

COMPARATIVE TERRITORIAL POLITICS

Regional and National Elections in Eastern Europe

Territoriality of the Vote in Ten Countries

Edited by
Arjan H. Schakel



Comparative Territorial Politics

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Editor

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Each country chapter is accompanied by a country data file which provides pre-formatted tables and figures on the four dependent variables of the book: congruence between regional and national elections, turnout in regional and national elections, party vote share swings between regional and national elections, and electoral strength of non-statewide parties in regional and national elections. The tables present regional electoral data disaggregated by election years, by regions, and by parties. The country data files and a codebook which details measurement and sources can be found on the following website: <http://www.arjanschakel.nl>. On this website, you may also find the election data for 13 West European countries analysed in our previous book (*Regional and National Elections in Western Europe*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and the dataset as well as the syntax for the analyses presented in the introduction and conclusion of this book.

Maastricht
August 2016

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1

Introduction: An Analytical Framework for Studying Territoriality of the Vote in Eastern Europe

Arjan H. Schakel and Régis Dandoy

1.1 Introduction

Elections are often considered to be one of the core institutions of democracy (Bunce and Wolchik 2009), and therefore it is not surprising that scholars have taken up an interest in electoral dynamics in post-communist countries (Bakke and Sitter 2005; Lewis 2006; Olson 1998) and competitive elections taking place in authoritarian regimes (Diamond 2002; Donno 2013; Ghandi and Lust-Okar 2009). This scholarship typically uses analytical frameworks and methods imported from studies

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on elections taking place in genuinely democratic countries. An important contributor to the structuring of party politics in long-standing democracies are processes of nationalization (Jeffery and Wincott 2010; Lipset and Rokkan 1967). Nationalization refers to a 'broad historical evolution toward the formation of national electorates and party systems' and through nationalization processes 'peripheral and regional specificities disappear, and sectional cleavages progressively transfer into nationwide functional alignments' (Caramani 2004, p. 1). What is surprising is that nationalization processes in the West (Caramani 2004; Chhibber and Kollman 2004; Dandoy and Schakel 2013; Deschouwer 2009; Schakel 2013a, b) have received far more attention than in the East (two important exceptions are the studies by Bochsler 2010a and Tiemann 2012). Furthermore, the analysis of regional elections in Eastern Europe is relatively absent from the literature. Tucker (2002, pp. 281–3) reviews a decade of election studies (from 1990 to 2000) and finds that only 10 out of 101 articles analyzed subnational elections and those 10 studies that did include local elections focused exclusively on Russian elections. The picture has not changed much for the 2000s (Romanova 2013, p. 37).

This lack of scholarly attention to territoriality of the vote in Eastern Europe is surprising for two reasons. First, Kopecky and Mudde (2000, pp. 528–31) point out in their literature review that one of the major challenges for democratization scholars is to increase our understanding of the interplay between processes of state- and nation-building and democratization processes. Nationalization may help the consolidation of party systems while it is generally assumed that when statewide parties compete for votes across the statewide territory they are thought to be able to integrate and assimilate voters across the territory into one party system. In contrast, excessive regionalization of the vote, for example, when regional and ethnic parties dominate in particular areas, may lead to violence and secessionism (Bochsler 2010a). On the other hand, giving voice to territorially concentrated minorities through regional elections might actually help to stabilize the party system (Caramani 2004, p. 292).

Second, many post-communist countries and authoritarian regimes have regional government and hold regional elections. Turkey's provinces date back to the Ottoman Empire and the first provincial elections in

the Republic of Turkey, which was established with the adoption of the constitution in 1924, were held in 1930. After communist rule, several countries in Eastern Europe introduced regional elections. The federations of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, and Serbia and Montenegro established regional elections at the same time or very soon after the first national election held after Communist rule. Croatia, Hungary, and Romania introduced regional elections before 1995 but were held after the first or second national election. Poland saw its first regional election in 1998 and the Czech and the Slovak Republics followed in the 2000s.

In this book we set out to study territoriality in the national and regional vote in ten Eastern European countries. By putting the region at the center of the analysis, we hope to shed more light on the role of regional elections in post-communist and authoritarian countries. We set out to study territorial heterogeneity in the vote while avoiding what other scholars have labeled as a 'national bias' (Swenden and Maddens 2009, pp. 4–5) or 'methodological nationalism bias' (Jeffery and Wincott 2010, pp. 171–3). These critiques describe the tendency of political scientists to take the national level as the unit of analysis and thereby almost exclusively focus on 'national' elections and more, in particular, on lower chamber and presidential elections. As a consequence, important political processes taking place at the regional level or in regional elections may be left unnoticed. For Western European countries, a cumulating amount of evidence indicates that territory is important in explaining electoral outcomes and that in various places the regional vote significantly differs from the national vote (Dandoy and Schakel 2013; Hough and Jeffery 2006; Swenden and Maddens 2009). For Eastern European countries, we have not a satisfactory empirical overview of how much the vote differs across the territory, and we do not know whether explanations for territorial heterogeneity in the vote for the West also apply for the East. This lack of understanding particularly pertains to regional elections but the territorial heterogeneity of the national vote has also received scant attention (Bochsler 2010a; Tiemann 2012).

In this book we present ten in-depth country studies on regional and national elections held in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Serbia and Montenegro (until 2006, Serbia and Montenegro are independent

countries since 2006), and Turkey (Table 1.1). We conceive regional government as a coherent territorial entity situated between the local and national levels with a capacity of authoritative decision-making and which serves an average population greater than 150,000 (Hooghe et al. 2016a). Kosovo and Montenegro do not have an intermediate tier of government and *maakunnad* in Estonia, *raionabi* in Russia and *powiaty* in Poland do not meet the population criterion. We exclude Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine, and countries which hold no regional elections (Slovenia) or which have regional tiers with an indirectly elected assembly (Albania, Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, and Macedonia).

Each of the ten country chapters examines the extent to which national and regional elections are regionalized or nationalized and explores the causes for the observed territorial heterogeneity in the vote. To enhance comparison, the country chapters apply a common framework which distinguishes between five dependent variables which are thought to describe the most important dynamics of regional voting behavior. The authors will discuss congruence between the regional and national vote, turnout in regional and national elections, vote share change between regional and previously held national elections, electoral strength and ideology for non-statewide parties (NSWPs), and the constellation and electoral strength of electoral alliances. With regard to the independent variables, we apply a deductive or ‘top-down’ and an inductive or ‘bottom-up’ approach. Within the deductive part of the analytical framework, the authors of the chapters will examine in how far territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral rules can explain territorial heterogeneity in the vote. The inductive part of the research strategy asks the contributors to identify factors which may impact on regional voting behavior beyond the set of variables included in the deductive part. In the conclusion to the book, we will make an overall assessment of the impact of the various independent variables on nationalization and regionalization of the vote, and we will delve into the question in how far regional elections in Eastern Europe require their own explanatory model.

In the remainder of this introduction chapter, we will explain in further depth the analytical framework adopted in this book. Scholars who analyze electoral dynamics in post-communist countries regularly make a comparison to Western European countries (Bielasiak 2002, 2005; Birch

Table 1.1 Countries, regional tiers, and regional elections included in this book

Country name	Regional tier		Regional elections		
	Name	English name	N	Years	N
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine Republika Srpska	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Republika Srpska	2	1996–2014	14
Federacija Bosne i Hercegovina	Kantoni/ Županije	Cantons	10	1996–2014	69
Croatia	Županije	Counties	21	1993–2013	126
Czech republic	Kraje and Hlavní město Praha	Regions	14	2000–2012	56
Hungary	Megyék	Counties	20	1994–2014	120
Poland	Województwa	Provinces	16	1998–2014	80
Romania	Județe and București	Counties	42	1996–2012	210
Russia	Subyekty federacii	Subjects of the federation	89	2001–2015	204
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia / Serbia and Montenegro	Republika/ Država članica Crna Gora	Republic/Member State of Montenegro	1	1998–2012	6
Republika Srbija	Republika/ Država članica Srbija	Republic/Member State of Serbia	1	2000–2014	6
Republika Srbija	Autonomna Pokrajina Vojvodina	Autonomous Province of Vojvodina	1	2000–2012	4
Slovak republic	Samosprávne kraje	Self-governing regions	8	2001–2013	32
Turkey	İller	Provinces	81	1963–2014	799
Total			306		1726

Notes: *Kantoni/Županije* constitute a regional governmental tier in one of the entities of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne i Hercegovina*).

Autonomna Pokrajina Vojvodina is a special autonomous region in Serbia.

Subyekty federacii in Russia do not include *raionabi*. The 2000 elections for one *kanton/županija* in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the 1992 elections for Romanian *județe* are missing and *subyekty federacii* elections before 2001 in Russia are not included (see Chaps. 2, 7, and 8 for more details)

2001; McAllister and White 2007; Sitter 2008). For Western European election data, we can rely on our previous book on *Regional and National Elections in Western Europe* (Dandoy and Schakel 2013) where we adopt a similar analytical framework and this puts us in an excellent position to contrast electoral outcomes between regions from the East and West. The comparison reveals that explanations which fare well in the West cannot fully account for regional electoral dynamics in the East and below we propose to include additional variables in the analytical framework in order to gain more traction on describing and explaining electoral dynamics in Eastern European regions.

1.2 Exploring Territorial Heterogeneity of the Vote in Eastern Europe

A comparison between regional and national election vote shares is widely used to assess territorial heterogeneity in the vote (for example see Florida 2010; Pallarés and Keating 2003; Jeffery and Hough 2003, 2009; Skrinis and Teperoglou 2008; Tronconi and Roux 2009). Most scholars set out to assess the degree to which electoral results in a specific region diverge from results in another region or from national electoral outcomes. Most studies use a dissimilarity index, sometimes referred to as the Lee index, which is identical to the Pedersen's index (1979) of electoral volatility, but, instead of comparing an election with another election held previously in time, a regional election is compared to a national election. Dissimilarity scores are calculated by taking the sum of absolute differences between regional and national vote shares for each party and subsequently dividing the sum by two. In this book we apply an adjusted dissimilarity index which allows us to vary vote shares according to the type of election as well as the level of aggregation (Schakel 2013b):

$$\text{Dissimilarity score} = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n |X_{ijk} - X_{ilm}|$$

whereby X_i is the vote share won by party i in election j or l (dis)aggregated at the territorial level k or m . The type of election as well as the level of aggregation can vary between regional and national. The absolute values are summed and divided by two to avoid double counting (one party's gain is another party's loss). Scores may vary from complete congruence/similarity (0 percent) to complete incongruence/dissimilarity (100 percent).

The formula allows one to produce a variety of dissimilarity scores but three measures of congruence are of particular interest (Schakel and Dandoy 2013a). *Party system congruence* compares national election vote shares aggregated at the national level (X_{iNN}) to regional election vote shares aggregated at the regional level (X_{iRR}). This measure is useful to indicate overall differences between national and regional party systems but it conflates two sources of variation, namely it compares at the same time two different types of elections (national versus regional) and two levels of aggregation (national versus regional). To gain further insight into the causes underlying party system congruence, two additional types of dissimilarity scores are produced. First, *electorate congruence* keeps the type of election constant but varies the level of aggregation. In this book we look at electorate congruence for national elections which contrasts national election vote shares aggregated at the national level (X_{iNN}) with vote shares for the same national election but disaggregated at the regional level (X_{iNR}). Second, *election congruence* keeps the level of aggregation constant but compares between types of elections. This measure allows one to study dual voting or vote switching between regional (X_{iRR}) and national elections (X_{iNR}) within a region. The three dissimilarity indices are compared between 13 Western and 10 Eastern European countries in Table 1.2. For party system and election congruence, we compare regional to previously held national elections, and electorate congruence is assessed for national elections.

The comparison reveals that party system congruence scores for non-federal post-communist countries are comparable to those observed for federal and regionalized West European countries such as Austria, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. A closer look into election and electorate congruence reveals that dissimilarity between party systems in Eastern Europe can be ascribed to vote switching

Table 1.2 Congruence between regional and national elections

Countries	Party system congruence		Electorate congruence		Election congruence		Number of	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Elections	Regions
Austria	19.2	7.7	9.7	5.8	13.7	6.7	39	9
Belgium	51.0	11.3	52.6	11.3	8.2	5.9	17	4
Denmark	28.3	34.0	23.9	36.0	25.0	35.4	67	22
France	23.1	7.3	10.1	5.7	20.5	8.3	88	22
Germany	21.1	10.4	16.7	8.1	9.9	6.1	87	16
Greece	15.4	10.3	6.0	3.3	15.7	10.1	209	62
Italy	23.8	12.2	15.3	12.3	17.6	11.3	95	20
Netherlands	14.0	3.6	8.3	3.1	10.0	3.1	72	12
Norway	15.4	5.5	11.7	4.6	10.4	3.3	114	19
Spain	22.3	12.1	17.0	8.4	9.2	6.0	111	19
Sweden	10.9	4.5	9.2	4.4	4.9	2.1	132	27
Switzerland	28.7	11.3	31.6	18.7	18.6	17.4	120	26
United Kingdom	28.5	12.8	23.4	14.8	12.0	5.6	15	4
Western Europe	20.1	13.9	14.7	15.1	13.7	13.3	1166	262
Bosnia and Herzegovina	38.5	9.0	37.9	8.4	6.1	7.9	14	2
Cantons in FBiH	33.4	19.2	33.3	19.4	-	-	69	10
Croatia	32.7	10.3	14.8	7.9	28.7	10.0	126	21
Czech Republic	26.4	8.1	6.2	3.5	24.2	8.5	56	14
Hungary	18.4	6.2	6.1	2.8	16.8	6.0	120	20
Poland	22.3	7.4	10.4	3.9	18.9	6.9	80	16
Romania	33.7	11.0	17.9	12.7	27.4	7.6	210	42
Russia	23.3	11.8	12.8	9.0	20.3	12.7	204	87
Serbia and Montenegro	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	23.1	9.0	9.6	4.8	19.6	10.2	4	1
Slovak republic	39.7	8.6	13.3	4.5	35.7	8.9	32	8
Turkey	24.4	10.4	20.4	10.6	16.3	8.1	397	81
Eastern Europe	26.9	12.1	16.4	12.0	21.0	10.5	1312	304

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013)

Notes: Shown is average congruence (Mean) and its standard deviation (SD) per country for elections held since 1990. Serbia and Montenegro have two completely separated party systems which means that party system and electorate congruence is 100 percent and election congruence is 0 percent

Party system congruence: dissimilarity between the national vote at the national

(continued)

Table 1.2 (continued)

level and the regional vote in the region (NN-RR)
<i>Electorate congruence</i> : dissimilarity between the national vote at the national level and the national vote in the region (NN-NR)
<i>Election congruence</i> : dissimilarity between the national vote at the regional level and the regional vote in the region (NR-RR)

between national and regional elections (election congruence), whereas in federal and regionalized West European countries, it can be mainly attributed to different voting behavior between national and regional electorates (electorate congruence). This is a surprising result since high degrees of territorialization of the vote is thought to be supported by decentralized state structures (Dandoy and Schakel 2013; Hough and Jeffery 2006) but the comparison suggests that the party systems in the East can be equally or more regionalized without significant decentralization of authority to regional government (Hooghe et al. 2016a).

One should be careful with jumping to the conclusion that dual voting or vote switching between regional and previously held national elections are an indication of regionalized regional elections. Previously, we have argued that one may still speak of nationalization when voters switch their vote between national and regional elections but still base their vote choice on cues taken from the national rather than the regional electoral arena (Schakel and Dandoy 2013b, pp. 281–3). This may happen when regional elections are conceived by voters to be second-order or subordinate to national elections and regional elections are used by voters to voice their discontent with national government policy by casting a ‘protest vote’ against the party in national government while rewarding parties in national opposition and new and small parties (Reif and Schmitt 1980). A similar caveat can be raised with regard to taking low dissimilarity scores as an indication of nationalization (Schakel and Dandoy 2013b, pp. 281–3). High election congruence is an indication of nationalization when voters cast their vote for the same parties in regional and national elections. But equally, high election congruence may indicate regionalization of the vote because it may be regional and not statewide parties which win similarly sized vote shares in both national and regional elections.

The country chapters in this volume adopt a common analytical framework, whereby congruence between regional and national elections (dissimilarity scores) serves a starting point for an exploration into the extent to which the vote is nationalized or regionalized. To gain further insight into the causes underlying vote share differences, and to avoid the above mentioned caveats, the common analytical framework introduces two additional sections in the country chapters. Nationalization of the vote is explored by tracing second-order election effects in regional elections and regionalization of the vote is studied by looking at vote shares won by non-statewide parties and electoral alliances. These aspects of the analytical framework will be explained in further depth in the following two sections.

1.3 Nationalization of the Vote: Second-Order Election Effects

Scholars studying regional elections in Western Europe often analyze second-order election effects in regional elections. The second-order election model was introduced by Reif and Schmitt (1980) who studied the first elections to the European Parliament. They compared the results for the European Parliament to the previously held national elections and they observed that (1) voters turn out less, (2) parties in national government lose vote share and opposition, small and new parties gain vote share, and (3) the extent to which voters behave in these ways depends on the timing of the European election in the national election cycle. An important implication of the second-order election model is that regional elections may be considered to be nationalized when they display second-order election effects (Schakel and Dandoy 2013b, p. 282). In second-order elections, voters take their cues from the national political arena and base their vote choice on the governmental status of parties at the statewide level. A punishment vote for government parties and a reward vote for opposition, new, and small parties leads to dissimilarity between regional and national electoral outcomes but this should not be interpreted as an indication of regionalization.

To our knowledge, second-order election effects in regional elections taking place in Eastern Europe have been rarely studied (Schakel 2015a, b) but European election outcomes have been frequently studied for the Eastern European member states. One of the striking findings is that the second-order election model does not seem to apply as well in post-communist Europe as for Western Europe (Hix and Marsh 2007; Koepke and Ringe 2006; Schmitt 2005). In Eastern Europe, government parties do not consistently lose vote share (Koepke and Ringe 2006) and when they do lose votes (Stefanova 2008), these losses do not follow the cyclical pattern as we may observe for Western European countries (Schmitt 2005). These results are puzzling because individual level survey data suggests that voters in the East make their vote choices in second-order elections in similar ways as voters in the West (Van der Brug et al. 2008). In this book we want to assess in how far regional elections in Eastern Europe can be conceived to be second-order. In Table 1.3 we compare turnout for national and regional elections, and in Table 1.4 we display vote share changes between regional and previously held national elections for parties in national government and opposition parties.

Table 1.3 shows that turnout in Eastern European regions tends to be lower for both national and regional elections when compared to Western European regions. However, turnout gaps between national and regional elections have similar magnitudes apart from the Czech (29 percent) and Slovak (45 percent) Republics which have larger turnout gaps than the maximum turnout gap reported for Western Europe (27 percent in the Netherlands). Aside from these two ‘outliers’, turnout gaps observed for Russia (12 percent) and Hungary (13 percent) are comparable to those for Germany (13 percent) and the United Kingdom (14 percent). The turnout gap for Romania (9 percent) is of the same size as for Italy (9 percent), and there are practically no turnout gaps in Poland and Turkey just as can be observed for Belgium, Spain, and Switzerland. Vote share losses for government parties (Table 1.4) are not different between the East and West but they are exceptionally high for the Czech (18 percent) and Slovak (16 percent) Republics; figures which are well beyond those observed for Western European countries except for the United Kingdom (17 percent). In contrast to expectations, both government and opposition parties lose

Table 1.3 Turnout in regional and national elections

Countries	Regional turnout		National turnout		Turnout gap	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Austria	76.5	8.2	81.8	5.9	-5.4	8.2
Belgium	89.3	3.7	90.1	2.3	-0.8	1.8
Denmark	76.0	7.9	81.3	8.9	-5.2	11.8
France	60.0	8.9	65.5	4.0	-5.5	7.5
Germany	64.8	7.6	77.8	5.0	-13.2	7.2
Greece	70.1	9.1	73.7	8.9	-3.7	6.5
Italy	74.1	8.9	82.8	6.6	-8.7	6.0
Netherlands	51.5	5.4	78.8	3.9	-27.4	5.1
Norway	57.9	4.2	77.2	3.7	-19.3	3.5
Spain	67.0	6.3	67.6	6.5	-0.6	2.3
Sweden	81.2	3.0	83.8	2.9	-2.6	0.7
Switzerland	44.5	9.9	45.1	9.3	-0.7	9.7
United Kingdom	49.4	10.7	63.5	5.1	-14.2	10.8
Western Europe	66.0	13.4	73.4	12.8	-7.5	10.0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	56.0	1.7	-	-	-	-
Cantons in FBiH	54.5	4.9	-	-	-	-
Croatia	53.9	12.1	66.2	7.0	-19.4	8.0
Czech Republic	35.5	4.8	64.6	7.0	-29.2	6.9
Hungary	50.7	4.9	64.1	5.8	-13.4	6.4
Poland	46.1	3.1	46.4	5.6	-0.3	5.5
Romania	54.5	5.3	63.0	14.2	-8.5	15.1
Russia	50.0	15.8	61.6	12.4	-11.6	10.1
Serbia and Montenegro	65.8	8.9	-	-	-	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	52.6	12.3	60.0	2.4	0.3	0.5
Slovak republic	21.7	5.0	67.1	11.7	-45.4	11.4
Turkey	86.1	6.3	84.4	5.6	1.7	4.3
Eastern Europe	61.1	20.0	69.3	14.9	-8.0	13.6

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013)

Notes: Shown is average turnout (Mean) and its standard deviation (SD) across regions for national and regional elections. The turnout gap is derived by subtracting national turnout from regional turnout. See Table 1.1 for included regions and turnout is included for elections held since 1990

vote share (Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia) or only opposition parties face a vote share loss (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Russia).

It appears that the second-order election model does not seem to fare well in explaining regional electoral dynamics in Eastern Europe.

Table 1.4 Vote share swings between regional and national elections

Countries	Government parties		Opposition parties	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Austria	0.4	9.3	0.2	8.7
Belgium	-2.2	4.1	1.0	3.9
Denmark	1.4	6.0	-2.2	5.3
France	-7.5	8.8	2.0	3.3
Germany	2.0	3.9	-2.8	2.7
Greece	-3.6	7.3	0.9	3.9
Italy	-1.6	2.8	-1.3	2.8
Netherlands	-2.9	2.6	1.7	2.1
Norway	-4.3	3.7	2.3	4.8
Spain	-7.9	9.2	-0.4	9.3
Sweden	0.0	4.0	-0.4	3.4
Switzerland	-8.3	21.0	-1.1	5.7
United Kingdom	-17.2	9.4	2.3	7.3
Western Europe	-3.6	9.8	0.1	5.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	-0.6	2.2	-1.9	2.7
Cantons in FBiH	1.7	12.6	-4.2	12.2
Croatia	-3.3	8.9	2.2	8.7
Czech Republic	-18.0	8.1	8.8	6.2
Hungary	-3.7	9.3	-6.8	9.0
Poland	-5.1	7.9	1.6	9.8
Romania	-1.8	13.9	-1.7	11.8
Russia	-0.5	12.9	-4.1	16.3
Serbia and Montenegro	-	-	-	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	-6.9	9.9	5.8	7.1
Slovak republic	-15.7	9.0	-3.9	10.0
Turkey	-4.6	10.3	1.4	7.9
Eastern Europe	-3.8	11.7	-0.8	11.3

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013)

Notes: Shown are average vote share swings (Mean) and its standard deviation (SD) between regional and preceding national elections. Vote share changes are summed for parties in national government and parties in national opposition. See Table 1.1 for included regions and vote share swings are included for elections held since 1990

Research shows that volatility between elections is much higher for the Eastern than for Western European countries (Birch 2003; Lane and Ersson 2007; Olson 1998). It appears that a large part of volatility in the East is not caused by vote transfers between existing parties. Rather,

volatility arises because parties split or merge or parties disappear from the party system and new parties enter the electoral arena (Powell and Tucker 2014; Sikk 2005; Tavits 2008). For this reason, we have amended the framework for looking into second-order election effects (Dandoy and Schakel 2013), and in addition to vote transfers for government and opposition parties, we also look at two other types of (often small) parties (Schakel 2015a, b). First, ‘new’ parties which are defined as parties which did not participate in the previous national election and which make their first appearance in the regional electoral arena. Second, ‘no representation’ parties which are parties which participated in the previous national election but did not manage to win a seat in the national parliament. In this book we also explore the regionalization of the vote and these indicators are discussed in the next section.

1.4 Regionalization of the Vote: Non-statewide Parties and Electoral Alliances

Dissimilarity in vote shares between elections and across regions do not necessarily indicate regionalization. As explained above, incongruence may arise from second-order election effects whereby parties in national government lose vote share whereas opposition, small, and new parties gain vote share. This raises the questions what, then, signals regionalization of the vote? Ideally, one would have access to surveys whereby voters are asked for the motives underlying their vote. Unfortunately, national election surveys cannot be used because they tend not to ask questions on the regional vote and a regional breakdown is often not possible while the total number of respondents is too low and respondents are not selected to be representative for regions. Furthermore, different questions are asked in different countries which put severe limits on the comparability of survey data across countries. In addition, regional election surveys are particularly rare for Eastern European regions. The strategy of this book is to focus on two indicators: the electoral strength and ideology of non-statewide parties and the electoral strength and constellation of electoral alliances.

Non-statewide Parties

The relationship between regionalization of the vote and the presence of non-statewide parties is immediately clear: electoral politics will be confined to the region to the extent that non-statewide parties increase their vote share. We prefer to adopt the term non-statewide party for two reasons. First, a non-statewide party is defined as a party which participates in elections in only one part of the country in contrast to statewide parties which participate in elections across the territory. Often, regional parties are defined by winning vote shares in one region only (Brancati 2008). However, this operationalization would exclude parties which compete in more than one institutionally defined region. In Eastern Europe, ethnic minorities tend to be dispersed across the territory but are still concentrated in a small number of regions. These parties would not be on our 'radar' when we would apply a very strict definition and, as a result, we would underestimate the territorial heterogeneity of the vote.

In Table 1.5 we compare non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections between Eastern and Western European regions. Non-statewide parties win equally sized vote shares in regional and national elections across Europe, and this result seems to suggest that subnational interests are to a similar degree electorally mobilized with the exception of the United Kingdom where regional parties tend to be exceptionally strong (38.8 percent in regional and 31.8 percent in national elections). Average vote share won by the strongest non-statewide parties is comparable in size between East and West European regions. The vote share won by non-statewide parties in Romanian (10.1 and 10.6 percent), and Slovakian (12.0 and 11.0 percent) regions and Vojvodina (18.7 and 6.7 percent) is comparable to average non-statewide party electoral strength in regions within Belgium (11.4 and 12.8 percent), Italy (9.4 and 7.4 percent), and Spain (14.5 and 8.7 percent). In both Eastern and Western Europe, non-statewide parties tend to win vote share in every country and they generally win more vote share in regional than in national elections.

A second advantage of using the concept of non-statewide party is that it is neutral with regard to the ideology of the party. This allows the authors of the country chapters to differentiate non-state parties

Table 1.5 Non-statewide party electoral strength

Countries	Non-statewide party strength	
	Regional elections	National elections
Austria	0.1	0.0
Belgium	11.4	12.8
Denmark	6.5	6.0
France	1.6	0.0
Germany	9.1	7.9
Greece	6.4	0.0
Italy	9.4	7.4
Netherlands	2.0	0.0
Norway	0.5	0.2
Spain	14.5	8.7
Sweden	0.8	0.0
Switzerland	0.8	0.7
United Kingdom	38.8	31.8
Western Europe	5.6	3.1
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2.3	0.1
Cantons in FBiH	0.4	0.0
Croatia	5.8	1.9
Czech Republic	2.3	0.0
Hungary	3.7	0.0
Poland	3.0	0.8
Romania	10.1	10.6
Russia	1.1	0.0
Serbia and Montenegro	-	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	18.7	6.7
Slovak republic	12.0	11.0
Turkey	6.0	6.3
Eastern Europe	5.2	4.1

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013)

Notes: Shown is average non-statewide party strength (percent of votes) in regional and national elections held since 1990

according to their ideology. Szöcik and Zuber (2015) identify two important components for evaluating party positions on an (ethno)national dimension of competition. The first is the degree of congruence parties seek to achieve between the boundaries of the state and the boundaries defining ethnonational groups. 'In this constellation, the extreme poles of the ethnonational dimension consist in seeking full congruence between

the majority ethnonational identity category and the current state on the one hand, and seeking full congruence between a minority ethnonational identity category and a new nation-state on the other.’ The second component concerns parties’ stances on the principles of cultural and territorial autonomy. Through cultural and territorial autonomy ‘national minorities can realize the goal of self-determination to a certain extent within the state, and therefore often demand the devolution of decision-making competencies to their own rulers, either in certain policy areas that are vital to their ethno-cultural survival or on the basis of a certain territory where they constitute the regional majority’ (Szöcik and Zuber 2015, p. 3). We adopt the framework developed by Szöcik and Zuber (2015), and the contributors will discuss the (ethno)national ideology of non-statewide parties.

Electoral Alliances

One of the differences scholars have noted when they analyzed elections in post-communist countries is the relevance and frequent occurrence of pre-electoral alliances (Marek and Bingham Powell 2011). Indeed, electoral alliances are virtually absent in Russia and Turkey, but they involve more than half of the vote shares in Croatia (58 percent) and the Slovak Republic (59 percent); about a third of the vote shares in the Czech Republic (38 percent), Hungary (33 percent), and Romania (33 percent); and close to one fifth of the vote shares in Poland (18 percent) and one tenth of the party vote shares in Vojvodina (8 percent). Electoral alliances are rare in elections taking place in Western European countries and, furthermore, when parties coalesce, they present the same electoral alliance to all voters across the whole territory (Dandoy and Schakel 2013). This is also the case for Bosnia and Herzegovina where electoral alliances are common but because of full simultaneity of holding elections the partners in an alliance do not change across the territory. This is in stark contrast to the other post-communist countries mentioned above where the participants of electoral alliances frequently change across the regions and between regional and national elections. This has practical and theoretical implications.

At a practical level, the presence of electoral alliances complicates the comparison of vote shares across regions and types of election. Vote shares won by an electoral alliance can often not be broken down to the partners of the alliance. In many countries, electoral alliances present one candidate list whereby seat shares are allocated at the party list and the party affiliation of candidates who win a seat is often not administered. Very often electoral alliances are formed around a large statewide party which partners up with different junior partners across regions. For example, in the 1997 county assembly elections in Croatia, the Croatian Democratic Union (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, HDZ), as a major statewide party in various electoral alliances with junior parties, won absolute or relative majorities in 20 out of 21 regions (Ivanisevic et al. 2001). Since most electoral alliances involves the same major statewide parties we decided to assign the vote share won by an electoral alliance to the major party of the coalition. Major parties are parties which obtained the largest vote share in the previous national or regional election compared to the other, minor parties involved in the electoral alliance. Dissimilarity in the vote increases when parties participate in an electoral alliance in one type of election or in one region but present their own list in another type of election or in another region. In the conclusion to the book (Chap. 12), we analyze how much of the variance in the dissimilarity in the vote can be attributed to electoral alliances.

At the theoretical level, it is difficult to determine beforehand whether electoral alliances can be perceived as nationalization or as regionalization of electoral politics. Statewide parties may engage in an alliance because they would like to secure their electoral presence in a region while non-statewide parties may want to partner up with a statewide party to gain access into national parliament because they can be large parties in the regional electoral arena but are often small actors at the statewide level. We think that for many instances electoral alliances will signal regionalization because statewide parties cannot be expected to be willing to form an electoral alliance unless they are electorally weak in a region and non-statewide parties are not willing to coalesce with statewide parties unless they get policy concessions.

1.5 Explaining Regional Electoral Dynamics in Eastern European Countries

Examining second-order election effects, non-statewide parties and electoral alliances will provide insights into the question whether elections are nationalized or regionalized. In order to explain what underlies territorial heterogeneity in the vote, we adopt a ‘stakes-based’ approach. This approach stipulates that regional-scale factors and processes will play a larger role when the regional electoral arena becomes more relevant for voters and parties. Country studies provided by Jeffery and Hough (2009) and Dandoy and Schakel (2013) show that territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral rules may increase the stakes of regional elections. In this section we will discuss these three sets of independent variables and we develop hypotheses for explaining regional electoral dynamics in Eastern Europe.

Territorial Cleavages

Regional elections may increase their relevance to the extent voters may want to express region-specific preferences which are often linked to territorial cleavages based on, for example, history, language, and ethnicity. The basis of territorial cleavage theory lies in sociological approaches which explain dissimilarity of party systems by the extent to which territorial cleavages are politicized (Lijphart 1977; Livingston 1956). Several scholars analyzing regional elections in Western Europe have observed that if subnational elections are held in areas with distinctive territorial identities, voters are more likely to disconnect themselves from the first-order arena and make different vote choices in the subnational context (Dandoy and Schakel 2013; Jeffery and Hough 2009). It is generally believed that political cleavages that formed West European party systems (i.e. the class, the rural-urban, the church-state, and the center-periphery cleavages) are of limited relevance in post-communist countries (Bielasiak 1997; McAllister and White 2007). However, as Bochsler (2010b, pp. 811–2) argues, ethnic divisions are salient in Eastern Europe and in many cases ethnic minorities tend to vote for ‘their’ party.

We contend that the extent to which territorial cleavages may lead to territorial heterogeneity in the vote depends on intervening factors such as whether territorial cleavages are mobilized by non-statewide parties. The ability of non-statewide parties to mobilize the regional voter in great part depends on the territorial concentration of ethnic minorities. When the boundaries of electoral districts and regional governments are drawn so that the ethnic group members are distributed across different territorial units, the expression of ‘regional voice’ may be significantly hampered because the ethnic group constitutes a minority in each of the units (Treisman 2007). Another possible intervening factor is the presence of special rules for ethnic minority representation in national parliaments. Some countries in Eastern Europe (e.g. Romania) have reserved seats for specified ethnic minorities in national parliament. The ethnic group members are the only eligible voters for these seats which secures a regional or ethnic ‘voice’ no matter the territorial distribution of that ethnic group across the country.

Territorial cleavages can be measured according to infinite number of dimensions such as ethnicity, language, religion, history, or economy, but geographical distance, a history of independent statehood, and the presence of minority languages are among the most mentioned cleavages (Fitjar 2010; Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan and Urwin 1983; Van Houten 2007). Hooghe et al. (2016b) define Rokkan regions according to whether a region is an island (distance), has a history of independent statehood (statehood), or when a majority in the region speaks a language other than the majority in the country as a whole (language). In Table 1.6 we report the proportion of regional elections taking place in Rokkan regions. In contrast to Western European countries, Rokkan regions are relatively absent in Eastern European countries except for the three federations and Turkey. However, in the remaining six unitary countries, the territorial boundaries of regional government have been significantly redrawn during and after communist rule. As a result, Rokkan regions and territorially concentrated minorities therein may have been divided up into a number of institutional regions. Therefore, we have asked the authors of the country chapter to analyze the territorial heterogeneity of the vote according to ‘historical-cultural’ regions in addition to the current institutional regions.

Table 1.6 Territorial cleavages: Rokkan regions

Countries	Rokkan regions	Distance	Statehood	Language
Austria	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.0
Belgium	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5
Denmark	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.2
France	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Germany	0.4	0.0	0.4	0.1
Greece	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0
Italy	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.3
Netherlands	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1
Norway	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Spain	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.4
Sweden	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Switzerland	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.8
United Kingdom	0.8	0.3	0.5	0.0
Western Europe	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.2
Bosnia and Herzegovina	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.5
Cantons in FBiH	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Croatia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Czech Republic	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hungary	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Poland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Romania	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Russia	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.1
Serbia and Montenegro	-	-	-	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Slovak republic	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Turkey	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.2
Eastern Europe	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1

Source: Data is obtained from Hooghe et al. (2016b)

Notes: Shown is the proportion of elections taking place in Rokkan regions which are defined according to whether a region is an island (distance), has a history of independent statehood (statehood), or when a majority in the region speaks a language other than the majority in the country as a whole (language)

Regional Authority

A significant decentralization trend since the 1970s across Western European countries (Hooghe et al. 2016a) has induced a number of scholars to investigate in how far increased regional authority has led to a regionalization of elections (Hough and Jeffery 2006; Pallarés and

Keating 2003). Decentralization is thought to affect parties and voters by providing incentives and opportunities to mobilize locally based preferences. This may produce variation in voter and party alignments even up to the point of ‘unique’ party systems at the regional level (Thorlakson 2007, 2009). When regional government has independent policy making capacities voters may base their vote according to their evaluation of the performance of regional government instead of national government. This, in turn, may induce regional branches of statewide parties—which compete for votes with regionally based parties in the regional electoral arena—to deviate their policies from the party at the national level especially when adhering to statewide party policies involves electoral risks in the regional arena (Hough and Jeffery 2006; Maddens and Libbrecht 2009).

In Table 1.7 we present minimum and maximum regional authority index (RAI) scores for Eastern and Western European countries. The RAI measures regional authority according to self-rule—the extent of authority exercised by the regional government over citizens within the region—and shared rule, the extent of authority exercised by the regional government in the country as a whole. Both self-rule and shared rule are measured by five indicators. Self-rule is assessed by institutional depth, policy scope, fiscal autonomy, borrowing autonomy, and representation, and shared rule is measured by legislative control, executive control, fiscal control, borrowing control, and constitutional reform (Hooghe et al. 2016a). Not surprisingly, the (con-)federal countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia and Serbia and Montenegro score high on the regional authority index. The seven non-federal countries score on the low end of the regional authority index especially when compared to unitary countries in Western Europe. For example, the counties in Scandinavian countries, which are described as local governments by some scholars, have RAI scores above 10.

Despite strong expectations that decentralization should lead to a regionalization of the vote, the empirical evidence on the relationship between federalism/decentralization and party nationalization in post-communist countries is mixed. Tiemann (2012) finds no effect but Bochsler (2010a, b) does. It is important to note that both scholars have only looked at national elections. Caramani (2004, pp. 291–2) observes

Table 1.7 Regional authority index (RAI) scores and electoral institutions

Countries	RAI		Compulsory voting		Simultaneity with elections			Electoral system	
	Min	Max			Local	Regional	National	Regional	National
Austria	22	23	No/Yes	No	No	No	No	PR	PR
Belgium	11	24	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	PR	PR
Denmark	7	25	No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	PR	PR
France	10	12.5	No	No	No	Yes	No	PR/MIX	MAJ
Germany	26	27	No	No/Yes	No/Yes	No	No	MIX	MIX
Greece	9	9	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	MAJ	MIX
Italy	9	12	No/Yes	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	PR	PR/MIX
Netherlands	16.5	17.5	No	No	No	Yes	No	PR	PR
Norway	11	12	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR	PR
Spain	20.5	25.5	No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	PR	PR
Sweden	12	13	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PR	PR
Switzerland	24.5	26.5	No/Yes	No	No	No	No	PR/MIX/MAJ	PR
United Kingdom	1	20.5	No	No/Yes	No/Yes	No/Yes	No	MIX	MAJ
Western Europe	1	27	No/Yes	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	PR	PR
Bosnia and Herzegovina	18	26	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PR	PR
Cantons in FBiH	13	15	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	PR	PR
Croatia	8	9	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR/MIX	PR/MIX
Czech Republic	8	9	No	No	No	Yes	No	PR	PR
Hungary	8	8	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR	MIX
Poland	8	8	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR	PR
Romania	7	8	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR/MIX	PR/MIX

(continued)

Table 1.7 (continued)

Countries	RAI		Compulsory voting	Simultaneity with elections			Electoral system	
	Min	Max		Local	Regional	National	Regional	National
Russia	19	24	No	Yes	Yes/No	No/Yes	MIX/PR/MAJ	PR/MIX
Serbia and Montenegro	26	27	No	No	No	-	PR	-
Vojvodina in Serbia	8	8	No	Yes	No	No/Yes	MIX/MAJ	PR
Slovak republic	7	8	No	No	Yes	No	MAJ	PR
Turkey	6	7	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	PR	PR
Eastern Europe	6	27	No/Yes	Yes/No	Yes/No	No	PR	PR

Source: Western European data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013). Data on regional authority index (RAI) scores are provided by Hooghe et al. (2016a)

a nationalization trend for national elections in Western Europe even in countries with a strong center-periphery cleavage, and he offers an interesting hypothesis for this counter-intuitive finding: ‘rather than being a cause of territorialization of voting behavior, federal structures reduce the expression of regional protest in the party system by opening up institutional channels of voice’. In this view, one would expect to observe nationalization for national elections but regionalization for regional elections.

Electoral Rules

Research on second-order election effects in regional elections has revealed that the timing of elections matters. Second-order election effects are amplified when regional elections are held mid-term of the national election cycle but second-order election effects decline when regional elections are held close to or at the same time as national elections (Jeffery and Hough 2001, 2003; Schakel and Dandoy 2014). Next to vertical simultaneity of elections, one may also hypothesize that holding several (or all) regional elections simultaneously (that is, horizontal simultaneity) amplifies their second-order qualities by giving them collective nationwide reach and resonance (Jeffery and Hough 2006a, b; Schakel and Dandoy 2013a, b). In Table 1.7 we present vertical and horizontal simultaneity for regional elections with national, local, and other regional elections. Vertical simultaneity with national elections is rare in both Eastern and Western European countries and only regional elections taking place in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, and Sweden are very often or always held concurrently with national elections. Vertical simultaneity with local elections and horizontal simultaneity with (other) regional elections is the norm in Eastern Europe. The high turnout gaps for the Czech and Slovak Republics (Table 1.3) may be explained by non-simultaneity between regional and local elections which decreases the stakes of regional elections (Schakel and Dandoy 2014). Compulsory voting increases voter turnout and second-order election effects should decrease as a result but in Eastern Europe voting is obligatory in Turkey only.

In addition to electoral cycles, we also consider the impact of rules translating votes into seats. Bochsler (2010a) and Bernauer and Bochsler (2011) have shown that legal thresholds in national elections in Eastern Europe can moderate the extent to which ethno-regional parties are excluded from the party system because these tend to be small parties. However, when these parties contest regional elections, they will contribute to a regionalization of the vote. Dissimilarity between the regional and national vote may be a direct result of differences in electoral systems because majoritarian and mixed systems tend to be more restrictive for parties than proportional rule. Under plurality rule, successful performance requires cooperative behavior from parties, whereas proportional rule generates very weak incentives for electoral cooperation (Cox 1997; Lijphart 1984). With plurality rule, only parties with large support can win a majority of the votes and seats and, therefore, parties have incentives to jointly field candidates. In contrast, with proportionality, the relatively fair allocation of seats encourages voters to support their most preferred party. Hence, differences between the national and regional vote may arise out of an inclusive regional but an exclusive national electoral system or vice versa. Table 1.7 presents the electoral rules for national and regional elections and it becomes clear that electoral systems differ widely between countries and between national and regional elections.

Electoral systems may also indirectly increase incongruence between regional and national elections through its impact on the formation of electoral alliances. Kostadinova (2006) links the high occurrence of pre-election coalitions in post-communist countries to the incentives produced by mixed electoral systems. Mixed electoral systems combine the use of plurality or majority run-off procedures in single member constituencies for election of some representatives, and proportional rule for elections of the remaining representatives in the same chamber of parliament. The choice of party coalition strategies is determined by how parties assess their chances for success. In mixed-system elections, parties have four available options for participation (Kostadinova 2006, p. 125): 'first, they may decide to run completely on their own; second, party strategists may decide that it would be better for their organization to participate in coalition with other parties in the list tier and on their

own in the nominal tier; third, parties may run in coalition in the SMD part and on their own in the PR part; and fourth, a party may prefer to run in coalition in both tiers.’ In analogy, the choice of party coalition strategies may vary to similar extent across national and regional elections especially when the electoral rules are different between the two levels.

