Web Appendix

*Party abbreviations*

SDP: Social Democratic Party

CENTRE: Centre Party

NCP: National Coalition Party

SPP: Swedish People’s Party

LA: Left Alliance (formerly Finnish People’s Democratic League; FPDL)

GREENS: Green League

CD: Christian Democrats (formerly the Finnish Christian League)

TF: Finns Party (formerly True Finns)

FRP: Finnish Rural Party

*Qualitative data*

The qualitative material that we used to assess current list formation practices stems from 22 broad in-depth interviews (average length: 1.5 hours; around 33 hours in total) collected between September 2019 and February 2020. In order to produce generalizability, we wanted to interview representatives from several electoral districts. For economic reasons, we settled on four districts (out of a total of 13) that, we envisaged, should be as dissimilar as possible while representing as broad voter base as possible. We reasoned that list formation and intra-party competition could work differently in large and demographically complex districts compared to small and demographically homogenous districts. We considered four factors especially important for producing such variation: district magnitude (large vs. small), geographical location (centre vs. periphery), internal centralization (large city and small municipalities vs. several larger cities) and economical structure and performance (strong multi-sectorial economy vs. narrow and weak economy that is based more on public subsidies). We selected four districts that were most dissimilar in these terms: Uusimaa (DM: 35, Southern Finland/Helsinki metropolitan area, de-centralized, strong economy), Oulu (DM: 18, Northern Finland, centralized, mediocre economy), Satakunta (DM: 8, Western Finland, de-centralized, mediocre economy) and Savo-Karjala (DM: 16, Eastern Finland, de-centralized, weak economy). Combined, almost 40% of Finnish MPs are selected from these districts (77/200).

The main variable in party selection was party’s ‘genetic’ organizational heritage. In addition to the four largest parties (SDP, NCP, TF, CENTRE) that reflect the ‘genetic’ spectrum of main European party families, we interviewed representatives of a small (CD) and a mid-sized party (GREENS) of more niche ideological leaning to observe if niche ideology and varying levels of resources produced notable differences.

To get a sense of the potential interaction between national parties and district party organizations (that according to law should nominate candidates), we interviewed representatives from both organizational levels. Most Finnish parties have salaried chief functionaries at both organizational levels, but we decided to focus on political chairpersons, i.e., district chairs and national general secretaries, because they 1) are politically responsible for the lists and 2) have a mandate to talk. If political functionaries were not available, we interviewed salaried functionaries instead.

We approached all chairs of the selected districts and parties, and the national general secretaries of all selected parties, who had acted during the 2019 general election. The final set of interviewees included 13 district party chairs and 3 general managers (16 out of 24), and 5 national party general secretaries and 1 head of organizational activities (6 out of 6). The interviewees represented six out of eight parties that have more than one MP in parliament, *Eduskunta*. Combined, these parties represent 89% (178) MPs from a total of 200. The interviewees dispersed relatively evenly along the studied parties (SDP (4), NCP (5), TF (2), CENTRE (4), GREENS (3) and CD (4)). The interviewed district leaders (political and salaried) represent around 15% of all Finnish district chairs and the national-level leaders (political and salaried) 75% of the number of Finnish parties’ general secretaries. Due to a mutual confidence agreement, we do not present the names of our interviewees.

The interviews approached list formation from a holistic perspective, utilizing loose semi-structured format and broad-themed questions to unearth unobvious factors and interactions along the whole process: how parties determine their objectives, which type of objectives are favoured when lists are being formed, how parties seek and find potential candidates, and how do they decide about the final candidates. For the purposes of this study, the interviews were interpreted through two questions: 1) Which factors can be regarded as enhancers of list stability? and 2) Which factors can be regarded as drivers of change? In addition, both questions were divided into demand-side factors (i.e. those relating to the needs of the party) and supply-side factors (i.e. those relating to candidates).

As the original interview questions were relatively broad, and all interviewees had their personal style and perspective, we decided not to engage in numerical analysis, i.e., determine the generality and weight of the views via the extent of their appearance. Experience has shown that even very important intra-party dynamics can appear so trivial for party elites that they fail to mention them or mention them only sporadically and randomly. Also, because all interviewees belonged to the absolute intra-party elite, in relation to list formation, we valued all insights equally and instead of drawing a generalization we focused on unearthing the complexity and nuances of the practice of list formation.

