we discovered that candidate novelty is strongly dependent on other variables, particularly party size that we need to add as control variables. We also discovered a very clear relationship between candidate change and time between elections (see Figure 2) – with early elections producing much more limited candidate change than elections held after full term. Also, for reasons that are not of primary interest here, we noticed differences in candidate novelty levels between different countries.

As a result, we adjusted candidate turnover (our dependent variable) by the overall mean for parliamentary parties in a country (across all elections). This is because turnover rates seem to vary across countries (see above) and the adjustment helps to control for the potential effects of different electoral systems or other dependent variables that we have not included in our models. A further adjustment was necessary to account for the fact that the time gap between elections varied. We divided the difference between a party's candidate turnover and

[13] Otherwise we would have to overlook parties that disappeared, merged or split.
[14] Note, however, that the two of the prominent outliers in that quadrant (SK 2012 and LV 2011) were early elections – that tend to have lower levels of candidate novelty – held less than two years after the preceding one.

the national average and divided that by time between elections. The most typical gap of four years was set at 1 so that in effect all turnovers were normalized to as if the gap between elections was four years. Hence, the dependent variable was adjusted as follows:[15]

$$acp_{adj} = \frac{acp_i - \overline{acp}}{0.25t}$$

where acp_i stands for the adjusted candidate percentage for party i, $\overline{acp}$ for national average for all parliamentary parties in all elections and t for years between the pair of elections.

When we look at all parliamentary parties together (Table 2, model 1), corruption or change in perception does not affect candidate turnover; only party vote share has a positive impact. New candidate percentage tends to decrease by about 11 per cent as the vote share of parties increases tenfold (as we use log to the base of 10 with the party vote share).

Table 2. Determinants of candidate novelty (governing and other parliamentary parties)[16]

	Old candidate %			Kept candidate %	
	(1) All parties elected to the parliament	(2) Governing parties	(3) Non-governing parties	(4) Governing parties	(5) Non-governing parties
CPI change $_{t-1-t-4}$	-2.17	-15.19***	1.77	-11.99*	-0.94
	(4.88)	(4.23)	(5.12)	(6.58)	(5.33)
CPI $_{t-1}$	0.36	0.65	3.97	1.33	0.17
	(2.63)	(2.20)	(2.57)	(3.46)	(2.58)
Unemployment change $_{t-1-t-3}$	-0.52	-1.55***	-0.32	-0.13	-0.81
	(0.63)	(0.54)	(0.63)	(0.79)	(0.66)
$\log_{10}V_t$	10.89*	23.78***	24.33***	30.01***	23.52***
	(6.03)	(4.36)	(6.03)	(10.63)	(8.63)
Constant	-11.08	-6.86	-37.20**	-29.64	-21.18
	(13.46)	(10.46)	(15.52)	(21.65)	(16.49)
Observations	181	65	60	68	63
R^2	0.02	0.43	0.27	0.17	0.15
Adjusted R^2	-0.001	0.40	0.21	0.11	0.10

Note: *p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01 (standard errors in parentheses)
Note: top 25% candidates

When we run the same model separately for governing parties and other parliamentary parties,[17] we see striking differences in the coefficients. Most importantly for our present purposes, change in corruption perception has a remarkable effect, but only for governing parties. Hereby, the effect is congruent with our *renomination* hypothesis – candidate novelty *decreases* as perceived levels of corruption increase (i.e. CPI decreases). For each one point

[15] To keep the regression models parsimonious and simple, we chose to transform the dependent variable. The transformation involved variables that are of limited interest here (and should not affect the governing and non-governing parties differently) and does not make the interpretation of results more difficult (therefore, we leave party size as an independent variable).

[16] Some parties in some elections were excluded from some of the models due to extreme leverage: (1) Latvia 2011: SC, Vienotiba, ZRS and ZZS, (2) Latvia 2011: Vienotiba and ZZS, (3) Slovakia 2012: Smer, (4) Latvia 2010: Vienotiba, (5) Slovakia 2010: Smer 2010. None of the models suffers from heteroscedasticity.

[17] See Table 3, see Appendix for lists of governing and non-governing parties.

change in CPI over the four preceding years (roughly corresponding to an electoral cycle), the governing parties include 15 per cent more new candidates. The effect of party size still remains highly significant – ten times increase in party size leads to 24 percentage points fewer new candidates. The share of 'kept candidates' is likewise dependent on CPI change with a similar but slightly lower coefficient, possibly because of the overall lower model fit. As in all other models, party size has very strong impact on the percentage of'kept candidates'/candidate dropout, with candidates of larger parties less likely lose top candidates.