1.6 Structure of the Book

The discussion above reveals that quantitative numbers need to be interpreted with care and need to be considered alongside qualitative evidence. For example, non-statewide party strength may be an indication of regionalization of the vote, but it may also signal nationalization because non-statewide parties may be the recipients of the vote share losses incurred by government parties (i.e. a second-order election effect). Similarly, it may be difficult to disentangle the effects of the explanatory variables. For example, regional authority tends to coincide with vertical simultaneity between regional and national elections because the three (con-)federal countries hold all or many elections at the same date. Therefore, we study regional and national elections in ten Eastern European countries in depth according to a comprehensive analytical framework, whereby we combine a ‘top-down’, nationalization approach with a ‘bottom-up’, regionalization approach.

The main research question in each chapter is to what extent are national and regional elections regionalized or nationalized and what are the causes for territorial heterogeneity in the vote? The first step in each chapter is to examine congruence between regional and national elections. Dissimilarity in the vote does not necessarily mean that the vote is regionalized, therefore, in a second and third step, the authors will look at specific indicators for nationalization of the vote (second-order election effects) and regionalization of the vote (regional election effects). To account for different degrees of nationalization and regionalization of the vote between regions and over time, the authors may turn to three sets of independent variables: territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral rules (deductive approach). In addition, authors may propose any

independent variable they think impacts on the regional vote (inductive approach).

The country studies adopt a similar chapter structure which reflects the analytical framework. The introduction to the chapter discusses the transition to democracy and the introduction of regional government and regional elections. When available, authors will also summarize research on regional elections. The second section presents an overview on 'regional government and regional elections'. The analytical part of the country chapters is divided into three sections. One section discusses 'congruence of the vote' which is followed by a section which looks at 'second-order election effects' where the authors analyze turnout and vote transfers between regional and previous national elections. The fifth section looks specifically for evidence of 'regionalization of the vote' by examining the electoral strength and ideology of non-statewide parties and by examining the constellation of and vote shares won by electoral alliances. The authors will propose explanatory factors (territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral rules) which, according to them, may account for the observed electoral dynamics. In the conclusion to the chapter, the authors address the question whether regional elections are regionalized or nationalized.

This book presents ten in depth country studies on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Serbia and Montenegro (until 2006, Serbia after 2006), and Turkey. The country chapters are presented in alphabetical order. We have assembled data on the five aspects of regional election behavior, and the full variation across regions and parties, and over time, are provided in country Excel files. The Excel files and the codebook are published on a webpage to accompany this book on the website (www.arjanschakel.nl) of the editor (Arjan H. Schakel). The authors of the country chapters reflect upon the most interesting figures and tables, which means that not all figures and tables are discussed. Readers who would like to access the data or who would like more detail are advised to download the country Excel files. In Chap. 12 (conclusion to the book), we will draw cross-country comparisons and we will develop an explanatory model for regional electoral dynamics in Eastern European countries.

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2

Bosnia and Herzegovina: An Archetypical Example of an Ethnocracy

John Hulseley and Dejan Stjepanović

2.1 Introduction

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a post-communist state that, just like most Central and East European countries in the early 1990s, underwent a 'transition' from a communist regime and economic model toward liberal democracy. Unlike most Central and East European countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina experienced a violent conflict that lasted from 1992 through 1995, costing around 100,000 lives in a country of roughly four million inhabitants. These events ultimately led to the segregation of

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ethnic communities and the country upheld ethnicity as the main principle of political representation ever since. A corollary of these processes is the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina has one of the most intricate governance and political party system in Europe. The present chapter analyzes the post-1995 period, starting with the elections held in 1996 and finishing with the most recent elections of 2014.

Multiparty elections were held in 1991 which saw, despite the expected strong performance of reformed communists with cross-ethnic membership, the victory of the nationalist parties namely the SDA (*Stranka demokratske akcije*, Party of Democratic Action), the main Muslim/Bosniak party, the SDS (*Srpska demokratska stranka*, Serb Democratic Party) and the HDZ (*Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Union). These developments were concurrent with the breakup of Yugoslavia and the intensification of interethnic conflict in neighboring Croatia. In the midst of the crisis, the referendum on independence was held which received overwhelming support (97 percent) of Bosniak and Croat population while most Serbs boycotted it, being in favor of closer ties with the rump Yugoslavia dominated by Serbia.¹ Following the referendum, Bosnia and Herzegovina was recognized as a state by the international community in March 1992. Bosnia and Herzegovina's Serb leaders subsequently proclaimed their own state of the *Republika Srpska*. In the ensuing war, Serbs and Croats expressed their secessionist claims and demands for union with their kin-states, Serbia and Croatia respectively, while Bosniaks tried to reassert the control of the central government. The conflict lasted from 1992 till 1995 and resulted in ethnic cleansing of large swathes of territory. There were several unsuccessful internationally mediated attempts aimed at reaching a lasting peace. Finally, in late 1995, with US involvement and including Croatia and Serbia as signatories, a peace treaty between Bosnia and Herzegovina's warring parties was signed in Dayton, Ohio. The Dayton Peace Agreement also included the constitutional blueprint of the future federative state. The

¹ The referendum held on 29 February and 1 March 1992 was marked by a 63.6 percent turnout, similar to the combined census figures of Muslim/Bosniak and Croat populations of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The overwhelming majority of 99.7 percent voted for independence. For more details on the independence referendum, see CSCE The Referendum on Independence in Bosnia-Herzegovina February 29–March 1, 1992.

agreement and its Annex IV containing the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina foresaw a loose (con)federation of the two entities, *Republika Srpska* and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (*Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine*; hereafter 'the Federation'). Established in 1995 to oversee the civilian implementation of the Dayton Peace Agreement, the Office of the High Representative is another important locus of power in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1997, the Office of the High Representative was given additional far-reaching powers, the so-called Bonn Powers, which include the right to remove public officials who are found to be violating the Dayton Peace Agreement. These powers were used extensively and the Office of the High Representative frequently intervened in daily politics of the state and entities especially in the late 1990s and 2000s.²

Apart from the two asymmetrically decentralized entities, Brčko District is another peculiarity of Bosnia and Herzegovina's territorial government, as it is formally defined as both a 'condominium' of the two entities and as a unit of local self-government within the state. However, it enjoys powers nearly equal to those of the two entities. The District of Brčko itself is not analyzed separately but a section of the chapter is devoted to the politics of the District and its relations to other levels of government in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The region further illustrates the complexities of the vertical state structure and party system of the country.

This chapter in many ways builds on the existing studies by Hulseby and Mujkić that have looked into various aspects of multilevel politics in Bosnia and Herzegovina. More in particular this chapter will delve into the complexity of the consociational/federal nature of the political system (Mujkić 2007) and will illustrate the ethnic separation of the party system (Hulseby 2015). The findings confirm that mono-ethnic subunits are the fundamental locus of representation and political competition for many voters, constituting a typical example of an ethnocracy. The concept of ethnocracy has been applied to the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Stojanović and Hodžić (2015) who analyzed the prob-

²Between 1997 and 2004, the High Representative removed or suspended 139 individuals from office including judges, ministers, civil servants and elected parliamentarians or mayors at entity and state level (Venneri 2007, p. 27).

lem of de facto disenfranchised minorities such as Jews and Roma. This chapter analyzes elections held since 1996 and shows that there is little evidence for second-order effects in regional elections. This chapter also extends the idea of ethnocracy by looking into how territorial differences in the national and regional vote look like in ethnocracies and thereby contributes to the literature on party politics of divided societies.

2.2 Regional Government and Elections

In order to better understand the current political system, including the functioning of regional government and elections, it is worth briefly delving into the history of state formation. The external territorial boundaries of Bosnia and Herzegovina are historically well established. Relatively stable borders of what we know now as Bosnia and Herzegovina were drawn by the Treaty of Karlowitz at the end of the seventeenth century. Until the 1990s, however, Bosnia and Herzegovina did not exist as an internationally recognized state but rather as a province—*eyalet* of the Ottoman Empire or a joint condominium/land of Austria and Hungary during the last days of the Habsburg rule. The name of the country refers to the historic regions of Herzegovina (in the South) and Bosnia (Central and Northern areas), which, however, have not been matched by administrative or political institutions in the modern period. Thus, these historic regions are relegated to sociological identities, culture and history with little impact on everyday politics. In Yugoslav socialist times, Bosnia and Herzegovina was one of the six federal republics. Unlike other republics, it did not have a single ‘constituent’ nation but three nations (or religious communities) were considered to be formative of the state. According to the last Yugoslav census in 1991, Bosnia and Herzegovina’s ethnic structure included 43 percent Muslims (since 1993 called Bosniaks), 31 percent Serbs (predominantly Orthodox Christians) and 17 percent Croats (predominantly Catholics). These ethnonational communities were territorially dispersed and there were very few ethnically homogenous areas in the country. The war that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia and ended with the adoption of the Dayton constitution was formative of the current government arrangements, which still provoke controver-

sies. These include not only the controversies over representation, voting rights and ethnic quotas but also about the nature of the system itself, whether the state is a confederation, a federal state or something else.

Despite the fact that the territorial arrangement established by the Dayton Peace Agreement belongs to the 'genus of federalism' (Elazar 1994) and that the state consists of two entities which are de facto federal units (Keil 2013), there is no reference to federalism in the founding documents. Federalism remains a seldom-used word in Bosnian constitutional jargon. This is most likely due to the fact that the dissolution of Yugoslavia happened along federal borderlines (Radan 2002; Ramet 1992; Roth 2015). Hence, federalism is not mentioned when regulating constitutional relations between the two entities that form the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina as it could have been interpreted and used as a legitimization of secession. The two entities of the state are *Republika Srpska*, centralized and Serb dominated (over 80 percent of the population), and the further (ethnically) fragmented Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of ten cantons, and dominated by Bosniaks and Croats. Bosniaks form a majority in five cantons, there are two Croat-Bosniak bi-national cantons (Cantons number 6 and 7), two cantons have a majority of Croats (Cantons 2 and 8) and Canton 10 has a Croat majority with Serbs as the second largest group. Cantons are further divided into 79 municipalities with limited powers. One exception is the ethnically segregated city of Mostar (both Croats and Bosniaks are dominant) which is a municipality which enjoys some broader powers (the city is located in Herzegovina-Neretva Canton or Canton 7). The Office of the High Representative and the international community were instrumental in tackling the problematic division of the city that occurred during the 1990s. In the early 2000s, they abolished six districts (administrative units) in favor of one single city council. However, community interests are protected through preserving the six municipalities in the form of electoral units in order to prevent outvoting. Additionally, vital 'national' interests are protected through a system of super-majority voting and veto rights, as is the case at the entity and cantonal levels (Bieber 2005). *Republika Srpska* does not possess meso-tier governments equivalent to the cantons. The lowest level of self-government consists of 62 municipalities/cities.

The entities are, according to the Dayton Peace Agreement, entitled to far-reaching powers. According to the regional authority index, *Republika Srpska's* authority scores range from 26 in 1995 to 20 in 2010 and the Federation's scores range from 24 in 1995 to 18 in 2018, which is roughly similar to or higher than Belgian regions (Hooghe et al. 2016a, b). Furthermore, the scores for the cantons in the Federation cantons ranges from 15 in 1995 to 13 in 2010. The entities (*Republika Srpska* and the Federation) also regulate their own citizenship (introduced by the Dayton Peace Agreement), and, since dual substate citizenship is not allowed, citizenship is directly connected to voting rights in the entities.

All of the above clearly indicates that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a divided state with ethnicity as the major cleavage and where ethnic loyalties trump other ideological preferences. Bosnia and Herzegovina can be characterized as an 'ethnocracy' which is 'a political system in which political and social organizations are founded on ethnic belonging rather than individual choice' (Howard 2012, p. 155). An ethnocracy is a hybrid system that features a mix of democratic and non-democratic elements; the key distinction from liberal democracy being the principle that lies at its heart: ethnic group rights and representation rather than individual rights and representation. Three core characteristics define an ethnocracy: political parties are primarily based on ethnic interests, while alternative dimensions of party competition, such as the left-right economic dimension, are of secondary importance; ethnic quotas in the allocation of key political positions; and state institutions segmented by ethnic group (Howard 2012, pp. 155–6). All of the three characteristics apply in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The establishment of substate divisions, regional government and elections dates back to the Dayton Peace Agreement. The federal (central) government is officially headed by a collective presidium formally called the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina and all three constitutional ethnic groups are represented by one member. They serve as heads of state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their term in office is four years. Members of the Presidency rotate as chairmen every eight months. They are elected by a relative majority in the two entities. The Croatian and Bosniak members always come from the Federation and the Serb

member comes from the *Republika Srpska*. Among the main powers of this collective leadership is foreign policy and related international duties. Part of the executive branch is the government of Bosnia and Herzegovina, consisting of nine ministries including the Prime Minister nominated by the Presidency and approved by the Parliament. The main powers which are reserved to the central state are finances, macro-economic planning, military and foreign affairs. Remaining powers are enjoyed by the *Republika Srpska*, the Federation and the Brčko District. Legislative power at the state level is exercised by a bicameral parliament. The House of Representatives (*Zastupnički/Predstavnički dom Bosne i Hercegovine*) is made up of 42 deputies (28 from the Federation and 14 from *Republika Srpska*) who are elected through party-list proportional representation. The House of Peoples (*Dom naroda Bosne i Hercegovine*), the upper chamber of the parliament, consists of 15 deputies (5 Bosniaks, 5 Serbs and 5 Croats) elected from the House of Peoples of the Federation and the National Assembly (*Narodna skupština*) of *Republika Srpska*. The term of office of both houses of parliament is four years. At the state level, the highest judicial authority is exercised by the Constitutional Court and the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Šedo 2010). There are nine constitutional court judges, four are elected by the House of Representatives of the Federation, two by the National Assembly of RS, and three are appointed by the chairman of the European Court for Human Rights. The District of Brčko is represented by a non-member observer. Apart from these, each entity has its own judicial system.

Hence, there is a large degree of asymmetry between institutions which is not only limited to the Brčko District or the ways entities interact with the (central) state institutions. The Federation has an intermediate tier of government (cantons), whereas the *Republika Srpska* is heavily centralized. The ten cantons (*kantoni* in Bosnian and Serbian, and *županije* in Croatian) of the Federation are autonomous and have legislative, executive and judicial powers (Constitution of the Federation 1994, Art. III). The cantons have their own basic laws (constitutions), governments and ministries. Hence, the Federation is a relatively loose federation in which most competences related to economic and land planning, tourism,

culture, housing, education, welfare and the cantonal police are designated to the cantonal level.³

General elections for the state, entity and cantonal parliaments take place on the same date every four years. They are organized by the central electoral commission that keeps the register of voters. Voting registers consist of adult citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There is a two-tier citizenship in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Štikš 2010), one has citizenship in either one of the entities and of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and this has important consequences for voting rights. For example, adult citizens of *Republika Srpska* have the right to vote in local elections, elections for the *Republika Srpska* Assembly, the state Parliament and Presidency. Residency is not crucial for voting rights and, for example, a Federation citizen residing in *Republika Srpska* does not have the right to vote for the *Republika Srpska* Assembly and vice-versa. Local elections are normally held mid-term, that is, two years after the general elections. For example, general elections were held in 2010 and 2014, while local elections were organized in 2012. Elections are held on Sundays and election silence kicks in one day prior to the start of voting and lasts until the polling stations close. Bosnia and Herzegovina citizens residing abroad keep their full voting rights but rarely exercise it. In 2014 there were 42,008 registered voters abroad.

There are eight electoral districts in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the purposes of election of the representatives to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament. Three are in *Republika Srpska* and five in the Federation. The territorial boundaries of electoral districts in the Federation do not correspond directly to those of the cantons but rather two cantons constitute an electoral district.⁴ *Republika Srpska* has three electoral districts

³In cases where the majority of the population in a municipality in the Federation is different in ethnic composition from that of the canton as a whole, education, culture, tourism, local business and charitable activities, and radio and television are by law allocated to the municipal level to protect the minority within the canton (Constitution of the Federation 1994, Art. V.2b; Jokaj 2001).

⁴Electoral district no. 1 consists of Cantons 1 (Una-Sana) and 10 (Livno) and elects three Members of Parliament (MPs). Electoral unit 2 consists of Cantons 7 (Herzegovina-Neretva) and 8 (West Herzegovina) and elects three MPs as well. Unit 3 consists of Cantons 5 (Bosnian-Podrinje Canton Gorazde) and 9 (Sarajevo) and elects four MPs. Unit 4 consists of the Cantons 4 (Zenica-Doboj) and 6 (Central Bosnia) and elects six MPs. And finally, electoral unit 5 is made of the Cantons 2 (Posavina), 3

and three representatives are elected in each. The remaining representatives come from compensatory lists. While there is no evidence that the electoral districts were gerrymandered for reasons other than geographic contiguity and expediency, Croat politicians have complained that the system works unfavorably for them and they have asked for the establishment of an electoral unit in which Croats form the majority (*Večernji list* 21 May 2012).

Another characteristic of Bosnia and Herzegovina is the large number of political parties. In a country of approximately 3.8 million inhabitants, there are nearly 200 parties competing in national, regional and local elections. Despite this fragmentation, there is a high degree of party system stability whereby parties represent one of the three ethnic groups (Hulsey 2015, p. 44). The superfluity of parties is largely determined by the design of electoral institutions which introduce low entry barriers for parties to gain representation. This point can be well illustrated by the election of the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Parliament is elected from eight electoral districts which are in turn nested within the two entities. Three to six representatives are elected from each of the districts by proportional vote. Twelve additional compensatory seats are redistributed to parties that achieved significant support across the districts but did not reach the threshold in any particular one. It is worth noting that the compensatory seats are distributed separately for the two entities, something that enhances both the stability and the fragmentation of the party system. Hence, the bifurcation of the party system between the entities is coupled by the ethnicization of electorates.

Less than one percent of the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina is governed by the laws of the Brčko District. The District formally belongs to both entities (and the state) and enjoys the same breadth of powers as the entities to which it belongs. One of the reasons for excluding the Brčko District from the quantitative analysis presented in this chapter is the fact that there is no direct vertical integration of this territory in the rest of the state. In other words, due to the fact that electoral districts of the Federation and *Republika Srpska* overlap in Brčko and voting rights

(Tuzla) and the Brčko District and elects five members of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament (*Izborni zakon* [Electoral law] Bosnia and Herzegovina, Article 9.2).

are accorded to entity citizens, it is nearly impossible to retrieve electoral results for the district. However, here we will discuss the particularities of the District's 'condominium' arrangement.

Despite the legalistic hotchpotch, branding the Brčko as a condominium in legal documents defining its status, the entity is problematic from a theoretical perspective since the territory is entirely autonomous from the entities that are allegedly sharing their sovereignty over the District. As an atypical unit of local self-government with legislative and executive powers equaling those of the entities, Brčko constitutes the third (de facto) federal unit of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In terms of judicial competences, however, unlike the two entities, Brčko District does not possess its own constitutional court, and has instead, since 2009, direct access to the Constitutional Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Currently, the Brčko District has its own 29-member law-making body (*Skupština*) with legislative powers nearly equaling those of the entities' assemblies. The head of the executive is the District Mayor. Unlike the state-level institutions, there are no ethnic quotas for the assembly (apart from reserved seats for smaller minorities such as the Roma), but softer measures apply, for example, the requirement of a three-fifths majority for the election of a mayor, which necessitates cross-ethnic party cooperation. For more than a decade, the District was headed by an international supervisor, the Office of the High Representative. The supervisor reserves the formal right to veto decisions and appoint officials but this right has not been exercised since the end of the supervision in 2012. No elections were held during most of the time of international supervision until the 2008 local elections when the Brčko District started to run its own district elections, using the registry of all residents whose details are automatically entered into the electoral roll of the district. All residents of the Brčko District who are citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina have passive and active voting rights in Brčko elections. However, some residents still do not possess either the Federation or *Republika Srpska* entity citizenship and face potential obstacles when voting for entity or state parliaments.

The Office of the High Representative and district supervisors have recognized the deficiency and have taken three steps to alleviate the situation. These include allowing the Brčko residents to choose either the Federation or *Republika Srpska* entity citizenship allowing citizens to

register in one of the entity electoral rolls and, due to lack of success of these measures, the decision to indirectly impose entity citizenship on all adults in Brčko through the issuance of identity cards that record entity citizenship. All of these measures had partial success and there are still disenfranchised Brčko District citizens (Stjepanović 2015). 45,317 citizens from Brčko District possess entity citizenship and have voting rights, and this group is split between 20,528 *Republika Srpska* voters and 24,789 Federation voters. Their votes for entity and state elections are added to the respective voting district of *Republika Srpska* and the Federation disregarding the existence of the boundaries of the Brčko District.

2.3 Congruence of the Vote

Congruence between regional and national elections will be explored by three dissimilarity measures. Party system congruence concerns the dissimilarity between national election results aggregated at the national level and regional elections results at the regional level (NN-RR). Electorate congruence concerns the dissimilarity between national election results at the national level and national election results at the regional level (NN-NR). Finally, election congruence measures the difference in election results between national and regional results at the regional level (NR-RR). These three measures have been adjusted slightly because of the peculiar vertical state structure and electoral system in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Figure 2.1 depicts the degree of congruence between votes cast for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the vote cast for the entity and cantonal legislatures. Points closer to zero on the y-axis indicate less dissimilarity and more congruence between the Bosnia and Herzegovina and the entity or cantonal levels. NN-RR (Federation) shows the difference between the vote cast for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the vote cast for the parliament of the Federation. The difference is approximately 35 percent and has been consistent across elections. NN-RR (*Republika Srpska*) shows the difference between vote shares for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and votes cast for the Assembly

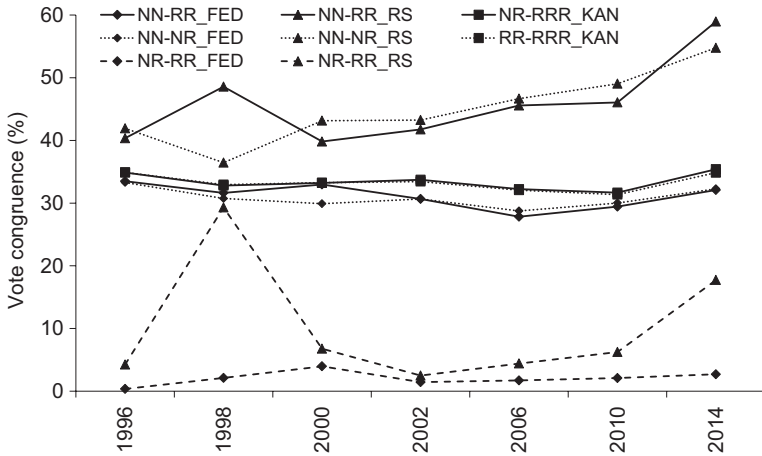


Fig. 2.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: NR national vote in the region, NN national vote at the statewide level, RR regional vote in the region, FED Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine, RS Republika Srpska, KAN Kantoni/županije. Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Bosnia and Herzegovina)

of *Republika Srpska*. The difference has increased from around 40 percent in 1996 to around 55 percent in 2014. These results show that there is a high level of incongruence between the party systems of the two entities and the party system of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole. Party system congruence captures the core characteristic of Bosnian politics, namely that the two entities have almost entirely distinct party systems. The somewhat greater difference for RS relative to the Federation is simply a function of the relative size of the delegation to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The most salient feature of elections in Bosnia in general and the election for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina in particular is that 28 of the seats are allocated from votes in the territory of the Federation, while 14 are allocated from the territory of *Republika Srpska* and that no seats are allocated based on the country-wide results. Rather, multi-member districts are nested within entity boundaries and compensatory seats are allocated based on entity-level instead of national-level results. As a result, the seat allocation for the entity representatives

in the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina is proportional to their respective entity vote.

In order to examine congruence between electorates, Fig. 2.1 displays NN-NR (Federation) and NN-NR (*Republika Srpska*) which show the difference between the vote share cast for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina from each respective entity and the overall vote share for Bosnia and Herzegovina. The difference for the Federation is about 35 percent and has been consistent over time. The difference for *Republika Srpska* has increased from around 40 percent in 1996 to 54 percent in 2010. These results show that the degree of party system congruence is driven by the degree of electorate congruence.

NR-RR (Federation) and NR-RR (*Republika Srpska*) also show the difference between vote cast for the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the vote cast for each entity legislature; however, these two measures contrast the national and regional vote cast in Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament elections within an entity as opposed to comparing each entity's vote to the vote of the whole country. The measures of election congruence compare results within an entity as opposed to results between an entity and the national aggregate. This explains the high level of election congruence as opposed to electorate congruence and party system congruence. Since election congruence is very high and party system and electorate congruence very low it is a clear signal that party systems are bifurcated just like in Belgium. With the exception of sharp increases in 1998 and 2014 for *Republika Srpska*, there is very little difference in the vote share from within each entity. The increase in 2014 is a result of a number of parties that ran separately in the Bosnia and Herzegovina-level elections but formed a coalition in the *Republika Srpska* Assembly elections.

Figure 2.1 also shows comparisons between the vote share for the cantonal parliaments and the vote share for the Federation entity legislature (RR-RRR KAN) as well as the Federation delegation to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina (NR-RRR KAN). These measures also show fairly high levels of dissimilarity. The vote share differences consistently hover around 35 percent. The large differences are a reflection of the fact that some cantons are heavily Croat while some are heavily Bosniak, and thereby cantons are dominated by parties that are absent in other

Table 2.1 Party system congruence scores breakdown by canton

Year	KA01	KA02	KA03	KA04	KA05	KA06	KA07	KA08	KA09	KA10	Mean
1996	31.7	57.1	20.8	13.5	32.7	15.9	28.9	70.1	21.0	57.2	34.88
1998	33.8	51.0	21.0	14.8	26.1	17.0	28.7	64.8	17.4	53.4	32.80
2000	31.5	44.6	24.8	13.7	24.2	15.0	–	68.6	22.6	54.0	33.23
2002	26.4	48.8	22.7	17.1	24.7	15.9	31.4	73.1	18.1	58.9	33.72
2006	26.8	52.5	21.4	11.6	18.6	15.7	28.2	72.8	17.5	57.1	32.23
2010	25.7	52.0	15.3	11.2	20.0	15.8	27.3	71.5	18.2	59.8	31.67
2014	27.5	56.2	21.0	13.5	34.0	17.1	28.8	74.6	17.3	63.9	35.40
Mean	29.0	51.8	21.0	13.6	25.8	16.1	28.9	70.8	18.9	57.8	33.4

Notes: Shown are dissimilarities between the vote cast for cantonal parliaments and the vote share for the Federation delegation to the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina (NR-RRR KAN). Data for KA07 for 2000 is missing. KA01 = *Unsko-sanski kanton*; KA02 = *Županija Posavska, Posavski kanton*; KA03 = *Tuzlanski kanton*; KA04 = *Zeničko-dobojski kanton*; KA05 = *Bosansko-podrinjski kanton Goražde*; KA06 = *Srednjobosanski kanton. Županija Središnja Bosna*; KA07 = *Hercegovačko-neretvanska županija; Hercegovačko-neretvanski kanton*; KA08 = *Županija Zapadnohercegovačka, Zapadnohercegovački kanton*; KA09 = *Kanton Sarajevo*; KA10 = *Županija 10, Kanton 10*

cantons. Low levels of electorate congruence drive low levels of party system congruence between the cantons and the entity-level as well. This pattern is clear in Table 2.1, which shows the breakdown by canton. West Herzegovina, which shows the highest difference, is dominated by parties associated with Croats and the large Bosniak parties are not represented. In contrast, Zenica-Doboj and Central Bosnia have mixed Bosniak/Croat populations and therefore have cantonal legislatures that are more similar to the Federation as a whole.

Figure 2.1 and Table 2.1 clearly illustrate the impact of ethnic demography on the party system in Bosnia. No parties receive a high proportion of votes throughout the country. The specific shape of the party system in a particular legislature or electoral district depends heavily on the ethnic composition of the constituency. The degree of congruence is higher where electorates are similar across levels, for example, when the results for the entity-level parliaments are compared to the results of the delegations from the same entity to Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament (NR-RR).

The overall low level of congruence is caused by the fragmented electorate and the political and ethnic divisions of the country which are

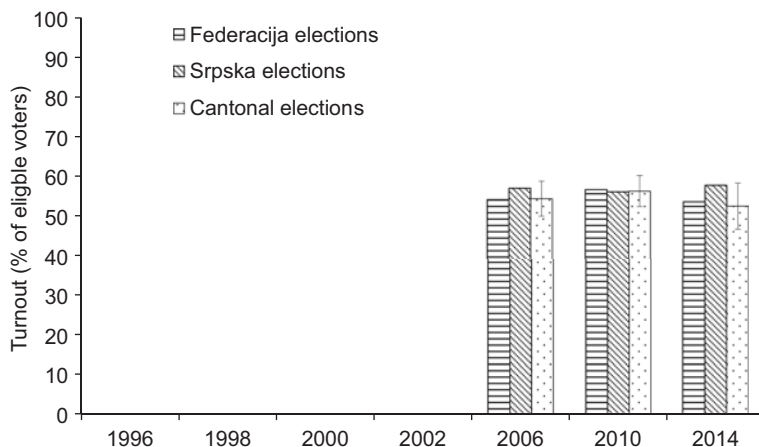


Fig. 2.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional election. Data until the election of 2006 is missing. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Bosnia and Herzegovina)

sustained by the electoral system. For example, the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina has relatively few seats (42) and a relatively low district magnitude in comparison to entity and cantonal legislatures. While the compensatory seats go a long way toward correcting disproportionality caused by relatively low district magnitude, the small number of overall seats to be allocated from each entity (28 for the Federation and 14 from Republika Srpska) creates higher barriers to entry in the Bosnia and Herzegovina Parliament elections than in the entity and cantonal elections.

2.4 Second-Order Election Effects

This section evaluates the proposition that regional elections in Bosnia are second-order elections, which are viewed by voters as less important which leads to low turnout and voting against the party in national government.

Table 2.2 Percentage of invalid votes cast in entity and cantonal elections

Year	FED	RS	KA01	KA02	KA03	KA04	KA05	KA06	KA07	KA08	KA09	KA10
1996	1.3	–	3.4	7.6	2.7	2.5	2.2	2.5	2.3	3.1	3.2	4.5
1998	12.2	9.4	8.4	7.8	11.1	8.4	12.5	9.3	7.0	3.0	11.1	7.5
2000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2002	5.6	5.2	5.7	6.6	7.1	5.5	5.9	5.5	4.7	3.5	7.2	4.6
2006	7.0	4.7	6.3	7.0	7.2	7.0	8.8	6.7	6.0	5.3	7.7	7.4
2010	6.8	5.6	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.4	6.5	6.4	5.7	5.0	6.6	5.3
2014	8.2	6.3	9.1	7.9	7.5	8.4	6.2	8.3	6.7	5.0	7.2	5.9
Mean	6.8	6.3	6.5	7.2	7.0	6.4	7.0	6.4	5.4	4.1	7.2	5.9

Notes: Shown is the percentage of invalid votes cast in entity and cantonal elections. Data for 2000 and the election for the 1996 *Republika Srpska* election is missing. FED = *Federacija Bosne i Hercegovine*; RS = *Republika Srpska*; KA01 = *Unsko-sanski kanton*; KA02 = *Županija Posavska, Posavski kanton*; KA03 = *Tuzlanski kanton*; KA04 = *Zeničko-dobojski kanton*; KA05 = *Bosansko-podrinjski kanton Goražde*; KA06 = *Srednjobosanski kanton, Županija Središnja Bosna*; KA07 = *Hercegovačko-neretvanska županija, Hercegovačko-neretvanski kanton*; KA08 = *Županija Zapadnohercegovačka, Zapadnohercegovački kanton*; KA09 = *Kanton Sarajevo*; KA10 = *Županija 10, Kanton 10*

One second-order election indicator is the level of turnout in regional elections relative to national elections. Figure 2.2 shows the percentage turnout of eligible voters for elections from the Federation, *Republika Srpska* and the cantons in the Federation. Since the elections are held simultaneously, it is not surprising that the turnout for the Federation and canton elections are nearly identical. There is no sharp drop-off in turnout for cantonal or entity elections relative to national elections. So, there is no evidence that voters consider canton and entity elections as second-order elections.

Due to missing data,⁵ Table 2.2 presents information on the percentage of invalid votes, which can also serve as an indicator of ‘second-orderness’, and canton and entity elections are second-order when they have higher levels of invalid votes than registered for national elections. Table 2.2 shows a high level of invalid votes for regional elections, although one

⁵The missing data problem is driven by the ways in which the Electoral Commission reports results. The components of election turnout are only reported at the precinct level, whereas the percentage of valid and invalid votes is reported at the aggregate level. Complete, precinct-level datasets are not available for recent elections.

that decreases over time. The percentage of invalid votes is actually lower in regional elections than in national elections for elections held since 2000. Hence, there is no evidence for ‘second-orderness’ of regional elections rather it appears that national elections in Bosnia are of secondary importance for voters. More likely, the mismatch between party systems at the local and national levels pushes voters who vote for region-based parties to cast invalid votes in national elections where those parties are unlikely to gain representation. This could be yet another feature of an ethnocracy.

This assertion is supported by comparing the percentage of invalid votes across cantons. For example, the elections taking place in the Canton Una-Sanska record the most invalid votes, and this canton is characterized by parties and coalitions (for example A-SDA, the Party of Democratic Activity—*Stranka Demokratske Aktivnosti*, a splinter from SDA) that are not represented in the Parliament of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In contrast, West Herzegovina, which has the lowest percentage of invalid votes, is dominated by the two Croat parties that

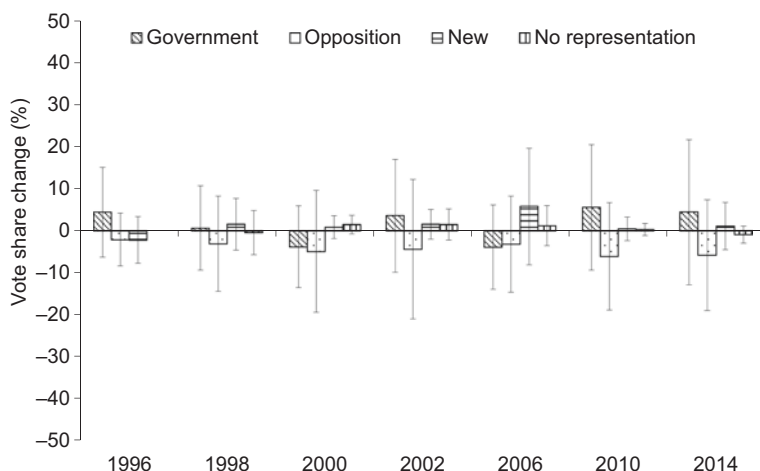


Fig. 2.3 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Bosnia and Herzegovina)

also garner the lion's share of votes from Croat voters in the national election. It seems likely that these differences are leading voters to either intentionally or unintentionally spoil their ballots. There is no clear evidence which supports the claim that regional elections are second-order; rather, the evidence points out how different the regional and national electorates and elections can be.

Figure 2.3 displays swings in vote shares between cantonal and previously held statewide elections broken down by whether the party is new and whether it has participated in government. Another sign for second-order election effects is when regional elections are used by dissatisfied voters to punish government parties and to support opposition parties instead. Second-order elections can be conceived as nationalized elections while regional election results are driven by factors originating from the national electoral arena. Two characteristics of Bosnia and Herzegovina make it unlikely to expect second-order election effects. First, there is full synchronicity between cantonal, entity and national elections and all three types of elections are held on the same day. Second, due to the multi-level consociational nature of the party system, almost all large parties are members of coalitions at one of the levels, and large parties from each ethnic group play a formal role in forming the Council of Ministers at the Bosnia and Herzegovina level. These two characteristics entail that voter's ideas about 'government' and 'opposition' play a different role in Bosnia and Herzegovina than in countries with more conventional institutional arrangements. Therefore, it is no surprise that Fig. 2.3 does not show a consistent pattern regarding the regional electoral performance of parties that had been in government and in opposition.

Interpreting the vote share swings displayed Fig. 2.3 is also complicated by the strong tendency in Bosnian party politics for parties to split as opposed to change leadership. The most recent example is the departure of Željko Komšić from the SDP in order to form the Democratic Front (DF—*Demokratska fronta*) ahead of the 2014 elections. DF then outperformed SDP in the following elections. Overall voter support did not change, but the votes were split across multiple parties.

2.5 Regionalization

This section discusses the relationship between ethnoterritorial groups and how these are translated into voter support for ethnic or regional parties. Regionalization in Bosnia and Herzegovina is best understood along two dimensions: the ethnoterritorial dimension related to the conduct and settlement of the war and regionalization within ethnic party blocs. Of these two dimensions, the former is much more important and influential. As has been discussed above, the party system in Bosnia and Herzegovina is bifurcated into two entity party systems. Parties associated with Serbs dominate *Republika Srpska* while parties associated with Bosniaks and Croats receive the lion's share of votes in the Federation. In addition, the party system within the Federation is also sharply divided between cantons populated primarily by Bosniaks and cantons populated primarily by Croats.

Ethnoterritorial regionalization clearly shows the impact of the war and its dominant feature: ethnic cleansing. The Dayton political system is built upon the ethnoterritorial realities of the war. Where possible, the Dayton system created ethnically homogenous political units. Apart from setting the principles of federalism and consociationalism, the Dayton Peace Agreement and the Constitution, according to critics, effectively excluded minorities from decision-making processes. For example, Article IV Chapter 1 of the Constitution reads: 'the House of Peoples shall comprise 15 Delegates, two-thirds from the Federation (including five Croats and five Bosniaks) and one third from the *Republika Srpska* (five Serbs)' (Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina). In this way, minority members, other ethnically non-affiliated citizens—Serbs from the Federation or Croats and Bosniaks from *Republika Srpska*—are excluded from effective participation in some governing institutions. However, '[t]he Dayton Constitution may well have *entrenched* ethnic division within Bosnian politics, but did not *invent* this as a factor' (Allcock 2004). The reasons behind the dominance of ethnicity in the Constitution may be found in the concept of national federalism and the influence of the 'confederal, consociational model of the last two decades of Titoist Yugoslavia' (Bose 2002, p. 68). Furthermore, entities and can-

tons in Bosnia and Herzegovina form a sort of territorial autonomy for the constituent ethnic groups (Bieber 2004). Apart from defining the territorial management of the country, the Dayton Peace Agreement introduces substate citizenship, that is, *Republika Srpska* or Federation citizenship, which has important implications for voting rights since dual substate citizenship does not exist. In other words, only citizens of either entity can vote in relevant entity elections. For example, a citizen of the Federation, who might be residing in *Republika Srpska* cannot vote for the *Republika Srpska* Assembly and vice-versa. This rule also applies to national elections, as each entity has a fixed number of mandates and no office is filled through votes cast in more than one entity.

These might be some of the reasons why the vast majority of Serbs and their elites consider *Republika Srpska* as the basic guarantee of their continued political existence. This is especially visible in the cases in which the international administration is trying to delegate more power to the national institutions, thus weakening the authority of the regions. Such instances almost by default raise tensions and furious reactions in the Serb entity. The results of the polls conducted in the ethnic majority areas (entities or cantons), show a significant and persistent support among Serbs, and to lesser extent Croats for further decentralization or dissolution of the state. For example, based on a survey conducted in 2013 (UNRCO 2013), 59.3 percent of ethnic Serb respondents would like to see an independent *Republika Srpska* alongside 11.1 percent of those who would prefer the entity to be united with Serbia. The support of ethnic Croats for secession of a Croat entity is somewhat lower at 37.7 percent but this is still the most preferred option. These are persistent trends for the last 20 years. For the majority of Bosniaks, on the other hand, the national goal and overwhelming support is for the existence of a unified or even centralized state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

These structural conditions could explain the failures of cross-ethnic political parties such as *Naša stranka* (Our Party) founded in 2008 or *Socijaldemokratska partija Bosnia and Herzegovina* (Social Democratic Party of Bosnia and Herzegovina—SDP BiH, a successor to the League of Communists of Bosnia and Herzegovina) to gain significant support across the ethnic divide. The case of SDP BiH is indicative as it is defined as a multi-ethnic party (SDP BiH Statut, Article 3) but is perceived as a

Bosniak party as it receives votes mainly from the ethnic Bosniak electorate. Hence, structural conditions typical for ethnocracies favor the separation of parties along ethnonational lines. This is so in spite of the more recent examples of significant cross-ethnic political mobilization in Bosnia (Murtagh 2016). Similar to arguments presented by Džankić and Zuber, when analyzing the region of Vojvodina in this volume (Chap. 10), one can argue that Bosnia and Herzegovina parties fail to mobilize voters simultaneously along regional and ethnonational identities. More specifically, Bosnia and Herzegovina parties mobilize regional identities only when they correspond to ethnonational identities or, in other words, when territorial units are dominated by one ethnic group.

Thus, as expected in an ethnocracy, territorial heterogeneity in the vote largely corresponds to ethnic majorities. Worth emphasizing are two specific exceptions to the rule. The first example is the election of Željko Komšić in 2006 and 2010, an ethnic Croat candidate from the SDP party, enjoying strong support among the Bosniak electorate, as the Croat member of the tripartite Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. His election caused a crisis of legitimacy in which the dominant Croat parties, HDZ BiH in particular, considered him to have been elected by the Bosniaks rather than Croats, claiming that Croat votes were not represented in the Presidency (*24sata*, 22.10.2010). According to HDZ BiH, this constituted a breach of the constitutional principles outlined in the Dayton Peace Agreement. In 2014, Dragan Čović, a HDZ BiH candidate, was elected Croat member of the Presidency.

The other exception relates to territorial cleavages. There is very little region-specific intra-ethnic party competition, for example, the vote shares for parties dominant in the *Republika Srpska*—for instance, the *Savez nezavisnih socijaldemokrata* [The Alliance of Independent Social Democrats] (SNSD) and the SDS—are equally distributed across the territory. Within the Federation, regional differences in vote shares mainly correspond to Bosniak areas in the central Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croat areas in Herzegovina. The DNZ party (Democratic People's Union—*Demokratska narodna zajednica*) in the Cazin region, part of the Una-Sana Canton (Canton 1) in northwestern Bosnia is an outlier to this general pattern. The DNZ party relies on an intra-Bosniak cleavage that stems from the 1990s conflict during which splinter groups from

SDA led by Fikret Abdić defied the central authority of Sarajevo by violent means. Although hovering around a mere 20,000 votes, the electoral system fosters representation and the party continues to win seats in cantonal and Federation assemblies. This example also conforms to and shows the reasons behind the stability and fragmentation of political system and the proliferation of political parties.

2.6 Discussion

The comparative measures presented in this chapter clearly show the ways in which ethnic divisions in Bosnia and Herzegovina are reflected in its party system. The peace delivered by the Dayton Agreement is built around the creation of ethnic enclaves, particularly in *Republika Srpska* and most of the cantons in the Federation. These enclaves, dominated by one of Bosnia's three constituent peoples, form the basis for a divided party system in which there is electoral competition between parties within one ethnic group but little competition across ethnic group boundaries. Voters may split their tickets between parties across elections, but there is little evidence that they split their votes across ethnic boundaries, even for parties that offer multi-ethnic programs. As a result, congruence across elections taking place at different levels is high within a region but very low between regions.

Overall, Bosnia and Herzegovina's party system is poorly nationalized. While the major parties play the key roles at all levels of government, which particular combination of parties is present depends on the ethnic composition of each constituency. The primary locus of incongruence is between *Republika Srpska* and the Federation. The two regional party systems and electorates are so different that only one party, the Bosniak SDA, is represented in both delegations. Even so, the SDA received less than five percent of the vote and won only one seat in *Republika Srpska*. Similar patterns can be observed for the Federation entity compared to its constituent cantons.