*Quantitative data*

We employed intra-party candidate data from Finnish general elections spanning the period from the 1983 election to the latest 2019 election. We included only the lists of major Finnish political parties that were not in an electoral alliance during 10 general elections (1983–2019). List volatility for a party in a district in a given election was measured by looking at how many new candidates were on the election list. Thus, the volatility of a list was defined as the ratio between the number of candidates at time t who did not run at t-1and the number of all listed candidates at time t.

However, we were not able to calculate volatility for the alliance lists where two or more parties decided to run with a common list. These alliances usually only last for one election, and in the next election, the same parties campaign with their own lists or in alliance with new parties. Thus, we had to leave alliance lists out of our analysis. Alliances are typically formed by small parties, and they are decided for each election individually. Out of a total of 985 lists between 1983 and 2019, 257 (26%) were alliance lists. Of 728 lists that were not in an alliance, volatility could not be calculated for lists appearing for the first time or lists for non-consecutive elections. The final number of lists included in the analysis was 564.

Over time, the Finnish party system has included a vast number of small or local parties that have typically existed for a few elections only and have never been able to win a seat in parliament. In our analysis, we only included parties that have been able get seats in at least two consecutive parliamentary elections. The candidate lists from these parties cover the vast majority of all candidates running in the elections. To be more specific, we included the following parties:

1983: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, FPDL, FRP

1987: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, FPDL, FRP, GREENS

1991: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, FRP, LA, GREENS

1995: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS

1999: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

2003: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

2007: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

2011: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

2015: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

2019: SDP, NCP, CENTRE, CD, SPP, LA, GREENS, TF

The data on party members were derived from the sources below. If data for a party in a specific election year were not available, they were extrapolated from previous and later data points.

Biezen, Ingrid van, Mair, Peter, & Poguntke, Thomas (2012): Going, going, . . . gone? The decline of party membership in contemporary Europe. *European Journal of Political Research* 51, 24–56.

Borg, Sami (2013), Indikaattorikatsaukset, in Borg, S. (ed.) *Demokratiaindikaattorit 2013*. Helsinki: Oikeusministeriö.

Mickelsson, Rauli (2007). *Suomen puolueet*. Tampere: Vastapaino.

Nousiainen, Jaakko (1998). *Suomen poliittinen järjestelmä.* 10th edition. Helsinki: WSOY.

Sundberg, Jan (1996). *Partier och partisystem i Finland*. Esbo: Schildts.

Newspapers: *Aamulehti* (22.2.2008); *Kauppalehti* (13.3.2011); *Etelä-Suomen Sanomat* (28.6.2015).

Information from party offices; parties’ annual reports.

Table I. Multilevel mixed-effect linear regressions of candidate list volatility where each independent variable is added one by one.

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| --- |
| Dependent variable: Volatility (%) |
| Time (election wave) | .400 (.311) | .337 (.326) | .299 (.319) | .579\* (.255) | .491\*\* (.144) | .500\*\* (.151) |
| Party type A:(reference: mass party)Other Cadre | - | 7.464\* (3.196)7.021\*\* (2.640) | 7.777\* (3.260)6.725\* (2.751) | 8.734\* (3.660)7.521\* (2.933) | 2.507 (1.997)7.368\*\*\* (1.936) | 2.533 (1.985)7.410\*\*\* (1.995) |
| Headwind (decreased number of MPs in previous election) | - | - | 1.862\*\*\* (.276) | 1.614\* (.728) | 1.678\* (.819) | 1.693\* (.797) |
| Tailwind (increased number of MPs in previous election) | - | - | - | -.919\*(.426) | -.903(.503) | -.882(.492) |
| Party membership (logged) | - | - | - | - | -2.982\*\*\* (.708) | -2.976\*\*\* (.699) |
| District magnitude | - | - | - | - | - | -.035(.151) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -2106.996 | -2097.2525 | -2094.5464 | -1592.8452 | -1585.9915 | -1585.9599 |
| N | 564 | 564 | 564 | 434 | 434 | 434 |
| Random parameters |
| Var(\_cons) | 63.499 (11.548) | 49.262 (9.385) | 51.226 (9.029) | 39.740 (8.294) | 34.572 (9.995) | 34.642 (10.163) |

Notes: Models account for heteroscedasticity and first-order autoregressive errors; Standard errors clustered in the level of parties in parentheses; Similar results are observed when party type A is replaced with party type B; \*\*\*p < .001 \*\*p < .01 \*p < .05.