Remarkably, in contrast to governing parties, change in corruption perception does not affect non-governing parliamentary parties. Still, interestingly and somewhat puzzlingly, the share of 'old' and 'kept' candidates (i.e. in turn candidate novelty and dropout rates, respectively) among non-governing parliamentary parties is better explained by party size. Changes in unemployment on the other hand only appear to affect the share of old candidates in governing parties – a decrease in the unemployment rate also leads to a decrease in old candidates and vice versa, i.e. to more candidate turnover which is congruent with out hypothesis.

Note that new parties are excluded from our models here, as there is (usually) no one party which can be defined as a predecessor for the purposes of our analysis. Their exclusion is intentional as (a) new parties have been shown to benefit from rising perceptions of corruption (Hanley & Sikk 2014) and (b) we wish to maintain a focus on existing parliamentary parties in this paper. Candidate novelty of new parties that entered the parliament was markedly higher (57.2 percent) than that of previously existing ones (35.4 percent).[18] Combining genuinely new and existing parties would conceptually blur the picture.

Discussion and conclusion

Our main finding here – that increasing perception of corruption lead to lower candidate novelty among governing parties – supports our renomination hypothesis. Yet given contrary findings in the literature supporting the rejuvenation hypothesis, it still begs further

[18] The mean candidate novelty for governing parties was even lower at 31.8 percent. New parties defined as those for which continuities compared to previous election were missing in Volkens et al 2014. The low average indicates that new parties such defined include some which included many candidates in the running previously. We plan to review new parties in future, but such "false discontinuities" are sometimes difficult to correct due to frequent organizational changes. Note that what constitutes a new party is a contested and debated issue in political science (see Barnea & Rahat 2011, Litton 2013 and Sikk & Köker n.d.).

explanation. A mixed methods approach that combines more sophisticated quantitative models with in-depth case studies of carefully selected party/election dyads might be most useful here. We also contend that the coding of government parties remains difficult and may have consequences for model results. For example, current coding excludes Czech ODS or several governing parties in Bulgaria because of the strict 18-months-before-election rule. Furthermore, determining which governing parties should be 'blamed' for increasing corruption is far from clear in countries with multi-party cabinets (that applies to most of our cases) – an issue covered by the 'clarity of responsibility' discussion in the literature on economic voting (see Andreson 2000, Hobolt et al 2013, Royed et al 2002 and Whitten & Palmer 1999; also see Tavits 2007 on the impact of clarity of responsibility on corruption).

The above limitations notwithstanding, this paper has presented one of the first large-scale analyses of candidate turnover in modern democracies. We believe that focussing on electoral candidates not only provides a way to study political parties' responses to corruption but it also has the potential for analysing party and party system change more broadly. The selection and presentation of candidates is one of the essential functions of political parties. Furthermore, candidates are a key part of a parties' organisational structures and are invariably linked to elections. Candidate turnover helps to capture the fluidity and development in party systems which is particularly pronounced in CEE, but can also be found in some parts of Western Europe.

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Appendix

Descriptive statistics of variables for models 1-4 in Table 3.

		OLD/dropped candidate index[a]	CPI change	CPI	Unemployment change	$\log_{10}$V
Model 1	N	63	63	63	63	63
	Mean	-15.1	0.1	4.7	0.4	1
	St. Dev.	18.2	0.6	1	4.1	0.4
	Min	-69.4	-1	3.4	-6.1	-0.1
	Max	31.6	1.2	6.7	11.4	1.6
Model 2	N	61	61	61	61	61
	Mean	-7.5	0.04	4.9	0.3	1.1
	St. Dev.	20.7	0.5	1	3.9	0.4
	Min	-93.5	-1	3.5	-6.1	-0.2
	Max	32.2	1.2	6.7	11.4	1.7
Model 3	N	60	60	60	60	60
	Mean	-9.1	0.1	4.5	0.9	1.2
	St. Dev.	25.7	0.6	0.9	4.6	0.3
	Min	-100.2	-1	3.4	-6.1	0.7
	Max	47.4	1.2	6.7	11.4	1.7
Model 4	N	60	60	60	60	60
	Mean	-3.4	0.1	4.9	0.3	1.1
	St. Dev.	16.6	0.5	1	3.9	0.3
	Min	-37.6	-1	3.5	-6.1	0.6
	Max	35.6	1.2	6.7	11.4	1.6

[a] adjusted by national mean for parliamentary parties and time between elections (see text)