There is little evidence for second-order effects in regional elections. The main reason for this is that regional and cantonal elections occur at the same time as national elections. The evidence for second-order effects

implies that national elections are subordinate to regional elections. This suggests that mono-ethnic subunits are the fundamental locus of representation and political competition for many voters, leading them to spoil their ballots in higher-level elections where their collective support is not sufficiently large to gain representation. All of these confirm the initial argument that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a typical case of an ethnocracy, whereby voters first and foremost base their vote choice on ethnicity leading to a large and bifurcated party system whereby each ethnic group is represented by their own parties.

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3

Croatia: Elections for Weak Counties When Regionalization Is Not Finished Yet

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and Romea Manojlović

3.1 Introduction

Croatia is a relatively small, unitary and centralized state that became independent in 1991. A new system of local self-government was established in 1993 and comprised towns (*grad*) and municipalities (*općina*) as first level local units and counties (*županija*) as second level local units. Counties were defined as deconcentrated units of state administration with additional, but very narrowly defined self-government tasks. The county level has been subject to a number of reforms over the past two decades. The territorial boundaries of counties were slightly redrawn in 1995 (Ivanišević et al. 2001; Koprić 2003) and counties were consti-

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tutionally redefined as ‘units of territorial (regional) self-government’ in 2000. However, despite a decentralization process that began in 2001, counties are still considered to be weak (Koprić 2007a). The system of local government in Croatia can be characterized by a fragmented territorial structure, limited administrative and financial capacities, a weak ability to apply for EU structural funds, and suffering from problems with transparency and corruption (Koprić et al. 2015a, b). Given the highly centralized nature of the Croatian state, we may expect that county elections are second-order elections when compared to first-order, national elections. In this chapter we would like to explore whether we can find empirical evidence for this hypothesis.

The literature on local and county elections is less abundant than the literature on local and county administration. The available studies suggest that local and regional elections are subordinate to national elections. In 2001 a proportional electoral system replaced a mixed majoritarian and proportional electoral system. Omejec (2002) studies the effects of this change and concludes that subnational elections remained subordinate to national politics. In local and regional elections, voters express, first and foremost, their preferences toward national parties, whereas local circumstances, characteristics of local candidates, and local policies are not decisive for voter behavior (Omejec 2002, pp. 149–50, Ivanišević et al. 2001). Koprić (2007b, 2009, 2011) analyzed the results for independent lists and independent candidates for county governors and mayors of towns and municipalities for the 2005 and 2009 elections. The main findings are that independent lists won less than ten percent of the total number of seats in local representative bodies, they won larger vote shares in municipalities than in county assemblies, and they were more successful in coastal areas and their electoral success decreased when one moves into the inland (Koprić 2011, pp. 93–7).

There is evidence for regionalization of the vote too. Kasapović (1994, pp. 176–7) found clear evidence for a center-periphery cleavage: the main statewide parties have their strongholds in Zagreb while regional parties tend to be strong in the periphery, most notably in Istria. Territorial strongholds for parties from the left and right can be found for national and presidential elections. Grdešić (2013) found that there is a stable divide between those parts of Croatia which lean over to the right

and those that tend to vote for center-left parties. Istria, Primorje, the northwest part of the country, and several Dalmatian cities and islands are strongholds of center-left parties, while the rest of Dalmatia, Lika, and some parts of Slavonia are strongholds of right-wing parties.

In a previous study (Koprić et al. 2015a), we conclude that county elections are second-order elections with low turnout rates and voters voting similarly in county and national elections. In this chapter we built up on this study and the literature cited above and we explore which factors can account for the second-order nature of county elections and we look whether we can find evidence for a regionalization of the vote. The next sections respectively discuss regional government and regional elections (Sect. 3.2), congruence between the regional and national vote (Sect. 3.3), second-order election effects (Sect. 3.4), and regional election effects (Sect. 3.5). The final section (Sect 3.6) concludes.

3.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

The territorial division introduced in 1993 is based on 20 counties and the City of Zagreb, which has county status. The territorial organization is not based on historical, geographical, demographical, economic, social, or any other kind of principle (Koprić 2010, pp. 115–16). The basic purpose was to create a highly centralized state, with a proper span of control, and which is easy to govern from the center. The second purpose was to divide the opposition, in favor of the ruling party (HDZ, *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Community) which introduced the county administration (Map 3.1).¹

As a result, the territorial organization of the country has been criticized for more than 20 years on the basis of a number of criteria. In 1992, when the new territorial division was discussed, legal historian

¹This has led to ‘remarkable’ county borders. For example, Ličko-senjska County has a coastal zone which has never been part of historical Lika. As a result, the island of Pag was cut in half: one half belonging to Ličko-senjska County and the other half being part of Zadarska County. Another example concerns Međimurska County which was created over night, after a visit of local HDZ politicians to the then President of the Republic (Koprić 2001, p. 72).



Map 3.1 Croatian counties (Notes: I Zagrebačka County, II Krapinsko-Zagorska County, III Sisačko-moslavačka County, IV Karlovačka County, V Varaždinska County, VI Koprivničko-križevačka County, VII Bjelovarsko-bilogorska County, VIII Primorsko-goranska County, IX Ličko-senjska, X Virovitičko-podravna County, XI Požeško-slavonska County, XII Brodsko-posavska County, XIII Zadarska County, XIV Osječko-baranjska County, XV Šibensko-kninska County, XVI Vukovarsko-srijemska County, XVII Splitsko-dalmatinska County, XVIII Istarska County, XIX Dubrovačko-neretvanska County, XX Međimurska County, XXI The City of Zagreb. Source: The Miroslav Krleža Institute of Lexicography (2013). Croatia: land and people. http://croatia.eu/pdf/Croatia-land_and_people.pdf, date accessed 25 July 2016)

Vrbošić pleaded against the proposal while it would create too many counties and therefore cannot be ‘the expression of historical, transport, and cultural factors, and especially they cannot be self-government entities’ (1992, p. 66). Šimunović (1992), an economist, criticized the centralistic orientation of the proposal and argued for the establishment of a polycentric organization based on four macro regions. The critiques have intensified after 2000 and especially since 2010 despite a number of reforms because these did not affect the territorial boundaries of the counties. Geographer and urbanist Žuljić (2001, p. 16) highlighted that the county organization is the result of a political compromise which ultimately leads to counties not being capable to serve as the basis for

decentralization. Ivanišević, an administrative scholar who also served as the minister of justice, public administration and local self-government in 2000 and 2001, stated that the territorial structure should be based on five historical regions which could be achieved through ‘merging counties with similar developmental interests’ (2003, p. 26). There are five historical regions: Istria and Primorje, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Central Croatia, and the metropolitan region of Zagreb. The current territorial boundaries of the 21 counties cross-cut those of the five historical regions. Several other scholars from various disciplines such as administrative science (Koprić 2010, 2012, 2014, 2015; Blažević 2010; Đulabić 2011, 2013, 2015), demography (Gelo and Gelo 2012), and geography (Toskić and Njegač 2015) have argued for the creation of five regions.

Apart from the academic and professional community, political parties have also argued for regionalization. One of the general goals of the Government Programme 2000–2004 in the field of decentralization was a ‘gradual transformation of the territorial structure’ (Program VRH, 2000).² A group of regionalist parties has signed three declarations demanding the regionalization of the country (Šantić 2014, p. 5). Regionalization has been advocated by the HNS (*Hrvatska narodna stranka*, Croatian People’s Party) as well as by the two strongest regional parties IDS (*Istarski demokratski sabor*, Istrian Democratic Assembly) and HDSSB (*Hrvatski demokratski savez Slavonije i Baranje*, Croatian Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja). Even some members of the two major statewide parties have pleaded for regionalization. Vladimir Šeks (2010, p. 23), a highly positioned HDZ member, stated that decentralization needs to be implemented and that the territorial organization had to be adapted accordingly. The center-left coalition of the SDP (*Socijaldemokratska partija*, Social Democratic Party), HNS, IDS, and HSU (*Hrvatska stranka umirovljenika*, Croatian Party of Pensioners) argued in its election program for the 2011 parliamentary elections for

² ‘By connecting counties and correcting their boundaries, a smaller number of regional units will be established whose area will, as a rule, coincide with the natural and historical Croatian regions. At the local level, efforts will be made to implement the process of consolidation of local self-government units in order to increase their capacity and achieve a greater degree of rationality of local structures.’

decentralization and regionalization.³ At the end of 2013, both the former of Republic Ivo Josipović and the Constitutional Committee of the Croatian Parliament initiated constitutional amendments which would enable regionalization of Croatia, but these amendments have been never adopted. Earlier versions of the draft Law on Regional Development, which was at the end adopted in 2014, had contained provisions about the five 'planning regions,' but these provisions were rejected, for different reasons, by opposition parties and IDS from the government coalition. In sum, even if there are many proponents of decentralization and regionalization of Croatia, proper decentralization has never taken off. This can be explained by the opposition of the leadership of the two largest statewide political parties, HDZ and SDP, which are not in favor of regionalization, as well as by the strong resistance of IDS to support regionalization without having guarantees that the Istarska County will get position of a region.⁴

During the 1990s a highly centralized governance system was established. Counties served as the supervisory and decreeing instruments in the hands of central government. They primarily operated as deconcentrated state administrative units and were used by central government to supervise local government and implement central government policy. The most powerful body in the counties was the county governor (*župan*) who holds supervisory, coordinative, and financial competencies, and who presides over the executive board (*poglavarstvo*). Although the *župan* was elected by a county assembly, the office holder has the status of state political functionary and the candidate had to be confirmed by the president of the Republic on the proposal of the central government (Koprić 2003).

Further reforms of local self-government were implemented in 2000 after an important political change at the national level. After being in government since 1990, the right-wing government led by the HDZ was replaced by a center-left coalition led by the SDP. The new Law on Local and Territorial (Regional) Self-Government was adopted in 2001. The counties were redefined as autonomous second-tier self-government units

³<http://www.kukuriku.org/files/plan21.pdf>

⁴IDS had at the time veto power, due to the then parliamentary structure.

with no role for the central state in the nomination or confirmation of regional office holders. In addition, a bicameral system was replaced by a unicameral parliament. Under the bicameral system, counties were nominally represented in the upper chamber (House of Counties); however, in practice the upper chamber served as the last line of defense for the ruling HDZ.⁵ The 2001 law did not affect the territorial structure of the counties and counties remained pure political creations.⁶

Since 2009, each county has two directly elected bodies: the county assembly (*županijska skupština*) and the county governor (*župan*). The introduction of direct elections has significantly strengthened the position of county governors. In addition, county governors gained several important new competencies. County governors can be removed from their office by a recall referendum which can be instigated at the request of 20 percent of the county constituency. When the county budget is not adopted by the end of year, the county governor shall be removed by central government and the county assembly will be dissolved as well.

The county assembly is the representative and deliberative body and is free to decide in all issues of county competences. This includes the right to decide about local referenda, although it is not allowed to refuse a referendum if it is requested by 20 percent of the county electorate. A referendum result is only valid when 50 percent of the electorate participates. Referenda are rarely held, most likely because of these high thresholds. The main competences of counties comprise education, health, spatial and urban planning, economic development, traffic infrastructure, pub-

⁵ Between 1991 and 2001, the Croatian Parliament (*Sabor*) consisted of two chambers, the House of Representatives and the House of Counties. Representatives for the House of Counties were directly elected (three per county), and thereby this chamber did not represent regional government but served as an additional instrument in the hand of the ruling party (Kasapović 1997, p. 97). The upper house was the junior legislative partner. It could give its opinion on proposed legislation and send the proposal back to the lower house, which could then legislate by absolute majority.

⁶ According to the Croatian Constitution counties are defined as units of territorial (regional) self-government (*područna (regionalna) samouprava*), so the term 'regions' is used only as a second term for the counties. This happened because at the time the Constitution was amended (in 2000), there was opposition to the use of the word regions. There were fears that the use of the word regions could reinforce autonomy demands of some counties, even secession (in particular Istarska County). In addition to representatives from the HDZ, also members of the ruling center-left coalition, most notably Dražen Bodice, the president of one of the government parties (HSL), were against the use of the term regional self-government. A compromise was found in the term territorial (regional) self-government.

lic roads, planning and development of a network of educational, social, cultural and health institutions, and issuing construction and demolition permits. However, counties are relatively small (175,000 inhabitants on average) and therefore are not able to fulfill their role with regard to regional development (Koprić 2007a). Furthermore, none of the functions executed by counties is an exclusive competence; rather, they share policies with local government and/or the central state (Bajo and Bronić 2009, p. 448). This makes it difficult for citizens to understand which role counties perform in overall government and to understand which tier of government is responsible for which services. A reform in 2005 introduced the category of large towns with more than 35,000 inhabitants. These towns as well as the towns which are county seats (24 in total) have almost the same competences as counties and further diminished the role of countries.

The share of public service provision by both local and county government is limited. Their combined share in overall public expenditures in 2013 was less than 17 percent (Koprić et al. 2015b). The vast majority of those expenditures are spent by the City of Zagreb and other (large) towns (Ministry of Finance, in Jambrač 2013, p. 115). Counties and the City of Zagreb had a share between 7.9 and 9.4 percent in overall public expenditures in the period between 2005 and 2014, but the predominant share is taken up by the City of Zagreb (Jambrač 2016, p. 111). Moreover, the share of counties in public investments is lower than those of local government which strengthens the observation that counties do not have enough capacity to play a large role in regional development (Rogić Lugarić 2015, p. 186). The number of seats in a county assembly ranges from 31 to 51 depending on the size of a county constituency. Assembly members have a mandate of four years and candidates need to be at least 18 years, should have permanent residency on the territory of a county, and should hold Croatian citizenship or citizenship of any other EU country. Members of Parliament (MPs) cannot serve as county governors, but there is a possibility of *cumul des mandats* by combining memberships to a county assembly and local council, and local mayors can be candidates in county elections. There is vertical and horizontal simultaneity between local and county elections which are held every four years on the third Sunday of May. Local and county elections are

held mid-term during the national election cycle, that is, about two years after a national election.⁷ Both political parties (and alliances of political parties) as well as independent lists⁸ can put forward candidates in elections to the county assembly and county governor. Independent lists need to be supported by a minimum percentage of the county electorate.⁹ Political parties and independent lists which win at least one seat in a county assembly or at least ten percent of the votes in elections for the county governor are entitled to receive annual funding and can get their campaign expenses reimbursed.

There are special rules regulating national minority representation in the county assembly. If the share of a national minority in a county is between 5 and 15 percent, then at least one representative of that minority has to be elected. When the share exceeds 15 percent, the national minority receives a proportional share of the seats in an assembly.

The electoral systems for county assemblies as well as for the national parliament have frequently changed during the 1990s.¹⁰ The first democratic national and local elections were held in May 1990. Majority rule was adopted for both levels and required an absolute majority in the first round and a relative majority in the second round. In 1992, the electoral system was reformed and a mixed proportional and majority electoral system was introduced. One half of the MPs was elected by proportional representation, while the other half was elected in electoral districts by a one-round relative majority system. A similar electoral system was applied in the 1993 local and county elections. In the 1995 national elections, the proportion of MPs elected by proportional representation increased to three quarters and the same electoral system was applied for the 1997 local and county elections. Since the national election of

⁷ On average, they have been held 529 days after a national election (except in 1993 when they were held 189 days after the first national election) (Koprić et al. 2015a, p. 489).

⁸ Independent lists are nominated by voters, not by political parties.

⁹ Independent lists need to be supported by at least 600 signatures from within the county electorate in counties with 35,000 to 60,000 inhabitants, 800 in counties with 60,000 to 100,000 inhabitants, 1000 in counties with 100,000 to 200,000 inhabitants, 1400 in counties with 200,000 to 300,000 inhabitants, 1800 in counties with 300,000 to 500,000 inhabitants, and at least 2500 signatures in counties with more than 500,000 inhabitants.

¹⁰ The same electoral system applies for both county and local elections.

2000,¹¹ all subsequent national elections (2003, 2007, 2011) and local and county elections (2001, 2005, 2009, 2013) apply proportional representation with blocked lists. A minor reform in 2015 introduced preferential voting in national elections. Only lists which obtain more than five percent of the votes participate in the division of seats. The d'Hondt method is used to determine the number of seats to be allocated to a list.

The frequent changes to the electoral system during the 1990s served to secure the dominant position of the HDZ at all three levels of government. The electoral system was reformed only a few months before an election took place and gerrymandering consisted of adjusting the size of electoral constituencies. The strategy regarding size of the electoral units was twofold. First, the ruling party decreased the size of electoral strongholds of the opposition parties and shifted the redundant votes (those exceeding 50 percent plus one) for the HDZ to the electoral units in which these votes were needed by the HDZ to win a majority. Second, the ruling party created several large electoral units in areas where it had less chances for success and where votes for rival parties were scattered as much as possible (Kasapović 1995, p. 20).

The electoral reform of 2000 constituted a compromise between HDZ and the opposition parties and entailed proportional representation with ten electoral units which have an approximately equal number of voters (Working group 1999). This proposal was acceptable for the HDZ because a proportional electoral system favors large parties. In addition, there was a possibility that left voters would be dispersed across a number of opposition parties and ten electoral units. The proposal was also

¹¹ Since the election of 2000, the country is divided into 10 electoral constituencies which each elect 14 MPs. The territorial boundaries of the ten electoral constituencies cross-cut those of the 21 counties. There are two additional electoral constituencies, one for the Croatian citizens living abroad (each party can candidate a list with 6–14 candidates; the exact number of MPs elected in this unit depends on the overall turnout in 10 electoral units in Croatia), and one constituency for national minorities. The Serbian minority elects three representatives, the Hungarian and the Italian minorities elect one representative each and the Czech and Slovakian minorities combined elect one representative. Two additional representatives are elected by two groups of national minorities, one group consists of Austrian, Bulgarian, German, Polish, Roma, Romanian, Ruthenian, Russian, Turkish, Ukrainian, Vallachian, and Jewish minority voters, and the second group combines the Albanian, Bosnian, Montenegrin, Macedonian, and Slovenian national minorities into one electorate. Majority rule applies in both constituencies.

acceptable for the SDP and its coalition partners because they could pool votes by concluding a pre-electoral coalition agreement.

3.3 Congruence of the Vote

Nationalization of the vote can be usefully explored by following the framework developed by Schakel and Dandoy (2013a, pp. 19–21) who conceptualize congruence between national and regional elections in three ways. Party system congruence (NN-RR) measures the overall difference between the results of a national election and the election results in a particular region. These differences find their cause in dissimilarity between electorates and elections, and to tease out these sources of variation, two additional indicators are proposed. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) compares the national election results at the statewide level to the national election results in a region and taps into the difference between national and regional electorates. Election congruence (NR-RR) compares the results between a national and regional election within a region and this measure indicates the extent to which a regional electorate switches their vote between regional and national elections. Congruence can range from complete congruence (0 percent) to complete incongruence (100 percent).

Figure 3.1 shows that electorate congruence is higher than election congruence (indicated by lower dissimilarity scores). Electorate congruence is on average 15.09 percent which is almost twice as small as dissimilarity for election congruence which registers an average score of 28.67 percent. This result signals a strong tendency of voters to switch their vote between national and regional elections. Party system congruence closely follows election congruence which means that dissimilarity in the regional vote is mainly caused by dual voting. A regional level analysis reveals that counties have similar scores for the three measures of the congruence of vote with the exception of Istarska County. Istarska County has an average party dissimilarity score of 60.93 percent. This exceptional

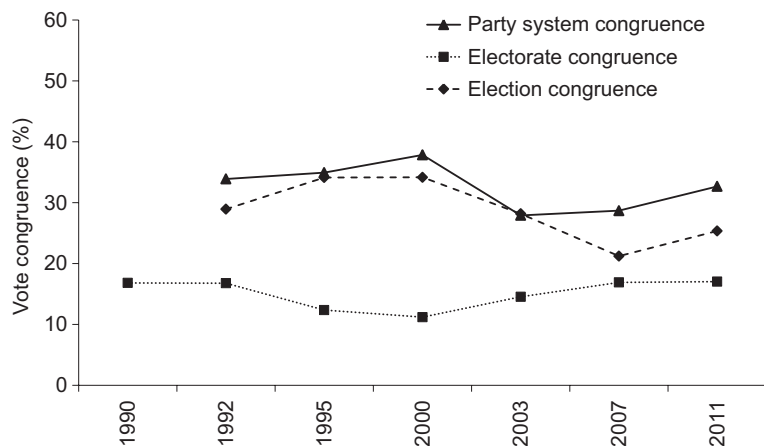


Fig. 3.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Croatia)

score can be explained by the territorial, cultural, and economic distinctiveness of the county compared to the rest of the country.¹²

Since counties do not overlap with historical regions, it is interesting to examine whether there are differences in congruence scores when the five historical regions are taken as the basis for the analysis. Table 3.1 reveals that party system dissimilarity is particularly high for the historical region of Istria and Primorje, whereas the other four historical regions have much lower party system dissimilarity scores. However, the dissimilarity scores conceal differences in party strongholds which are the result of historical cleavages as well.

¹²According to the Central Bureau of Statistics (<http://www.dzs.hr/Hrv/censuses/census2011/results/censustabsh.htm>), 12.11 percent of inhabitants in Istarska County declare themselves as Istrians, while the share of inhabitants in other counties who identify themselves by their county affiliation is practically non-existent. The total share of Catholics in Croatia is 87.03 percent, but in Istarska County, only 75.08 percent of the inhabitants are Catholics. The share of Croatian-speaking people is the lowest in Vukovarsko-srijemska County (84.64 percent) and Istarska County (86.78 percent). Finally, Istarska County is a relatively rich region since it is among the only four counties (the City of Zagreb, Istarska, Primorsko-goranska, and Zagrebačka counties) which have more revenues than expenditures per capita, meaning they are able to function without subsidies from the central state (IJF 2014, p. 134).

Table 3.1 Party system congruence broken down by historical regions

Election year	Dalmatia	Istria and Primorje	Central and Northwest Croatia	Slavonia	Zagreb
1992	30.4	69.7	33.8	32.3	20.9
1995	25.2	67.1	38.0	32.7	22.3
2000	34.1	62.3	38.4	38.7	19.3
2003	22.2	55.2	29.5	23.6	29.2
2007	25.5	60.9	27.1	30.4	16.5
2011	35.0	50.5	29.6	34.9	25.4
Mean	28.7	60.9	32.7	32.1	22.3

Notes: Shown is the average dissimilarity between the national vote at the national level and the regional vote in the region for five historical regions

First of all, regionalist parties are present in the periphery of the country (see Sect. 3.5). The strongest regionalist party, IDS, represents the historical region of Istria and wins majorities in national, county, and local elections in this region. In other peripheral historical regions, statewide parties have been able to form their strongholds preventing regionalist parties to thrive. Dalmatia and Slavonia are economically underdeveloped regions and constitute strongholds of right-wing political parties led by the HDZ. The northern part of Croatia and Istria with Primorje are the most economically developed parts of the country and are the strongholds of center-left parties, especially IDS (in Istarska), SDP (especially in Primorsko-goranska), and HNS (in Varaždinska and Međimurska).

In sum, we observe a large degree of vote switching between national and regional elections and we find some territorial differences with regard to strongholds for regionalist and statewide parties. In the next two sections, we explore nationalization (second-order election effects) and regionalization of the vote in further depth.

3.4 Second-Order Election Effects

Regional elections are second-order elections when compared to national elections. Turnout is lower and parties in national government lose votes while opposition parties gain votes. Reif and Schmitt (1980, p. 10) note that second-order effects tend to follow a cycle, whereby the strongest

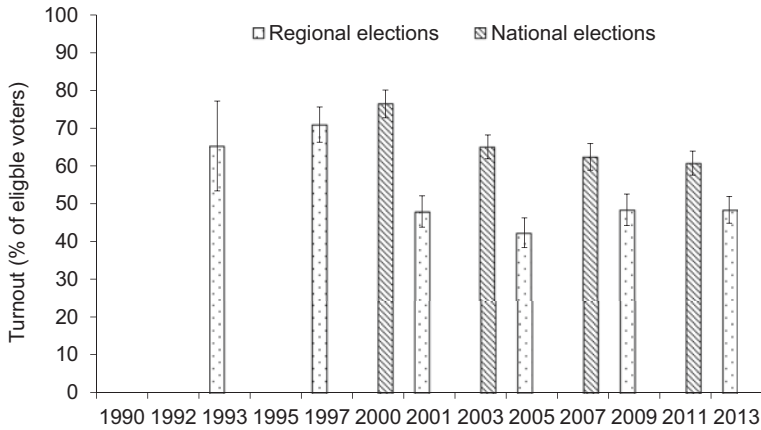


Fig. 3.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. Data for the 1990, 1992, and 1995 national elections is missing. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Croatia)

Table 3.2 Vote share swings for two major statewide parties

Election year	HDZ		SDP	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
1993	5.5	9.6	-4.9	4.3
1997	-4.1	4.8	-21.3	13.3
2001	0.6	5.2	-19.5	6.6
2005	-7.2	4.9	8.3	14.3
2009	2.7	9.6	-0.7	11.3
2013	8.2	5.8	-13.2	8.1

Notes: Shown are the averages (Mean) and its standard deviations (SD) of vote share swings between regional and previously held national elections for 21 cantons. Figures in bold indicate that the party was in national government. HDZ *Hrvatska demokratska zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Community; SDP *Socijaldemokratska partija*, Social Democratic Party

effects can be observed at the mid-point between national elections and tend to diminish once a regional election is held closer to a national election. Since county government is weak and county elections are held at mid-term of the national election cycle, we may expect that county elections are nationalized and appear as second-order elections.

Turnout in county elections is considerably lower than for national elections. Turnout is less than 50 percent for county elections but is over

60 percent for national elections (Fig. 3.2). Turnout in county elections also exceeded 60 percent during the 1990s, and this can be explained by the simultaneity of county elections with elections to the upper house of parliament which was abolished in 2000. Low turnout in the 2001 and 2005 county elections was an important argument for introducing direct elections for county governors and local mayors. However, turnout for the 2009 and 2013 county elections increased only by six percent compared to the election of 2001.

Another second-order election effect is that government parties lose and opposition parties gain votes in regional elections. Voters use their county vote to punish the governing party at the national level. In other words, voters do not use their vote to voice their preferences with regard to county policy but rather cast their vote as a sign of protest and dissatisfaction with national government.

Table 3.2 displays vote share swings between regional and previously held national elections for the HDZ and SDP which have been alternatively governing at the national level since 1990. The vote share swings reveal that the losses and gains for the two parties are relatively large. When all government and opposition parties are taken together, they account for 86 percent of the variance in vote share swings between national and county elections (from 66 percent in 2013 election to 95 percent in 1997 county elections). The average vote share for regional parties amounts to only eight percent. These results strongly indicate that county elections are second-order elections (see also Omejec 2002, pp. 149–50).

In the elections of 1993 and 2009, the main government party (HDZ) did not lose vote shares. The 1990s was a period of total domination of the HDZ. In the national elections of 1992, the SDP was utterly defeated and the party did not even manage to retain its status of main opposition party. SDP became the leading opposition party again only after the 1995 elections. Hence, the early 1990s were an exceptional time of HDZ dominance in the Croatian party system.

The second-order nature of county elections is sustained by a lack of authority and limited competences and resources (see Sect. 3.2). Hence, it is not surprising that citizens appear not to be interested in county elections and use county elections to express their dissatisfaction with national government. In the next section, we will explore in how far we can trace regionalization of the vote in county elections.

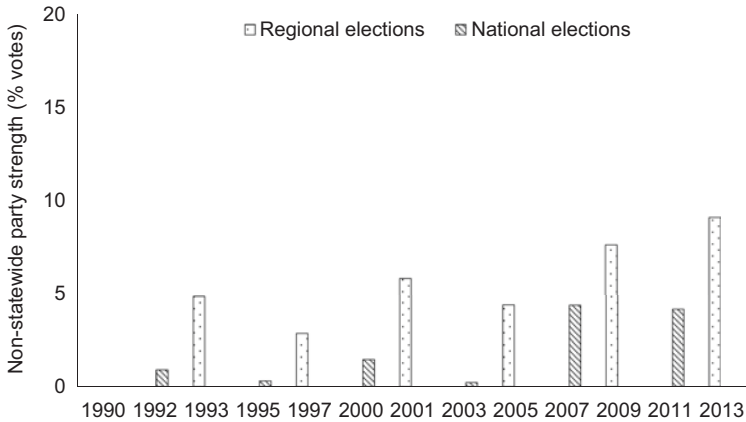


Fig. 3.3 Non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average vote shares obtained by non-statewide parties in regional and national elections. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Croatia)

3.5 Regional Election Effects

One indicator of regionalization of regional elections is the strength of non-statewide parties in national and regional elections. Regionalization takes place when these parties win large vote shares. One can differentiate between regionalist and regional parties. Regional parties represent locally based preferences without questioning the vertical structure of the state while regionalist parties explicitly demand decentralization.

Eighteen political parties may be considered to be regional parties. These parties represent specific interests of one or more neighboring counties within the five historical Croatian regions. Eight regional parties participate in county and local elections in one county¹³; four parties

¹³ AM (*Akcija mladih*, Youth Action), ARS (*Autonomna regionalna stranka hrvatskog primorja, gorskog kotara, otoka, i Rijeka*, Autonomous Regional Party of Croatian Primorje, Gorski kotar, islands, and Rijeka), and LRI (*Lista za Rijeku*, List for Rijeka) participated in Primorsko-goranska County elections. HDD (*Hrvatski dalmatinski dom*, Croatian Dalmatian Home) competed in Splitsko-dalmatinska County. MDS (*Medimurski demokratski savez*, Democratic Alliance of Međimurje) and MS (*Medimurska stranka*, Party of Međimurje) competed in Međimurska County. PS (*Podravska stranka*, Party of Podravina) competed in Koprivničko-križevačka County. PSS (*Posavska slavonska stranka*, Posavsko-slavonska Party) competed in Vukovarsko-srijemska County.

compete in county and local elections in several (two to five) counties¹⁴; and six compete in county, local, and national elections¹⁵ (Koprić et al. 2015a, pp. 504–5). Regional and regionalist parties do not win large vote shares; they received an average of 1.63 percent of the national vote and 5.78 percent of the regional vote over the past 25 years (see Fig. 3.3). However, these averages conceal important variation across parties and counties. Some non-statewide parties are quite successful (for instance, IDS, HDSSB, PGS, and ZDS) while others receive few votes (for instance, AM, ARS, DA, IDF, MS, PS, and SBHS). The combined vote share in county elections for regional and regionalist parties is relatively high in Istarska County (on average 38.5 percent for 1993–2013), Osječko-baranjska (16.8 percent), Primorsko-goranska (12.7 percent), and Vukovarsko-srijemska (14.4 percent), but these parties are practically non-existent in counties such as Bjelovarsko-bilogorska (0.32 percent), Grad Zagreb (0.11 percent), Varaždinska (0.11 percent), and Zagrebačka (0.0 percent).

The northern counties as well as Istria and Primorje, which are the most liberal and economically developed parts of the country, have served as strongholds for regionalist parties (Raos 2014a, b, p. 87). IDS is the strongest regionalist party in Croatia. The party was founded in 1990 and it has participated in all national and county elections since 1992 and won all elections and has governed in Istarska County since the first county election of 1993. IDS was also part of the center-left national government between 2000–2001 and 2011–2015. The party is a center-left party and a strong advocate of decentralization and regionalization of the

¹⁴DPZS (*Demokratska prigorsko-zagrebačka stranka*, Democratic Party of Prigorje and Zagreb) competed in the City of Zagreb, Zagrebačka County, and Karlovačka County. DSSR (*Demokratska stranka slavonske ravnice*, Democratic Party of the Slavonian Plain) competed in Osječko-Baranjska, Požeško-Slavonska, and Brodsko-Posavska counties. IDF (*Istarski demokratski forum*, Istrian Democratic Forum) competed in Primorsko-goranska and Istarska counties. ZS (*Zelena Stranka*, Party of Zagorje) competed in the City of Zagreb, Zagrebačka, and Krapinsko-zagorska counties.

¹⁵DA (*Dalmatinska akcija*, Dalmatian Action) competed in several counties in Dalmatia. HDSSB competed in five counties in Slavonia and IDS competed in Istarska and Primorsko-goranska counties. PGS (*Primorsko-goranski savez*, Alliance of Primorje-Gorski Kotar); ex RDS (*Riječki demokratski savez*, Rijeka Democratic Alliance) competed in Primorsko-goranska County. SBHS (*Slavonsko-baranjska hrvatska stranka*, Croatian Party of Slavonia and Baranja) competed in three counties in Slavonia. ZDS (*Zagorska demokratska stranka*, Zagorje Democratic Party) competed in the City of Zagreb and Krapinsko-zagorska County.

country while it aims to transform Istarska County into a separate, constitutionally recognized region, with more financial capacity and much wider competences than the counties. The party promotes Istrian identity and argues for significant self-governing powers which enable Istarska County to manage its economy, to establish good cooperation with neighboring Slovenian and Italian regions, and to actively participate in the implementation of European policies (Raos 2014b, pp. 100–1). One of the reasons for the electoral success of the IDS is that it advocated policies which were exactly the opposite from what the HDZ promoted during 1990s. The HDZ argued for the creation of a centralized state and was strongly opposed to any kind of regionalization. The president of Republic, Franjo Tuđman, publicly labeled the inhabitants of Istria as not being ‘nationally conscious’ people (Šantić 2013, p. 33–34 in Raos 2014, p. 100). In reaction to this accusation, IDS declared itself as the protector of Istria and has been able to mobilize voters on that ground.

Another strong regional party is the HDSSB which was established in 2007. The HDSSB is a right-wing party established by Branimir Glavaš, a former member of the HDZ, and was formed after a political conflict with the then president of the HDZ (Ivo Sanader). The HDSSB strongly advocates for re-establishment of Slavonia as a (historical) region. The party is successful in both national and regional elections and it was able to participate in county government but only in Osječko-baranjska County since 2007.

The two major statewide parties HDZ and SDP have formed, alone or in coalition with other parties, the majority in the council in a majority of counties since 1990. After the regional elections of 1993 and 1997, the HDZ was the leading party in respectively 18 and 17 out of a total of 21 counties. Since 2001, after the introduction of a fully proportional electoral system, county government has become dominated by two to three leading statewide parties. In 2001 the HDZ delivered the county governor (*župan*) in six counties, HSS (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, Croatian Peasant Party) in nine counties, SDP in four counties, HSLS (*Hrvatska socijalno-liberalna stranka*, Croatian Social-Liberal Party) in one county, and IDS in one county. In 2005, SDP delivered five county governors, HDZ eight, HSS four, HNS two, and HSP (*Hrvatska stranka prava*, Croatian Right’s Party) and IDS both one. In 2009—with the intro-

duction of direct elections for the county governor—HDZ delivered ten county governors, SDP five, HSS three, and the HDSSB, HNS, and IDS one. In 2013, the distribution was exactly the same except for the SDP which lost one governorship to the HNS. Istarska County has remained the stronghold of IDS since 1993, and HDSSB has managed to form the county government in Osječko-baranjska County since 2009. Other small regional parties do participate in county government but solely as junior coalition partners. HDZ, HSS, and SDP are able to dominate county government by forming pre-electoral alliances, and these parties have done so especially after the introduction of proportional rule. A large majority of these pre-electoral alliances are formed with smaller national parties and not regional parties; hence, the alliances allow the HDZ, HSS, and SDP to ‘capture’ the regional vote. Smaller parties participate in these alliances in order to secure seats in the county assembly, while the statewide parties seek to minimize their losses or to maximize their gains in county elections.

3.6 Discussion

County elections in Croatia are highly nationalized and may be considered as second-order elections, whereby voters use their county vote to express their dissatisfaction with national government. Party system congruence between regional and national elections is low, which could be an indication of regionalization of the vote. But it appears that this dissimilarity is driven by vote switching between regional and national elections as a result of the second-order nature of county elections. The subordinate status of regional to national elections is further indicated by low turnout in county elections. Politicians have tried to increase regional turnout by introducing direct elections for the regional governor but this reform had only a mild effect. Two counties form an exception. Regionalist parties are electorally strong in Istarska and Osječko-baranjska counties where they are able to win seats in regional assemblies and where they are the leading parties in forming regional government.

Several factors sustain the highly nationalized nature of county elections. First, the territorial boundaries of the 21 counties are drawn so that

they cross-cut and divide up the five historical regions and thereby hamper the mobilization of the vote by regional parties. A poorly developed historical, geographical, and cultural identity of counties prevents citizens to identify themselves with counties and to consider them as their community. Until 2001 a majoritarian electoral system at local, regional, and national levels favored large statewide parties. A proportional electoral system was introduced in 2000 but by that time the party system of Croatia has become dominated by two statewide parties, the HDZ and SDP. These two parties form pre-electoral alliances with smaller national and regional parties which sustains their dominance in the party system. Finally, county government has weak powers, few competencies, and hardly any fiscal autonomy. In addition, counties were further weakened by the creation of a new jurisdictional category of large towns which took over the powers from the counties.

County elections may even be considered as third-order elections subordinate to both national and local elections (Koprić et al. 2015a). This subordinate status of county elections is conceived by various academics and politicians as a problem and regional government is regularly subject of intense public debate. An often mentioned proposal is the merging of counties into a small number of regions which would then be equipped with more self-governmental powers. However, the main statewide parties, and especially their leaders, are reluctant to propose and implement these kinds of reforms despite pressures from academia, the general public, and smaller and regional political parties.

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4

Czech Republic: Regional Elections Without Regional Politics

Michal Pink

4.1 Introduction

In the aftermath of the 1989 revolution, the Czech-Slovak Federation went through a transition process involving the establishment of free and fair elections. The first fully competitive elections took place in June 1990 after more than 40 years of communist rule. The political debate focused mainly on the future constitutional arrangements of the federation: its name, setup, operation, and division of powers within the state. The term of office of the first freely elected parliament was shortened from four to two years and the next elections were held in 1992. After a relatively short period of four weeks of intense negotiations between the leaders of both parts, the federation was dissolved

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and two new states were established: the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. In the second half of 1992, a number of laws detailing the division of the federation was drafted and adopted. The Constitution of the new Czech Republic therefore had to be drafted relatively swiftly and a number of new institutions were created at once—at least on paper. The Chamber of Deputies was established directly because the members of the Czech National Council, the state-level legislative body of the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic, automatically became members of the Chamber of Deputies. However, the establishment of other institutions was postponed for a number of years. These concerned the Senate,¹ the Supreme Administrative Court, and the envisioned reform introducing regions and regional elections, which are the focal point of this chapter.

After the establishment of the Senate, the setting up of higher territorial self-governing units—the regions—can be seen as the second major overdue fulfillment of the Constitution. In late 1997, the Parliament adopted Constitutional Act No. 347/1997Coll., on the Establishment of Higher Territorial Self-Governing Units, which resulted in the creation of 14 regions (*kraje*, singular *kraj*) on 1 January 2000. Elections were held for the first time in October 2000—concurrent with the elections to the Senate. Since then, regional elections, in which a total of 675 politicians are voted in, have taken place four times. The introduction of regional elections soon attracted scholarly attention. The regional elections of 2000 and 2004 are discussed by authors from the Institute of Sociology of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic (Kostelecký et al. 2006) and a group of authors who contributed to the volume edited by Balík and Kyloušek (2005). Apart from describing and analyzing the elections, specific features of the electoral system, post-electoral negotiations, and coalition formation at regional level, these studies also highlight citizens' attitudes toward the new self-governing units whose role and powers are

¹ The second chamber of the Parliament was established after the first elections in 1996. All 81 senators were elected at once; however, their mandate was either 2, 4, or 6 years. Since 1996, elections for one third of the Senate seats have been held every 2 years.

generally not well understood or are not seen as important by voters. They also point out that regional executives consisted mostly of center-right parties which acted as a counterweight to the governing national center-left coalition.

Regional elections provide a useful empirical basis to study the personalization of elections. For example, Daniel Ryšavý (2013, 2014) focuses on continuity and change of candidates on regional lists and finds that regional elections manifest typical characteristics of second-order elections, such as low turnout, vote share losses for governing national parties, and higher support for opposition parties. There is a high degree of continuity of regional politicians and many national politicians are involved in regional politics as well. Finally, Ryšavý also points out that regional elections provided the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (*Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy*, KSČM) with an opportunity to assume an executive role for the first time. In several regions, the party supported minority regional government or became part of a regional executive coalition.

Other studies followed after the third regional elections in 2008. Eibl et al. (2009) analyze electoral campaigns, the spatial distribution of voters, and voter turnout, and the most recent substantial work, dealing with the 2012 regional elections, is an edited volume (Balík et al. 2013) and covers topics such as the age and profession of regional candidates and elected representatives, party and campaign finance, electoral campaigns, coalition building, preferential voting, and differences in voter support between regional and national elections.

This chapter attempts to shed light on the degree of ‘regionalization’ of the vote in Czech regional elections. In contrast to the aforementioned studies, this chapter will use new measurements which have been previously applied to regional elections in West European countries (Dandoy and Schakel 2013) to evaluate territoriality in the vote for regional and national elections. The next section offers an overview of the establishment of Czech regional government and regional electoral institutions.

4.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

The first ‘local authorities’ in modern Czech history date back to the second half of the nineteenth century. At that time, the Czech lands were an integral part of the Austrian monarchy, which were organized territorially into three Crown lands also after the ‘federalization’ of 1868. In addition to the Bohemian Diet, which seat was in Prague, there was the Moravian Diet in Brno (Brünn) and the Silesian Diet in Opava (Troppau). This territorial organization was later modified several times,² but its basic structure remained in effect until the end of 1948. Regional administration was introduced in 1949 as part of a gradual centralization of the country’s administration which was being carried out by the communists. During the succeeding four decades, there was no regional self-government of any kind. Regional committees (*krajské národní výbory*, KNV) were introduced in 1949 and they were subordinated to the Ministry of Interior and carried out state administrative tasks. A reform in 1960 lowered the number of regions and regional boundaries were redrawn so that they crosscut the boundaries of the Crown lands. One of the first steps taken after 1989 was the abolition of this system of ‘regional’ administration, especially the KNVs, as they were strongly associated with the preceding non-democratic regime. The administrative structure was preserved in a few selected areas, such as the organization of the police force and the judicial system.

The abolition of the KNVs was not immediately followed by a creation of a new system of regional administration and it took more than ten years before regional government was re-introduced. Between 1990 and 2000, there was no self-governing unit at the regional level. The only administrative level between local (municipal) self-government and national level was the District Assembly (*Okresní shromáždění*) which was mainly responsible for approving subsidies to municipalities. The assembly was indirectly elected by municipal deputies and was led by an unelected official—the head of the district authority—appointed by the

² For instance, Moravia and Silesia were merged for administrative purposes in 1928.

central government on proposal by the Ministry of Interior. The office was incompatible with a seat in the Parliament or local council, a public administration position or any position in a political party or movement. The district authority was divided into departments which were led by officials who were selected and appointed by the head of the district authority. The districts were able to issue bylaws and were accountable to and controlled by the Ministry of Interior and other central government bodies (Act No. 425/1990 Coll.).