Table II. Multilevel mixed-effect linear regressions of candidate list volatility for each independent variable.

Model A-F test the effect of each independent variable on volatility separately.

|  |
| --- |
| Model A |
| Party type A: (reference: mass party)OtherCadre | 7.834\* (3.235)6.936\*\* (2.596) |
| Log-likelihood | -2099.0335 |
| N | 564 |
| Random parameter | 47.443 (8.928) |
| Model B  |
| Party type B:(reference: mass party)Other Cadre Activist |  6.002\*\* (2.168)9.122\*\*\* (2.242)10.450\*\* (3.370) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -2094.317 |
| N | 564 |
| Random parameter | 42.895 (10.633) |
| Model C |
| Change in the number of MPs:Headwind (decreased number of MPs)  |  1.974\*\*\* (.354) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -2106.4569 |
| N | 564 |
| Random parameter | 65.571 (12.164) |
| Model D |
| Change in the number of MPs:Tailwind (increased number of MPs in previous election) | -1.517\*\*\* (.385) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -1611.0701 |
| N | 434 |
| Random parameter | 55.798 (15.728) |
| Model E  |
| Party membership (logged) | -2.541\*\* (.863) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -2099.043 |
| N | 564 |
| Random parameter | 49.695 (10.480) |
| Model F |
| District magnitude | .089 (.158) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -2109.3836 |
| N | 564 |
| Random parameter | 62.105 (11.475) |

Notes: Models account for heteroscedasticity and first-order autoregressive errors; Standard errors clustered in the level of parties in parentheses; \*\*\*p < .001 \*\*p < .01 \*p < .05.

Table III. Multilevel mixed-effect linear regressions of list volatility only for incumbents

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Dependent variable: Incumbents’ volatility (%) | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
| Time (election wave) | .474 (.576)  | .338 (.374) | -.013 (.285) |
| Party type A:(reference: mass party)Other Cadre |  - | 4.721 (6.730)2.659\*\*\* (.421) |  - |
| Party type B:(reference: mass party)Other  Cadre   Activist |  - |  - |   25.263\*\*\* (2.680).281 (1.184).412 (2.375) |
| Headwind (decreased number of MPs in previous election) |  - | .718 (1.736) | .789 (1.817) |
| Tailwind (increased number of MPs in previous election) |  - | .428 (1.936) | .351 (1.992) |
| Party membership (logged) |  - | 3.591\*\* (1.351) | 3.174\*\* (1.129) |
| District magnitude |  - | .641\*\*\* (.160) | .699\*\*\* (.177) |
| Log pseudolikelihood | -1996.7222 | -1566.1702 | -1560.8008 |
| N | 452 | 357 | 357 |
| Random parameters |
| Var(\_cons) | 15.814 (18.345) | 6.297 (10.557) | 5.030 (11.674) |

Notes: Models account for heteroscedasticity and first-order autoregressive errors; Standard errors clustered in the level of parties in parentheses; \*\*\*p < .001 \*\*p < .01 \*p < .05.

**Robustness tests on different clustering of the variables**

In the quantitative analysis, our observations are nested in a complex manner. Some of the variables are measured only at the party level (party type and party membership), while others are measured at the district level (winning/losing in previous elections, district magnitude).

Below we present results from five different ways to cluster the observations to see how different options affect the overall results. The first one is the 2-level model in which the observations are clustered at the party-district level. In the second 2-level model, the observations and clustered only in parties and in third one only in districts. The last two models are 3-level models in which the observations are, first, clustered at the upper level in parties and at the second level in districts. The final model is a similar 3-level model, except that the upper level is districts and the second level is parties.

The results regarding party type, party membership and district magnitude are quite similar in all specifications. However, there are some differences on the significance levels on the winning/losing variables in the second and third model specifications. In these specifications, it seems that the variables measuring election win in the previous elections is significant while in other specifications it is mostly losing that matters. We have addressed this inconsistency in the main text. Nevertheless, on a more general level, all specifications agree that previous electoral performance is important, as also our interview material showed.

Figure A1: Model specifications with 3-category party type variable (coefficient sizes and 95% CIs).



Figure A2: Model specifications with 4-category party type variable (coefficient sizes and 95% CIs).