Governing parties (new candidate analysis)

	parties
2001.BG	ODS
2005.BG	DPS, NDSV
2009.BG	DPS, KZB, NDSV
2013.BG	GERB
2002.CZ	CSSD
2006.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL
2003.EE	RE
2007.EE	K, RE, RL
2011.EE	IRL, RE
2002.HU	FIDESZ-MDF, FKGP
2006.HU	MSZP, SZDSZ
2010.HU	MSZP
2000.LT	LCS, LKDP, TS
2004.LT	UdL
2008.LT	LICS, LSDP
2012.LT	LRLS, TS-LKD
2002.LV	LC, TB-LNNK, TP
2006.LV	LLP-LC, TP, ZZS
2010.LV	PVL-TB-LNNK, Vienotiba, ZZS
2001.PL	AWSP
2005.PL	SLD
2007.PL	PIS
2011.PL	PO, PSL
2008.SI	DeSuS, NSi, SDS, SLS
2011.SI	LDS, SD
2002.SK	SDKU, SDL, SMK-MPK
2006.SK	ANO, KDH, SDKU-DS, SMK-MPK
2010.SK	HZDS, SNS, Smer
2012.SK	KDH, MOST-HID, SDKU-DS, SaS

Non-governing parties (new candidate analysis)

	parties
2005.BG	KZB, ODS
2009.BG	ATAKA
2013.BG	ATAKA, DPS
2002.CZ	KSCM, ODS
2006.CZ	KSCM, ODS
2010.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL, KSCM, ODS, SZ
2013.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL, KSCM, ODS, TOP 09
2003.EE	IL, K, MD
2007.EE	IRL, SDE
2011.EE	EER, K, RL, SDE
2002.HU	MSZP, SZDSZ
2010.HU	FIDESZ-KDNP
2004.LT	TS
2012.LT	LSDP, PTT
2006.LV	JL, PCTVL, TB-LNNK
2001.PL	PSL
2005.PL	LPR, PIS, PO, PSL, SRP
2007.PL	PO, PSL
2011.PL	PIS
2008.SI	LDS, SD, SNS
2011.SI	DeSuS, SDS, SLS, SNS, ZARES
2002.SK	HZDS
2006.SK	HZDS, Smer
2010.SK	KDH, SDKU-DS
2012.SK	SNS, Smer

Governing parties (dropped candidate analysis)

	parties
1997.BG	ODS
2001.BG	DPS, NDSV
2005.BG	DPS, KZB, NDSV
2009.BG	GERB
1998.CZ	CSSD
2002.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL
1999.EE	RE
2003.EE	RE, RL
2007.EE	IRL, RE
1998.HU	FIDESZ, FKGP
2002.HU	MSZP
2006.HU	MSZP
2000.LT	BSDA, NS
2004.LT	LICS, UdL, VNDS
2008.LT	LICS, LRLS, TS-LKD
1998.LV	LC, TB-LNNK, TP
2002.LV	LC, LPP, TP, ZZS
2006.LV	JL, TB-LNNK, ZZS
2010.LV	Vienotiba, ZZS
1997.PL	AWS
2001.PL	SLD-UP
2005.PL	PIS
2007.PL	PO, PSL
2008.SI	LDS, SD
1998.SK	SDK, SDL, SMK-MPK, SOP
2002.SK	ANO, SDKU, SMK-MPK
2006.SK	HZDS, SNS, Smer
2010.SK	KDH, MOST-HID, SDKU-DS, SaS

Non-governing parties (dropped candidate analysis)

	parties
2001.BG	KZB, ODS
2005.BG	ATAKA
2009.BG	ATAKA, DPS
1998.CZ	KSCM, ODS
2002.CZ	KSCM, ODS
2006.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL, KSCM, ODS, SZ
2010.CZ	CSSD, KDU-CSL, KSCM, ODS, TOP 09
1999.EE	IL, K, MD
2003.EE	K, MD, RP
2007.EE	EER, K, RL, SDE
1998.HU	MSZP, SZDSZ
2002.HU	SZDSZ
2006.HU	FIDESZ-KDNP
2000.LT	TS
2008.LT	LSDP, PTT
2002.LV	JL, PCTVL, TB-LNNK
1997.PL	PSL
2001.PL	LPR, PIS, PO, PSL, SRP
2005.PL	PO, PSL
2007.PL	PIS
2008.SI	DeSuS, SDS, SLS, SNS, ZARES
1998.SK	HZDS
2002.SK	HZDS, KDH, Smer
2006.SK	KDH, SDKU-DS
2010.SK	SNS