The establishment of regions was preceded by a long discussion as to whether the higher territorial self-governing units should be regions or lands. The main advocates of regions were the President Václav Havel and the minor partners in the coalition government—the Christian-democrats (*Křesťanskodemokratická unie—Československá strana lidová*, KDU-ČSL) and the liberal Civic Democratic Alliance (*Občanská demokratická aliance*, ODA)—as well as a group of larger cities. The social democrats the Czech Social Democratic Party (*Česká strana sociálně demokratická*, ČSSD) welcomed the process of decentralization and the establishment of regional self-governance, however, they did not specify how many regions there should be and were not clear about the fate of the historic (Crown) lands. The Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (*Komunistická strana Čech a Moravy*, KSČM) was ambivalent, supporting the establishment of self-governing units yet not clarifying their function and role. The dominant party in the coalition government, the ODA, was strongly critical of any proposed segmentation of the newly established unitary state. Its chairman—the Prime Minister, Václav Klaus—was in favor of a strong state and considered self-governing municipalities (*obce*) to be the cornerstone of self-governance. Trade unions, employers' associations, and representatives of medium-sized and smaller towns and municipalities sided with Klaus, perceiving the proposed regional self-governance as a threat which could potentially interfere with their autonomy. A third group consisting of 'Moravian parties' accompanied by individual social democrats and communists, strongly favored the establishment of self-governing units and aspired for the reconstitution of Moravia as a Crown land. This group rejected the current regional setup (and continues to do so at the present day) but their influence remained marginal.



Map 4.1 Historical regions of the Czech Republic

Eventually, after eight years of discussion, the regions were established and the first regional elections were held in 2000. Regional borders were drawn in a rather random manner and do not follow historical and geographical boundaries (see Map 4.1). As a result, a number of municipalities have asked to be incorporated into neighboring regions and some regions (Vysočina, South Bohemia, Moravia-Silesia, and South Moravia) had to be renamed in 2001 because the original names derived from the name of the largest city in the region proved to be very unpopular.

As mentioned above, regional elections were introduced after a discussion which lasted for ten years. The discussion actually never ended and politicians and the media portray regional government as yet one more redundant governmental entity which sole purpose is to provide jobs for retiring national politicians. This negative view about regional government is shared by voters, and at the time of the first election in 2000, only a minimal share of citizens was optimistic about the new regions (12 percent) and many more citizens had negative attitudes toward the new regions (26 percent) (Vajdová 2001).

Act No. 129/2000 Coll. regulates the powers assigned to the regions, and over time regions gained competences in health care, education, and transport which were gradually transferred from the district authorities to the regions. The transfer of competences was completed when the district authorities were abolished on 31 December 2002. The regional assembly (*zastupitelstvo*) is headed by a regional governor (*hejtman*) and executive power is exercised by a regional council (*krajská rada*).³ The regional assembly primarily issues regulations; approves the regional budget; elects and recalls the regional governor, vice governors, and other council members; establishes and dissolves committees (and elects their chairs and members); exerts legal authority over property owned by the region; and also may present bills to the Chamber of Deputies.⁴ The executive body—the council—answers to the regional assembly. The sessions of the council are convened by the governor and, in contrast to regional-assembly sessions, are closed for the public. The council's primary responsibility is to manage the region, while ensuring conformity with the approved budget. It also delegates administrative tasks to the regional office and monitors their implementation and, when necessary, establishes committees and appoints their chairs. The region is led by a governor elected by the regional assembly. He or she signs legal regulations issued by the region (which requires prior approval from the Minister of the Interior), appoints and recalls the heads of regional offices, and informs citizens about the region's activities.

³The capital Prague is unique in that it is not part of any region and has an unique authority arrangement. Although some authors consider the capital as a 'region', it will be excluded from analysis in this chapter. First, Prague uses the electoral system for local elections to elect its representatives. This has a profound impact on the level of proportionality of the elections. Second, the elections in Prague are held at the same time as local elections, not at the time when regional elections are held. Therefore, they do not take place at the middle of the national government's electoral term, but (with the exception of the year 2014) six month after the elections to the Chamber of Deputies. Lastly, despite Prague being the largest Czech city and the seat of the government and most other key institutions of the state, the character of the electoral campaign in Prague is more similar to campaigns in local elections than for the regional election campaign. The following discussion will therefore not include Prague where it deals with regional elections themselves. In contrast, this chapter will consider Prague when comparing territorial heterogeneity in the national vote because in this case the elections in Prague take place at the same time and with the same rules as in other parts of the country.

⁴The last-cited competence is yet to be used.

Act No. 130/2000 Coll. on Regional Council Elections introduces proportional representation and a modified d'Hondt method for converting votes into seats.⁵ The electoral districts coincide with regional boundaries, and the number of assembly seats depends on the population size of a region: in regions with less than 600,000 inhabitants, 45 regional representatives are elected; in regions with 600,000–900,000 inhabitants, 55; and in regions whose population exceeds 900,000, voters elect a regional representative body with 65 members. Electors cast their vote by selecting one of many candidate lists on which they can give four 'preferential votes'; this allows the voters to 'personalize their vote' to a certain degree. If a candidate obtains at least 5 percent of preferential votes casted for their particular candidate list, they are shifted to the first position. If there are more candidates with sufficient number of preferential votes, the absolute number of votes determines which candidate is shifted to the first position.

The electoral system is similar to the one used for the Chamber of Deputies. There are, however, some minor differences. The number of mandates allocated to the electoral districts is lower in national elections. Therefore, the effective threshold is higher for the Chamber of Deputies. In addition, the d'Hondt formula is not modified for national elections. Like all other elections above the local level, regional elections can become an interesting financial resource for successful parties, since the state funds each regional mandate. The amount is 237,500 CZK (8800 EUR)⁶ a year for each regional seat. Hence, national parties have a financial interest to win representation at the subnational level.

⁵A modification of the d'Hondt divisor is used in Czech regional elections: each party's total votes are first divided by 1.42 instead of one. This modification has generated substantial criticism.

⁶For comparison, parties receive on an annual basis 855,000 CZK (31,666 EUR) for each seat in the Chamber of Deputies or the Senate. A fee per vote is also available for parties reaching the threshold in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies and European Parliament.

4.3 Congruence of the Vote

This section discusses congruence between regional and national elections. Figure 4.1 compares the national vote to the regional vote according to three measurements. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) indicates whether votes for a particular party are concentrated in a particular region and compares the result for national elections in a region to the statewide results. Figure 4.1 reveals that the national vote is very similar across regions and election congruence has remained at very high levels (indicated by low dissimilarity scores) since the first election in 1992. Party system congruence (NN-RR) compares the results of national elections at the national level to the results of regional elections at the regional level. Figure 4.1 shows a high degree of association between this measure and election congruence (NR-RR) which indicates the degree of dual voting between regional and previously held national elections in a region. Hence, differences between national and regional election outcomes are largely driven by vote switching. Dual voting sharply decreased from more than 30 percent in the 2000 regional elections (which are

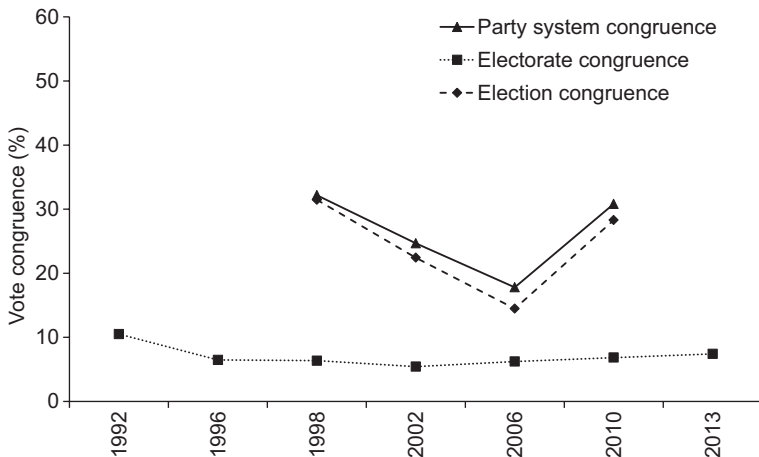


Fig. 4.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on the Czech Republic)

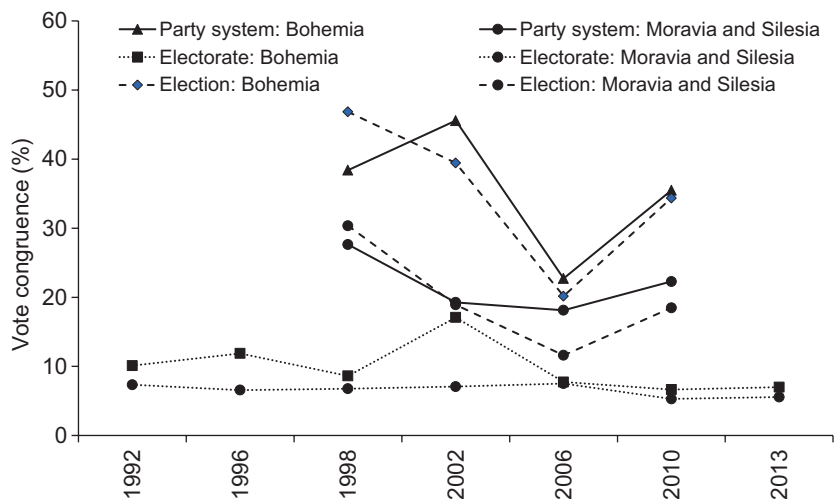


Fig. 4.2 Congruence between the regional and the national vote: historical regions (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores and its standard deviation for two historical regions. A historical region refers to the ‘Crown lands’ which existed during the Austrian-Hungarian Empire [1867–1918])

compared to the 1998 national elections) to less than 20 percent in the 2008 regional elections. However, vote switching increased dramatically in the regional elections of 2012.

Figure 4.2 explores in how far congruence between regional and national elections differ between the historical ‘Crown’ lands, that is, dissimilarity scores for regions located in Bohemia and in Moravia and Silesia (see Map 4.1 above). Election results in the current regions located on the border between the historical lands were disaggregated to smaller districts and were subsequently allocated according to their historical affiliation.

The comparison between Bohemia and Moravia and Silesia shows that the trend in congruence is the same but party system (NN-RR) and election (NR-RR) dissimilarity scores are higher in Bohemian regions. The explanation is twofold. First electoral support in national elections for KDU-ČSL is lower for districts located in Bohemia. Second, KDU-ČSL is considered by most voters to be the genuine opposition party at the national level. Over the past decade, there has been a minority govern-

ment of the social democracy party (ČSSD) which was supported, or at least explicitly tolerated, by its main rival, the civic democrats (ODS). Hence, when voters want to ‘punish’ parties in national government, they tend to favor KDU-ČSL rather than ODS which is considered to be part of national government. Higher rates of dual voting may be recorded in those regions where the electoral support for KDU-ČSL in national elections tends to be lower.

For the past two decades, the Czech party system has been shaped primarily by a socio-economic cleavage (Cabada et al. 2014). Until the 2010 election, there were four main parties established in the system. The two strongest parties were the liberal-conservative Civic Democratic Party (ODS) and the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD). ODS mainly attracted voters from cities and larger municipalities (especially in Bohemia) and its support was traditionally based in the economically more developed parts of the country. ČSSD, on the other hand, has its voter basis in the smaller municipalities and rural areas which are located in the eastern parts of the country.

Another long-established political party is the centrist Christian and Democratic Union—Czechoslovak People’s Party (KDU-ČSL) whose ideology is based on catholicism and which enjoys strong support in the Moravian countryside. The fourth main party is the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia (KSČM) which has been in opposition at the national level since 1990. Its electoral base is located primarily in peripheral areas affected by population transfers in 1945⁷ and in regions where heavy industry and/or the army (or other security forces) were concentrated during communist times.

Apart from these four main parties, there have been other formations which were able to surpass the threshold to the lower chamber of the national parliament, but in most cases, these parties did not stay in parliament for more than one electoral period. For example, the Green Party (*Strana zelených*, SZ) obtained several mandates in the Chamber of Deputies in 2006 (and participated in government), but did not win

⁷ Between 1945 and 1947, two million ethnic Germans from the border areas in Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia were deported from Czechoslovakia to Germany. These areas were later repopulated by Slav people both from the inland and from abroad (Romania, Ukraine, etc.). However, many German-speaking villages and municipalities along the borders simply ceased to exist.

a single seat in the election of 2010. Similarly, in 2010, the party Public Affairs (*Věci veřejné*, VV) managed to gain representation in the Chamber of Deputies. Despite its strong protest and populist appeal, the party entered the governing coalition led by ODS, but disintegrated shortly after. The same year marked the rise of a new rightist party TOP09,⁸ which mainly attracts liberal voters from urban districts, and could potentially replace the weakened ODS as the main relevant party on the right side of the political spectrum. Two other new parties entered the Chamber of Deputies in the early elections in 2013. The small Sunrise movement (*Úsvit*) has practically ceased to exist by the summer of 2015, while its more successful counterpart, ANO 2011, became the second largest party in the parliament and a crucial member of the governing coalition. The electoral base of both parties was distributed evenly throughout the country. Their success is based on personalities of their candidates rather than on particular values or ideology (Gidron and Bonikowski 2014). All aforementioned parties are statewide parties which manage to put up candidate lists in all regions and conduct statewide electoral campaigns. While neither of them can be viewed as a non-statewide party, some of them (most significantly KDU-ČSL) receive more support in some regions than in others.

4.4 Second-Order Election Effects

This section explores second-order election effects in regional elections by looking at vote share losses and gains for parties in national government and opposition, turnout differences between regional and national elections, and electoral performance of non-statewide and new political parties. When regional elections are second-order, we expect lower turnout in regional elections, vote share losses for parties in national government while parties in opposition, new and non-statewide parties should win vote share.

Regional elections in the Czech Republic are not only the second youngest elections (after elections to the European Parliament) but are

⁸TOP09 and ANO 2011 are both official party names and abbreviations.

Table 4.1 Importance of elections as indicated by voters

Type of election	Very important	Rather important	Neutral	Less important	Not Important
Local	38	26	19	10	7
Chamber of Deputies	34	25	21	12	8
Presidential	33	22	24	12	9
Regional	30	28	25	11	6
Senatorial	15	19	28	18	20
European Parliament	11	17	31	22	19

Source: STEM Trendy 9/2012

Notes: Shown is the percentage of respondents who indicate the level of importance for a type of election. The total number of respondents in the survey is 1,205

also considered by voters to be one of the least important elections. Table 4.1 displays the perceived importance of Czech voters for various types of elections. In a statewide survey, conducted by the private company STEM, respondents were asked to indicate the importance of various types of elections. Voters view local (municipal) elections as the most important: more than 50 percent of voters perceive local elections as important and less than 20 percent consider them to be unimportant. The results are similar when it comes to the main ‘national’ elections to the Chamber of Deputies. The results for presidential election can be explained by the fact that the president has been directly elected very recently in 2013, just one year before the survey took place. Regional elections are perceived as somewhat less important, with large part of the respondents choosing the ‘neutral’ option and marking regional elections as neither important nor unimportant. There is, however, a significant portion (over 50 percent) of voters who still consider regional elections to be important, and the differences between the perceived importance of regional, presidential, lower chamber, and local elections are minor.

Figure 4.3 displays electoral participation rates for regional and national elections. Regional elections tend to attract about 30 to 40 percent of registered voters, whereas turnout is about 60 percent in national elections. Table 4.1 reports on the perceived importance of each type of election

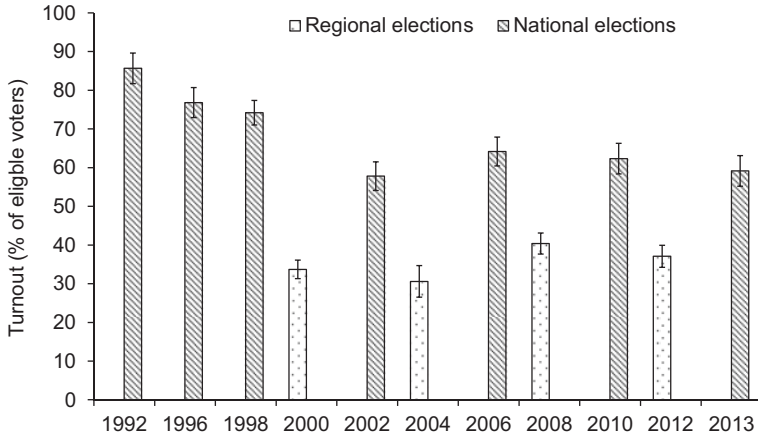


Fig. 4.3 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. More details can be found in the country Excel file on the Czech Republic)

and, interestingly, turnout is about ten points lower than the percentage of people who consider regional elections to be rather or very important.

Special circumstances surrounding elections may account for the higher turnout in the 2008 and 2012 regional elections. At the time of the regional election of 2008, there was fierce competition between two blocs, as neither the left nor the right had emerged victorious from the preceding national elections. Both sides lacked one seat needed to form a majority in the Chamber of Deputies (i.e. 99 out of a total of 200 seats). In addition, a vote of confidence in Mirek Topolánek's government was marked by the dissent of two social democratic Members of Parliament (MPs) who disagreed with the majority opinion of their parliamentary party group. The 2012 regional elections were also significantly affected by developments at the national level. The governing coalition of ODS and TOP09, supported by several members of the disintegrating populist party Public Affairs, was implementing unpopular tax reforms at the time of the regional elections. In both cases, voters probably saw regional elections as an opportunity to punish parties in national government while favoring parties in national opposition and were incentivized to cast their (protest) vote.

Low turnout may be conducive for other second-order election effects, that is, vote share losses for parties in national government but vote share gains for new, small, and opposition parties. There are several other conducive factors for second-order election effects. First, regional elections are held almost precisely at mid-term of the national election cycle. That is, a regional election is held two years after the previous and two years before the next national election. Second, regional elections are held simultaneous throughout the country since 2000. It is therefore a state-wide affair, featuring uniform campaigns with minor and subtle regional differences. National political issues dominate the campaigns, and voters base their vote decisions primarily on their attitudes toward national parties (STEM, ČSSD 2008).⁹ An example is the regional election campaign of 2008, during which national health policy reform was the dominant issue, a policy in which regions do not have competences. The punishment vote in regional elections did resort an effect in central government policy. After being confronted with a vote share loss, the governing social democrats decided to amend the new health-care policy by discarding the health-care fees imposed on individual patients and decided to obtain alternative funding from regional budgets. Another contributing factor to second-order election effects is that the electorate has had a significant break when the regional election takes place. The only exception was the 2004 election when elections to the European Parliament took place five months before the regional elections. Other regional elections constituted the first opportunity for voters to express their (dis-)satisfaction with the ruling elite since the preceding parliamentary election.

Figure 4.4 displays vote switching between regional and previously held national elections for four types of parties: government parties, opposition parties, new parties, and parties that existed at time of the previous national elections but were not represented in national parliament at the time of the regional election. From Fig. 4.5 it becomes apparent that voters penalize government parties. In line with expectations, opposition parties performed well but their gain in vote shares decreases

⁹The question was: did you use your vote to show support/dissatisfaction with the government? The majority of respondents indicated that they expressed their vote in regional elections based on their attitude to 'national' issues and on their desire to show dissatisfaction with the government. This was especially true for voters who sympathize with the ČSSD (STEM, ČSSD 2008).

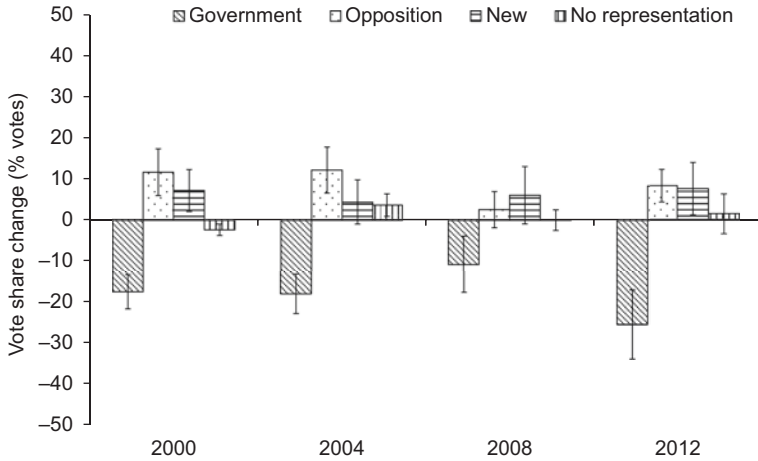


Fig. 4.4 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on the Czech Republic)

over time from about 10–15 percent in the 2000 and 2004 elections to about 5 percent in the 2008 and 2012 elections. New parties have appeared in all regional elections and non-statewide parties gained vote share since 2008. The dominance of national politics over regional elections is further supported by a high degree of overlap between candidate lists at regional and national level. Especially since 2008, regional candidate lists are often headed by well-known and popular politicians such as national MPs or members of the shadow cabinet. For example, when we look at elected regional representatives for the social democratic party in 2012, we find nine cases of politicians who hold positions at both the regional and the national level. The party subsequently changed its internal rules in order to discourage such accumulation of mandates but with limited success: five party members accumulated offices during the last three years. There are similar examples from other parties, such as ODS, which in 2012 managed to win regional elections in Plzeňský region with a candidate list led by Jiří Pospíšil, a very popular former minister of justice and vice-president of the party.

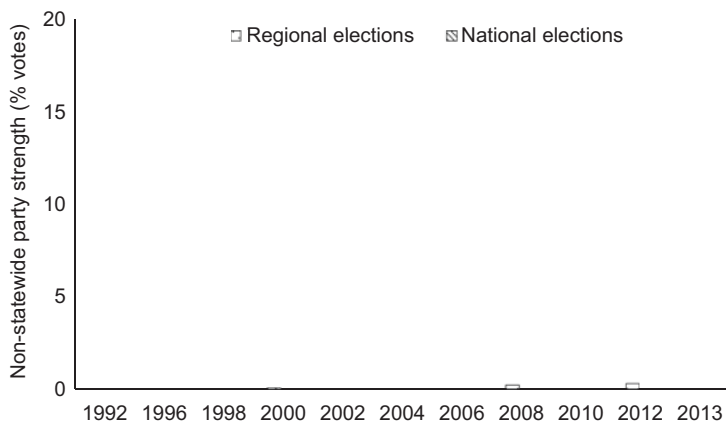


Fig. 4.5 Non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average vote shares obtained by non-statewide parties in regional and national elections. More details can be found in the country Excel file on the Czech Republic)

4.5 Regional Election Effects

Because second-order election effects tend to be strong in regional elections, parties in national government have not been able to gather enough votes to form regional government and to win the regional presidency. Between 2000 and 2012, governmental parties were in opposition in most regions. A major exception is KDU-CSL which traditionally receives higher support in Moravia. The party was able to win regional elections and obtain the office of regional president in some Moravian regions while being a junior party in a coalition government at the national level lead by the social democrats. A second exception is ODS which in 2008 managed to form two regional coalitions (in Jihomoravský and Jihočeský regions) with the victorious social democrats. At that time at the national level, ODS was the main governmental party and delivered the prime minister while CSSD was in opposition. Ironically, the regional branches of ODS allowed the social democrats to abolish the newly established health-care fees (a fee of 30 Kč, about 1.25 EUR, paid by patients at doctors' offices) and to use regional budgets to compensate for the revenue loss. A last exception is again the ODS, but this time in 2012, when the

candidate list lead by a former popular minister of justice Jiří Pospíšil managed to win elections in Plzeňský region while the party was leading the government at the national level. Despite the victory, the party did not win enough mandates to form regional government and remained in opposition.

Non-statewide parties are rare and not electorally strong in the Czech Republic. In the 1990 and 1992 national elections, only one non-statewide political party won representation in the national assembly: the Movement for Self-Governing Democracy—Society for Moravia and Silesia (*Hnutí za samosprávnou demokracii—Společnost pro Moravu a Slezsko*, HSD-SMS) in the Czech National Council. Since these elections, not one non-statewide party has gained representation in the Chamber of Deputies. However, non-statewide parties have been able to surpass the 5 percent threshold for winning seats in the assembly in some regions. Examples include the Zlín Movement of Independents (*Zlínské hnutí nezávislých*) in 2000, SOS in 2004, Severočeši.cz in 2008, and Severočeši.cz, Východočeši.cz, Jihočeši.cz, and others in 2012. Overall, the number of votes and seats won by non-statewide parties in regional elections is marginal (see Fig. 4.5) but there are a few successful examples (see Table 4.2). The Party for Open Society (*Strana pro otevřenou společnost*, SOS) is politically active in the Liberec region and gained representation in the first elections of 2000 and has managed to win seats since. Another example is Severočeši.cz which won 8 regional seats and attracted 13.2 percent of the vote in *Ústí nad Labem* in 2008. The party also managed to win seats in the Senate, with one seat going to Jaroslav Doubrava in

Table 4.2 Electoral results for non-statewide parties in the 2008 and 2012 regional elections

Region	Party	2008		2012	
		Votes (%)	Seats (total)	Votes (%)	Seats (total)
Karlovy Vary	Alternativa	9.9	4 (45)	6.7	4 (45)
Liberec	SOS	6.1	3 (45)	2.4	0 (45)
Ústí nad Labem	Severočeši.cz	13.2	8 (55)	12.0	9 (55)
South Bohemia	Jihočeši.cz	–	–	14.6	9 (55)
Hradec Králové	Východočeši.cz	–	–	7.7	4 (45)

Source: Czech Statistical Office. <http://www.volby.cz/>

constituency No. 31 (*Ústí nad Labem*) and another to Alena Dernerová in the nearby constituency No. 4 (Most).

The party manifestos of non-statewide parties can be seen as lists of pledges of local (municipal level) politicians to promote local interests at the regional level. These politicians have been member of a municipal council, or have a background in local businesses and industry, or are MPs of statewide parties who were unable to gain an electable position on their party's regional candidate list. For example, the founder of the political movement South Bohemians (*Jihočeši*), Michal Doktor, left ODS after years of representing the party in the Chamber of Deputies and founded his own non-statewide party. Another example is the well-known local movement North Bohemians (*Severočeši*) whose senators were elected to the Senate for the KSČM but who changed their allegiance to this party.

One possible explanation for the varying electoral success of regional parties across regions concerns the electoral system. The required number of votes to win a seat in a regional assembly differs quite significantly across regions due to the differences in the number of inhabitants in a region, the number of seats in the regional assembly, voter turnout, and preferential voting. Table 4.3 illustrates this: the required number of votes to gain regional representation is about 3,600 votes in Karlovy Vary but it is almost five times as much in South Moravia. Other regions with a low effective threshold are Liberec, Pardubice, and Plzeň, whereas the threshold is relatively high in South Moravia, Central Bohemia, and Moravia-Silesia.

A particular electoral strategy in regional elections can be observed for the Christian-democrats. While other statewide parties compete in regional elections with the same label as used for national elections, the Christian-democrats often choose to compete in regional elections under a different name. In some regions, more often in Bohemia than in Moravia, the party uses the label 'Coalition for the...Region'. The label is tailored toward each region, so we can find candidate lists such as Coalition for the Pardubický Region, Coalition for the Královéhradecký Region, and so on. The term coalition implies that the party cooperates with another political party. However, a closer look at the candidate lists reveals that KDU-ČSL usually partners up with groups of non-partisans or with marginal local parties. For example, the Coalition for the

Table 4.3 The threshold (number of votes) in the 2008 and 2012 regional elections

Region	Threshold in 2008	Threshold in 2012
Central Bohemia	19,844	17,490
Hradec Králové	8,977	8,169
Karlovy Vary	4,138	3,607
Liberec	6,484	6,474
Moravia-Silesia	19,055	15,999
Olomouc	9,748	8,844
Pardubice	8,662	7,773
Plzeň	8,944	8,727
South Bohemia	10,194	9,956
South Moravia	18,886	17,367
Ústí nad Labem	12,083	10,650
Vysočina	9,028	8,203
Zlín	9,667	9,346

Source: Czech Statistical Office. www.volby.cz

Notes: Shown is the number of votes a party needs to win in order to get a seat in a regional assembly. The threshold is 5 percent of the votes

Pardubický Region presented a list of 50 candidates in 2012, 22 candidates were members of KDU-ČSL, 4 were members of a local party, and the rest were non-partisans. This candidate list has the highest proportion of non-KDU-CSL members of all regional coalitions the party has presented. Members of KDU-ČSL and non-partisans usually take turns on the candidate lists, so that the list of elected representatives appears to be well-balanced between party members and non-partisans. In other regions, the relation between KDU-ČSL members and other candidates on the list leans heavily toward party members. While the label remains the same (Coalition for...), an overwhelming majority of the elected representatives are KDU-ČSL members. The impact of this strategy is difficult to evaluate since—as we can see in Fig. 4.4—the party's opposition position at the national level is probably more important for its success in regional elections.

4.6 Discussion

An analysis on four regional elections clearly reveals that regional elections in the Czech Republic are highly nationalized and may be described as typical second-order elections. Statewide parties win most of the regional vote and non-statewide parties have had only limited electoral success. Turnout in regional elections is significantly lower than in national elections and voters frequently punish governing parties while favoring parties in opposition. Most of the non-statewide parties that managed to win a regional seat are not typical regionalist parties since they do not promote stronger regional autonomy but rather represent diffuse regional interests. But some historical and territorial differences exist. KDU-CSL has limited potential to win votes in Bohemia but receives a stable and long-term electoral support in Moravia. Therefore, the party is much more successful in regional elections in Moravia while it accentuates the territorial cleavage in Moravia, whereas the socio-economic cleavage is dominant in other parts of the country. In Bohemia, protest voters in regional elections prefer to support local and regional political parties to show their dissatisfaction with national political parties. This role is in large part fulfilled by the KDU-CSL in Moravia.

Nationalization of regional elections is sustained by several factors. Regional candidate lists often feature national politicians on the top of the list: members of the shadow cabinet, ex-ministers, vice-chairmen of opposition parties, and so on. In addition, regional elections take place on the same date throughout the country and election campaigns focus on national issues. Voters clearly conceive regional elections as second-order. When asked about their motives for their vote in the 2008 election, more than 50 percent of the respondents indicated that national policy determines their vote decision (this figure exceeded 80 percent for ČSSD and KSČM voters). It seems that Czech regional elections have become an instrument for voters to express their dissatisfaction with national policy and have become a tool for statewide parties to promote their national policy agenda. Although regional elections in the Czech Republic are clearly second-order elections, it remains an open question whether they will remain subordinate to national elections. It might be the case that

four elections over a time span of 12 years is a too short time period for voters and political parties to develop distinct regional election behavior.

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5

Hungary: Are Neglected Regional Elections Second-Order Elections?

Gábor Dobos and Réka Várnagy

5.1 Introduction

Hungary is a centralized unitary state with a strong municipal tier. Municipalities took advantage of the liberal regulation introduced during the early 1990s and the number of local governments doubled from 1526 to 3093. Despite the emergence of a highly fragmented system of local governments, the intermediate level remained a ‘missing tier’ (Zongor 1999). There are 19 counties but these are deprived of all major

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responsibilities that they used to hold as agents of central government before the democratic transition. There is no hierarchy between local and county (*megye*) government. Local governments are autonomous actors and deliver a broad range of local public goods and services but they lack the financial resources to efficiently implement these policies. The counties have a complimentary role and almost no tasks are directly delegated to them (Pálné et al. 2004). Although the asymmetrical relationship between localities and counties quickly resulted in a lack of coordination and problems of economy of scale, the absence of a sufficiently powerful intermediate level has only been half-heartedly addressed in Hungary. The ‘central government was not interested in filling out the institutional vacuum at the intermediate-level and local governments were not interested in the establishment of a potential rival in service delivery’ (Soós and Kákai 2010, p. 546).

The introduction of direct election for the members of the county assemblies (*megyei közgyűlés*) in 1994 signaled an effort to strengthen counties but this reform did not bring a break-through and counties remained present but ‘invisible’ actors. Hence, not much is at stake in county elections which we consider regional elections for the purposes of this chapter since they are the ‘intermediate-level elections’ in Hungary.¹ In this chapter we are interested in the question whether the regional vote is nationalized or regionalized. We expect that regional elections are nationalized but there are two ways in which nationalization may be expressed in the regional vote. First, we expect that regional elections are second-order elections since regional assemblies are weak and not much is at stake. When county elections are subordinate to national elections, government parties should lose vote share while opposition, small, and new parties should gain vote share (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Second, the dominance of national politics, the relative homogeneity of the Hungarian society, and the timing of regional elections (approximately

¹ The term region was introduced in 1999 (Act XCII of 1999) when the country was divided into seven NUTS2 (nomenclature d’unités territoriales statistiques) regions. In 2006 a strategy of regionalization was developed which foresaw replacing the counties by regions with directly elected assemblies. This reform did not gain sufficient political support and was never implemented. The regions merely remained planning and statistical units.

six months after national elections) may lead to similar election results and we expect small differences between the national and regional vote.

While there is some research on the role of national parties in local and regional elections (e.g. see Bóhm [2006] and Wiener [2010]), regional level election results have rarely been analyzed. In addition, major territorial reforms took place between 2010 and 2012 and the effects of these reforms have not been studied yet. The aim of this chapter is to analyze the extent to which Hungarian county elections are nationalized or regionalized. The next section offers an overview of regional government and regional elections. In the third section, we explore differences between the national and regional votes, and in the fourth and fifth sections, we respectively address the questions in how far these differences are caused by second-order election effects (nationalization) or are the result of a regionalization of the vote. The final section discusses the results and reflects on the second-order nature of regional elections.

5.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

One may ask the question whether there is a county level of government in Hungary. During the communist regime, counties were administrative units. In the highly centralized territorial structure, the counties served as the local agents of the central party without real self-governing capacities. After the democratic transformation, politicians emphasized the role of local communities and purposefully weakened the role of other subnational units (Pálné 2008, p. 141). As a result, counties have almost no tasks and responsibilities of their own (Hooghe et al. 2016) and they are in a relatively weak position for structural, functional, and organizational reasons.

The current territorial structure of Hungary is defined by the Fundamental Law of Hungary which states that ‘the territory of Hungary shall consist of the capital, counties, cities and towns, as well as villages’ (Article F). Despite of being the only intermediate-level territorial unit defined in the territorial structure of Hungary, the county’s authority

was challenged by various actors. First, the Hungarian territorial structure is not hierarchical in the sense that local governments function independently of county assemblies. Designed as complementary institutions the tasks of local governments and the counties are separated and the county has no right or responsibility to control the functioning of local governments. Second, the county assemblies do not respond to all voters living within their boundaries as cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants can choose to be 'promoted' to cities of county rank² (*megyei jogú város*), which means that they can fulfill tasks that are normally assigned to the county assemblies. These cities also operate independently from the county assemblies, and while their geographical expansion is limited, they often host a significant share of the infrastructure (business, public services, education) in the county as a whole. At elections voters living in these cities do not cast a vote for the county assembly members but for their own city's assembly members (which instead of being called local governments (*önkormányzat*) are called city assembly (*községi ülés*) to emphasize their county rank). Third, the role of counties as an institution representing an intermediate-level territorial unit encompassing several smaller local governments is challenged by the merger of localities in local government associations (*társulás*) and micro-regions (*kistérség*). These mergers are motivated by financial incentives to obtain benefits from scale economies but these mergers often hinder the capacity of county assemblies in developing a comprehensive economic development policy. Finally, the role of counties is further weakened by deconcentrated central state administration. The central state introduced a parallel administrative structure with more than 40 intermediate-level government agencies (currently called *kormányhivatal*) which are assigned with a variety of tasks (consumer protection, land registration, labor issues, etc.) and which have offices in the counties, acting as the territorial sub-unit of the central state, in a deconcentrated structure.

The void at the intermediate-level of the Hungarian territorial structure was clearly a problem but the potential answers given by different governments varied to a great extent. During the beginning of 2000s,

²In 2015 there are 23 cities of county rank, out of which 18 are also the administrative centers of their counties.

the socialist government aimed at reforming the territorial structure through regionalization. Supported by the European Union creating administrative regions was a must in order to be able to absorb European funds but domestic political actors resisted the idea of creating viable regional governments with wide responsibilities and capacities. As a result, the already existing territorial structure with local governments and regional assemblies remains, but a new, parallel institutional structure was introduced with regional and sub-regional units. The regional development councils (*fejlesztési tanácsok*) lack a democratic mandate since they have no directly elected members. However, these councils soon took over most of the planning activities of the counties. Due to strong political resistance, this new structure of development councils did not bring along a strong regionalization process but, as Pálné (2011, p. 20) points out, resulted in the centralization of power with the government dominating the councils despite the fact that regionalization dominated the political agenda on local reform between 1996 and 2011 (Pálmai 2013).

Regionalization was often challenged by right-wing parties which saw regions as an administrative tool lacking political content (such as historical territorial continuity, shared regional identity or any other trait of political community). The reform introduced by the Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Party's (*Fidesz Magyar Polgári Párt*, Fidesz)-Christian Democratic People's Party (*Kereszténydemokrata Párt*, KDNP) government, which came into office in 2010, can be characterized by centralization combined with a strong degree of deconcentration. As a result of deconcentration, a new subnational territorial unit, the district (*járás*) was created with 198 districts introduced as of 1 January 2013. The districts are subdivisions of the already existing county government agencies (*megyei kormányhivatal*) and are responsible for carrying out magisterial and administrative tasks.³ Along with the introduction of districts came the redefinition of the role of local governments and county assemblies, and many of their tasks and responsibilities were transferred to the districts.

³ Before the reform, this duty was assigned to the notaries of local governments, who had two roles: they were the heads of the local administration (and were directors of the mayor's office) and were central state agents. The reform's aim was to separate these roles, and let the notaries deal with local issues, while the government tasks were transferred to the district offices.

The complex institutional setting at the intermediate tier of the Hungarian territorial structure clearly affected the role and function of county assemblies. After the transition to democracy, county assemblies were assigned with two functions: (1) responsibility for regional economic development and planning and (2) to provide services which cannot be efficiently delivered by municipalities because of scale economies (for instance, hospitals or secondary education). However, none of these functions cannot be properly carried out by the county assemblies because of the above mentioned institutional complexity at the regional level leading to various competing governmental units challenging the counties' authority. Furthermore, county assemblies have very few competences of their own and they mostly deal with local policies which can be more efficiently provided at a larger territorial scale such as waste and sewage management.

Moreover, due to declining financial support from the central state, many local governments handed over their services to the county assemblies over the past two decades. Local governments have full autonomy in deciding which services are being transferred to the county level and this has resulted in varying and diverse roles for counties. The fiscal capacities for county assemblies are also very limited because they do not have their own taxes nor can they set the rate of national taxes. Thus, counties are fully dependent on the financial support from central government. Finally, the reform of 2013 redefined and narrowed the role of county assemblies by making development and planning their priority while taking away the responsibility of managing public services such as secondary schools and hospitals. The county assemblies have become empty 'shells' without real power and entrusted with the sole task of regional development and regional planning. One can hardly speak of regional government also because of the organization of the executive at the county level. There is no separate executive body at the county level. Councilors form party groups and decision-making is exercised by simple majority voting in the assembly. Coalition agreements are rare despite the fact that in most county assemblies, none of the party groups has a majority. The president of the assembly (*megyei közgyűlés elnöke*) is elected by the assembly members but the powers associated with the office are minimal and includes tasks such as chairing assembly meetings and signing documents of the assembly.

Along with the changing role of counties the regional electoral system has been modified on several occasions. Direct regional elections were introduced in 1994 and have been held every four years. Subnational—local and regional—elections are held in the same year as national parliamentary elections; the latter are in spring and the former are held in autumn (typically in October).⁴ Because local/regional elections are held shortly after national elections they are often considered as a second round of national elections (Bóhm 2006).

There have been two major electoral reforms at the regional level, one in 1994 and one in 2010. The reform in 1994 introduced direct elections for the members of the county assemblies (in 1990 the county assemblies were indirectly elected by the members of the municipal councils) and allowed for a *'cumul des mandats'*, that is, the practice of holding elected positions at both the local and regional level or at the regional and national level.⁵ As a result, regional assemblies became part of a patronage-system for parties in which regional assemblies serve as a 'springboard' for inexperienced politicians and as a 'safety net' for the defeated candidates at the national level (Várnagy 2008; Borchert 2011). The personal links between regional and national levels were further tightened by the Members of Parliament (MPs) who also won mandates in regional and local assemblies. In 1994, 11 percent of the members of national parliament also had a seat in a regional assembly, and by 2002 this proportion had increased to 28 percent and then slightly dropped to a bit below 20 percent (Várnagy 2012). The practice of *'cumul des mandats'* was abolished in 2012.

The electoral systems at the local and regional levels are similarly structured and highly complex (Swianiewicz and Mielczarek 2005, p. 20). Municipalities with a population of less than 10,000 inhabitants hold elections under a plurality formula with a block vote system and municipalities with more than 10,000 inhabitants combine majoritarian rule with compensatory lists which make the overall election results proportional. The list system induces political actors to establish party organiza-

⁴ The timing of subnational elections will change in 2019 since local and regional representatives and mayors elected in 2014 have a mandate of five years.

⁵ Before 2012 there were MPs in the Hungarian Parliament who were mayors of cities and members of regional assemblies at the same time.

tions to compete in elections (Soós, n.d., p. 2). The block vote system helps the election of individual candidates and the compensatory lists allow national political parties to gain entry at the local level (Kákai 2004, p. 10). Until 2010, the regional electoral system was very similar to the local one: there were two types of electoral districts in each region. One district for municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants and one district for municipalities exceeding 10,000 inhabitants. Both types of districts applied a proportional list formula (with Sainte-Laguë method and a 4 percent threshold), and the total number of seats is proportional to the total population in the territory. Citizens in cities with county rank do not vote for county assemblies but elect municipal councilors and the assembly of the Municipality of Budapest is elected by 23 districts.

An electoral reform in 2010 (Act L of 2010) introduced two major changes to the local and regional electoral systems: first, the two types of districts were merged and second, the number of mandates in each local and regional assembly were significantly decreased. On average the number of seats declined by 53.8 percent, ranging from a decline of 38 percent (from 40 to 25 seats) in Hajdú-Bihar county to a drop of 63 percent (from 40–41 to 15 seats) in Heves, Komárom-Esztergom, Nógrád, Tolna, Vas, and Zala counties.⁶ In addition, the threshold to stand for elections has increased from 0.3 percent to 1 percent of the voters. The electoral formula translating votes into seats was changed to the d'Hondt formula, while the threshold for winning a seat was increased from 4 to 5 percent. All these reforms resulted in a less proportional party system which favors bigger parties. In the elections of 2010, only one non-national political organization (the Association for Somogy County, *Somogyért Egyesület*) was able to win mandates in a regional assembly.

A similar majoritarian turn can be observed for the 2011 reform of the national electoral system which was first applied in the election of 2014. Before 2011, 386 parliamentary mandates were distributed among 3 tiers: 176 mandates were allocated in single member districts (SMDs), a maximum of 152 mandates were distributed on the basis of regional proportional party lists, while a minimum of 58 compensatory man-

⁶As the average number of seats was decreased from 43 to 21, the number of mandates became more proportional regarding the population of the counties.

dates were distributed on the basis of national party lists. A two-round, absolute majority system was applied in the SMDs and a threshold of 5 percent was established for party lists. This electoral system greatly benefited the larger parties while the winners in the SMDs were overrepresented in terms of mandates compared to its share of the vote (Benoit 2005). The 2011 reform reduced the number of parliamentary seats from 386 to 199 and 106 out of 199 mandates are allocated to SMDs which apply a single round, relative majority system. The other 93 mandates are distributed on the basis of national party lists according to the remaining votes from the SMDs which were not used to allocate seats (i.e. the votes of the 'losers' as well as the surplus votes of the winners). These mandates are allocated on the basis of the d'Hondt method with a 5 percent threshold. The regional lists have been abolished. Subnational government and subnational electoral systems have been constantly reformed, and in the next sections, we explore the effects of these reforms on the nationalization of the regional vote.

