Online Appendix to ‘How Democracy Works Within a Populist Party: Candidate Selection in the Alternative for Germany’

**Appendix 1.** Brief Project Description

The large-scale research project #BuKa2017 of the Institute for Parliamentary Research (IParl) on candidate selection for the German general election 2017 examined the Alternative for Germany (AfD), the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), the Christian Social Union (CSU), the Greens (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen), the Left Party (Die Linke), the Liberals (FDP), and the Social Democrats (SPD).[[1]](#footnote-1) These parties were chosen, because according to polls, they were most likely to win seats in the Bundestag. The field research was conducted between September 2016 and July 2017. It contained both quantitative and qualitative methods of empirical research, including standardized surveys with questionnaires, expert interviews, notes from nomination conferences, party statutes and minutes, and media reports on candidate selection. In addition to the IParl-team, 43 junior and senior researchers were trained for the data collection and deployed at the nomination conferences. The article ‘How Democracy Works Within a Populist Party: Candidate Selection in the Alternative for Germany’ is mainly based on their notes (method of participant observation). For more details about the research project #BuKa2017, see: IParl and Policy Matters (2017) Methodenbericht. Befragung zur Kandidatenaufstellung für die Bundestagswahl 2017, at [www.iparl.de/en/methods-buka2017.html](http://www.iparl.de/en/methods-buka2017.html).

**Appendix 2.** Case Selection

In total, data was collected at 136 randomly selected nomination conferences, 48 at the state level (*Bundesländer*) and 88 at the district level (*Wahlkreise*). The case selection was carried out by the polling organization Policy Matters. The random sample includes the same number of decentralized party branches of all chosen parties. At the state level, half of all cases were selected. Since there are 16 German federal states, the data set includes half of the list nominations of each party (each party eight out of 16 state-level associations, in sum 48 out of 96 cases). For the Christian Democratic sister parties, one list selection of the CSU which only runs for office in Bavaria, and seven list selections of the CDU, which runs for office in all states except Bavaria, were taken into account. The most prominent party organizations in membership-terms are in North Rhine-Westphalia and Baden-Wurttemberg, and were selected for all parties, as they have a decisive influence on the internal (and external) affairs of the party as a whole. In sum, information for 1,246 nominations on party lists was conducted.

At the district level, 90 cases were randomly selected (from a total of 299 constituencies and usually six party candidate selections per constituency). The field research could actually be carried out in all but two selected cases, i.e. in 88 cases: 15 for the FDP, the Greens, the Left Party, 14 for the AfD and the SPD, 12 for the CDU, and three for the CSU. Together with the list places, 1,452 single candidate selections of seven Bundestag parties were thus examined.

To show the robustness of the random data, information on available additional list and district nominations has been added (only) in this appendix for the inclusion indicator (marked in italics in Appendix 5 und 7). At the state level, seven additional list nominations were added, e.g. a general meeting at the Greens in Hesse (which took place instead of the usual delegate assembly). At the district level, 206 district nominations were added: first, 11 cases based on the expectation that an incumbent MP would not run for re-nomination. Second, nine cases were included due to special research interests such as a public search for aspirants. Third, information from media was collected for 42 cases. Fourth, 56 official party minutes were available.

**Appendix 3.** Observation Notes

Two types of observation notes are used in the article: first, extensive notes and second, basic notes. The extensive notes were prepared directly at the nomination conferences. The documentation was meticulously carried out from beginning to end. These notes include, inter alia, question rounds, pro or contra speeches as well as the voting procedure. Using this method, 44 extensive sets of notes were collected at the district level and 55 extensive sets of notes at the state level. The second type – the basic minutes – were prepared before, during or after the nomination conferences. They cover less information than the extensive notes, e.g. the type of conference (general meeting vs. delegate assembly), the number of party members attending (formal inclusion vs. effective inclusion) and the number of aspirants for a nomination. In total, 44 basic notes at the district level were collected.

**Appendix 4.** Variables and Definitions

* **Aspirants per list place (ALP)**

$$\frac{N aspirants competing in a ballot}{N list places to elect in a ballot}$$

For each list place, the number of aspirants was counted. At the bottom of the list, sometimes more than one place was elected *en bloc* in a linked list ballot (*Blockwahl*). To assign an aspirant’s number to each of these list places, the number of aspirants competing for nomination was divided by the number of list places to elect. This allows for non-integer ALPs, if, for example, five aspirants competed for two list places, the ALP would be 2.5 for each of these two places.

* **Candidates’ initial support (CIS)**

$$\frac{\sum\_{}^{}share of votes of the (finally nominated) candidates in the first ballot}{N list places}$$

The candidates’ initial support was rounded to whole numbers. The share of votes is based on the number of all votes cast, including invalid votes and abstentions. In some cases, the voting procedures did not allow for a comparison. If, for example, several list places were filled in one round, but the eligible party members had fewer votes than places, the results were incomparable. Such cases, which sometimes occurred at the end of a list with no chance of winning for a mandate, were therefore treated as missing values.

* **Contributions: questions, statements, and supportive speeches in Q&A-rounds**

The contributions were counted for (all aspirants of) a nomination conference of a state-level association, since in some cases it was not possible to precisely assign a contribution to a specific list place or aspirant due to comprehensive list selection procedures or open questions for one or more list places ‘to whom it may concern’.