5.3 Congruence of the Vote

Dissimilarity in the vote between regional and national elections can be usefully explored by three congruence measures. Party system congruence (NN-RR) compares the result of a national election to a regional election. Party system dissimilarity scores capture differences between national and regional elections as well as between regional and national electorates. Two additional indices differentiate between the two sources of variation. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) contrasts, for national elections, the result at the statewide level to the outcome within a region. This measure captures the extent to which a regional electorate votes differently than the national electorate. Election congruence (NR-RR) compares within a region the result of a national election to the outcome of a regional election and taps into the extent to which a regional electorate switches their vote between regional and national elections.

Figure 5.1 displays the scores for the three congruence measures since 1990. Two observations stand out. First, electorate congruence is relatively high (indicated by low dissimilarity scores) and is stable over time

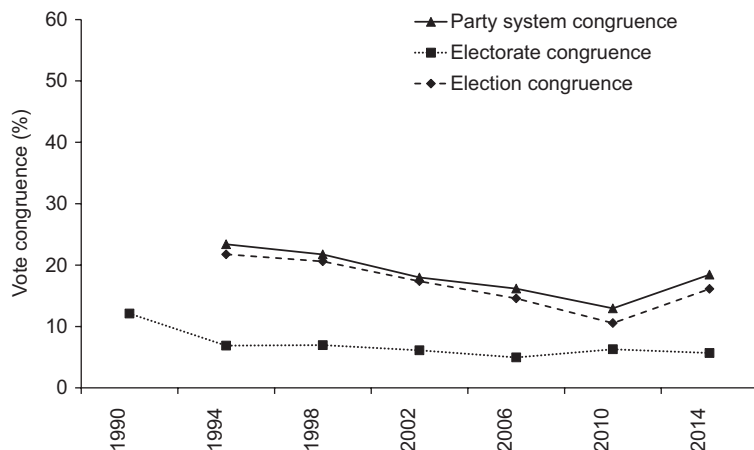


Fig. 5.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Hungary)

with the exception of the first election of 1990 which can be explained by the novelty of democratic elections. Second, variation in electoral congruence scores across regions is low (indicated by low standard deviations; results not shown) and this indicates that voters do not seem to express regional preferences in national elections but rather base their vote choice on stable party preferences. Electorate congruence scores need to be interpreted with some care. A mixed electoral system applies for national elections, whereby voters cast a vote for a candidate in a single-member district and for a regional list.⁷ We calculated electorate congruence scores on the basis of the regional list vote, and thereby we may underestimate dissimilarity in the vote since we do not take into account the possibility of split-ticket voting.⁸ In 2011, the electoral sys-

⁷ In the Hungarian mixed-member electoral system, MPs can obtain their mandate from the vote cast in single member districts, for a regional party list and for a national party list. Voters have two votes, one for the single member district and one for a regional party list. The national party list fulfills a compensatory role by distributing mandates based on surplus votes casted in single member districts and for party lists. For a detailed discussion, see Benoit (2005). In 2011, a major electoral reform took place (see Sect. 5.2).

⁸ Split-ticket voting in the Hungarian context refers to a comparison between the vote in single member districts to the votes cast for regional list (e.g. see Moser and Scheiner 2009 and Benoit 2001).

tem was reformed and the regional lists were abolished. The electorate congruence score for 2014 is based on the votes cast for national party lists and, despite the different ways of computing, the score is similar in magnitude as for previous elections.

Party system and election congruence gradually increases (indicated by lower dissimilarity scores) between 1994 and 2010 but decrease sharply in 2014. In addition, party system and election congruence closely follow each other indicating that differences between regional and national party systems is largely driven by vote switching between regional and national elections. However, it is important to recall that citizens living in cities with county rank do not vote in regional elections. To be more precise, they vote for their municipal council but not for the council of the county they live in. This means that we compare different electorates when we contrast the national vote to the regional vote; the national vote includes cities with county rank whereas the regional vote does not. Hence, we do not know whether the election dissimilarity scores reflect vote switching or differences between the vote within cities of county rank and counties. This is an important caveat while previous research has shown that an urban-rural cleavage shapes voters' party preferences (Evans and Whitefield 1995; Körösenyi 1999) and has affected the development of the Hungarian party system (McAllister and White 2005; Casal-Bertoa 2014). According to Knutsen (2013, p. 29), 'the correlation between urban-rural residence and party choice is moderate, but clearly significant'. Hungary has a highly fragmented territorial structure and out of 3154 municipalities there are 328 towns—among others, the capital Budapest and 23 towns with county rank—and 2826 villages. The towns with county rank are important for the economy in their county and they play a key role in providing social services (Tábit 2012). Data from the Central Statistical Office reveals that one fourth on the Hungarian population (Budapest not included) lives in towns with county rank, and these towns host 34 percent of all enterprises, 35 percent of employment, and 25 percent of housing (KSH 2012; Budapest not included). In sum, it is likely that the party system and election congruence scores displayed in Fig. 5.1 reflect an urban-rural cleavage alongside vote switching between regional and national elections.

The dissimilarity scores are comparable over time and both party system and election congruence increase (indicated by lower dissimilarity scores) between 1990 and 2010 but decrease sharply for 2014. This result raises two questions: what was the cause for increasing congruence and what lead to the sudden decrease in 2014? The increase in congruence can be explained by the consolidation and nationalization of the party system, whereby the major national parties increase their ability to capture larger shares of the regional vote (see Table 5.1). Scholars have noted a ‘freezing party system’ at the national level as early as 1995 (Ágh 1995). During the transition process toward democracy, early-established parties were at an advantage and were able to attract voters across the whole territory and could prevent the establishment of new parties.

The party system at the national level was first replicated at the local level and easily spilled-over into regional elections. The number of regional lists presented in county elections declined from 489 in 1998 to around 100 in 2010 and 2014, and the number of regional lists which gained representation in a county assembly declined from 27 in 1998 to around 10 in subsequent regional elections (Table 5.1). The largest party has been able to win absolute majorities since 2010, and the combined vote share for the two largest parties is more than 70 percent after the county election of 2002 (Table 5.1). Clearly, large statewide parties dominate in regional elections. Their dominance is sustained by the nomination strategies of the statewide parties: most chairs of the county assemblies were also members of the Hungarian Parliament until the practice of having dual mandates was abolished in 2012 (Várnagy 2012).

Table 5.1 Concentration of regional party systems

Election year	Number of regional lists		Percentage of votes for the	
	Participating	Gaining representation	Largest party (%)	Two largest parties (%)
1994	370	33	31.5	48.6
1998	489	27	29.3	54.2
2002	479	11	40.4	71.3
2006	347	9	49.5	80.7
2010	72	10	58.5	79.9
2014	107	9	52.6	73.9

Party system consolidation also entailed that a left-right dimension of political contestation became the dominant factor for election campaigns, voting behavior, and coalition formation. This development can be illustrated by the growth and decline of the Independent Smallholders' Party (*Független Kisgazdapárt*, FKGP) which explicitly capitalized on the urban-rural cleavage. After being in government in 1990 and 1998, the party started to disintegrate due to an increasing number of intraparty conflicts. The party opted out of the coalition government and this was followed by a party schism in 2001. As a result, the party booked poor electoral results at the 2002 elections and gradually disappeared. The urban-rural cleavage is not anymore explicitly represented by a party but the vote for statewide parties is still based on this dimension of political contestation. Left-wing parties are traditionally overrepresented in urban areas in both national and local elections although this advantage seems to decline after 2010 (Enyedi et al. 2014, p. 534).

The sudden decrease in party system and election congruence in 2014 can be explained by an increase in the number of regional lists (see Table 5.1). The increasing number of regional lists is the result of a disintegration of the parties on the left. Two new organizations were founded by ex-leaders of the Hungarian Socialist Party (*Magyar Szocialista Párt*, MSZP) which was the largest opposition party until the elections of 2010. The disintegration of the MSZP opened up a window of opportunity for new parties to enter the national political arena.⁹ The combined vote share for the two largest parties at the regional level suggest that these new parties were not very successful but it is still an open question whether the increase in the number of regional lists caused a decline of party system

⁹Figure 5.1 suggests that the 2014 national elections were still nationalized (i.e. low electorate congruence [NN-NR] dissimilarity scores), but regional elections have become considerably regionalized (indicated by higher dissimilarity scores for party system [NN-RR] and election [NR-RR] congruence). This can be explained by parties from the left which participated in electoral alliances in national elections but contested on their own in regional elections. It is not possible to disaggregate the combined vote share for an electoral alliance to the individual partners of the alliance and the total vote share is attributed to the senior party which is the party that won the largest vote share in a previous election. Parties forming the alliance participate on their own in regional elections and the total vote share received by the electoral alliance in national elections is compared to the (most likely smaller) vote share of the senior party in regional elections. Hence, the decrease in party system and election congruence for 2014 may be a result of party alliance strategies rather than of dual voting.

and election congruence. Before we will turn to this question, we first explore nationalization further by looking at second-order election effects in regional elections.

5.4 Second-Order Election Effects

Figure 5.1 shows a trend of increasing congruence between national and regional elections, and dissimilarity in the vote decreases from almost 22 percent in 1994 to a bit more than 10 percent in 2010. However, party system and election dissimilarity scores are still significantly higher than those for electorate congruence which hovers between 5 and 7 percent. In addition, we may observe a sharp increase in the dissimilarity scores for party system and election congruence in 2014. In this section we explore in how far these observations are caused by second-order election effects.

When regional elections are second-order elections, we may expect turnout to be lower and parties in national government to lose vote share, whereas opposition, small, and new parties should gain vote share. This voting behavior comes about because voters, politicians, and media

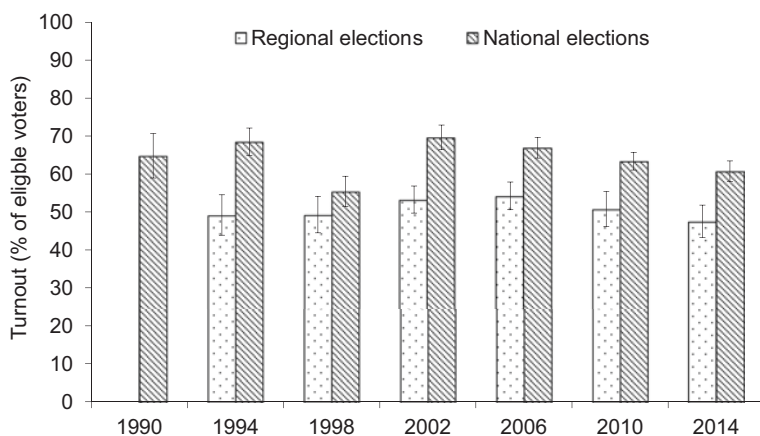


Fig. 5.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Hungary)

perceive regional elections to be less important than national elections, and when there is less at stake, voters do not bother to cast a vote and those who do use their vote to send a signal of discontent by punishing parties in national government (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Figure 5.2 displays turnout for national and regional elections since 1990 and we may observe low participation rates for regional elections. Regional elections attract around 50 percent of the electorate despite the fact that county elections are held simultaneously with local and mayoral elections. A factor contributing to low turnout may relate to the timing of regional elections relative to national elections. Subnational elections are held only six months after a national election. Most parties run out of financial resources after a national election campaign and are not able to fill up their campaign budgets within six months. Voter fatigue also may play a role. In 2014 three consecutive elections took place in Hungary: parliamentary elections on 6 April, elections to the European Parliamentary on 25 May, and local and regional elections on 12 October. The regional

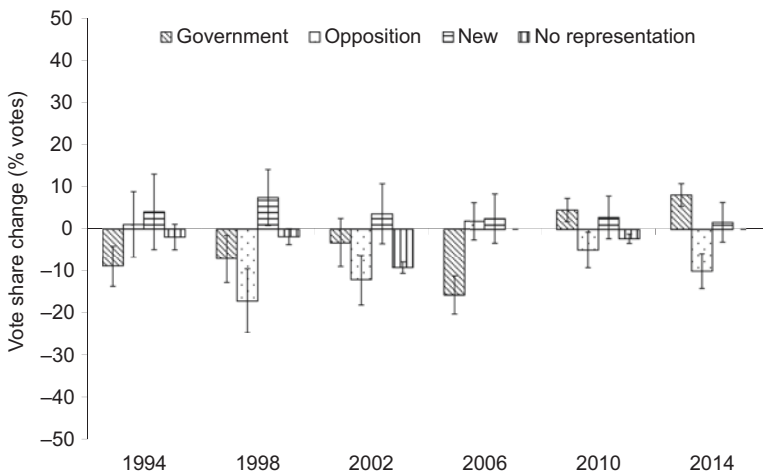


Fig. 5.3 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new, and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Hungary)

election of 2014 records the lowest turnout figure since 1994 (see Fig. 5.2).

Figure 5.3 displays vote share swings between regional and previously held national elections for four types of parties: government, opposition, new, and no representation parties. New parties are established in between national and regional elections and no representation parties participated in the previously held national election but did not manage to win a seat. In contrast to our expectations, we find mixed evidence for the hypothesis that regional elections are second-order. Only in the elections of 1994 and 2006 do government parties lose and opposition parties win vote shares. In 1998 and 2002, both opposition and government parties lose vote share, while for the elections of 2010 and 2014, we may observe reversed second-order election effects and government parties win, whereas opposition parties lose vote share. These results are all the more surprising since consolidation and nationalization went alongside with bipolarization of the Hungarian party system both at the elite and mass levels (Enyedi and Casal-Bértoa 2011). Between 1990 and 2006, the Fidesz-Hungarian Civic Union (Fidesz) dominated the political right and the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) dominated the political left. The Fidesz took over the leading role of the MSZP on the political left from 2010 onward.

Several explanations can be put forward to account for the mixed second-order election effects. New parties may be more attractive for the voter who is discontent not only with the parties in government but with the overall party supply. From Fig. 5.3 we may observe that new parties win significant vote shares in regional elections to the detriment of opposition parties. Government parties lose vote shares in regional elections held between 1994 and 2006 but the loss is particularly large for the 2006 election. In the autumn of 2006, the popularity for the governing MSZP was exceptionally low because of a leaked ‘we lied’ speech by Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány which ignited mass protests all around Hungary and riots in Budapest. Government parties won and opposition parties lost vote shares in the elections of 2010 and 2014. These ‘reversed’ second-order election effects can be explained by the break-up of the main opposition party (MSZP) and the subsequent fragmentation of the opposition camp by the establishment of new parties. The governing

Fidesz-KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party, *Kereszténydemokrata Néppárt*) alliance could dominate both national and regional elections which induced a further disintegration of the political left. In the elections of 2010 and 2014, the governing coalition won more than two third of the votes and thereby gained a qualified majority in national parliament.

Another remarkable result is that no representation parties lost significant vote share in the 2002 elections; these parties lost more than 9 percent vote share when compared to the previous national election whereas the overall average is a loss of 2.5 percent. This large vote share loss can be ascribed to two parties—the radical right Party of Hungarian Justice and Life (*Magyar Igazság és Élet Pártja*, MIÉP) and the agrarian FKGP—which did not get elected to the parliament but still had local organizations that managed to run at the regional elections. New parties won relatively large votes in 1998 when they gained 7.5 percent of the vote compared to an overall average of 3.7 percent. In 1998 there were 19 new organizations, which did not participate in the previously held national election but ran for mandates at the regional level, and 12 of these parties competed only in that particular election.

In sum, we find mixed evidence for second-order election effects in regional elections. Turnout is lower than for national elections but government parties do not systematically lose vote share, and in some regional elections, opposition parties also lose vote share. The timing of the elections might be a crucial explanatory factor for the mixed findings. Regional (and local) elections are held six months after a national election and this is a very short period of time for voters to revise their preferences. The close timing of national and regional elections also leads to a long campaign during which opposition parties have often dried up their resources by the time when regional elections are held. Finally, the short period between national and regional elections does not allow for much time for the manifestation of the disadvantages of being in government (such as implementing unpopular policies) and to induce protest voting in regional elections.

Table 5.2 Counties in Hungary

Historical regions: 63 counties (<i>vármegye/megye</i>)	Institutional regions: 19 counties (<i>megye</i>) established in 1950
Abaúj-Torna, Alsó-Fehér, Arad, Árva, Bács-Bodrog, Baranya, Bars, Békés, Bereg, Beszterce-Naszód, Bihar, Borsod, Brassó, Csanád, Csík, Csongrád, Esztergom, Fejér, Fogaras, Győr, Gömör és Kis-Hont, Hajdú, Háromszék, Heves, Hont, Hunyad, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Kis-Küküllő, Kolozs, Komárom, Krassó-Szörény, Liptó, Máramaros, Maros-Torda, Moson, Nagy-Küküllő, Nógrád, Nyitra, Pest-Pilis-Solt-Kiskun, Pozsony, Sáros, Somogy, Sopron, Szabolcs, Szatmár, Szeben, Szepes, Szilágy, Szolnok-Doboka, Temes, Tolna, Torda-Aranyos, Torontál, Trencsén, Turóc, Udvarhely, Ugocsa, Ung, Vas, Veszprém, Zala, Zemplén, Zólyom	Bács-Kiskun, Baranya, Békés, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén, Csongrád, Fejér, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Hajdú-Bihar, Heves, Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, Komárom-Esztergom, Nógrád, Pest, Somogy, Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg, Tolna, Vas, Veszprém, Zala (Most counties of the Kingdom of Hungary [1526–1918] were transferred to its neighboring countries as a result of the peace treaty of the World War I)

5.5 Regional Election Effects

Dissimilarity between national and regional elections can also be the result of regional parties which tend to be more electorally successful in regional than in national elections. At first sight, regional parties are not to be expected in Hungary. The vote of minorities in Hungary is not mobilized by ethnic or regional parties and minorities vote for the same statewide parties as other Hungarians do.¹⁰ The Hungarian county system is one of the oldest mezzo-level institutions in Europe and the current counties have similar borders as the historical counties or are mergers of historical counties (see Table 5.2). Yet Hungarian citizens have no strong regional identity (Böhm 2002). Finally, institutional barriers prevent the

¹⁰ Compared with the neighboring countries, Hungary has no significant minorities: ‘the evolution of domestic minorities was less affected by the border changes of the 20th century, and even the more numerous and officially recognized groups (...) could not form larger blocs (...) and were much more exposed to assimilation and the homogenizing efforts of the emerging modern Hungarian state’ (Dobos 2014, p. 278). There are 13 minorities representing 6.5 percent of the population, from which the Roma society is the largest with 3.2 percent of the population (KSH 2011, p. 21). The ethnic minorities are distributed equally across the territory, with the only exception of Romas, who mainly live in the North-Eastern regions of Hungary.

emergence of a strong regional party. As mentioned above, national elections apply a mixed electoral system with a national compensatory list. Before the reform of 2011, parties needed to be listed on the regional lists in seven counties before they could participate in the compensatory list. After the 2011 reform, parties need to have candidates for the single member districts in at least nine counties and in Bucharest.

Nevertheless, Table 5.1 shows that several hundred regional lists have been presented in county elections, and since 2002 about ten of these lists gain representation in the county assembly. These regional lists are not regional political parties but are non-governmental organizations. The election law allows these organizations to participate in local and county elections and grants them a civil legal status. Hence, they are not political parties in the sense that they do not have the ambition to compete in national elections but they often contest both county and local elections. In the larger communities, these organizations often represent the interests of their municipality at the regional level. In smaller communities, the organizations often form alliances based on common interests (e.g. alliances of pensioner clubs or agricultural organizations) or for the purpose to combine electoral forces (in almost every county, there is an ‘alliance of mayors’ or an ‘alliance of villages’).

Regional parties—that is, parties that win vote in one region only—are not absent in county elections since most civil society organizations participate only in elections in their region. In this sense, the electoral success of these civil organizations can be considered as an indicator for a regionalization of the vote. Table 5.3 lists the number of ‘regional parties’

Table 5.3 Regional party strength

Election year	N	Mean
1994	8	4.1
1998	19	7.5
2002	6	3.7
2006	5	2.6
2010	6	2.8
2014	4	1.7

Notes: Shown is the number of parties which obtained at least 5 percent of the regional vote in only their respective region (N) and their average electoral strength (Mean) across 19 counties

which managed to win more than 5 percent of the national or regional vote in the county. There are several regional parties but their average vote share in regional elections across counties is below 5 percent and is declining over time. The elections of 1998 are an exemption. One possible explanation is the electoral reform of 1994 which introduced the direct elections of county representatives instead of the delegation by local assemblies. This reform was implemented just before the subnational elections were held and civil society organizations had only two months to adapt to the new electoral system. By 1998, the organizations have had a sufficient amount of time to prepare.

There is one regional party which has been able to gain and maintain strong regional support: the Association for Somogy County. This civil organization won 19–26 percent of the vote between 1994 and 2014 and also ran for parliamentary elections in 2006 and 2010 (and won one seat in national parliament in 2006). Additionally, its leader (István Gyenesei) was a member of the socialist cabinet between 2008 and 2009. The Association for Somogy County can also be regarded as a regionalist party; that is, the party represents the specific interests of Somogy County in parliament. During his term in national parliament (2006–2010), István Gyenesei addressed (mostly agricultural) problems of Somogy County in a number of interpellations.

The increasing participation of civil society organizations in county elections has induced national parties to establish alliances with these organizations. This cooperation is beneficial for both partners: local organizations increase their chances of winning a seat in the county assembly and national parties gain a larger reach into the local society. The collaboration between national parties and locally based civil organization is fragile. The connections between national parties and civil organizations lasted until the regional elections of 2010, when national parties ran alone in all regions. This happened because left-wing parties were undesirable coalition partners for the local organizations and Fidesz could easily win the election without the help of these organizations. Once in national government and enabled by its two-thirds majority in national parliament, Fidesz quickly reformed the electoral system before the local and county elections of October 2010. The aim of the reform was to reduce costs of subnational government by decreasing the number of represen-

tatives but the effect of the reform has been to introduce majoritarian elements. Most importantly, districts were merged and as a result an average organization needs 6.7 times more recommendations in order to be allowed to present a list in elections. National parties which have broad horizontal organizational networks could easily adapt to the new system. The locally rooted civil organizations face great difficulties finding support outside their community. Before the reform of 2010, there were on average 22.1 party lists per county and this number decreased to 3.8 in 2010 and 5.6 in 2014. The electoral reform of 2010 can be interpreted as the end-point of a process, whereby national parties have fully captured the regional vote and almost completely forced out civil organizations from the regional electoral arena (see Dobos 2011).

5.6 Discussion

County elections in Hungary are highly nationalized and over time one can observe an increasing dominance of national parties at both the local and regional levels (Bóhm 2006, pp. 14–15; Wiener 2010, p. 118). The nationalization of regional elections does not manifest itself in second-order election effects. Turnout in county elections is (much) lower than for national elections but government parties do not systematically lose and opposition parties do not constantly win vote share. Rather the regional vote seems to reflect government popularity at the time of county elections. Nationalization of county elections does not mean that regionalization of the regional vote is not present in Hungary. On the contrary, many new parties have been established at the county level and these have won significant vote shares. However, these parties are actually civil society organizations which are allowed to participate in regional but not in national elections. In addition, nationalization of the vote is enforced and maintained by constant institutional and electoral system reforms. County government is ‘hollowed out’ from below (micro-regions, local government associations, and deconcentrated central government offices), from sideways (cities with county rank and deconcentrated central government offices), and from above (macro-regions). Civil society organizations with strong roots in local communities have

been able to successfully compete in county elections but various electoral reforms introduced majoritarian elements which have curbed the electoral strength of these organizations. In addition, the reforms have favored the two large statewide parties which win more than 70 percent of the county vote.

The latest reform introduced a five-year mandate for local and county assembly members and was implemented with the 2014 elections. This reform entails that the timing of subnational elections in the national election cycle will change drastically. County elections have been held about six months after national elections but will now be held more than a year later. County elections are highly nationalized but we found only mixed evidence for second-order election effects. We think this is mainly due to the short time period between national and subnational elections which does not allow voters to revise their preferences, which does not allow parties to fill up their campaign budgets on time, and which does not allow for the manifestation of the disadvantages of being in government. There will be substantial amount of time in between national and subnational elections, and we expect that second-order election effects will increase. However, we have to await the elections of 2019 before we can assess the effects of the reforms implemented in 2014.

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6

Poland: Nationalization Despite Fear of Regionalization

Wojciech Gagatek and Michał Kotnarowski

6.1 Introduction

Since 1989, Poland has been driven and torn between two contradictory tendencies: between the will to recognize and empower local self-government after 50 years of communist centralism, on the one hand, and a concern about the state's defragmentation, well known from the past 200 years of Polish history, on the other hand.¹ From the very

¹ In this chapter, the terms voivodeship and region will be used interchangeably, although we would like to point out that in Polish political language the term regional elections is used rarely. The more common term is 'elections to *sejmik wojewódzki*' or self-government elections. Similarly, in Polish the term government is used only in relation to the national government.

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beginning of the post-1989 democratic transformation, subnational democracy has been cherished as one of the most important building blocks for national democracy. Already during the so-called Round Table negotiations of 1989, which laid the basis for a peaceful, negotiated transition from communism to democracy, the representatives of the democratic opposition argued that vibrant and strong tiers of local self-government are an important precondition for a well-functioning democracy at the national level. This policy line was an important part of the reform package of the first non-communist government of Tadeusz Mazowiecki (1989–90), and an amendment to the Polish constitution was introduced to guarantee local government a role in the overall governance of the state (Piasecki 2009, pp. 143–5). On the other hand, the representatives of the democratic opposition did not argue that the Polish state should become a federation, or that Poland should regionalize to the extent that is observed in some Western European countries. The first, positive approach—which could be labeled as regionalization—may find its origin in a reaction against the highly centralized communist rule, whereas the second approach, nationalization, relates to the fear (particularly among right-wing politicians) that any further regionalization is a recipe for cultural and political fragmentation of the Polish nation. It must be emphasized that the unitary character of the Polish state has not been questioned by any of the major national political parties, and that unitarism was enshrined in the Polish constitution of 1997. Over the past 25 years, the challenge has been to find a balance between establishing strong subnational tiers which contribute to the consolidation of democracy, but which, at the same time, do not endanger the state's unity due to so-called excessive regionalization as observed in some Western European countries (for instance, Belgium, Spain, and the United Kingdom). The result of these regionalization and nationalization considerations has been that Poland holds periodic subnational elections, which are perceived as a 'safe tool' to 'activate' subnational democracy, while, at the same time, relatively few competences are devolved to subnational tiers.

In the early years of transformation (1989–1997), Poland retained a very fragmented state structure inherited from communist times, with 49 relatively small voivodeships (*województwo*, the highest of the two local tiers), more than 800 towns and more than 2000 communes. In

the 1990 and 1994 local elections, citizens only elected councilors for the communal assemblies. In 1998, a thorough state reform reduced the number of the highest-tier voivodeships from 49 to 16 and introduced directly elected assemblies (*sejmik wojewódzki*), with the objective to make them financially more efficient and effective, to increase their economic capacities, and to adjust the Polish state structure to the conditions of the projected EU membership (in particular, in order to be eligible for cohesion policy funds).²

Scholars note that party competition at the regional level resembles to a large degree national party competition (Flis 2008, p. 11). In contrast to local elections, where individual candidate characteristics have a relatively high impact on the vote, the regional vote is to a large extent driven by the popularity of national parties (CBOS 2010a). This observation has led scholars to suggest that regional elections may function as a ‘barometer’ for current public support for national parties (Bartkowski 2003a, p. 169). This nationalization trend is reinforced by the electoral law which introduces a 5 percent electoral threshold and a d’Hondt method of seat allocation (Sokół 2010, p. 26). Regional election campaigns do not differ significantly from those for national elections. For example, political scientists as well as journalists noted that the 1998 regional election campaign hardly differed from the 1997 parliamentary campaign, with most electoral committees replicating the same slogans and campaign strategies (Bąkiewicz 2008, p. 118). Scholars agree that the electoral law and the nationalized nature of regional election campaigns lead voters to base their regional vote according to their national political preferences (Wołek 2008, p. 54).

However, while scholars have compared national to regional elections, we are not aware of any systematic attempt to apply the second-order election model to Polish regional elections. And although scholars have been interested in the connection between the regional and national vote, we could not find any evaluation on vote congruence between regional and national elections and electorates. In this chapter we set out to systemati-

² Additionally, this reform introduced an intermediate-level local tier, *powiat*, in between the lowest communal tier (*gmina*) and the highest regional tier (*województwo*). *Powiaty* are not discussed in this chapter.

cally explore the extent to which Polish regional elections are nationalized by looking at congruence between regional and national elections and by observing the magnitude of second-order election effects in regional electoral outcomes. In addition, we look in how far congruence of the vote and second-order election effects differ across regions and we explore possible explanatory factors which may account for particularities in regional voting behavior.

In the next section, we first describe regional government and the regional electoral system of Poland. The subsequent sections respectively explore and discuss congruence between the regional and national vote, second-order election effects and regional election effects. We will conclude that the regional vote is indeed to a large extent nationalized but there are some significant differences between regions and across elections. In the conclusion we address the question whether the Polish regional vote can be considered to be regionalized or nationalized.

6.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

The territorial reform of 1998 was intensively discussed. From the very beginning, the right-wing government of Solidarity Electoral Action (*Akcja Wyborcza Solidarność*, AWS) and Union for Freedom (*Unia Wolności*, UW) proposed to create large regions in which the defragmenting impact of local factors would be counterbalanced by a strong government representative (*wojewoda*) who would guarantee the unitary character of the state. An important reason for the government to introduce this proposal was that the establishment of regions would improve Poland's perception abroad, and, in particular, 'open a way toward an EU membership based on partnership' (Kulesza 2008 [1998], pp. 255–9). However, some features of this reform were heavily contested and received criticism from the left as well as the right. There was no controversy that the number of Voivodeships should be reduced; rather the central question was how many new voivodeships should be created. The first version of the reform proposed by the right-wing government—introducing 12 voivodeships—was rejected by the left-wing opposition

consisting of the Democratic Left Alliance (*Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej*, SLD) and the left-wing president Aleksander Kwaśniewski. As noted by one insider, Jerzy Regulski, the governing AWS would have had a majority in 8 out of 12 regional parliaments, whereas the SLD would have a majority in the remaining four regions. Kwaśniewski made a tour through the country and promised that he would defend the interests of voivodeships which were to lose their status. At the end of 1998, after intense controversies, 16 voivodeships were established. Both AWS and SLD had won a majority in eight regions in the 1998 national election (Regulski 2005, pp. 171–2). Right-wing politicians feared that the reform would lead to an excessive decentralization and regionalism, or even that some bordering regions, in particular, in the west of Poland, would lean toward Germany or, worse, would secede. These politicians linked their criticisms to the fear of German expansionism. The farmers' parties feared that large and powerful voivodeships would undermine the authority of the lowest communal tier. Finally, the towns that hosted the voivodeship government argued that the reform would lead to a huge increase in unemployment (due to the reduction of state administration in those towns), and generally, would depress their economic and political status (Gorzelać and Jałowicki 1999, pp. 12–38).

Since the reform of 1998 (in force since 1 January 1999), each voivodeship has a directly elected assembly (*sejmik wojewódzki*) which elects, by majority, the *zarząd województwa* (voivodeship executive) and the head of the executive (the marshal, *marszałek*). Five regional elections have been held since 1998 but we have decided to omit the elections of 2014 from the analysis because a controversy on electoral disambiguities was still going on at the time when we were writing this chapter (see discussion for more details).

According to the regional authority index, Polish regional self-government does not appear to be particularly strong (see Hooghe et al. 2016a). Regions have no tax authority and their competences concern the national identity and culture (as well as local identity); creating conditions for economic activity, competitiveness and innovation; environmental protection; and spatial development (Sejm 1998). The means to achieve these goals are laid down in regional development strategies, adopted by *sejmik wojewódzki* in so-called regional operational pro-

grams, which are co-funded by the EU and mostly carried out by *zarząd województwa*. In addition, regions implement national policies in health, education, transportation, and culture.

Regional executive power is shared between the *zarząd województwa* (voivodeship executive) and the *marszałek* (marshal), on the one hand, and a *wojewoda*, on the other hand. The *wojewoda* represents national government and is appointed by the prime minister. What is unique in Poland in comparison to regional government in Western European countries is that the *wojewoda* resigns at the same time when national government steps down (Loughlin 2004; Dandoy and Schakel 2013). The *wojewoda* is responsible for implementing national government policy, coordination of state administration, and he has some more narrowly defined competences in areas such as emergency management and defense. It is often in connection to the latter competencies that individual *wojewoda* appears in the media. For example, in January 2014, Prime Minister Donald Tusk strongly criticized (the media used the verb 'scolded') the *wojewoda* in the Podkarpackie region for acting too slow in response to a large snowfall that isolated a few villages.

It is important to note that regions do not have their own tax resources and that they completely rely on a share from income tax collected by the central state. *Województwa* participate in the share of individual and corporate income tax and, in 2014, they received 1.6 percent of individual income tax from tax payers resident in each *województwo*, and 14.8 percent of corporate income tax from companies registered in each *województwo*. The limited budgetary autonomy of regions is further reinforced by the *wojewoda* who is responsible for appropriating and auditing funds from the central government. Furthermore the *wojewoda* is also responsible for supervising regional operational programs which are carried out by the *zarząd województwa*. National legislation often creates competences for both the marshal and *wojewoda* within the same policy field. For example, the National Development Plan (*Narodowy Plan Rozwoju*) adopted in 2004 stipulates that both the marshal and *wojewoda* are responsible to build regional and local partnerships for regional development. This duality in regional administration can lead to political tensions between the marshal and *wojewoda* with regard to the question who is 'truly' representing the region and this especially might happen when

they are members of different political parties (Właźlak 2006). Within the dual executive, the *wojewoda* is dominant because of its fiscal powers and this entails that regional election outcomes can only partially influence regional policy. In case voters want to change the policy direction in their region, they should vote for the same party in both national and regional elections. Only then will the marshal, the governing majority in the *sejmik wojewódzki*, and the *wojewoda* have the same party affiliation.

The electoral rules governing regional elections have remained by and large constant since the first election of 1998 and the most recent rules are specified in the Electoral Code (Sejm 2011). Overall, each voivodeship is divided into 5–7 constituencies, each electing 5–15 regional councilors. In total there are 87 constituencies and 561 regional councilors. All regional elections take place on the same day (horizontal simultaneity) in the second half of the year (usually in September, October, or November). Just like in elections for the national parliament, there is a minimum threshold of 5 percent (at the level of a voivodeship) and seats are allocated using the d'Hondt method. Scholars agree that these electoral rules tend to favor national parties over electoral committees established on a local or regional basis (Sarnecki 2008, pp. 16, 20).³ This set of rules has governed the 1998, 2006, and 2010 elections but the Saint-Laguë method was used to allocate seats in the 2002 elections. An important and one-off novelty was introduced in the 2006 regional election. It was allowed to establish groups of lists of candidates, sometimes also referred to as joint lists (Rymarz 2007). The idea behind this rule was to consolidate the party system and to stimulate stable majorities by allowing two or more regional electoral committees to combine their vote shares used as a basis for the division of mandates. This arrangement should not be confused with forming an electoral alliance (which has been allowed by the electoral rules for all regional elections) or any kind of post-electoral coalition. Voters did not vote for a group of lists of candidates but they voted for individual electoral committees. However, at the stage of seat allocation, the group lists were treated as one 'entity', whereby the votes

³In the Polish electoral law, the generic term 'electoral committee' is an official term denoting entities registered by the Polish Electoral Committee, which are entitled to propose candidates standing for elections. In regional and local elections, such electoral committees can be established by single political parties, coalitions of parties, associations and civic organizations, and groups of voters.

cast for each member of the group list were summed. A benefit of this arrangement was that the votes for parties that did not pass the 5 percent threshold were transferred to other parties of the group list which led to a prevention of 'lost votes' (Sarnecki 2008, p. 19). For example, in the 2006 regional elections, there were two main group lists: one uniting the government parties—Law and Justice (*Prawo i Sprawiedliwość*, PiS), Self-Defence (*Samoobrona Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej*, SO), and the League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin*, LPR)—and another uniting the opposition parties, Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO) and Polish People's Party (*Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe*, PSL), together with The National Pensioner's Party (*Krajowa Partia Emerytów i Rencistów*, KPEiR) in some regions. There was also a third list uniting a few left-wing parties (*Lewica i Demokraci*, LiD). The main beneficiaries of the joint lists were two junior coalition partners. Self-Defence won 37 instead of 12 mandates and the LPR won 11 instead of 2 mandates when the joint lists would not have been concluded. The joint list system also led to vote share losses and PiS lost 10, PO lost 6 mandates, and the left-wing LiD lost 21 mandates compared to a situation in which joint lists would not have been possible (Rymarz 2007, pp. 63–5).

In contrast to expectations, the joint list system did not lead to a consolidated and stabilized party system. In practice, parties changed partners after the 2006 elections and formed regional coalitions with parties from other blocks. For example, in the Mazovia region, LPR formed a joint group list with PiS and SO but joined a regional government coalition with PO-PSL and left-wing Democratic Left Alliance (SLD) after the election. What also happened was that the same party (such as PSL) was on the government joint list in one region but was on the opposition joint list in another region. After the 2006 election, the possibility to form joint lists was removed from the electoral law.

The election law provides a major advantage to large electoral committees (i.e. statewide parties). Electoral committees that manage to register lists of candidates in at least half of the constituencies and at least one list in each region have access to free airtime on national TV and radio (art. 411 of the Electoral Code). This provides for a strong incentive for statewide parties to run a statewide campaign for regional elections. As a result, statewide parliamentary parties win almost all regional mandates.

Out of a total of 561 available regional mandates for the 2006 regional elections, an electoral committee without representation in national parliament succeeded to win only one mandate (Flis 2008, p. 24). Parties without representation in national parliament won a substantial number of seats in the 2010 regional elections in two regions (9 and 3 seats, respectively, in *Dolnośląskie* and *Śląskie*), but the overall number of seats won by non-statewide electoral committees did not exceed 20.

6.3 Congruence of the Vote

In this section we explore in how far the regional vote is different from the national vote. One may distinguish between three types of congruence: party system congruence, electorate congruence, and election congruence. Party system congruence concerns the dissimilarity between national election results aggregated at the national level and regional elections results at the regional level (NN-RR). Electorate congruence concerns the dissimilarity between national election results at the national level and national election results at the regional level (NN-NR). Finally,

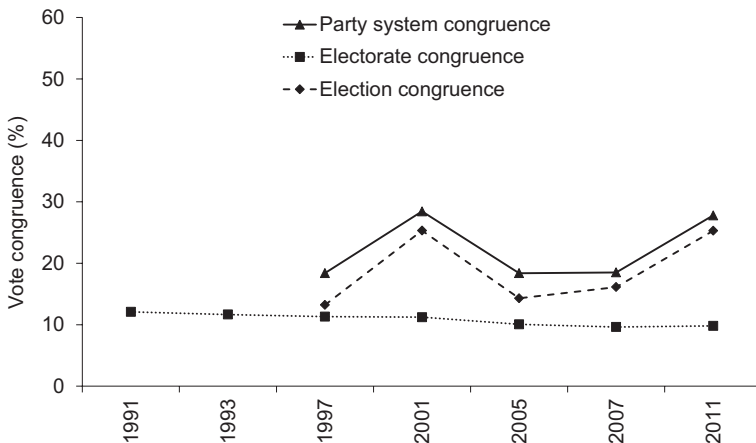


Fig. 6.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Poland)

election congruence measures the difference in election results between national and regional results at the regional level (NR-RR). The three measures are plotted in Fig. 6.1.

Electorate congruence is relatively higher than election congruence, which indicates that the Polish electorate votes similarly in national elections but voters tend to switch their vote between national and regional elections. In addition, Fig. 6.1 also reveals that electorate congruence is quite stable over time—although one can observe a slight tendency toward congruence over time—whereas election congruence is much more volatile. Election congruence starts at 13 percent in 1998, it peaks at 25 percent in the 2002 regional elections, goes down to 14 percent in 2006, and then moves up to 16 percent in the 2010 regional elections. Party system congruence (NN-RR) captures both electorate and election congruence and we may observe that change in party system congruence is almost completely driven by change in election congruence.

In the remaining part of this section, we would like to explore factors that are driving territorial differences in dissimilarity scores. We propose two factors, first historical legacies and second the economy. A brief historical overview is necessary to show how historical legacies are still reflected in recent territorial voting patterns (see Davies 2005, pp. 3–119 for a thorough analysis). Between 1795 and until 1918, Poland (at that time named the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) did not appear on the political map of Europe. Three neighboring powers—Prussia, the Russian Empire, and the Austrian Empire—ruled parts of the Polish territory. This period is often referred to as ‘the partitions’; the term ‘Partition’ (in singular) refers to the land that each power ruled, hence, there are the Austrian Partition, the Prussian Partition and the Russian Partition. When Poland gained independence in 1918, one of the major objectives of the Polish political elites was to reunite these detached regions. After World War II, Poland lost parts of its land in the East but gained German territories in the West as a result of the Yalta agreement (1945) which was concluded between the allied forces of the United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union. The German population residing in the West was displaced (in accordance with the Yalta agreement), and the area was later settled by people from other parts of Poland, in particular, from territories in the East which were annexed by the Soviet

Union. During communist times, this newly gained land was referred to as the ‘Recovered Territories’. As a result, there are four distinct historical regions in Poland: three ‘Partitions’ and the ‘Recovered’ territory. Scholars analyzing Polish elections agree that voters from the various ‘Partitions’ still behave differently in elections (Bartkowski 2003b, pp. 305–420). For example, over the past 160 years, the regions of *Wielkopolska* (West) and *Pomorze* (North) are characterized by high turnout rates, whereas for the past 100 years turnout tends to be low in *Śląsk Opolski* (South-West). In addition, important changes in electoral behavior have taken place within regions. For example, before World War II, a majority of voters in *Wielkopolska* tended to vote for the right, whereas since the early 1990s, a majority of voters tend to support the left (Bartkowski 2003b, p. 414).

In the analysis below, each voivodeship is assigned to one of the three ‘Partitions’ or the Recovered Territory: *Kujawsko-Pomorskie*, *Pomorskie*, *Śląskie*, and *Wielkopolskie* are classified as former Prussian partition; *Łódzkie*, *Lubelskie*, *Mazowieckie*, *Podlaskie*, and *Świętokrzyskie* constitute the former Russian partition; *Małopolskie* and *Podkarpackie* are considered as the Austrian partition; and *Dolnośląskie*, *Lubuskie*, *Opolskie*, *Warmińsko-Mazurskie*, and *Zachodniopomorskie* are classified as Recovered Territory. One caveat which should be kept in mind is that the current territorial division of Poland does not fully overlap with the historical regions. For example, the territory of *Małopolskie* voivodeship used to be divided over all three partitions. Nevertheless, it appears that analyses of electoral results based on a clustering of voivodeships or municipalities to historical regions did not have a significant impact on the results (Peisert and Kotnarowski 2011). In Fig. 6.2 we compare scores on the three congruence measures between the four historical regions.

It appears that there are no substantive differences between historical regions in terms of party system congruence. However, party system congruence conflates election with electorate congruence, and when we look in more detail, we may observe interesting patterns. In the former Austrian partition, high election congruence (indicated by low dissimilarity scores) is combined with low electorate congruence (indicated by high dissimilarity scores). This result indicates that voters in this Partition do not tend to switch their vote between type of elections (national and

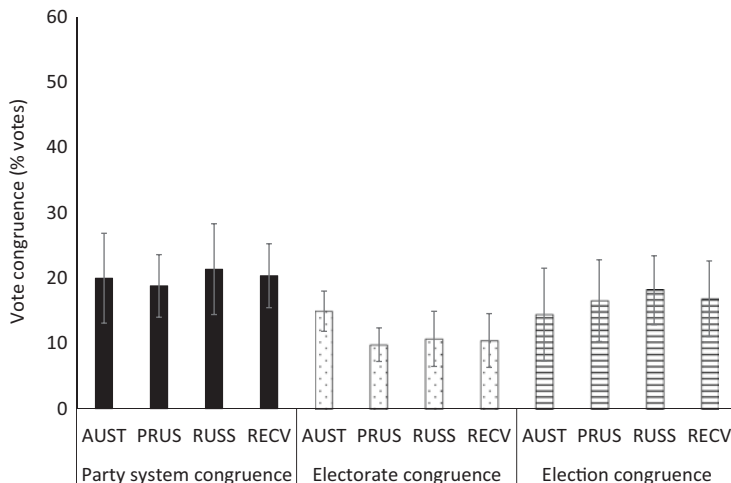


Fig. 6.2 Congruence between the regional and the national vote: historical regions (*Notes:* Shown are average dissimilarity scores and its standard deviation for four historical regions. A historical region refers to a part of Polish territory which used to be governed between 1795 and 1918 by the Austrian [AUST], Prussian [PRUS], and Russian [RUSS] empires or which was recovered [RECV] after World War II)

regional) but voters do vote substantively different when compared to the other two Partitions and the Recovered territory.

What can explain this territorial heterogeneity in the vote? Low electorate congruence combined with high election congruence in the former Austrian partition may be related to the fact that, unlike the other partitions, this territory enjoyed a considerable level of autonomy and independence under Austrian rule. The region had its own parliament, there was a Ministry in the Austrian government dedicated to Polish affairs, and some Poles were members of the Austrian government. Moreover, the population has remained quite stable for a long period of time due to low levels of migration from other parts of Poland. Other historical regions either did not have the same levels of autonomy and independence (the Russian and Prussian partitions) or experienced high levels of migration (Recovered territory). These results are consistent with those found by other scholars (see for instance Bartkowski 2003b).

6.4 Second-Order Election Effects

In this section we explore in how far the differences in election results reported in the previous section are driven by second-order election effects. The core claim of the second-order election model is that subordinate elections—that is, subordinate to first-order national elections—are characterized by low turnout, substantial anti-government backlash, and electoral gains for opposition as well as small and new parties. An assumption underlying the second-order election model is that second-order election behavior emerges because these elections are deemed less important by the voter. We can draw upon opinion poll data to observe the perceived importance of Polish subnational elections. Surprisingly, Poles perceive local elections more important than nationwide parliamentary or presidential elections (CBOS 2010d).⁴ Local self-government is perceived as rather or very important by two third of the respondents surveyed in 2011 (CBOS 2011). One month before the local elections of October 2010, more than 60 percent of respondents indicated that they were interested in these elections (CBOS 2010b). When voters were asked which level of government should be responsible for the development of the town/city in which they live, voters selected communes and counties (*powiaty*) as most important, and these were placed above the regional tier (voivodeships), central government, and the EU. The same polls also show that citizens believe that many collective problems are best solved by the commune, whereas the regional government is held responsible for dealing with the organization and supervision of the health system and infrastructural development (CBOS 2010c). However, other public opinion data show a different picture. When respondents were asked to rank the importance of various types of elections, they clearly marked the national parliamentary and presidential elections as much more important than regional or local elections. Yet, regional and local elections were conceived to be much more important than elections to the European Parliament (Wojtasik 2010, p. 261).

⁴ Respondents were asked ‘what is the importance of the election for people like you?’ and they could choose between the answers ‘not important at all’, ‘rather not important’, ‘rather important’, and ‘very important’. This question was asked for local/regional, parliamentary, presidential, and European elections.

Voters seem to find it more difficult to make their vote choice for higher tiers of subnational self-government. As much as 89 percent of the respondents stated not to have any problems in deciding who to support in the direct elections for president or mayor but 39 percent had difficulties to decide who to vote for in regional elections. Similarly, voters take different factors into account when they vote in the various types of elections, and it appears that, for regional elections, respondents base their vote choice on their sympathy toward parties rather than toward candidates. Twenty-seven percent of the respondents indicated that they followed their partisan attachment when they make their choice in regional elections, while only 11 percent followed partisan attachment in the municipality council elections and 18 percent in the *powiaty* council elections. However, more than half of the respondents based their vote choice in regional elections on the basis of candidate characteristics rather than the party which the candidate represents (CBOS 2010a).

Public opinion data on the perceived importance of subnational government seem to suggest that turnout levels for regional elections will not differ substantially from those for national elections. In addition, regional elections are held separately from national elections, but there is vertical

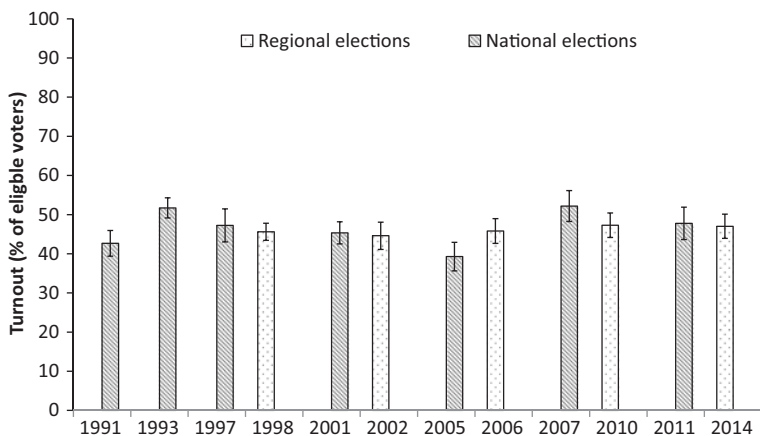


Fig. 6.3 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Poland)

simultaneity between mayoral, regional, and local elections which may give a boost to regional turnout. Figure 6.3 displays turnout for national (*Sejm*) and regional (*Sejmik*) elections.

The data reveals that turnout levels are rather similar for both national and regional elections. Turnout in the 1998 and 2002 regional elections was only a little bit lower than for the preceding 1997 and 2001 national elections, and turnout for the 2006 regional election was substantially higher (6.6 percent) than for the 2005 national elections. However, turnout for the 2010 regional election was almost 5 percent lower than for the national election of 2007. The turnout data presented in Fig. 6.3 does not seem to indicate that regional elections are second-order. We must note, however, that the highest levels of turnout in Poland are recorded for presidential elections which, for the period 1995–2010, is on average 57.6 percent for the first round. Nevertheless, turnout for local and regional elections far exceeds turnout for elections to the European Parliament, which was 20.9 percent in 2004 and 24.5 percent in 2009.

Another second-order election effect concerns vote share swings between regional and previously held national elections (Fig. 6.4). Parties

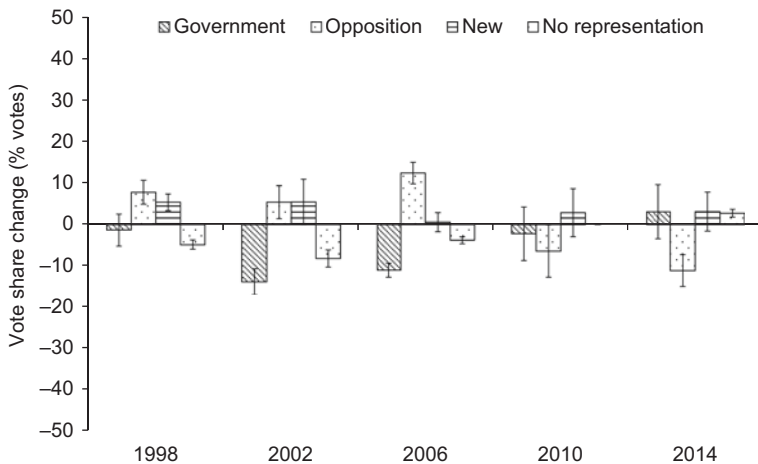


Fig. 6.4 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Poland)

in national government lost vote share, whereas parties in national opposition won vote share in the 1998, 2002, and 2006 regional elections. However, in the 2010 regional election, both government and opposition parties lost whereas non-statewide parties increased their vote share. Except for the elections of 1998 and 2010, we may conclude that there are significant second-order election effects in Polish regional elections.

However, it is very important to note that ‘referendum’ voting in regional elections does not necessarily prevent parties in national government from winning in regional elections. For example, in 1998 and 2002, the largest government party (AWS in 1998 and SLD in 2002) still managed to win the largest number of votes. After the 2001 national parliamentary election, the SLD became the senior coalition partner in the national government. In the 2002 regional elections in the *Dolnośląskie* region, the SLD incurred a very large vote share loss of 20 percent. The party won 27 percent in the regional election compared to a 47 percent vote share in the preceding national election. Yet a vote share of 27 percent was still enough to win the election in the region. Similarly, in the election of 2010, when both government and opposition parties lost vote shares, the senior coalition partner still managed to win the election in all but three regions. Interestingly, the standard deviations of vote share swings for both government and opposition parties are larger for the 2010 election when compared to the previous regional elections (Fig. 6.4). This leads us to explore the factors that may contribute to variance across regions in the magnitude of second-order election effects.

Second-order election effects may find a base in protest voting and we expect that voters will be more dissatisfied when the economy worsens (Lewis-Beck and Paldam 2000; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2007; Tucker 2006). For opposition parties, we may observe a clear positive relationship between vote share gains and unemployment. The Pearson correlation coefficient between vote share swings for opposition parties and the level of unemployment equals 0.52 (and is statistically significant at the 0.1 percent level). For government parties, we may observe a negative relationship between vote share swings and unemployment; however, this relationship is weak (Pearson correlation coefficient equals -0.18) and is statistically not significant.

Overall, we find mixed evidence that Polish regional elections are second-order. Turnout in regional elections is not substantially lower than for national elections (Fig. 6.3) and second-order election effects vary widely across elections (Fig. 6.4). The election of 2006 seems to be the typical second-order election, whereby opposition parties win vote share to the detriment of parties in government. In the elections of 1998, 2002, and 2010, government parties also lost vote share but the senior (largest) government party was still able to win the election. In addition to opposition parties, new and non-statewide parties also tend to win vote share. The variation in second-order election effects can in large part be explained by the state of the economy. Vote share swings between regional and previous national elections can be related to unemployment and this result indicates that there is one underlying causal mechanism for vote choice in Polish regional elections which is typical for second-order elections. Parties in national government are held accountable by voters for the poor performance of the national economy and lose vote share in regional elections. On the basis of the analysis on second-order election effects, we may tentatively conclude that Polish regional elections are considerably nationalized. In the next section, we trace regional election effects in Polish regional elections.

6.5 Regional Election Effects

In order to identify regional election effects, we will subsequently look at non-statewide parties, electoral alliances, and government congruence. Non-statewide parties are parties which tend to win votes in one or few regions and their policy priority is often the representation of region-specific interests. On the basis of vote share distributions across regions, one may identify two non-statewide parties in Poland which, however, differ quite substantially in the way they represent 'regional interests'. The German Minority (*Mniejszość Niemiecka*, MN) is the only non-statewide party which participates in national elections and which is represented in national parliament. According to the latest census of 2002, there are about 152,000 Germans living in Poland, out of which about 70 percent live in the Opolskie voivodeship which borders Germany.

Almost all votes won by MN come from this region, and since 1997 the MN is represented by one or two national Members of Parliament. However, representation in national parliament is only possible because the MN is exempted from an obligation to meet a 5 percent nationwide electoral threshold (the party has never surpassed this threshold). At the national level, the party manifestos of the MN are primarily concerned with the representation of the interests of the German minority such as bilingual education in the Opolskie region, support for multiculturalism, and a number of proposals to decentralize economic development, education, and social affairs to the regional level (MN 2011). However, MN does not have any specific claims with regard to the autonomy status of Opolskie voivodeship. In that respect, the MN can be considered to be an ethnic rather than a regionalist party. However, at the regional level, the MN strongly states in its party manifestos that it not only represents the German minority but all residents of the region. In the Opolskie region, the MN is a major political party. In the regional elections of 2010, the MN scored 17.8 percent of the vote which translated into six seats in the regional parliament.

The second non-statewide party is the Movement for the Autonomy of Silesia Region (*Ruch Autonomii Śląska*, RAŚ; German, *Bewegung für die Autonomie Schlesiens*; Silesian, *Ruch Autonomije Ślůnska*), and this party can be considered to be an autonomist party. The RAŚ emerged as a significant non-statewide party in the 2010 regional election when it obtained 8.5 percent of the votes and won three seats in Silesia. The RAŚ also participated in the 2005 national elections by presenting five candidates for the elections to the upper house of the national parliament but these candidates appeared on the list of another party (PSL) and none of them were elected. The ideology of RAŚ is based on the recognition of a Silesian nationality which the party considers to be different from Polish identity. The party is inspired by West-European regionalism and EU regional policy and calls for strong and independent voivodeships which are financially independent from central government and have independent taxing powers as well as decision-making autonomy in culture and education policies. Yet, RAŚ rejects separatism and does not call for the Śląsk region to form an independent state but rather aims for a regionalized Polish state which falls in between the current self-government and a

federation (RAŚ 2012). In addition to non-statewide parties, local political alliances are formed either by former members of established parties, by some non-partisans, or by some local mavericks such as city mayors. None of these alliances have any autonomist or regionalist ambitions, nor do they base their ideology on ethnic or regional distinctiveness. But such electoral alliances can bring a regional or local flavor to regional elections, and therefore we explore this phenomenon in more depth.

The relationship between partners in electoral alliances can be interpreted as nationalization (when the senior statewide party clearly dominates) or as regionalization (when a non-statewide party is dominant in a particular region, and thus can obtain concessions from the senior, statewide party). As observed above, non-statewide parties are almost non-existent in Poland except for the MN and RAŚ. There are electoral alliances which participate in regional elections and these are created at the national level by statewide parties. Because these electoral alliances participate in the same constellation across the regions and across type of elections, we may safely conclude that these electoral alliances may be considered to 'behave' like statewide parties. One example concerns the Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS), which was an alliance of several center-right and right-wing political parties created for the 1997 national parliamentary elections and which subsequently contested the 1998 regional elections. A second example is the Democratic Left Alliance (SLD)—Union of Labour (*Unia Pracy*, UP) alliance, which was formed for the national elections of 2001 but which later also contested in national, regional, and European elections.

There are also electoral alliances which were specifically created to contest in regional elections. In 1998, the Polish People's Party (PSL) formed the Social Alliance (*Przymierze Społeczne*) with a few smaller parties and this alliance won 11.9 percent of the regional seats. In 2002, two statewide parties in opposition in the national parliament—PO and PiS—created an electoral alliance (PO-PiS) to contest regional elections in 14 voivodeships (all except the Mazovia and Podkarpackie regions), and this alliance obtained 16.5 percent of the seats. In 2006, there was only one relevant nationwide electoral alliance called The Left and Democrats (*Lewica i Demokraci*, LiD), whereas 2010 saw no such nationwide electoral alliance at all. However, in 2010, there were some non-statewide

electoral alliances and the largest success was obtained by the electoral committee of the mayor of Wrocław, Rafał Dutkiewicz, which ended up second place with 22 percent of the vote and 9 seats. Region-specific electoral committees also won large vote shares in the 2002 election: 14 percent in *Małopolskie* and 15 percent in *Podkarpackie* (PKW 2010). It is important to note that the vast majority of the electoral alliances which are specifically created to run for seats in the regional elections are created by national political parties.

A third way to look at differences between regional and national party systems is to look at dissimilarities in executive government. Government congruence is operationalized in the same way as party system congruence but instead of including vote shares for all types of parties, seat shares for government parties are plugged into the calculations. Table 6.1 displays government congruence since 1998. In general, government congruence is increasing with subsequent elections and this result indicates that dissimilarity between national and regional government is decreasing over time. However, when we look at cross-regional variation, we may observe some interesting patterns. Government congruence of the first Polish regional governments established after first regional elections in 1998 had quite a large variance between regions. There is a group of regions for which dissimilarity between regional and national government reaches its maximum value of 100 percent, which means that regional and national governments consisted of completely different parties. At the same time, there is also a group of regions for which dissimilarity between governments is very low.

Table 6.1 Government congruence

Election year		Mean	Variance
Regional	National		
1998	1997	0.62	0.17
2002	2001	0.38	0.10
2006	2005	0.75	0.09
2006	2007	0.39	0.07
2010	2007	0.22	0.02

Notes: Show is the mean and its variance across 16 regions in dissimilarity between seats shares for parties in executive government at the regional and national government

Government congruence increased for subsequent elections and the smallest value of government dissimilarity (indicating the highest government congruence) was obtained for regional governments established after the regional elections in 2010 (see Table 6.1). In 2010 two parties that were governing at the national level, namely PO and PSL, were members of regional governments in all 16 regions—12 regional governments had exactly the same composition as at the national level; in 3 other regions, these 2 parties governed together with a third party (a different one for each of the three regions); and in Śląskie PO governed with RAŚ until May 2013.

The results for government congruence may be highly dependent on the comparison between elections. The 2006 regional elections, which were held at the midpoint between the 2005 and 2007 national elections, may serve as an example. When the 2005 parliamentary election is compared to the 2006 regional election, one obtains very low values of government congruence—the dissimilarity index equals 75 percent which is the highest value in the period covered by the data. However, government congruence is relatively high when the 2007 national election is compared to the 2006 regional election: a dissimilarity score of 39 percent. Trends in public opinion seem to underlie vote share losses for parties in national government. Public opinion polls shows that dissatisfaction with national government was high in 2006 (CBOS 2006) and parties in national government lost significant vote shares in the 2006 regional elections (see Fig. 6.4) as well as in the subsequent national election in 2007.

6.6 Discussion

Overall, the results presented in this chapter point toward nationalization of Polish regional elections. Most of the difference in the vote between regional and national elections can be ascribed to election congruence which indicates that voters tend to switch their vote between regional and previously held national elections. A large part of this vote switching arises out of second-order election effects, whereby parties in the national opposition gain vote share to the detriment of parties in the national government. In addition, vote share swings for government and opposition

parties seem to relate to unemployment rates and second-order election effects increase when the economy worsens.

Despite strong second-order election effects, we also find traces of regionalization. Turnout levels for regional elections are about the same as those for national elections, and in 2 out of 16 voivodeships, we find significant non-statewide parties which ask for more autonomy for regional governments. In addition, congruence between the regional and the national vote depends on historical legacies. Voivodeships which were part of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire tend to display high dissimilarity scores on electorate congruence.

Statewide parties have been able to nationalize Polish regional elections due to several factors. Despite strong second-order election effects, (senior) government parties are still able to win regional elections. In part they achieve this by forming statewide electoral alliances prior to regional elections. In addition, congruence between regional and national governments has been increasing over time and, in conjunction with the centrally appointed powerful *wojewoda*, this has helped statewide parties to gain control over regional politics. The fear that Poland would fall apart due to excessive regionalization (see Introduction) has never materialized and statewide parties have been very successful in nationalizing Polish regional elections.

Finally, we would like to comment on a rather deviant case of the 2014 elections, which we omitted from the analysis. The Polish State Electoral Commission has been heavily criticized by politicians, experts, and the media for how it organized the 2014 elections. The main criticism concerned the structure of a ballot paper. Candidates of a single electoral committee were listed on each page of a brochure instead of listing all names on a single page and it was not explained to voters how they could cast a vote. This led to a large number of invalid votes (17.47 percent compared to an average of 13.06 percent for regional elections held between 2002 and 2010) and to an exceptionally and surprisingly beneficial result for the PSL (23.88 percent of the vote) which was way beyond what any opinion poll (including exit polls) predicted. Some pundits have attributed this surprising result to the fact that the first page of the ballot brochure listed a disproportionate number of PSL candidates (despite a random draw) combined with the assumption that about

700,000 voters treat voting as an obligation and just vote for the first candidate on a ballot paper without considering the party affiliation of the candidate (Flis 2015). The controversy is still going at the time when we were writing this chapter and the 2014 regional election results are therefore not included in the chapter. The Polish country excel file accompanying this chapter and available on the website of the book includes the 2014 election results.

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7

Romania: Regional Persistence in a Highly Nationalized Party System

Dragoş Dragoman and Bogdan Gheorghişă

7.1 Introduction

Romania is a centralized and unitary state. For almost a century, the centralist French model was scrupulously adopted and preserved by Romanian national elites. Nationalization has always been an objective underlying the design of regional administration ever since modern Romania was created at the end of World War I in 1918 by integrating territories largely inhabited by ethnic Romanians but who belonged to different multinational empires (Hitchins 1994). Romania bonded together provinces which were previously part of the Austrian-Hungarian and Russian empires and thereby brought in various ethnic and religious

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minorities. Therefore, consolidating the national state and unifying the national culture has been a priority for national elites (Livezeanu 1995).

Despite its internationalist ideological approach, Romanian communism quickly turned into a nationalist promoter as well. Following a brief episode when ethnic minorities, and especially the numerous Hungarian ethnic minorities in Transylvania, enjoyed a certain degree of autonomy, Romania was once again centralized and its territory homogenized. Since the 1968 territorial administration reform, the Romanian territory is divided into 41 counties (*județe*) and Bucharest, the capital city. This feature is one of the most visible heritage of communism and constitutes a very sensitive issue. Back in 1991, the new post-communist Constitution settled the county as the regional unit in Romania and kept in place the administrative division dating from 1968. Due to the sensitive ethnic situation in Transylvania, the counties were kept despite significant institutional changes and the overall democratization process after the end of communism. During transition, decentralization and deconcentration of central government were accepted as possible changes, yet regionalization was rarely seriously and openly debated (Dragoman and Gheorghiuță 2016).

In preparation for future accession, Romania introduced eight development regions which complied with the requirements of the European NUTS system (Law 151/1998). Regional Development Agencies (*Agenția pentru Dezvoltare Regională*) were established in each of the development regions which are responsible for economic development and administration of EU cohesion funds (Dragoman 2011a). Although the eight macro-regions encompass several existing counties, they are not legal entities acknowledged by the constitution. Rather they constitute associations of counties which are coordinated by a national ministry. While complying to EU statistical requirements, the Romanian government did not empower the new entities with legal competences that would turn them into autonomous regions (Law No. 315/2004).

Despite the slow regionalization process, elections have been set up for towns, counties, and at the national level. This is in sharp contrast to the communist type of elections during which the candidates of the Communist Party were appointed without real political competition. With the consolidation of local democracy in Romania, the importance

of local and regional elections has increased (Dragoman 2016). This is visible for turnout, which is higher in regional elections than for general elections and which has been stable for regional elections but which has steadily dropped during the post-communist transition for general elections. This is also visible in the trust citizens place in local and regional elected officials which is higher for subnational officials than for officials from central government institutions most notably the parliament.

The difference lies also in the performance of political parties in national and regional contests. Whereas the literature focused more on national elections during the first stages of the post-communist transition (Mihut 1994), in the last stage of the democratic consolidation, and especially after 2007 when Romania gained EU membership, scholars have started to pay attention to regional elections (Dragoman 2006) and to regional parties (Zamfira and Dragoman 2009; Zamfira 2015). Despite the increasing nationalization of the party system, regional and ethno-regional parties seem to have consolidated their electoral strongholds, resulting in differences between regional and national election outcomes. The regional vote tends to be locally specific whereby local candidates enter the regional electoral arena and are presented as an alternative solution to the mainstream statewide parties.

This chapter intends to make a step forward and to present a broader and more systematic perspective on the stabilization of the Romanian party system during the democratic transition by focusing extensively on the regionalization of the vote. The territorial heterogeneity in the vote is explained by the persistence of regional parties, as well as by second-order election effects, namely turnout and electoral volatility between regional and previously held national elections in a relatively unstable institutional framework.

7.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

In Romania, the counties are regional units of government which exercise (administrative) autonomy at the NUTS III level whereas the eight development regions at the NUTS II level constitute deconcentrated central government. The territorial boundaries of counties rarely crosscut historical boundaries of the provinces from the nineteenth century. Each former province encompasses five to ten counties depending on their overall population and each county encompasses a number of towns and villages whereby the largest town is generally designated as the capital city. The ethnic composition of counties is far from homogeneous. Especially in Transylvania, where the 1.5 million ethnic Hungarian minority is concentrated, counties are rather heterogeneous when compared to the more homogeneous counties outside Transylvania. This situation is of paramount importance for the regionalization of the vote, as mentioned below.

The post-communist constitution endows counties with the coordination of policies such as economic development, regional transportation, and waste management for towns and villages within the county. Counties are also responsible for spatial planning and environmental policy and they can set taxes (mainly taxes on property) to cover spending incurred for the policies they coordinate and implement. During the last phase of post-communist transition (1997–2004), counties have been empowered with other competences in areas previously held by central government ministries and agencies, most importantly public health and education (Alexandru 2015).

Counties are fiscally largely dependent on central government transfers, although new sources of revenue have been introduced by the Law No. 189/1998 on Local Public Finance. These new fiscal arrangements range from property taxes and duties to shares of personal income taxes paid by residents of the counties, to various fiscal and capital revenues, non-fiscal revenues and special deviations of revenues (shares of VAT or real-estate taxes). Although financial autonomy increased following the adoption of Law 189/1998, counties remain largely dependent on cen-

tral government transfers which are paid through specific programs (for instance, education and public healthcare) which come along with strict guidelines on how the funds should be spent (Pop 2002). An Annual Budget Law establishes a formula for the equalization payments from the central government paid into the county budgets but most of these transfers depend on the availability of central funds and on political negotiations between central and county officials. Political parties in government use legislation on party funding in order to gain access to state resources, including budget transfers (Gherghina and Chiru 2013). Moreover, they use electoral bribes both to preserve electoral strongholds and to gain supplementary votes (Gherghina 2013). Scholars have pointed out that especially rural and under-developed counties are dependent on central government funds. County elites act as gatekeepers during the process of fiscal allocation from the county to municipalities and communes (Mungiu-Pippidi 2003). This is because some of the central funds for towns and communes are redistributed by counties. Typically, a share between 10 and 20 percent of the income tax revenue is redistributed by the counties which enables them to pursue county-specific policies.

Each county has a council (*consiliul județean*) which executes legislative power and each council has its own executive apparatus. Executive power is held by the president of the county council (*președintele*), who coordinates the administration of the county council and who legally represents the county. From 1992 until 2008, the president was indirectly elected by the elected county councilors (*consilieri județeni*) during the first opening session of the council. The county council presidents were directly elected in 2008 through a first-past-the-post system whereby candidates could win an election with a plurality of the valid casted votes (which very often fell short of an absolute majority of votes). The directly elected county president was in place for only the 2008 and 2012 local elections. Beginning with the 2016 local elections, the presidents of the county councils have been once again indirectly elected by county councilors.

The presidents of the county council depend on the support of the councilors, as they can be removed from office by a majority vote. Additionally, according to Law No. 215/2001 on Public Administration, presidents can be suspended from office and dismissed on administrative grounds by the prefect of the county (*prefect*), following a legal sanction

ruled by a judicial court leading to imprisonment or when an incompatibility between their office and other activities (economic or administrative) has been officially acknowledged by the National Agency for Integrity (ANI). Finally, their mandate ends automatically when they decide to switch parties. An accumulation of public offices—that is, a *cumul des mandats*—including positions in state-owned or public companies is not allowed. In each county there is also a centrally appointed prefect who has two important tasks. First, the prefect has the duty to exercise legal control over administrative acts issued by local authorities. Second, the prefect coordinates the activities of decentralized central government institutions in the county such as environmental, agricultural, statistical, cultural, and social protection agencies.

Since 1992, when the first local elections were held, county councilors are elected through proportional representation with closed lists whereby remaining seats are allocated according to a d'Hondt formula. From 1992 to 1996, the required threshold for winning a seat was set at 3 percent and it was increased to 5 percent in 2000. For electoral alliances, the threshold rises with the number of parties within the alliance. The total number of county councilors varies from 31 in counties with a population below 350,000 to 37 in counties with a population above 650,000. Electoral competition is open to legally registered parties, but at the county level, there are no specific rules for nationally recognized minorities. Unlike for the national parliament, where one seat is reserved for each of the 18 nationally recognized minorities (King and Marian 2012), there are no guaranteed seats for these minorities in the county assemblies.

From 1992 to 2008, the same PR system was used for the election of county councilors and national deputies and senators. The counties serve as constituencies for national elections. In 2008 the electoral system for national elections was changed. PR was replaced by a single-round majority voting system with the aim to achieve district-based representation (Marian and King 2010) while maintaining overall proportionality at the national level. Mandates are directly allocated to those candidates winning a majority of votes in their district. The remaining seats are distributed proportionally according to the national performance of parties and allocated to constituencies which encompass several districts.

Although the overall distribution of the mandates was helping smaller parties, most parties were not satisfied with the allocation mechanism while many mandates were not won by the first candidate in line, but by the second, third and even fourth candidate. Moreover, the remaining seats were allocated to the party with the best electoral results at the constituency level and this led to a situation whereby candidates of the same party but from different electoral districts were competing with each other. Following a brief use of this electoral formula, and without a formal evaluation, the parliament decided in 2015 to abandon the single-round majority voting system and to re-install as of 2016 the PR system that was in use before 2008.

Among the various types of subnational elections—which are all held simultaneously—county elections are often conceived as the least important ones, whereas elections for the commune and municipality councils and mayors are often considered as the most important. Elections to the county councils are often perceived as ‘test elections’ for the popularity of national parties. This is in large part due to electoral timing of local elections vis-à-vis national elections. The first elections in spring 1992 were local elections and general and presidential elections were held in autumn of the same year. The term for local and national mandates is identical (four years; presidential elections are held every five years) and the electoral calendar set up in the early 1990s is still in place today. As a result, local elections, which are held in spring, are often conceived as a test for the more important general elections, which are held in autumn.

7.3 Congruence of the Vote

This section on the congruence of the vote looks at the electoral performance of parties in national and regional contests. Differences between national and county election results are explored by three measurements of congruence of the vote. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) compares the national vote at national level with the national vote in a particular county. Election congruence (NR-RR) looks at the difference between the national and county election vote within a given county. Finally, party

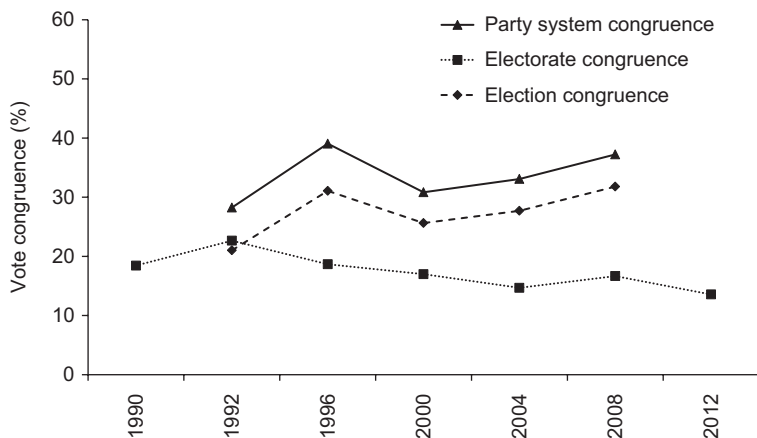


Fig. 7.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Romania)

system congruence (NN-RR) compares the results for national elections at the national level to regional election results at the county level. The three congruence measures are displayed in Fig. 7.1.

Figure 7.1 reveals that party system congruence is rather low as indicated by dissimilarity scores which lie above 30 percent except for the 1992 elections. Electorate congruence is relatively low and hovers between 15 and 20 percent. Variation in party system congruence seems to be largely driven by election congruence. A high degree of electorate congruence is not surprising considering that the same electoral system has been in use for county and national elections and that county elections are held about half a year before national elections which turn the former into test elections for the latter. Although electorate congruence is relatively high, dissimilarity scores vary widely across counties especially during the early phases of democratization (Mihut 1994) when the party system was rather unstable. The highest average dissimilarity score for electorate congruence is recorded for 1992 and 1996. In 1992, the former communist party-members organized themselves into the National Salvation Front (*Frontul Salvării Naționale*, FSN) which became later the National Democratic Salvation Front (*Frontul Democrat al Salvării*

Națională, FDSN). This party was challenged by a large anti-communist party alliance labeled the Romanian Democratic Convention (*Convenția Democratică din România*, CDR). After 1996 the main competition was between their successors (Pop-Eleches 1998). The Romanian Social Democracy Party (*Partidul Democrației Sociale din România*, PDSR) split into the Social Democrat Party (*Partidul Social Democrat*, PSD) and the National Liberal Party (*Partidul Național Liberal*, PNL). During the same time, the FDSN split from the FSN and FSN formed later the Democrat Party (*Partidul Democrat*, PD) which later on adopted the name Democrat Liberal Party (*Partidul Democrat Liberal*, PDL). In the elections of 1992 and 1996, the CDR won the largest vote share in counties from the more developed western provinces (Transylvania and Banat) and in Bucharest, the capital city, while the FDSN/PDSR won its largest vote shares in the southern and eastern provinces (Oltenia, Muntenia, and Moldova) which are the rural and less developed areas of Romania. Despite significant differences across counties, electorate congruence has increased over time due to the nationalization of the party system (Mungiu-Pippidi 2003). Average dissimilarity in the national vote across counties decreased from a high of 23 percent in 1992 to a low of 14 percent in 2012.

Election congruence (NR-RR) is relatively low and this can be explained by the presence of regionalist parties which are parties with a regional electoral basis and which defend local interests. Regionalist parties are forbidden by law but ethnic parties, which are legally defined as cultural associations, are present in Romania. It is not easy to define an ethnic party since they can be defined according to the composition of the rank-and-file of the party, according to its voters or according to the interests the party defends (Chandra 2011). The parties defending the interests of Hungarians in Romania can be considered to be ethnic parties as well as regional parties since they win majority vote shares in several counties in Transylvania. Hence, the label ethno-regional parties would be appropriate. In counties where the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania (*Uniunea Democrată a Maghiarilor din România*, UDMR) and other smaller ethnic parties such as the Hungarian Civic Party (*Partidul Civic Maghiar*, PCM) win large vote shares (for instance, in the Transylvanian counties of *Covasna*, *Harghita*, *Mureș*, and *Satu-Mare*), party system and electorate dissimilarity scores are significantly

higher and election dissimilarity scores significantly lower than in counties which are not largely inhabited by ethnic Hungarians. For example, *Covasna* and *Harghita* counties have the highest values for the electorate congruence (62.46 percent and 72.35 percent), much higher than *Iasi* (9.51 percent) or *Prahova* (9.23 percent) which are situated out of Transylvania. The same can be noticed for party system congruence, with *Covasna* (68.17 percent) and *Harghita* (70.14 percent) displaying higher values than *Suceava* (27.24 percent) or *Dolj* (29.22 percent) which are counties outside Transylvania where party system congruence is lowest.

7.4 Second-Order Election Effects

In this section we explore the extent to which dissimilarity between national and county elections are due to second-order election effects. The impact of national politics on local elections is favored by the timing of elections in Romania, as mentioned in Sect. 7.2 on regional government and regional elections. Political parties realize the importance of

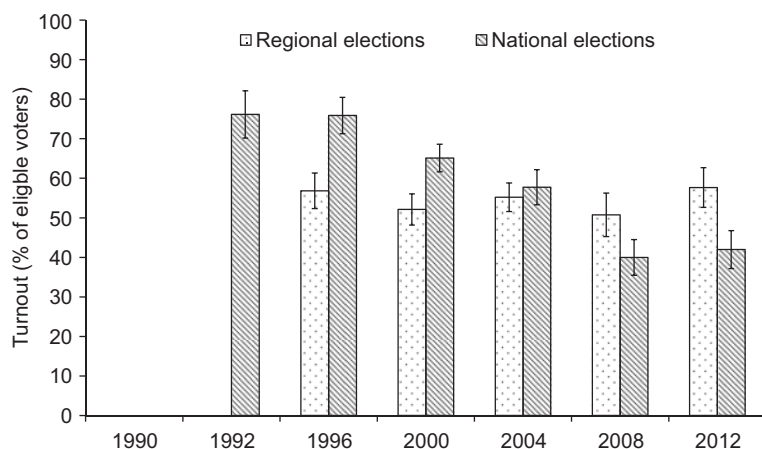


Fig. 7.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. Data for the 1990 national elections is missing. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Romania)

the timing of local elections. In 2011, the PDL tried to postpone the 2012 local elections but the decision was overruled by the Constitutional Court (Dragoman and Gheorghită 2013). The PDL government severely lost in the local elections in June 2012.

In a second-order election, turnout is low and parties in national government lose vote share whereas opposition, small, and new parties win vote share (Reif and Schmitt 1980). Figure 7.2 displays average turnout in county and national elections with standard deviations as a measure for variation in turnout across counties. Turnout in regional elections is quite stable and varies between 50 and 57 percent. This means that regional elections generates the interest of voters, who learned how to use their right to vote during the democratic transition. According to Pop (2002, p. 346), average and median turnout in the 2000 municipal elections was 60 percent, with two important predictors for explaining variation in turnout, namely, the size of municipality and the location (historical region) of the municipality. Smaller municipalities and localities in Transylvania tend to display higher turnout levels. On average there is a 12.2 percent difference between turnout for county and turnout for national elections. In local elections, especially for mayors and local councils, turnout has become more constant and stable with the consolidation of local autonomy. When compared to turnout in national elections, which has a variance range in turnout of 35.9 percent, the variation in regional turnout ranges from a minimum of 50.74 percent to a maximum of 57.6 percent.

Turnout for national elections decreased from more than 75 percent in 1996 to a bit more than 40 percent in 2012. This drop in turnout is in stark contrast to the expectations held up by civil society in 2008, when a single-round majority voting system was introduced with the expectation that it would lead to more civic involvement, increased transparency, responsibility, and electoral competition which, in turn, would trigger an improvement in the quality of representative government (Marian and King 2010). The previous PR system was heavily criticized by NGOs for the parties' incapacity to select committed and honest candidates and often lead to corrupt politicians being put as candidates on the ballot papers (Mungiu-Pippidi 2005). The critics argued that a major

benefit of a single-round plurality system was that candidate selection would be done by voters instead of parties.

These expectations were not confirmed. Between 2009 and 2012, the governing coalition formed by the PDL and UDMR was concerned with consolidating its power at all cost. The parties adopted a populist rhetoric and pretended to speak for the people and attacked the liberal and independent institutions such as courts and the mass media (Dragoman 2013a). Many cabinet ministers have been involved in striking cases of corruption, involving hundreds of millions of euros. Prime Minister Boc and President Băsescu were invoking the harsh economic crisis in order to justify draconian cuts in public spending: a 25 percent cut in salaries for employees from the public sector; a 16 percent increase of tax on pensions overpassing a certain amount; a considerable reduction of state allowances for disabled and unemployed people, mothers, and children; and a 25 percent increase in value added taxes. These measures led to a decrease in trust in central government institutions. The parliament continues to be ranked as the least trusted central political institution and

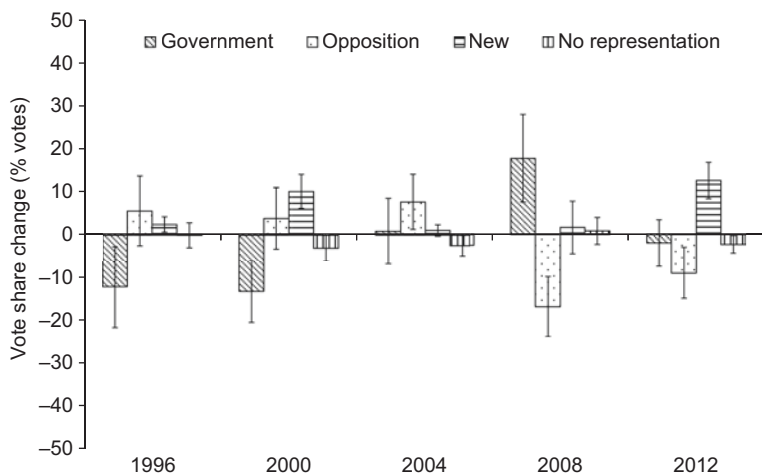


Fig. 7.3 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Romania)

only 20 percent of the citizens indicate that they trust national parliament whereas 50 percent trust the president. In contrast, more than 80 percent of the citizens tend to trust the army and the Orthodox Church (Dragoman 2014a). This distrust in elected offices, and especially in national parliament, can explain the relatively low turnout in national elections and why turnout for elections to the national parliament is lower than turnout for county elections.

Second-order elections are characterized by a high degree of electoral volatility between regional and previously held national elections. Figure 7.3 displays vote share swings for government, opposition, new and no representation parties. Electoral volatility is relatively high and this comes as no surprise considering the consolidation of the party system and the frequently changing coalitions (Gherghina 2015). Except for 2004, all election years show large vote share swings between county and previously held national elections (Fig. 7.3). These can be explained by two factors: electoral institutions and the economy. First, local elections are held three and a half years after general elections and half a year before the upcoming national election. The electoral timing may increase the extent to which county elections are considered to be second-order to national elections and are used by voters to express their satisfaction with national government.

Additionally, two important changes to the electoral system were introduced in 2000 and 2008. In 2000, the National Christian-Democrat Peasants Party (*Partidul Național Țărănesc Creștin-Democrat*, PNȚCD), the largest party from the governing CDR alliance, pleaded for an increase in the electoral threshold from 3 to 5 percent. This reform has reduced the effective number of parliamentary parties (Preda 2001) but it also proved to be 'fatal' for the PNȚCD itself, which did not succeed to surpass the new threshold in the national election of 2000. As mentioned above, a single-district majoritarian electoral system was adopted in 2008. This reform favored the opposition which was dominated by PDL and which run a successful campaign against PNL, its former ally and coalition partner from 2004 to 2007 (Marian and King 2010).

The economy is a second factor which may induce vote share swings (Fiorina 1981; Lewis-Beck 1988; Roberts and Wibbels 1999; Dassonneville and Hooghe 2015). In 2000, the governing CDR-PD

coalition was severely electorally sanctioned for its management of the economy and the social impacts following extensive liberalization and large-scale privatization which increased social inequity and severely deprived many citizens (Carey 2004). In 2008, the PNL government was sanctioned for its perceived inability of fairly distributing the public revenues generated by the unexpectedly high economic growth from 2003 to 2007. Leading politicians from the PDL accused the PNL of corruption and this populist rhetoric convinced the electorate to shift parties and to largely vote for the PDL (Dragoman 2014b).

In 2000 and 2012, new parties gain significant vote shares. In 2000, dissatisfaction with the economy helped the Greater Romania Party (*Partidul România Mare*, PRM), an extremist and radical party (Pop-Eleches 2001) and it came second to the winning PSD (Dragoman 2011b). PRM's presidential candidate, Corneliu Vadim Tudor, was defeated the same year in the second round of the presidential elections. In 2012, the disillusion with regard to the PDL pledges of 2008 on the fight against corruption fueled another populist party: People's Party—Dan Diaconescu (*Partidul Poporului—Dan Diaconescu*, PP-DD) which was built around its charismatic leader Dan Diaconescu, a former TV showman and media owner. However, the electoral successes of these new parties were short lived. PRM failed to surpass the electoral threshold in 2004 and became an extra-parliamentary party while the PP-DD fell apart when its leader was convicted for fraud and imprisoned in 2014.