* **Contributions per aspirant**

$$\frac{N contributions at a nomination conference}{N aspirants at this conference}$$

* **Contributions per list place**

$$\frac{N contributions at a nomination conference}{N list places at this conference}$$

* **Effective inclusion**

$$\frac{N members attending at the district level or the state level}{N all members of the respective party branch}$$

* **Formal inclusion**

$$\frac{N delegates at the district level or the state level according to the statute}{N all members of the respective party branch}$$

* **Rank competition index (RCI)**

$$\frac{\sum\_{}^{}rank value of contested list places}{\sum\_{}^{}rank value of all list places of the respective state party branch}$$

A contested list place was defined by more than one candidacy. The list position values were assigned in descending order. For example, a list of ten places received a value of ten for the first place and one for the last one. The values of the contested places were summed up and divided by the list place value of the whole list. A party’s RCI is the mean value of all selected state party branch RCIs.

* **Time taken to fill a list**

$$\frac{\sum\_{}^{}time taken to fill a list}{N selected state party branches}$$

**Appendix 5.** Effective Inclusion of Party Members: Randomly Selected Cases and All Available Cases

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | AfD | Liberals | Left Party | Greens | CDU | SPD | CSU | N |
| District level | 29.5 (14) | 19.4 (15) | 16.4 (15) | 15.5 (15) | 10.4 (12) | 9.1 (14) | 4.3 (3) | 88 |
| *32.6 (20)* | *20.0 (28)* | *15.0 (30)* | *16.2 (30)* | *16.1 (67)* | *9.7 (28)* | *5.2\* (46)* | *203+43* |
|  | General meeting | 29.5 (14) | 20.3 (14) | 18.1 (13) | 15.5 (15) | 15.7 (6) | 13.0 (3) | - | 65 |
|  | *32.6 (20)* | *20.5 (27)* | *18.9 (21)* | *16.2 (30)* | *20.4 (45)* | *13.5 (6)* | - | *149* |
|  | Delegate assembly | - | 5.6 (1) | 5.5 (2) | - | 5.1 (6) | 8.0 (11) | 4.3 (3) | 23 |
|  | *-* | *5.6 (1)* | *5.8 (9)* | *-* | *7.3 (22)* | *8.7 (22)* | *5.2\* (46)* | *57+43* |
| State level | 22.5 (8) | 9.2 (8) | 5.2 (8) | 7.1 (8) | 1.5 (7) | 1.8 (8) | 0.2 (1) | 48 |
| *23.1 (10)* | *9.2 (8)* | *5.2 (8)* | *8.0 (10)* | *1.5 (10)* | *1.8 (8)* | *0.2 (1)* | *55* |
|  | General meeting | 25.9 (6) | 18.2 (1) | - | 19.1 (1) | - | - | - | 8 |
|  | *25.8 (8)* | *18.2 (1)* | *-* | *15.3 (2)* | *-* | *-* | *-* | *11* |
|  | Delegate assembly | 12.4 (2) | 8.0 (7) | 5.2 (8) | 5.4 (7) | 1.5 (7) | 1.8 (8) | 0.2 (1) | 40 |
|  | *12.4 (2)* | *8.0 (7)* | *5.2 (8)* | *6.2 (8)* | *1.5 (10)* | *1.8 (8)* | *0.2 (1)* | *44* |

*Note*: In %; in parentheses = N; first line = randomly selected cases; second line (in italic) = all available cases; effective inclusion = ∑ attendant members/∑ all members; \*formal inclusion = ∑ delegates according statute/∑ all members; own member numbers as of 31 December 2016, based on information from the central offices of the parties.

**Appendix 6.** Summary Statistics on Competition and Nomination-Related Communication at State-Level Associations

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Mean | Median | Std. Dev. | Min | Max | N |
| Aspirants per list place (ALP) | 1.8 | 1 | 2.1 | 1 | 19 | 1246 |
| Candidates‘ initial support (CIS in %) | 0.8 | 0.9 | 0.2 | 0.1 | 1 | 1078 |
| Contributions per aspirant in the mean of a list conference | 1.1 | 0.5 | 1.4 | 0 | 4.8 | 48 (1246) |
| Contributions per list place in the mean of a list conference | 2.1 | 0.6 | 3.5 | 0 | 17.6 | 48 (1246) |
| Time taken to fill a list | 8:55 | 5:00 | 12:44 | 1:05 | 61:25 | 48 (1246) |
| Rank competition index (RCI) | 0.4 | 0.3 | 0.3 | 0 | 1 | 48 (1246) |

*Note*: Randomly selected cases.

**Appendix 7.** Summary Statistics on the Effective Inclusion of Party Members

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Mean | Median | Std. Dev. | Min | Max | N |
| District level | 16.5 | 14.3 | 11.8 | 2.0 | 66.9 | 88 |
| *17.0* | *14.4* | *11.5* | *1.4* | *66.9* | *206* |
|  | General meeting | 20.0 | 17.2 | 11.6 | 4.0 | 66.9 | 65 |
|  | *20.7* | *18.0* | *11.0* | *4.0* | *66.9* | *149* |
|  | Delegate assembly | 6.5 | 4.7 | 3.8 | 2.0 | 18.8 | 23 |
|  | *7.4* | *5.6* | *5.4* | *1.4* | *35.9* | *57* |
| State level | 7.9 | 5.5 | 9.0 | 0.2 | 39.0 | 48 |
|  | *8.3* | *5.5* | *9.2* | *0.2* | *39.0* | *55* |
|  | General meeting | 24.1 | 22.2 | 9.6 | 12.4 | 39.0 | 8 |
|  | *23.2* | *22.5* | *9.0* | *11.4* | *39.0* | *11* |
|  | Delegate assembly | 4.6 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 0.2 | 16.6 | 40 |
|  | *4.6* | *3.0* | *4.1* | *0.2* | *16.6* | *44* |

*Note*: In %; first line = randomly selected cases; second line (in italic) = all available cases.

1. Parties in the figures and tables are listed in descending order, beginning with the highest value. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)