7.5 Regional Election Effects

As mentioned earlier, the Hungarian ethnic minority is concentrated in Transylvania which was part of the Hungarian Kingdom for many centuries since Medieval times (Kristó 2000). Transylvania is the cradle of the Hungarian minority following the crushing defeat of 1526 and the subsequent Ottoman-Turkish occupation of central and southern Hungary (Lendvai 2004). Moreover, three counties in Eastern Transylvania are inhabited by Szeklers, a Hungarian-speaking ethnic minority descending from ancient settlers, who defended the Eastern borders of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom in exchange for extensive autonomy granted by the

Hungarian king. The historical autonomy of Szeklerland or Székelyland (*Székegyföld* in Hungarian and *Ținutul Secuiesc* in Romanian), which covers almost entirely the counties of *Harghita*, *Covasna*, and *Mureș*, is currently invoked for the recognition of a special autonomous status for ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania. Hungarian local political representatives in the region set up a Szekler National Council as a representative body of Szeklers in Transylvania and adopted a national anthem, a flag, and a national coat of arms. Furthermore, the Szekler National Council demanded regional autonomy for Székelyland and recognition of the region as distinct and indivisible territorial unit within Romania (Dragoman 2015). Counties within Székelyland are largely inhabited by ethnic Hungarians (36.46 percent in *Mureș*, 71.59 percent in *Covasna*, and 82.89 percent in *Harghita*), and this ethnic share translates almost one-to-one into similarly sized vote shares for Hungarian ethnic parties. Counties outside Transylvania are dominated by ethnic Romanians but the ethnic Hungarian diaspora can be substantial such as in the counties of *Arad* (8.49 percent), *Bihor* (24.02 percent), *Brașov* (7.22 percent), *Cluj* (14.98 percent), *Maramureș* (6.81 percent), *Satu-Mare* (32.69 percent), *Sălaj* (22.36 percent), and *Timiș* (5.16 percent).¹ Although there are 18 reserved seats for minorities in the Chamber of Deputies (King and Marian 2012), the share of ethnic minorities are scant except for the ethnic Hungarians.

Counties have become important political venues for the expression of ethnic cultural identities of minorities. Beginning in 1997 and continuing during the process of accession to the European Union, legal provisions have been put in place which grant ethnic minorities rights to use their own language in the educational and cultural domains (Dragoman 2012). The unrestricted use of minority languages applies for public administration in geographical areas where a minority surpass a threshold. In these territories, the ethnic language should be used in local council public communications, road signs, and street names as well as in courthouses and cultural institutions such as museums and theaters. This is in sharp contrast with the nationalist policies of the early 1990s (Gallagher 2001;

¹ The census data refer to 2011 (<http://www.recensamantromania.ro/rezultate-2/> accessed 5 January 2016).

Kettley 2003). At that time, ethnically defined Romanian nationalist parties in government, that is, the PRM and the Romanian National Unity Party (*Partidul Unității Naționale Române*, PUNR), refused to make concessions toward UDMR.

Ethnic minorities may establish cultural associations which can work as political parties, for example, the Hungarian and German parties. Although they are not regular political parties constituted according to the Law on Political Parties, electoral legislation grants them legal status and the right to compete in all elections. This was extremely important during the early stages of democratization, and through this legislation, Romania avoided ethnic-based conflicts similar to those experienced in Yugoslavia (Ramet 2002). A considerable expansion of minority rights during the transformation toward democracy allowed for an acceptance of ethnic parties (Dragoman 2015) and turned potential ethnic conflict into banal, everyday nationalism (Brubaker et al. 2006).

Most ethnic parties in Romania have a regionally based electoral stronghold and, therefore, the label ethno-regional parties suit them. Some of them, and in particular, some new Hungarian parties such as the Hungarian Civic Party (*Partidul Civic Maghiar—Magyar Polgari Part*, PCM) and the Hungarian Popular Party in Transylvania (*Partidul Popular Maghiar din Transilvania*, PPMT) can be also labeled as regionalist parties—that is, parties that demand a form of self-rule for the minority they represent. These parties compete with the UDMR for the electoral support of ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania and especially those living in Szeklerland, an ethno-culturally defined region in Eastern Transylvania, more or less encompassed by the counties of *Harghita*, *Covasna*, and *Mureș* (Bochsler and Szocsik 2013). This electoral competition takes especially place in local elections. For example, in 2008 UDMR lost four county councilor seats in *Harghita*, ten in *Covasna*, and two in *Mureș*, which went to other Hungarian ethno-regional parties (Zamfira 2012).

Despite the recent intra-county competition for the votes of ethnic Hungarians, UDMR remains the most significant ethno-regional party. Voters seem to anticipate that competing ethnic Hungarian parties would make it difficult to win national representation and the ethnic Hungarian electorate massively votes for UDMR in national elections. Beginning in

1996, UDMR has been a coalition or supporting partner for many central governments. Between 2000 and 2004, while it was not in government, UDMR supported the PSD cabinet run by Adrian Năstase (Gallagher 2005). But even before 1996, UDMR was well integrated in the democratic opposition to PDSR (Mihăilescu 2008). The UDMR manages to easily switch between coalition partners and the party regularly succeeds to obtain concessions from the senior, statewide parties. As a result, the legal and cultural status of the Hungarian minority has largely improved during the post-communist transition (Dragoman 2012). Participation of UDMR in government after 1997 has proven to be crucial for surpassing the nationalist politics of the early 1990s. Through coalition bargaining with various statewide parties (e.g., CDR, PSD, PDL), UDMR managed to secure extensive linguistic rights in education and local administration, as well as a restitution of buildings, churches, and museums, which had been nationalized by the former communist regime. Moreover, the participation of UDMR in government was used as an argument by the statewide parties during the EU and NATO accession processes, by emphasizing the willingness for ethnic cooperation in a region marked by ethnic hatred and bloodshed, as it was the case in former Yugoslavia, Ukraine, and Moldova (Chiribucă and Magyari 2003).

Alongside ethnic Hungarian parties, the German Democratic Forum of Germans in Romania (*Forumul Democrat al Germanilor din Romania*, FDGR) is the most visible ethno-regional party, yet it has only an electoral stronghold in the county of *Sibiu* and especially in the town of *Sibiu* (Dragoman 2013b). Although its electoral successes remain restricted to *Sibiu* (Dragoman 2006), the city is well-known because of the success story of *Sibiu* as the European Capital of Culture 2007 and by its mayor, Klaus Johannis, who was elected as president of Romania in 2014 as a PNL candidate (Cercel 2015). Except for these noticeable results, FDGR is represented in the national parliament by only one Member of Parliament which can make use of the reserved seat allocated to the German minority (King and Marian 2012). Overall, the electoral strength for Hungarian and German ethno-regional parties is very similar in county and national elections (Fig. 7.4).

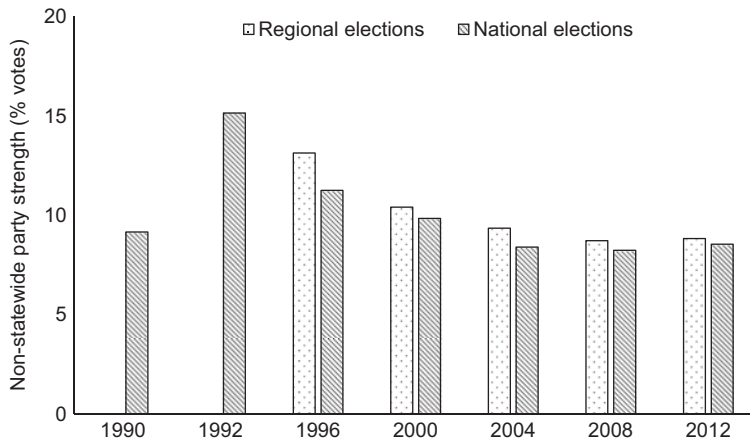


Fig. 7.4 Non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average vote shares obtained by non-statewide parties in regional and national elections. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Romania)

7.6 Discussion

A nationalization of the party system is one of the most noticeable features of two decades of democratic transition in Romania. With the reduction in the effective number of parliamentary parties and a gradual consolidation of a left-right political dimension, electoral results have become increasingly homogeneous across the territory. However, we also found significant regionalization of the national and county vote because German and Hungarian ethnic parties tend to have electoral strongholds in particular counties. Hungarian ethno-regional parties are electorally strong in counties in (Eastern) Transylvania whereas the German FDGR is particularly strong in *Sibiu*. High election congruence is induced and maintained by several electoral institutions. First, PR is applied in both regional and national elections (except for the elections held in 2008 and 2012) and, second, there is a small time gap of only six months between regional elections (spring-summer) and national elections (fall-winter).

The findings presented in this chapter highlight two important aspects of nationalization of party systems. First is the importance of electoral

institutions which, in the Romanian case, lead to a high degree of nationalization. Second is the overwhelming domination of central and state-wide parliamentary parties. In 2011 the PDL and president Băseșcu tried to reconfigure regional government and proposed to amalgamate counties into larger administrative units (Dragoman and Gheorghita 2016). Although this political move would have possibly favored PDL candidates in the 2012 regional elections, it would have significantly altered the political resources of minor, ethno-regional parties. These parties can represent viable alternatives for the electorate as is evidenced by the former mayor of *Sibiu* and former FDGR president Klaus Johannis who was elected president of Romania in 2014. These minor parties, some of them with a local or regional electoral stronghold could provide for better alternatives for voters when they would like to cast a sanction vote and may thereby prevent a rise of anti-system, extremist and xenophobic parties. This may prove essential for the consolidation of the still inchoate and inexperienced party system of Romania.

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8

Russia: Nationalization Achieved Through Electoral and Institutional Engineering

Derek S. Hutcheson and Arjan H. Schakel

8.1 Introduction

The nationalization of voting behavior is of particular interest in Russia. As the world's largest country, spanning the entire Eurasian sub-continent and bordering 16 countries, it has faced the perennial challenge of effectively governing its vast territory. The dynamics of Russian regional governance also exemplify the classical tension between sovereignty and centralization in federal structures. While the constitutional

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federal structure of Russia has barely altered since 1993 (apart from some amalgamations of neighboring regions), the degree of centralization has varied widely.

Scholars of the Soviet Union largely focused on politics inside the ‘Garden Ring’ of Moscow. By contrast, the early post-Soviet years witnessed an explosion of studies in the newly accessible Russian regions (Löwenhardt and White 2007). At first these focused mainly on differential experiences of transformation around the country (for instance, Friedgut and Hahn 1994; Gel’man et al. 2000; Ruble et al. 2001). By the late 1990s, there was interest in the emergence of variegated types of regional regimes (Gel’man 1999) and the emergence of a decentralized and generally ungovernable system.

Following his election as president in 2000, Vladimir Putin’s earliest reforms focused on the re-establishment of control over this fragmented patchwork of regional regimes. Of particular interest to scholars were the creation of seven new ‘federal districts’ with presidential plenipotentiaries (Nelson and Kuzes 2002 Petrov 2002; Ross 2002); the reform of the representation of the federal subjects in the upper house of parliament (Remington 2003); and the abolition of the regional gubernatorial elections (Goode 2007). The number of detailed studies of individual regions has diminished somewhat compared with the early post-Soviet years, but the focus on the dynamics of regional governance continues (for instance, Chebankova 2009a; Cherkasov 2008; Golosov 2012; Reisinger and Moraski 2013; Ross 2010, 2014; Ryzhenkov 2011; Sharafutdinova 2010; Turovskii 2010; Zakharov 2011).

The relative lack of party involvement in regional politics in Russia in the early post-Soviet years was reflected in the initial paucity of the literature on the subject. Although a few studies focused on individual aspects of regional electoral politics—regional variation in national voting patterns (Clem and Craumer 1997, 1998; Stadelbauer 1996), regional legislative elections (Moses 2003; Slider 1996; Smirnova 1998), party organizations in the regions (Hutcheson 2003) and nationalization of the vote (Ishiyama 2002)—few synthesized all these approaches until Golosov’s (1999, 2004) pioneering studies on party participation in regional politics, which noted a relative lack of party involvement in local legislative affairs. Since then, studies of regional legislatures have

observed the gradual encroachment and eventual domination of them by the Kremlin's 'party of power', *Edinaya Rossiya* (United Russia) (Golosov 2014a; Panov and Ross 2013).

In this chapter we analyze this phenomenon systematically by studying 203 elections for the lower chamber of regional (*sub"ekty*) parliaments held between 7 December 2003 and 13 September 2015. The 2000s are particularly interesting decades to study since significant nationalization of the vote has taken place during this period. In the Russian context, nationalization has occurred mainly because of the increasing vote shares won by *Edinaya Rossiya*. Despite an overall trend of nationalization, however, we find significant traces of regionalization of the vote. In other words, the depth and speed of nationalization have been unequal across the territory. In particular, we find that nationalization has been particularly pronounced in ethnic and more populous regions. Furthermore, we find that electoral institutional engineering has facilitated nationalization.

In the next section, we will discuss developments in regional government and regional electoral reform since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. In the third section, we discuss congruence between regional and federal elections. We explore nationalization of the vote in more detail in Sect. 8.4 and regionalization of the vote in Sect. 8.5. The final section summarizes and concludes.

8.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

Russia's regional politics since the break-up of the Soviet Union can be divided into two halves. During the Yeltsin years (1991–99), power was decentralized to the regions in exchange for their political support for the center, which led to the emergence of strong semi-autonomous regional fiefdoms and an entrenched gubernatorial class. The Putin era has seen recentralization, starting with efforts (from approximately 2000 to 2004) to create a 'unified legal space' out of the disparate regional regimes of the 1990s, and thereafter to establish control over both the executive and legislative arms of power in the regions.

Russia's basic organizational structure was inherited from the Soviet Union. Originally, there were 89 constituent entities (*sub"ekty*) until the consolidation of several regions into their larger neighbors from 2004–07. As of 2016, and including the controversial Crimean peninsula,¹ the 85 regions of the Russian Federation comprise 22 republics (*respubliki*), 9 administrative territories (*kraya*), 46 administrative regions (*oblasti*), 1 autonomous region (*avtonomnaya oblast*), 4 autonomous areas (*avtonomnye okruga*) and 3 cities of federal standing (Moscow, St Petersburg and Sevastopol).

The *sub"ekty* are highly asymmetrical in terms of rationale, power and size. Republics, autonomous areas and the autonomous province represent 'ethnic regions' where titular non-Russian ethnic groups generally form the plurality or majority of the population. Republics enjoy the highest formal level of autonomy, being allowed to have their own constitutions and languages (Russian Constitution, Arts. 66.1 and 68.2). Administrative regions, administrative territories and the cities of federal standing are formed on territorial rather than ethnic grounds.

As Osipov and Oracheva (2010, pp. 217–20) demonstrate, however, this ethnic/non-ethnic distinction is now largely a discourse rather than a legal fact, as the path-dependent differentiation into the six categories is not given an official rationale in the constitution and each subject is given equal representation in the Federal Council. Nonetheless, the provisions on republican autonomy and regional powers provisions were used in the 1990s to particular effect by some republics—most notably Tatarstan—to make declarations of sovereignty and obtain considerable de facto autonomy that for a while stopped just short of full statehood. The asymmetry extends not only to autonomy but also to size and economic strength. The least populated region, Nenets Autonomous Area, had just 42,800 inhabitants in 2013, compared with nearly 12 million in Moscow city, the largest (Rosstat 2013, pp. 138, 170). The GDP per capita in the poorest region (the Republic of Ingushetia) was 16 times

¹ Although we include them on this list, the Republic of Crimea and its capital city of Sevastopol remain unrecognized as Russian territory by the wider international community. We exclude them in the analyses presented below.

lower than that of the richest, Tyumen administrative region (Rosstat 2014).

The formal powers of the regions are the residuals of powers not explicitly reserved to the center or shared between the center and the regions (Russian Constitution 1993, Arts. 71–3). In principle, powers can be transferred in either direction by mutual agreement, as long as this does not contradict the constitution (Russian Constitution 1993, Arts. 11 and 78.2–3). In the 1990s there was a parade of bilateral treaties (*dogovory*) and policy agreements (*soglasheniya*) between the regions and the center—no less than 46 between 1994 and 1998 (Ross 2010, p. 168). These delegated significant ad hoc extra powers to particular regions, and in many cases also shifted primary responsibility to the regional level for key appointments to federal law enforcement and tax agencies (Chebankova 2009b, pp. 23–31). In many cases, they also contravened the constitution. Putin claimed in 2001 that 3,500 laws in the regions contradicted federal laws (Putin 2001), and over the next four years, the bilateral treaties were swiftly abandoned (Mironov and Burbulis 2010, pp. 75–80).²

Selection methods for the chief executives (governors) of regions have alternated every few years between appointment or indirect election (1992–95; 2005–12) and direct election (1991; 1995–2005; 2012 onward). Regional legislatures have been directly elected more or less throughout the post-Soviet era, but with frequent electoral system changes. From late 1991, the large regional soviets elected the previous year were augmented by ‘small soviets’, chosen from within their ranks, which met more frequently to take day-to-day decisions (Stoner-Weiss 1997, pp. 73–82). After the new constitution was ratified in December 1993, these were replaced by smaller regional legislatures initially elected for a two-year term, though some regions were slow to get going and others exceeded their initial mandate (Slider 1996). Since then, there has been a regular cycle of regional legislative elections.

Our focus for the rest of this chapter is on these regional legislative elections, and the connection between voting patterns in these and in federal

²Some regions (such as Tatarstan, Chechnya and Bashkortostan) retained significant de facto autonomy even after formally cancelling their treaties. Bashkortostan incorporated the bilateral treaty into a revised constitution (Ross 2002, pp. 149–50) and Tatarstan signed a new one in 2007 (Chebankova 2009b, pp. 66–7).

elections. Given the almost constantly changing context of central-federal relations in Russia, and the frequent changes in federal legislation regarding elections and political parties, we investigate the knock-on effect of these on the nationalization of the vote.

The overall narrative is of a system that has shifted from fragmentation to consolidation. To a large extent, this has been the product of heavy and almost constant institutional and electoral engineering. Between their inception and mid-2015, the Law on Political Parties (2001) was modified 38 times; the framework election Law on Fundamental Guarantees (2002) received 73 updates; and the Law on the Structures of Legislative and Executive Organs (1999) was subject to no fewer than 126 separate amending acts. This continually shifting set of rules has created the framework for control over regional legislatures by the national parties, in particular the ‘party of power’, *Edinaya Rossiya*. Four aspects of institutional and electoral engineering in particular are worth noting.

The first concerns the regulation of political parties. The Russian party system of the 1990s was chaotic and fragmented—a ‘floating party system’ in which an ever-changing menu of small and short-lived parties and other organizations ‘floated on and off the ballot’ (Rose 2009, p. 145). It was relatively easy to set up or dissolve a political movement or organization. Parties also played little role in regional politics (Hutcheson 2003). A major innovation early in Putin’s tenure was the replacement of the relatively lax Law on Public Organizations (1995) with a much stricter Law on Political Parties (2001), which outlawed interregional and regional movements or parties (Art. 9.3), imposed wide territorial penetration requirements (Art. 3.2) and introduced minimum participation criteria (Art. 37.1). This measure—as well as successive tightening of the minimum membership and other requirements—led to a cull of eligible political parties. By 2011, only seven remained eligible to stand in the State Duma election (Ministry of Justice 2011). Since then, party registration has somewhat been liberalized, leading to a mushrooming of obscure (and often misleadingly-named) parties. Superficially, things have come the full circle but the difference is that there is now an established Duma party ‘cartel’ (Hutcheson 2013) whose position—especially that of the dominant *Edinaya Rossiya* party—is strengthened by the

splintering of the vote among numerous small parties, leaving the seats to be divided among the major parties that pass the electoral threshold (Goloso**v** 2015).

A second major aspect of institutional engineering concerns changes to the electoral system. Regions have some leeway in choosing the details of their electoral system (Lyubare**v** 2011), but they must conform to the frameworks contained in the federal legislation, which has been subject to frequent politically-motivated changes. After the framework election law was changed in 2002 to stipulate that a minimum proportion of 50 percent of deputies had to be elected from party lists (Law on Fundamental Guarantees 2002, Art 35.16), most regions changed from majoritarian to mixed electoral systems. Combined with the aforementioned reforms restricting the supply of eligible parties, the outlawing of electoral blocs after 2005 (Goloso**v** 2014b), a high permitted electoral threshold (typically 7 percent) and the use of an unusual Imperiali divisor in the proportional part of these elections—which advantages the largest party (Goloso**v** 2014c)—the effect over time was to shift the dominant role from independent candidates to the leading parties.

Since 2011 there have been further extensive changes to the framework of Russian regional elections. Some of these appear to contradict the earlier measures, but they can be seen as part of a wider wave of renewed electoral engineering more suited to the present-day circumstances. Moscow and St Petersburg have been exempted from the requirement to have any deputies elected from party lists (the 2014 Moscow City Duma election took place on a purely majoritarian basis). The minimum proportion of deputies that have to be elected from party lists in other regions has been cut from 50 percent to 25 percent. The maximum electoral threshold has been cut from 7 to 5 percent, and minimum and maximum legislature sizes have been set in relation to the sizes of regional populations. *Edinaya Rossiya* at one point benefited from the central nature of proportional lists with its generally high vote shares, but the return of majoritarian systems—in which landslide election victories for the leading party are more likely—can be seen an insurance policy against the possibility of lower proportions of the vote after its long dominance.

In addition to overt electoral system change, elections have been consolidated chronologically as well. Since 2006, the previous system of rolling regional elections that took place on their own cycles has been replaced by bi-annual and later annual ‘unified days of voting’ in which all regional legislative elections due that year have been held simultaneously. In Western European countries, horizontal simultaneity is thought to increase second-order election effects because it induces a national campaign with large involvement of national media and politicians. The effect in Russia has been approximately similar: centralization has advantaged parties with greater resources. It has also made the annual election day a national ‘event’ that receives considerable federal media attention. The lack of variation in parties’ electoral messages was noted in the national press during the 2015 regional elections, for example (Razuvaev 2015).

The third aspect of institutional engineering involves the vertical and horizontal consolidation of the ‘party of power’ (*partiya vlasti*). The term ‘party of power’ comes from the second meaning of *vlast* (power) in Russian: it is the party not just ‘in power’, but more specifically, *of* power, formed by the authorities to cement and legitimize their rule (Oversloot and Verheul 2006). By contrast with the Kremlin’s numerous and hapless efforts to do this in the 1990s, the *Edinaya Rossiya* party that was formed early in the Putin era has proved adept at consolidating and eventually dominating legislative politics at all levels. One reason why the Kremlin devoted such energy to building a dominant party was that it allowed the center to overcome the ‘commitment problem’ of the regions, by establishing a framework for intra-elite interaction that established access channels to the Kremlin in exchange for long-term commitment to the regime (Reuter and Remington 2009). In the electoral arena, this led to the co-option and re-orientation of the ‘electoral machines’ of prominent regional leaders toward *Edinaya Rossiya* (Golosov 2014a, d).

Control over the regions by *Edinaya Rossiya* was consolidated by other institutional engineering. Governors’ independent bases of political power were dismantled—first by their removal from the Federation Council and later by the abolition of gubernatorial elections after 2004 (Law on Gubernatorial Appointments 2004). Henceforth, regional legis-

latures played a formal role in confirming (and after 2009, informing) the president's nominee. The extent to which governors were simply central government appointees is debated (Goode 2007; Blakkisrud 2011) but a regional governor clearly had little incentive to build an independent power base, and every incentive to ensure a loyal local legislature and 'deliver the vote' in federal elections to the benefit of the federal authorities. Direct gubernatorial elections were reintroduced in 2012, but with a qualification: a 'municipal filter' requires prospective candidates to collect nomination signatures from between 5 and 10 percent of deputies in a region's municipal assemblies, from at least four-fifths of municipal councils—which in practice makes it extremely difficult for non-approved candidates to get onto the ballot (Law on Gubernatorial Appointments 2012, Art. 3). Moreover, in 2013 a clause was added to the law that allowed regional assemblies to replace direct elections with appointment by the head of state. By April 2014, five of seven republics in the Northern Caucasus had done so (Dzutsev 2013, 2014).

Finally, we should address the fact that there are frequent questions raised about the impact of possible falsification in Russian elections. Even in the early 1990s, some analysts posted significant question marks over the reliability of the electoral process (for instance, Sobyenin and Sukhovol'skii 1995), and similar allegations have been repeated frequently since (for instance, Borisova 2000; Myagkov et al. 2009). Concerns focus on two aspects: overt falsification (Lyubarev et al. 2007, pp. 59–122), and the systematic use of 'administrative resources' (state-sponsored agency) to skew the election systemically to the benefit of particular candidates or parties (Hutcheson 2006, pp. 60–4).

The two main methods used to detect apparent fraud are the compilation of individual reported incidences of electoral law violations (for instance, Golos Movement 2014; Loshkina 2004; Ross 2014), and detailed statistical analysis of official voting and turnout patterns to spot anomalous results (for instance, Myagkov et al. 2009). While neither approach is perfect, they suggest that some regions run relatively clean elections, whilst others are more problematic. Myagkov et al. (2009, p. 5) point to the ethnic republics of the Northern Caucasus and the mid-Russian ethnic republics of Tatarstan and Dagestan as regions with particu-

larly attention-worthy voting statistics, consistent with other previous indices of Russian regional democracy (Petrov 2004) and local reports (for instance, Mikhailov et al. 2000).

Although election results seem both predictable and questionable, we think there are three reasons why a study of Russian regional elections is useful nonetheless. First, although the inter-party competition may be limited, *intra*-party competition is rife within *Edinaya Rossiya*. Most regions have set their legislature sizes at or close to the minimum permitted level, which—when combined with the fact that party lists are generally divided into more sub-districts than there are seats available—means that the district party organizations (and local administrations) are effectively competing with their neighbors to obtain representation (Kynev et al. 2015, p. 42). The competition to mobilize the local electorate thus assumes some importance despite the predictability of the aggregate result. Second, the electoral engineering, and the large number of regions, makes for a turbulent process but provides an almost unparalleled laboratory for testing the impact of electoral engineering on the vote. Finally, there is a difference between relative and absolute fraud. Even if we accept that the electoral results in some regions seem to come under question more than others, it is likely that the same practices will be prevalent in these regions in both federal *and* regional elections—which means that election congruence will still be discernible.

8.3 Congruence of the Vote

Before we start discussing congruence between regional and federal elections, we need first to set out the scope conditions for the comparison. In this chapter we analyze 203 regional elections which are grouped according three electoral cycles (Table 8.1). An electoral cycle starts with a federal parliamentary election (to the Russian parliament, the State Duma) and stops before the next federal election. Although there were already regional legislative elections in the 1990s, we start our analyses from the federal election of December 2003, for two reasons. First, the official reporting of regional elections before the turn of the century was fragmentary and often only contained details of the

Table 8.1 Included regional elections per cycle

Electoral cycle	First regional election	Last regional election	Number elections
1 '2003–07'	7 December 2003	15 April 2007	74
2 '2007–11'	2 December 2007	13 March 2011	63
3 '2011–15'	4 December 2011	13 September 2015	66
		Total	203

winners in each district, rather than full lists of candidates and their affiliations (for instance, Kozlov and Oreshkin 1998). Second, until 2003 most regional electoral systems used majoritarian rules to translate votes into seats. This resulted in very low vote shares for parties and the domination of regional legislatures by independent candidates with a local following. Golosov (2004, p. 73) concluded that party nominees won just 12.5 percent of seats in the 1993–95 period, and 21.8 percent from 1995 to 1999. Our data confirm this. Taking the inverse measure of party involvement—the percentage of votes won by non-affiliated candidates—we find that on average independents won over 75 percent of the vote in the regional elections held from 1999 to 2003 and won only 32 percent and 16 percent in the 2003–07 and 2007–11 election cycles, respectively.³

The first regional elections included in our analysis were held on 7 December 2003 and our analysis stops with the regional elections which were held on 13 September 2015, the last round before the September 2016 federal State Duma election. The reason for analyzing elections according to cycles is because the length of the mandates of regional representatives differs from two to five years and thereby the number of included regional elections differs across the electoral cycles. For each

³We could not assign vote share won by candidates to party labels for the majoritarian tier results for the 2011–15 electoral cycle. The results for the 1999, 2003 and 2007 elections have been assigned to parties by IRENA (Geliks Center hosted at <http://irena.org.ru/index.html>, accessed 14 November 2015). Unfortunately, the regional election database was taken offline by the federal election authority in 2012 (<http://www.themoscownews.com/russia/20120224/189485434.html>, accessed 14 November 2015). Therefore, we are not able to update the election data for the majoritarian electoral tier results for elections held after 2011 because the Central Electoral Commission and its regional affiliates (www.cikrf.ru) list majoritarian candidates only by name and not by party affiliation in the official results.

election cycle, we made sure that a region only appears once, and when a region held more than one election within an election cycle, we took the regional election held closest in time to the previous federal election as a basis for comparison.

Starting at the federal level, half of the parliamentary seats in the 2003 State Duma election were elected under proportional rule, with the other half elected in single-member constituencies—as had also been the case in 1993, 1995 and 1999. All representatives were elected under proportional rule in the federal elections of 2007 and 2011 (but the system reverted to a mixed unconnected one in 2016). Since 2003, most regions have used a mixed electoral system for their regional parliamentary elections. We compare the federal election results in the proportional tier to the regional election results in the proportional tier.

Figure 8.1 displays the results for three different dissimilarity indices for the 2003–07, 2007–11 and 2011–15 electoral cycles. Party system congruence (NN-RR) compares the federal election result at the national level to the regional election result in a particular region. This measure conflates two sources of variation. Election results are compared across types of election and across levels of aggregation. Election congruence (NR-RR) compares the federal election result in each region to the closest regional election outcome within the same region. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) compares the federal vote at the statewide level to the federal vote in a particular region. Figure 8.1 shows averages for three electoral cycles.

The overall trend is quite clear: dissimilarity decreased considerably between the 2003–07 and 2007–11 election cycles. However, there is also interesting variation across the measurements. The overall difference between the national and regional vote (party system congruence) was about 35 percent in the 2003–07 election round and more than halved for the 2007–11 and 2011–15 election cycles. Party system congruence seems to be highly related to election congruence and this suggests that most of the decline in dissimilarity in the vote can be attributed to a decrease in vote switching between federal and regional elections. The more stable list of parties participating over time presumably also plays a role. Electorate congruence, which compares the federal vote at the statewide level to the federal vote in a region, is

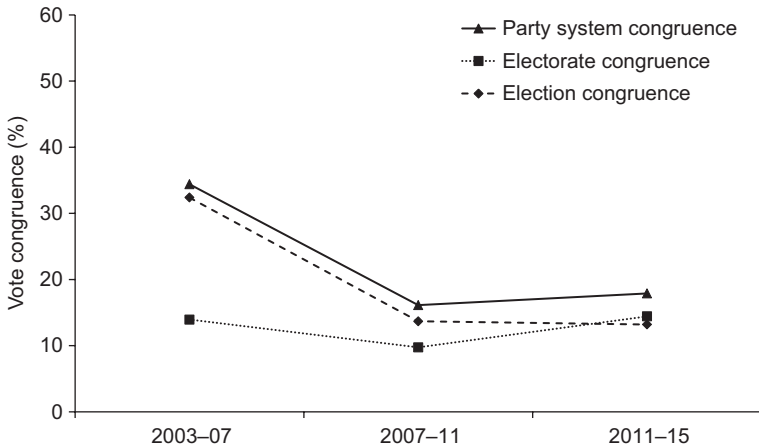


Fig. 8.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (*Notes:* Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. The results are shown for the proportional tier. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Russia)

higher (indicated by lower scores) than for the other two measures. For the 2003 federal election, average electorate dissimilarity was about 14 percent, decreasing to just below 10 percent for the 2007 election and increasing to about 15 percent in the 2011 election. When we compare the federal and regional vote within the proportional tier, we detect significant nationalization of the vote.

The results should be interpreted with care, since the comparison across time involves a different number of regions. However, federal election results allow us to assess the representativeness of the regions included within an election cycle. Table 8.2 presents average election congruence (NN-NR) scores for two groups of regions across three electoral cycles. The first group includes all regions at the time of the federal election, whereas the second group of regions are those which are included in an election cycle (see Table 8.1). From Table 8.2, one can observe that for each election round, averages and standard deviations are of comparable size across the two groups. The similarity in electorate congruence scores strengthens the finding that the decrease in dissimilarity in the vote cannot be (solely) ascribed to different regions included in the analysis. In

Table 8.2 Comparison of electorate congruence

Election cycle	All regions in the federal election			Regions included in election cycle		
	N regions	Mean	St. dev.	N regions	Mean	St. dev.
2003–07	89	13.94	8.98	74	13.41	8.46
2007–11	85	9.74	7.58	63	9.17	6.82
2011–15	83	14.43	9.41	66	14.43	9.67

Notes: Shown is the dissimilarity between the national vote at the national level and the national vote in the region

the next two sections, we explore in further depth the causes for the difference in the vote.

8.4 Second-Order Election Effects

One source of dual voting can relate to second-order election effects. The second-order election model posits that there is a (perceived) hierarchy between elections. National elections are considered to be the most important elections because there is more ‘at stake’ than in second-order regional elections. Because regional elections are considered to be less important, voters tend to display particular electoral behavior. Voters are inclined to turn out less and those who do turn out tend to use their vote to send a signal of discontent. They punish parties in national government and vote for small, new and opposition parties. The observed decline in dissimilarity in the vote in Fig. 8.1 could relate to decreased second-order election behavior. In this section we explore the extent to which regional elections display second-order election outcomes, and we start by exploring average turnout rates for federal and regional elections in Fig. 8.2.

Overall, average turnout was relatively low for both federal and regional legislative elections and did not exceed 70 percent in the three cycles. Turnout in federal legislative elections tend to be higher than for regional legislative elections (though it should be noted that it has always been higher still in presidential elections, which suggests that State Duma elections are also seen as slightly less than first-order con-

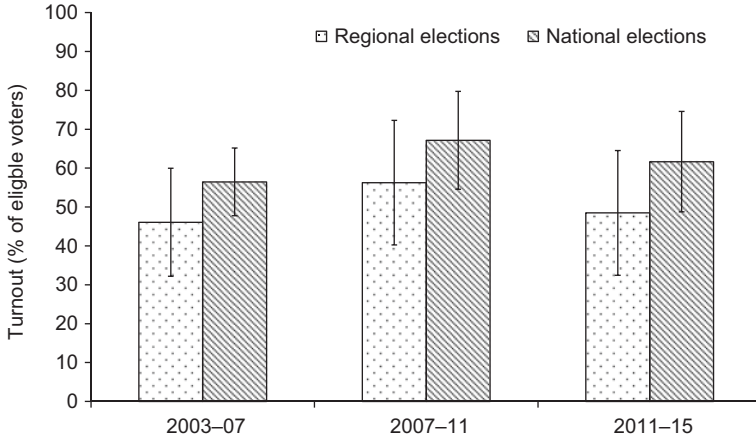


Fig. 8.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. The results are shown for the proportional tier. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Russia)

tests). Turnout in both regional and federal elections increased between the 2003 and 2007 election cycles, possibly reflecting the better mobilization of the regional elite in 2007 as they competed for the federal center's approval.

In order to explore second-order election effects in greater depth, we compare the regional vote to the previous federal vote for four party categories in Fig. 8.3⁴:

- The government party category reflects the vote share change for *Edinaya Rossiya* (ER). In other chapters in this volume, this label is applied to the parties of the governing coalition, but as the Russian government is neither party-based nor formed on the basis of a parliamentary majority, we interpret ER, as the party with which most of the regional governors are affiliated and which is explicitly endorsed by president, as the 'government party'.

⁴A party is included when it won at least 5 percent of the vote in a region for at least one federal or regional election (excluding independent candidates).

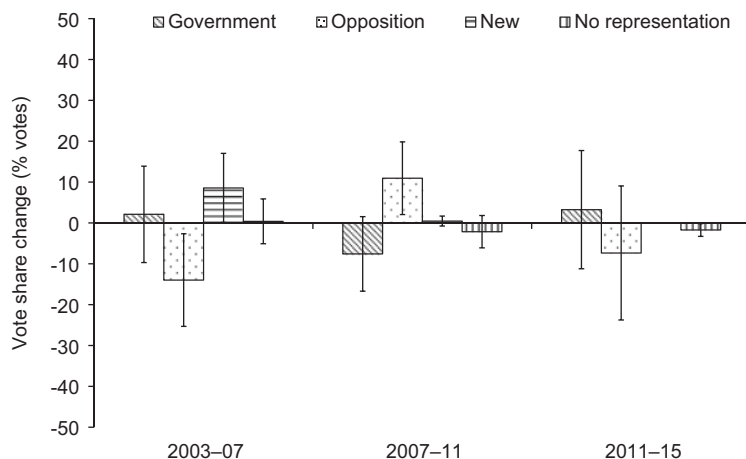


Fig. 8.3 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (Notes: The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. The results are shown for the proportional tier. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Russia)

- Opposition parties are considered to be the other non-ER parties that gained representation in the State Duma—five others in 1999, and three others in 2003, 2007 and 2011. As we shall see below, the extent to which they provide genuine opposition is sometimes debatable.
- No representation parties participated in the preceding federal election, but did not manage to gain seats.
- New parties are those established after the previous federal election was held.

According to the traditional second-order election model, government parties should lose vote share as an electoral cycle goes on, whereas vote share gains should be observed for the other categories of parties. Figure 8.3 displays average vote share transfers between regional and previously held federal elections.

We may observe different second-order election effects across the election cycles. *Edinaya Rossiya* tended not to be punished in the 2003–07 cycle as it continued to extend its dominance, but the party did suffer from a

vote share loss in the 2007–11 cycle—reflected also in ER’s lower vote share in the 2011 State Duma election result. In the 2003–07 cycle, new parties tended to gain votes to the detriment of opposition parties—though this is partly a statistical reflection of the machinations surrounding the *Rodina* (Motherland) party, which gained 37 out of 450 seats in the 2003 State Duma but split in 2005 and eventually became a component part of *Spravedlivaya Rossiya* (SR, A Just Russia), together with the *Rossiyskaya Partiya Zhizni* (Russian Party of Life) and the *Rossiyskaya Partiya Pensionerov* (Russian Pensioner’s Party). SR is classified as a new party in Fig. 8.3, but its roots lay in previous opposition parties and its hostility to the regime was questionable. At least in its infancy, it was broadly seen as a second ‘party of power’, and for the 2007 State Duma election, it declared itself ‘in opposition to the ruling liberal *Edinaya Rossiya* party but supportive of Vladimir Putin’ (Mironov 2007)—a difficult balancing act when Putin happened to be *Edinaya Rossiya*’s leading candidate.

Once these party splits and reformations are accounted for, second-order election effects in the 2003–07 cycle disappear, since the vote share loss for the other opposition parties is largely compensated for by the vote share gains incurred by SR. During the 2007–11 election cycle, *Edinaya Rossiya* on average lost 7.5 percent of its previous vote. A closer look at the party level reveals that the *Kommunisticheskaya Partiya Rossiiskoi Federatsii* (KPRF, Communist Party of the Russian Federation), *Liberal’no-Demokraticeskaya Partiya Rossii* (LDPR, Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) and SR were the opposition parties that won an average total vote share of about 10 percent in regional elections. Hence, second-order election effects occurred during the 2007–11 election cycle. The 2011–15 election cycle stands out because none of the party categories recorded an average loss or gain in vote shares as indicated by the high standard deviations.

Nationalization of the vote can also be explored by looking at the ability of parties to win vote shares across the territory. In Russia, most vote share is won by a decreasing number of parties—largely reflecting also the ever-reducing number of parties that were eligible to stand between 2003 and 2011, as discussed above. In Table 8.3 we present average *regional* vote share won by the six biggest parties over the three electoral cycles

from 2003–15.⁵ These six parties among them won an increasing total of the overall vote in the federal State Duma elections: up from 75 percent in the 2003 State Duma election, to 95 percent in the 2007 and 98 percent in 2011. They have also dominated regional elections, cumulatively winning 73 percent, 97 percent and 93 percent of the vote in the 2003–07, 2007–11 and 2011–15 cycles, respectively. Table 8.3 reveals clearly that most of the nationalization can be ascribed to the increased ability of *Edinaya Rossiya* to capture the vote. In the 2007 and 2011 election cycles, ER managed to win absolute majorities in federal and regional elections, even though its absolute vote share fell significantly between the 2007 and 2011 cycles.

8.5 Regionalization of the Vote

In the previous section, it was shown that, within a decade, federal and regional elections have become highly nationalized. In this section we take a region-level perspective and we explore in how far the process of nationalization has been uneven across the territory. As a measure of regionalization of the vote, we look at the vote share won by three categories of parties. In practice, nationalization appears when *Edinaya Rossiya* wins large vote shares, while regionalization can be observed by looking at the vote share won by the opposition parties in the Duma (see Table 8.3) and by other parties and independent candidates (non-Duma parties). As independent variables, we include factors that tap into the socio-economic and institutional regional context.

In Sect. 8.2 we discussed the highly asymmetric nature of the Russian federation caused by earlier bilateral treaties, ethnicity, population size and economic strength. We group regions into those that signed bilateral treaties (46 regions) and those that did not. The 1994–98 bilateral treaties can be seen as an indicator of an increased ability of regional executives to challenge the federal government, since in many cases these contravened the constitution's divisions of powers. As noted above, almost all bilateral

⁵These six parties have won at least 5 percent of the vote in a region for at least one federal or regional election (excluding independent candidates).

Table 8.3 Average vote share won by the six largest parties

Party	Federal elections			Regional elections		
	2003	2007	2011	2003–07	2007–11	2011–15
ER	40.15	66.03	49.89	41.60	60.13	53.36
KPRF	12.35	11.11	19.57	14.86	16.53	15.90
LDPR	12.12	8.53	12.60	8.35	10.17	11.26
Motherland	7.88	–	–	1.28	–	–
SR	–	7.65	13.47	6.10	10.21	10.92
Yabloko	3.71	1.25	2.88	1.20	0.25	1.10
Total	76.20	94.57	98.40	73.38	97.30	92.54

Notes: Shown are average regional party vote shares (percent votes) for three election cycles for federal and regional elections. They differ from the official results published by the Central Electoral Commission as they omit regions which did not hold a regional parliamentary election in the following cycle. See Table 8.1 for the included number of regions

treaties were annulled in the early 2000s and we are interested to explore in how far resistance against the federal center, or compliance with it, is still reflected in election outcomes in these regions. Republics (*respubliki*) and autonomous regions (*avtonomnyye okruga* and *avtonomnaya oblast*) are categorized as ethnic regions while provinces (*oblasti*), territories (*kraya*), and the two federal (*federalnyye goroda*) constitute the non-ethnic categories. The presence of titular nationalities would potentially provide regional elites with resources to mobilize the regional population politically along ethnic and religious lines. However, given that such grounds for party formation were outlawed in the 2001 Law on Parties, and these same ethnic and religious mobilization strategies have generally given the presidents and governors of the ethnic regions considerable control over regional populations and elites, the counter-hypothesis would be that we would expect to see *more* nationalization of the vote after 2001 as these leaders traded off the delivery of electoral support for the center against concessions for their regions, and then re-oriented their electoral ‘machines’ to the cause (Golosov 2014d).

The population size of a region is measured by the size of the regional electorate as a percentage of the total Russian electorate, and regional economic strength is expressed as a percentage relative to the Gross Domestic Product per capita in Russia as a whole (i.e., GDP for Russia is set at 100 percent and richer regions score above whereas poorer regions

score below 100 percent; Rosstat 2015). Just as with ethnic regions, we may pose two opposite hypotheses. More populous and economically rich regions may be better able to resist central efforts to nationalize the party system, but these regions are also likely to be subject to higher nationalization efforts given their importance in the Russian federal system. We also add a regional democracy variable which is the sum of scores for ten indicators⁶ which were rated on a five point scale by experts between 1998 and 2004, which applied at the start of the period under study. High scores indicate more democracy in a particular region (Petrov and Titkov 2004). We expect more regionalization of the vote with higher levels of regional democracy.

The models examining regional elections also include electoral timing variables. The timing of a regional election relative to the federal election cycle is measured by a variable labeled 'cycle' which is operationalized by dividing the number of months between a regional and a previously held federal election by 48 (the federal election cycle is four years). We include a squared cycle variable because we expect that nationalization of the vote is higher the closer a regional election is held to a previous or next federal election. Presidential elections took place in 2004, 2008 and 2012, and we include a dummy variable indicating whether a regional election was held concurrently with a presidential election, which would lead us to expect a nationalization of the regional vote. Finally, in Sect. 8.2, we discussed the introduction of a 'unified election day' for regional elections, which should contribute to nationalization as well. We include a horizontal simultaneity variable which measures the total regional electorate voting on the same day relative to the total Russian electorate.

Table 8.4 displays the results of ordinary least squares regression models and we run, for federal and regional elections separately, three different models which analyze respectively the vote share for *Edinaya Rossiya*, the five opposition parties in the Duma (see Table 8.3), and other parties and independent candidates (non-Duma parties). The vote share for *Edinaya Rossiya* is larger in the ethnic and more populous regions, and smaller in

⁶These dimensions are open/closed political life, democratic elections, political pluralism, independence of the media, corruption, economic liberalization, civil society, political structure, elite turnover and local government (more information is provided by Petrov and Titkov 2004).

Table 8.4 Multivariate analysis on the regionalization of the vote

	Federal elections			Regional elections		
	ER	Duma	Non-Duma	ER	Duma	Non-Duma
Bilateral treaty	-0.18 (1.94)	-0.17 (1.62)	0.36 (0.95)	-0.18 (2.27)	-0.15 (1.93)	0.32 (1.55)
Ethnic region	13.08*** (2.53)	-12.70*** (2.29)	-0.38 (1.15)	7.49*** (2.60)	-7.93*** (2.32)	0.44 (1.67)
Population size	2.46** (1.18)	-1.76** (0.74)	-0.70 (0.66)	4.44*** (1.34)	-2.39** (0.98)	-2.05*** (0.65)
Economic strength	0.003 (0.012)	-0.006 (0.010)	0.002 (0.006)	0.023* (0.012)	-0.004 (0.011)	-0.019** (0.007)
Democracy	-1.20*** (0.18)	0.88*** (0.16)	0.31*** (0.09)	-1.24*** (0.17)	0.86*** (0.18)	0.38*** (0.12)
Cycle				-30.19* (16.58)	-0.14 (10.88)	30.33*** (14.79)
Cycle ²				45.13*** (15.10)	-4.32 (11.46)	-40.81*** (14.05)
Presidential simultaneity				-1.18 (5.10)	0.25 (3.35)	0.93 (4.25)
Horizontal simultaneity				-0.07 (0.12)	0.61*** (0.13)	-0.54*** (0.10)
Constant	78.02*** (5.12)	19.40*** (4.79)	2.58 (2.24)	77.96*** (6.69)	10.63** (5.34)	11.42*** (5.09)
R-squared	0.37	0.39	0.03	0.30	0.42	0.28
Root MSE	14.04	11.57	10.70	14.28	11.96	12.65

Notes: * $p < 0.10$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed)

Shown are the results of an ordinary least square regression whereby standard errors are clustered by 86 regions. The number of observations is 201 regional vote shares for federal and regional elections held between 2003 and 2015. *ER* is the vote share for *Edinaya Rossiya*, *Duma* is the combined vote share for five opposition parties in the Duma (see Table 8.3), *non-Duma* is the combined vote share for parties not represented in the Duma

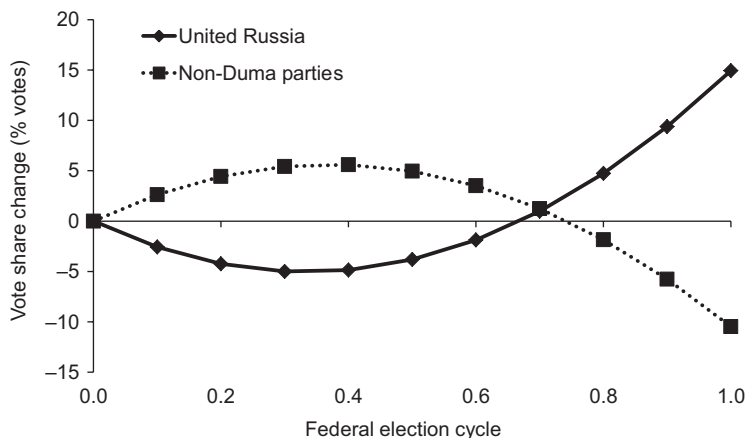


Fig. 8.4 Incurred change in vote share along the federal election cycle (Notes: Shown is the effect of the placement of a regional election in the federal election cycle (0.25 = 1 year) on the vote share for United Russia (*Edinaya Rossiya*) and the combined vote share for non-Duma parties. The estimates are based on the results presented in Table 8.3)

more democratic regions. The combined vote share for the Duma parties displays the opposite tendency. It is smaller in ethnic and more populous regions, and larger for the more ‘democratic’ regions.⁷ Bilateral treaties and relative economic strength do not seem to matter. Nationalization of the vote has been facilitated in or has focused on ethnic and more populous regions while more democratic regions have been able to resist the nationalization efforts by *Edinaya Rossiya*.

Zooming in on regional elections and the vertical and horizontal simultaneity variables, we may observe that vote shares for *Edinaya Rossiya* indeed follow a cyclical pattern and we display the results in Fig. 8.4 to ease interpretation. Vote share losses are incurred when a regional election is held within two and a half years after a federal election, and

⁷The substantive results for federal elections are as follows. In ethnic regions, the vote share for United Russia is 13 percent higher and the combined vote share for the five Duma parties is 12.7 percent lower. The most populous region has a 6 percent higher weight relative to the total Russian population, and this equals to 15 percent higher vote share for United Russia and to 10.8 lower vote share for the five Duma parties. The lowest democracy score is 17 and the highest score is 45 and the difference equals to 33.6 percent lower vote share for United Russia and to 24.6 percent higher vote share for the five Duma parties.

a maximum vote share loss of 5 percent is incurred just after one year. Larger vote shares for *Edinaya Rossiya* are to be found in regions which hold their election within one year before the federal election, and vote share gains may increase up to almost 15 percent. Interestingly, it is the non-Duma parties which gain or lose vote share when *Edinaya Rossiya* respectively loses or gains vote share. In addition, the Duma parties gain vote share when horizontal simultaneity increases, to the detriment of the non-Duma parties. In contrast to expectations, holding a regional election concurrently with a presidential election does not seem to matter. However, this may be explained by the fact that all the presidential elections in the period of investigation have been held within three months of a federal parliamentary election (this will change in 2016–18), and at that point in time, vote share losses for *Edinaya Rossiya* relative to the preceding State Duma election are practically zero (see Fig. 8.4). Overall, the results indicate that electoral engineering has contributed to a nationalization of the vote, that is, from non-Duma to Duma parties (horizontal simultaneity) and from Duma parties to *Edinaya Rossiya* (vertical simultaneity).

8.6 Discussion

Russia has undergone a tremendous process of nationalization during the 2000s. While the 1990s can be described as a period of extreme asymmetrical federalism, the 2000s may be labeled as a period of extreme nationalization. In the regional elections that were held under majoritarian rule during the election cycle that started in 1999, more than 75 percent of the vote share was won by independents. In the election round that commenced in 2011, the picture was reversed and more than 90 percent of the vote was won by parties. The story of nationalization of regional and federal elections relates strongly to the story of the political elite's consolidation of control over the political system—using, in the electoral sphere, the vehicle of *Edinaya Rossiya* to achieve dominance of the legislative organs of power. During the first election cycle of 2003–07, *Edinaya Rossiya* won large vote shares but on average did not achieve absolute majorities. The party did win more than 50 percent of the vote

on average in the subsequent election cycle, and fell back slightly in the election cycle of 2011–15.

The ability of *Edinaya Rossiya* to capture the vote can be in large part ascribed to significant and frequent electoral and institutional reform. Electoral systems seem to impact significantly on the nationalization of elections (see also Bochsler 2010a, b), also when elections take place in an ‘authoritarian’ regime. To this we can add that electoral institutional engineering also highly impacts on the nationalization of elections.

A strong process of nationalization has occurred across all elections and regions but the depth and speed of nationalization has been territorially uneven. Despite an overall trend of extreme nationalization, there are still significant traces of regionalization according to identity, population size and democracy. Regions with strong identities tend to be less nationalized in most countries. In contrast, *Edinaya Rossiya* has been able to win larger vote shares in ethnic regions. This may reflect larger efforts of *Edinaya Rossiya* to mobilize (or manipulate) the vote because ethnic regions can pose a threat to central government authority or hegemony, or it may reflect the greater ability of these regional leaders to harness their electoral machines to the cause.

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9

Serbia and Montenegro. From Centralization to Secession and Multi-ethnic Regionalism

Christina Isabel Zuber and Jelena Džankić

9.1 Introduction

Since the early 1990s, Serbia and Montenegro transformed from a centralized and authoritarian federation into a highly decentralized and democratic union of states and finally broke up into three independent territorial units: Montenegro, Serbia and Kosovo. The simultaneous pro-

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cesses of territorial change and regime transformation happened over a time span of only two decades. This makes multi-level elections in Serbia and Montenegro a compelling, but also a challenging case to study. Three time periods have to be differentiated when analyzing nationalization and regionalization of the vote in Serbia and Montenegro (Table 9.1). The first period starts with the break-up of Yugoslavia when the two former republics of Serbia and Montenegro formed the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (*Savezna Republika Jugoslavija, SRJ*) on 27 April 1992, which existed until the end of 2002. Within this formally federal republic, Milošević's authoritarian regime centralized power and stripped Serbia's two autonomous provinces, Kosovo and Metohija and Vojvodina, of the autonomy they had been granted under the Yugoslav constitution of 1974. Until the 1997–98 elections in Montenegro and the 2000 elections in Serbia, elections during this period could neither be considered free nor fair (Goati 2001, p. 199; Bieber 2003, p. 74).¹ Elections were taking place under the authoritarian regime headed by Slobodan Milošević and the Socialist Party of Serbia (*Socijalistička partija Srbije, SPS*). The regime exercised thorough control of key political institutions and the economy, counting on the support of the military and the security forces, as well as paramilitary and organized crime groups (Boduszynski 2010, pp. 172–3). The transitory federal elections of 24 September 2000 were the first free elections held since 1992. However, as explained in more detail in Sect. 9.2, Montenegro boycotted these elections.

The second period commences when the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was transformed into the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (*Državna zajednica Srbije i Crne Gore, SCG*) on 4 February 2003, following the transition to democracy after the fall of Milošević in 2000. The highest representative body of the State Union (2003–06) was the unicameral parliament of Serbia and Montenegro (*Skupština Srbije i Crne Gore*). During the short-lived existence of the State Union, the parliament was constituted once, namely on 25 February 2003. However, it was not elected directly by the people, but by former members of the SRJ federal parliament and the republic's parliaments.

¹ Official results of these elections can be found in the appendix to Goati (2001, pp. 209–22).

Table 9.1 Elections included in the analysis per territorial unit and time period

Territorial unit	Period 1: Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SRJ), 1992–2002	Period 2: State Union of Serbia and Montenegro (SCG), 2003–2006	Period 3: Montenegro and Serbia as independent states, 2006–2015
Federation	No democratic elections; Montenegro boycotts 2000 election; de facto separate party systems in Montenegro and Serbia	No direct elections; parliament elected by Montenegrin and Serbian parliaments and former members of the SRJ federal parliament	Territorial unit no longer exists
Montenegro	No democratic elections until 1998; Analysis of the territoriality of the vote in the 1998, 2001 and 2002 elections	Analysis of the Serbian vote in the election of 2006	Analysis of the Serbian vote in the elections of 2009 and 2012
Serbia	No democratic elections until 2000; Comparison between Serbia and Vojvodina for the election of 2000	Comparison between Serbia and Vojvodina for the election of 2003	Comparison between Serbia and Vojvodina for the elections of 2007, 2008, 2012 and 2014
Kosovo	No democratic elections until 2000; Not included because under UN rule since 1999	Not included because under UN rule since 1999	Not included because under UN rule since 1999; Kosovo declared independence in 2008
Vojvodina	No democratic elections until 2000; Comparison of 2000 Vojvodinian to 2000 Serbian election	Comparison of 2004 Vojvodinian to 2003 Serbian election	Comparison of 2008 and 2012 Vojvodinian to 2008 and 2012 Serbian elections

The third period began on 3 June 2006 when Montenegro declared independence and seceded from the Union, leaving a Serbian state to grapple with the remaining territorial questions of Kosovo and Vojvodina. Since 1999, Kosovo has been administered by the United Nations interim administration mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).² Kosovo issued a declaration of independence on 17 February 2008. Multi-ethnic Vojvodina continued on its quest for re-establishing autonomy within the boundaries of Serbia. Today, the Republic of Serbia is thus an asymmetrically decentralized state with the autonomous province of Vojvodina.

The upshot of all these developments is that elections to federal representative bodies are excluded from the analysis: they were neither free nor fair during the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and there were no directly elected representatives in the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. Without a federal reference point, we have to turn to the territorial units of Montenegro and Serbia to study nationalization and regionalization of the vote (Table 9.1). In Sect. 9.2 we analyze territoriality of the vote for Montenegrin elections. Nationalization of the vote is probed by looking at vote shares for pro-independence and unionist parties for the 1998, 2001 and 2002 elections. After 2003, Montenegro functions as a de facto independent state. This precludes the analysis of nationalization of the vote. Regionalization of the vote is studied by looking at the extent to which Serbian voters voted for Serbian ethnic parties during all Montenegrin elections held since 1998. Sect. 9.3 turns toward Serbia and compares outcomes between upper (Serbia) and lower (Vojvodina) levels for elections taking place between 2000 and 2014.

²The United Nations Security Council resolution 1244 of 10 June 1999 established the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to internationally administer this region after the 1999 conflict. Municipal elections have been held in Kosovo since 2000, and Kosovo-wide elections since 2001. A number of Serb parties in Kosovo has boycotted the elections in Kosovo under UNMIK, and the Serb population in the North of Kosovo voted in Serbian, rather than Kosovar elections.

9.2 Elections in Montenegro

Montenegro and Serbia cohabited in a federation (SRJ 1992–2003) and in a state union (SCG 2003–06). As the federal assembly consisted of two chambers, there were different mechanisms for regulating the election of representatives in each of them. Article 80 of the 1992 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia provided for direct elections to the citizens' chamber, whereby one parliamentarian would represent 65,000 people. It also guaranteed 30 seats for Montenegrin deputies.³ The same constitutional provision stipulated that the chamber of republics would be composed of 40 representatives, 20 from each of the constituent republics. While elections to the citizens' chamber were regulated through a federal electoral law, elections to the chamber of the republics were a competence of the republics of Serbia and of Montenegro, respectively. Although such a system had been established to guarantee adequate representation for both members of the federation (that differed significantly in terms of population and territory), it became a point of friction.

After the 1998 parliamentary elections in Montenegro, the representation of this republic in the federal assembly became a complex issue. The 1997 split of the Democratic Party of Socialists (*Demokratska partija socijalista*, DPS) brought about not only the departure of a part of the Montenegrin ruling elite from Milošević but also the end of the political monolith in this republic because the DPS had been capturing most of the popular support throughout the 1990s (Morrison 2009). The split created two factions of an approximately equal size—the DPS and the Socialist People's Party (*Socijalistička narodna partija*, SNP)—which became the government and the opposition in Montenegro.

When the DPS-led government sent its newly elected representatives to the chamber of republics in 1998, the federal assembly rejected their mandates. As a consequence, 14 out of 20 Montenegrin parliamentarians who had been elected to the chamber of republics in 1996 withdrew their mandates to support the DPS that opposed Milošević. The remaining six deputies from the SNP, that was close to Milošević, stayed as Montenegrin representatives in the chamber of republics. This resulted

³ Član 80, *Ustav Savezne Republike Jugoslavije* (Službeni list SRJ 1/92).

in further detachment of Montenegro from the federal institutions, since this republic's government considered federal laws unconstitutional and thus rejected their implementation. The 'creeping independence' process (Roberts 2002, p. 4) that followed entailed the establishment of separate political institutions in Montenegro including a different currency, customs policy, pension fund, police force, visa regime and diplomatic representation (ESI 1999). The same process also shaped the dynamics of political competition in Montenegro, analyzed in the following section.

Nationalization of the Vote in Montenegro

This section will examine in detail the nationalization of the vote in the 1998, 2001 and 2002 elections in Montenegro, during which the main regime cleavage of support for or opposition to Milošević transformed into the division over statehood and identity. As a republic in the SRJ, Montenegro had a unicameral parliament (*skupština*), composed of 76 to 78 deputies (one deputy for 6000 inhabitants), directly elected through proportional representation. From 1998 to 2011, Montenegro has used affirmative action for the Albanian population, but has since extended it to other minority communities.⁴ The results of the 1998 parliamentary elections presented in Table 9.2 show the attraction of voters for the factions of the former DPS (OSCE-ODIHR 1998, pp. 6–8). The main cleavage that shaped the political contest of Montenegro in 1998 was neither ethnic nor territorial; rather it was a regime cleavage over the support for or opposition to Milošević. While only 0.4 percent of the electorate was neutral in this division, the pervasiveness of the regime cleavage is also corroborated by the very small percentage of votes directed toward

⁴ In 1998, the Montenegrin Electoral Law was amended to allow the Parliament to adopt a special decision guaranteeing five seats for the representatives of the Albanian minority in Montenegro, elected by votes in municipalities listed in the Parliament's decision (areas with a significant proportion of Albanians). In 2011, the Electoral Law was amended to abolish the 3 percent threshold for entering the Parliament for all ethnic minority parties (Articles 36, 43 and 94). Rather, parties that have over 0.7 but below 3 percent of voter support can add up their votes in a joint list. This would guarantee them up to three seats. As the Croat minority in Montenegro is rather small (1 percent of the overall population), if neither election list of this minority reaches 0.7 percent, the most successful one will be granted one parliamentary seat provided that it gains 0.35 percent of votes.

parties with ethnic prefixes. As Table 9.2 indicates, Serb ethnic voters supported the political camp close to Milošević.

The situation in Montenegro changed after the ouster of Milošević in 2000. The government and the opposition in Montenegro, which had previously defined themselves through their relationship to Milošević, reconstituted their political identities. Since the Montenegrin government boycotted the federal presidential elections in 2000, an alliance was created between the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (*Demokratska opozicija Srbije*, DOS) and the SNP. The SNP affirmed their commitment to the preservation of the federal state with Serbia and attracted the votes of those who self-declared as Serbs after 2003 (Jenne and Bieber 2014; Džankić 2014). The DPS, which opposed Milošević, became the proponent of Montenegrin independence and a separate Montenegrin national identity. Other minorities, including Albanian, Bosniak/Muslim and Croat, were supportive of Montenegrin independence. According to Bieber (2003), since 1998, the DPS attracted the non-Serb minorities through its rhetoric on multiculturalism and inclusiveness, thus ‘instrumentalizing’ their votes to stay in power.

In other words, the ouster of Milošević significantly changed the profiles of political parties in Montenegro. It transformed the previous regime cleavage into extreme regionalization, coupled by the claim to autonomy based on an ethno-territorial cleavage. The ‘marriage’ between extreme regionalization and ethno-territoriality, however, manifested itself between Montenegro and the federal state, and not as much within Montenegro itself. That is, the different ethnic groups (Albanians, Bosniaks, Croats, Montenegrins, Serbs)⁵ were divided over whether Montenegro should stay in a federation with Serbia or not. Minorities did not seek territorial autonomy within Montenegro as is evidenced by two extraordinary rounds of elections—on 22 April 2001 and on 20 October 2002.

The results presented in Table 9.2 indicate political polarization over the issue of independence in the 2001 and 2002 elections in Montenegro.

⁵Albanians, Bosniaks, Croats and Muslims are the major ethnic minority communities in Montenegro. Due to the division over identity of Serbs and Montenegrins, Serbs were not formally a minority in Montenegro before independence.

Table 9.2 Montenegrin parliamentary elections by cleavage: May 1998, April 2001 and October 2002

Party/coalition	Regime (A-M) 1998		Ethno- territorial (P-I) 2001		Ethno- territorial (P-I) 2002	
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats
'For a Better Life'/'Victory is Montenegro'/'For a European Montenegro' DPS-SDP	49.5	42	49.5	36	48	38
Liberal Alliance of Montenegro	6.3	5	6.3	6	5.7	5
Democratic Alliance of Montenegro ^a	1.6	1	1.0	1		
Democratic Union of Albanians ^a	1.0	1	1.2	1		
Democratic Coalition—'Albanians Together' ^a					2.4	2
Party of Democratic Action in Montenegro ^b	0.6	0				
Bosniak-Muslim List/Coalition in Montenegro ^b	0.1	0	1.1	0	0.6	0
Party of Democratic Prosperity— Osman Redza ^b			0.4	0		
Liberal Democratic Party of Montenegro			0.1	0		
People's Unity—Novak Kilibarda			0.1	0		
Bosniak Democratic Coalition— Harun Hadžić ^b					0.7	0
	Regime (P-M)		Ethno- territorial (A-I)		Ethno- territorial (A-I)	
Socialist People's Party—Momir Bulatović	36.1	29				
Serbian People's Party ^c	1.9	0				
Serbian Radical Party—Dr. Vojislav Šešelj ^c	1.2	0			0.24	0
League of Communists of Montenegro/Communist Parties for Yugoslavia	0.5	0	0.1	0	0.4	0
'For Serbdom' ^c	0.4	0				
Serbian People's Radical Party ^c	0.2	0				
Yugoslav United Left in Montenegro	0.1	0	0.05	0		
'Together for Yugoslavia'/			40.8	33	38.4	30
'Together for Changes' SNP-SNS-NS						

(continued)

Table 9.2 (continued)

Party/coalition	Regime (A-M) 1998		Ethno- territorial (P-I) 2001		Ethno- territorial (P-I) 2002	
	%	Seats	%	Seats	%	Seats
People's Socialist Party—Momir Bulatović			2.9	0		
Patriotic coalition for Yugoslavia					2.85	0
	Regime (neutral)		Ethno- territorial (neutral)		Ethno- territorial (neutral)	
Party of the Law of Nature	0.2	0	0.1	0		
Party of the Human Ways	0.1	0				
Party for the protection of savings in foreign currency	0.1	0	0.2	0		
Party for the protection of savings and social security of citizens			0.05	0	0.24	0

Source: Džankić (2009) drawing on official electoral results: Centar za Demokratsku Tranziciju. Official results: Parliamentary Elections 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2006

Notes: ^aEthnic Albanian party, ^bethnic Bosniak/Muslim party, ^cethnic Serb party, Abbreviations: A-M against Milošević, P-I pro-independence, P-M pro-Milošević, A-I against independence. Continuing coalitions are counted as the same entity, coalitions that changed in composition obtain a new entry

Parties developed their agendas around the ethno-territorial cleavage (division over statehood and identity) that overtook all other socio-economic issues. The pro-Milošević parties turned into unionist parties, whereas the anti-Milošević parties became pro-independence. Both camps attracted similar vote shares in the 1998, 2001 and 2002 elections with the exception of the pro-independence camp in 2001 whose vote share decreased by almost 5 percent compared to the bloc that opposed Milošević in 1998. This can be explained by the fact that the People's Party (*Narodna stranka*, NS) left the DPS-SDP coalition 'For a better life' ('Victory is Montenegro' in 2001) and joined the 'Together for Yugoslavia' coalition.⁶

⁶ The NS defined itself as a party that was against Milošević, but supportive of the Yugoslav federal state and of the Serb ethnic origins of Montenegrins. The move of the NS to the opposition is an indicator that the two political camps transformed from pro/against-Milošević into pro-independence and pro-union, respectively.

Extreme regionalization and its link with the ethno-territorial cleavage intensified after the 2001 elections (Bieber 2003, p. 36). The ruling DPS aligned with the Social Democratic Party (*Socijaldemokratska partija*, SDP) and the Liberal Alliance (*Liberalni savez Crne Gore*, LSCG) to form a government that would push for Montenegro's independence from the federation. The coalition with LSCG provided an impetus for the DPS to formally change its political profile and formally support a 'democratic and internationally recognized and independent state of Montenegro' (DPS Istorijat 2015). Yet, broader international pressures and demands decreased the party's independence drive during 2001 and 2002. As a result, the DPS eventually supported the Belgrade Agreement of 14 March 2002 that marked the decay of the SRJ, and gave birth to the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro in 2003. The State Union was short-lived and Montenegro declared independence on 3 June 2006, following the independence referendum that took place on 21 May.⁷ This event induced another realignment of the Montenegrin vote, in particular with respect to vote shares won by Serb parties as analyzed in the following section.

Ethnicization of the Vote in Montenegro

In the period from 1998 to 2006, we can observe an ethnicization of the Serbian vote, that is, parties with ethnic Serb prefixes increased their vote share. This process was reversed in more recent elections in independent Montenegro as displayed in Table 9.3.

The ethnicization of the Serb vote in Montenegro between 1998 and 2006 is a direct consequence of extreme regionalization within the common state with Serbia and the internal Montenegrin division over national identity. In the early 1990s, the Montenegrin and Serb ethnic identities were not mutually exclusive (Darmanović 1992, pp. 27–9).

⁷At the referendum, a total of 55.5 percent of the votes were cast for independence and 44.5 percent for the preservation of the union with Serbia. The referendum law adopted through EU mediation stipulated that the threshold for independence was 55 percent of the total valid votes. The minimum turnout was set to 50 percent of the total electorate; the actual turnout was 86.5 percent.

Table 9.3 The Serb vote in Montenegro for 1998 until 2012

Election	Party and vote percentage			Total % of votes
1998	SNS 1.9	SRS 1.18	SNRS 0.22	3.3
2001	SNS 3.7 ^c	SRS 1.18		4.9
2002	SNS 7.7 ^c	SRS 0.24		7.9
2006	The Serb List			14.7
2009 ^a	NOVA 9.3	SNL 1.3	OSS 0.7	11.3
2012 ^b	Serb Unity 1.3			1.3

Source: Centar za Demokratsku Tranziciju (www.cdtmn.org). Official results: Parliamentary Elections 1998, 2001, 2002 and 2006; State Electoral Commission of Montenegro (<http://www.dik.co.me>). Official results: Parliamentary Elections 2009 and 2012

Notes: ^aPeople's coalition (*Narodnjačka koalicija*, NK) also took part in the 2009 elections. As it consisted not only of ethnic parties it is excluded

^bDemocratic Front (*Demokratski front*, DF) also took part in the 2012 elections. As it consisted of ethnic and non-ethnic parties it is excluded

^cAs the SNS joined the SNP-led coalitions in 2001 and 2002, the percentages are derived by multiplying the total vote share for the coalition by the proportion of seats for the SNS

Individuals could identify as Serb and Montenegrin at the same time, and ethnic voting was present only among minorities such as Muslims/Bosniaks and Albanians (Kubo 2007, pp. 167–9).⁸ After the split of the DPS, which pushed the NS to align with the party's faction that opposed Milošević, a faction of this party broke off and established the SNS in 1998. Over the subsequent decade, the SNS grew into a key party for those voters who identified as ethnic Serbs.

The data presented in Table 9.3 indicate that support for the ethnic Serb parties first increased at the 2001 elections, which revolved around the status of Montenegro in the common state with Serbia after the fall of Milošević. The SNS ran as a member of the SNP-led coalition 'Together for Yugoslavia' and received a total of two out of the 33 parliamentary seats allocated to the coalition whose vote share amounted to 40.5 percent. At the subsequent elections of 2002, support for the SNS increased. The SNS received six out of 30 seats from the SNP-led coalition 'Together for Changes' that had a total vote share of 38.4 percent. The SNS's seat

⁸ Even though Albanian, Bosniak/Muslim and Croat minorities in Montenegro vote for their ethnic parties, their demands are socio-cultural rather than territorial (Jenne and Bieber 2014; Kubo 2007).

share of 20 percent within the coalition was equivalent to 7.7 percent of the total vote.

The rise in the SNS vote between 1998 and 2006 is attributable to the internal division over whether Montenegrins were a separate nation or a subgroup of Serbs (Džankić 2014). As asserted by Džankić (2014) and Jenne and Bieber (2014), with the gradual separation of Montenegro and Serbia, Montenegrin ethnicity became largely associated to independence, while Serb ethnicity became associated with the preservation of the common state. This redefinition of ethnic identities was corroborated in the 2003 population census, where the number of self-declared Montenegrins decreased from 61.9 percent in 1991 to 43.2 percent in 2003 (Monstat 2003). Simultaneously, the share of self-identified Serbs increased from 9.4 percent in 1991 to 32 percent in 2003 (Monstat 2003). The changing ethnolnational identification equally affected the voting preferences of the self-identified Serbs, who in 2001 and 2002 supported ethnic parties within the political camp that favored the preservation of the common state with Serbia.

The next parliamentary elections took place in September 2006 and were held in Montenegro as an independent state. Voter preferences for the ruling DPS-led coalition remained the same,⁹ while the opposition was faced with clustering along the socio-economic, the ethnic and the regime cleavages. After the loss at the independence referendum, the SNP—the pillar of the former unionist bloc—reformed its agenda to focus on socio-economic, rather than ethnic issues. However, this meant that a share of SNP's voters who had by 2006 self-identified as Serbs would flee to the SNS, a party that established the 'The Serb List' coalition. The primary goal of this coalition's political program has been to advocate 'cultural and educational autonomy for the Serb people and its proportional representation in public administration' (Radović 2008). The SNP rejected the invitation to join the 'The Serb List' as it considered itself a 'civic party' and called for a wider anti-government coalition (PCNEN 2009). Yet the regime cleavage became an essential pillar for

⁹The DPS-SDP coalition, joined by the Croatian Civic Initiative (*Hrvatska građanska inicijativa*, HGI) received a total of 48.6 percent of votes, winning an absolute majority of seats in parliament (39 out of 76).

the Movement for Changes (*Pokret za promjene*, PzP), which grew out of a civil society organization that opposed the state capture by the ruling DPS.

The 2006 electoral results indicate that the opposition fragmented into three almost equally sized blocs based on these cleavages.¹⁰ A share of the votes of the former SNP-led coalition went to PZP, a newly established party that professed neutrality regarding the statehood and identity debate, attracting people disillusioned with the perpetuation of the DPS in power, the oligarchic accumulation of wealth and ethnic divisions. Equally, by departing from ethnic issues and by orienting itself toward transitional reforms, the SNP lost a considerable number of Serb votes to the SNS, a party with a clear ethnic profile. The ethnicization of the Serb vote in the first post-independence election was caused by two interrelated factors: the association of the Serb ethnicity with the SNP-led coalition that supported the preservation of the common state in the pre-referendum period; and the reconstitution of the SNP as a moderate civic party and the voters' shift to the SNS as the key party that represents the interests of the Serbs in Montenegro.

The share of the Serb vote declined significantly in the 2009 elections, when the Serb National List remained without parliamentary representation, while the SNS spin-off party New Serb Democracy (*Nova srpska demokratija*, NOVA) won eight seats (four down from the 12 previously held by the Serb National List). In 2009, the SNP focused almost exclusively on socio-economic issues and the state capture by the ruling DPS. It regained some of the support it lost to ethnic parties in 2006 and won 16 seats, while the PzP was weakened by inexperienced leadership and lost six seats compared to 2006. Given the strengthening of the ruling DPS coalition after independence and its grip over the state, the ethnic cleavage became completely subsumed by the regime cleavage in the 2012 elections, which brought about a coalition between NOVA and PzP and the emergence of new political actors opposing the long term DPS rule, such as Positive Montenegro (*Pozitivna Crna Gora*).

¹⁰The three blocs included: (1) the ethnic Serbian List (SNS-led) captured 14.7 percent of the vote and 12 seats in parliament; (2) the reformed SNP-NS-DSS coalition focusing on socio-economic issues received 14.1 percent of the vote and 11 seats; and (3) the PzP won 13.1 percent of the vote and 11 seats (Centar za Demokratsku Tranziciju, Official results: Parliamentary Elections 2006).

In summary, from 1998 to 2006, the ethnic and territorial cleavage largely overlapped; that is, Serb voters supported the common state of Serbia and Montenegro. After Montenegro's independence in 2006, the Serb vote became detached from the territorial cleavage and related almost exclusively to ethnic identity, which never became related to new territorial demands *within* Montenegro. Hence, there is no regionalization but ethnicization of the vote after independence of Montenegro. This is further corroborated by the decline of the ethnic vote in the 2009 and 2012 parliamentary elections. The next section analyzes elections in Serbia where, by contrast, the quest for autonomy of the multi-ethnic province of Vojvodina constitutes a territorial but not an ethnic cleavage.

9.3 Elections in Serbia

Serbia has two sub-state levels of government, the local level that consists of municipalities (*opštine*), cities (*gradovi*), and the city of Belgrade (*grad Beograd*) and the level of the autonomous provinces (*autonomne pokrajine*; *Zakon o teritorijalnoj organizaciji Republike Srbije* 2007, art. 2). Serbian constitutional law defines two autonomous provinces that together constitute Serbia's intermediate or regional tier of government: the autonomous province of Kosovo and Metohija and the autonomous province of Vojvodina (Serbian Constitution, art. 182). Kosovo is not included in our analyses because it had been administered by the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) since 1999 and declared independence on 17 February 2008 (Table 9.1). In contrast to the purely administrative Serbian districts (*okruzi*), Vojvodina has institutions of regional self-government, such as its own legislative assembly (*Skupština Autonomne pokrajine Vojvodine*) and provincial government (*Pokrajinska Vlada*). Direct elections to the legislative assembly were held in 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012, establishing chains of accountability between regional institutions of self-government and a regional electorate.¹¹ The

¹¹ Results for the 2004–12 elections can be retrieved from the online archive of the provincial electoral commission. For the 2000 elections, a file with the names and party affiliations of the regional Members of Parliament (MPs) elected can be downloaded. The electoral commission confirmed that the votes cast by candidate in 2000 were not archived.

next section will discuss provincial governmental and provincial electoral institutions, followed by three sections analyzing provincial electoral outcomes.

Regional Government and Regional Elections in Vojvodina

The province's asymmetrical status is enshrined in the Serbian constitution of 2006. Serbia's territorial regime can therefore be classified as a 'constitutionally decentralized Union' (Watts 1999). However, the constitutional provisions remained vague with regard to the actual scope and substance of Vojvodina's status and its financial resources. They left these aspects to be determined in ordinary legislation that can be adopted with a simple majority vote in the Serbian parliament. Komšić (2013, p. 354) therefore argues that the 2006 constitution established merely 'another form of permanently overseen administrative self-government'.

Vojvodina has competencies in the areas of 'urban planning and development; agriculture, water economy, forestry, hunting, fishery, tourism, catering, spa's and health resorts, environmental protection, industry and craftsmanship, road, river and railway transport and road repairs, organizing fairs and other economic events; education, sport, culture, health care and social welfare and public informing at the provincial level' (Serbian Constitution, art. 183). In order for the province to exercise these competencies, the budget of Vojvodina shall make up at least 7 percent of the Serbian budget (*ibid.*, art. 184). However, the wording in the constitution leaves room for interpretation with regard to the exact basis from which the 7 percent are to be calculated. According to commentators from the province, this vagueness has been used for 'creative saving' by the central government in the past (Boarov 2012). Following the adoption of the 2012 Serbian Law on the Budget System, the province appealed to the Constitutional Court to dispute the Law for violating the constitutional provision of 7 percent (Komšić 2013, p. 338). Vojvodinian political parties and civil society actors have long been calling for a reform of the Serbian 2006 constitution to consolidate Vojvodina's status within Serbia (for a selection of recent statements, see

Komšić 2013, pp. 335–7, 339–40), but the center has not shown much interest in tackling the required changes, independent of who was governing. Tellingly, the Serbian constitution of 2006 had failed to convince an absolute majority of registered voters in Vojvodina, though gaining the support of 53 percent of registered voters' in Serbia as a whole.¹²

Another recent source of the center-periphery conflict has been the statute of autonomy the province is entitled to adopt as its 'supreme legal act' according to Article 185 of the Serbian Constitution. The parliament of Vojvodina had originally adopted its statute on 14 October 2008. After more than a year of controversy, the statute was finally ratified in the Serbian parliament on 30 November 2009. In 2013, the Democratic Party of Serbia (*Demokratska stranke Srbije*, DSS), a conservative Serbian nationalist party, whose MPs had earlier voted against the statute at both the provincial and the Serbian level, took the statute to the constitutional court. On 5 December 2013, the court ruled that two-thirds of the provisions of the statute were not in accordance with the Serbian constitution. The conflictive issues were mostly of a symbolic nature. The statute had granted a range of attributes of statehood to the province, such as treating Novi Sad as Vojvodina's 'capital' (*glavni grad*) and calling the executive body 'the government of Vojvodina' (*Vlada Vojvodine*). Following the setup of a working group at the central level and an agreement between DSS and the main regionalist party, the League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina (*Liga socijaldemokrata Vojvodine*, LSV), as protagonists of the center-periphery conflict, revisions to the statute were agreed in the Serbian parliament and the revised version of the statute was adopted by Vojvodina's parliament on 22 May 2014.¹³

The provincial electoral system has been subject to a series of reforms that have subsequently brought it closer to the preferences of the regionalist LSV. The first democratic election of 2000 had employed a majoritar-

¹² Republican electoral commission, http://www.rik.parlament.gov.rs/latinica/propisi_frames.htm [17 February 2015].

¹³ The current version of the statute as adopted on 22 May 2014 can be found at: <http://www.skupstinavojvodine.gov.rs/Strana.aspx?s=statut&tj=SRL> The previous version of 2009 that was taken to court by the DSS can be accessed at <http://www.dnv.co.rs/03NavigacijaV/Dokumenti/Zakon/STATUT%20AUTONOMNE%20POKRAJINE%20VOJVODINE.pdf> [29 January 2014].

ian electoral system with all 120 regional MPs elected in single-member districts. The 2004, 2008 and 2012 used a mixed electoral system with 60 members elected according to party-list proportional representation (d'Hondt method with 5 percent threshold, from which parties and coalitions of parties representing national minorities were exempted) and 60 elected according to two-round majority voting in single-member districts. On 6 June 2014, the regional parliament adopted the decision to reform the electoral system once again (*Pokrajinska skupštinska odluka o izboru poslanika*). The next regional elections in 2016 will be held under closed-list proportional representation with one province-wide district, a 5 percent threshold (from which parties representing national minorities or coalitions of parties representing national minorities will be exempt), and using the d'Hondt formula to transform votes into seats. With these characteristics, the regional electoral system will resemble the system used for elections to the Serbian parliament. The final solution closely resembles the initial proposal made by LSV.

Congruence of the Vote

Figure 9.1 presents a series of measures comparing electoral results within the whole of Serbia to those within the region of Vojvodina. They allow us to assess whether and to what extent voters in Vojvodina vote differently from the rest of the country. Growing incongruence of the vote across territorial levels can be seen as evidence of regionalization. Conversely, if electoral results differ hardly at all between levels, nationalization prevails. The index of dissimilarity (Schakel and Dandoy 2013, p. 19) is used to compare election results in Vojvodina to national elections. The index is calculated taking the sum of absolute differences between regional and national vote shares for each party and dividing the sum by two (to avoid double counting). Three indices of dissimilarity are calculated: (1) *Party system incongruence* compares national election results for the whole of Serbia (NN) to Vojvodinan election results (RR); (2) *Electorate incongruence* compares national election results for the whole of Serbia (NN) with national election results for Vojvodina (NR); (3) *Election incongruence* compares how the Vojvodinan electorate voted in the national election

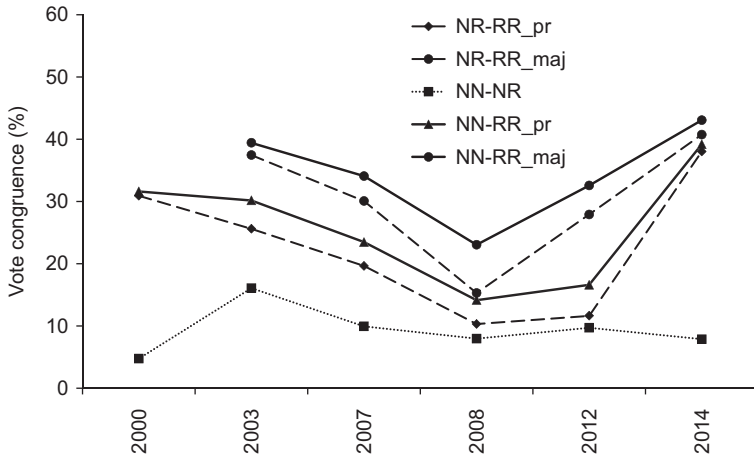


Fig. 9.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. *NR* National vote in the region, *NN* National vote at the statewide level, *RR_pr* Regional vote in the region, proportional tier, *RR_maj* Regional vote in the region, constituency vote in the majoritarian tier, 2nd round results)

(NR) to how the Vojvodinan electorate voted in the Vojvodinan election (RR). For party system and election incongruence, we look at Vojvodina's majoritarian (RR_maj) and proportional tier (RR_pr) separately.¹⁴

We can observe the highest levels of dissimilarity when looking at *party system incongruence*, that is, when comparing national results to regional results in the majoritarian tier in Vojvodina (NR-RR_maj). This makes intuitive sense since the effect of electing different representative assemblies is added to the psychological and mechanical effects of applying two different electoral systems. The summed differences between parties' vote shares between territorial levels reach peaks of 37 percent (when comparing the 2003 national election to the 2004 regional election) and 41 percent (when comparing the 2014 national elections to the 2012 regional elections).

¹⁴ Since the first elections of 2000 were held under a purely majoritarian system, focusing on the majoritarian tier for the mixed system elections can maintain comparability over time. We further focus on results of the second round in the majoritarian tier since a wide range of very small local citizens' organizations field candidates who are not viable in the first round.

The smallest difference can be found in the case of *electorate congruence* (NN-NR), that is, when the election is held constant and voting patterns in the region are compared to voting patterns nationwide. Looking at changes over time shows that for all types of congruence, territorial differences between parties' vote shares reached their lowest level in 2008. This can be explained by two factors: the introduction of vertical simultaneity and the polarization of party competition.

Serbian party scholars classified the entire period between 2002 and 2008 as a period of polarized pluralism in Sartori's ([1976] 2005, pp. 117–118) sense of the term (Goati 2004, p. 229; Orlović 2005, p. 181). At one side of the spectrum, we find two anti-system, Serbian nationalist parties, the Socialist Party of Serbia (*Socijalistička partija Srbije*, SPS) and the Serbian Radical Party (*Srpska radikalna stranka*, SRS) that initially did not accept the results of regime change. The civic and pro-democratic Democratic Party (*Demokratska stranka*, DS) occupied the other end of the spectrum. Together, they were putting the centrist DSS government under pressure through bilateral opposition. With the nationalism/regime cleavage dominating party competition, pro-autonomy voters in Vojvodina that were also pro-democracy can be assumed to have voted for DS rather than for a regionalist party in order to avoid the worst outcome of a government led by the SRS.

European integration was far from being a valence issue in 2008. Party competition was extremely polarized with a civic, pro-EU block headed by the DS that was campaigning against a nationalist, anti-EU block headed by the SRS. In addition, in 2008, national and regional elections were held simultaneously for the first time. Voters were thus giving their vote for representatives at different levels, but under the impression of the same informational environment where European integration was the key issue defining the political agenda. Nicholson's (2005) theory of agenda voting posits that agenda issues prime vote choice across elections for different representative offices. He argues that unlike political scientists, voters do not group elections by type, but by informational environment. Applying this idea to the 2008 regional and national elections would imply that voters were primed by European integration. It took precedence over whatever specific preferences they might have had for the distinctive representative offices they were asked to elect. Voters

gave their vote to either the pro- or the anti-EU block that had formed congruent electoral coalitions across levels. In addition, LSV formed part of the DS-led electoral alliance at the national level, so there was no trade-off for a pro-European regionalist voter whose preferences could be catered for by the alliance. Following the 2008 elections, a DS-led government was formed that ended up including both regionalist parties from Vojvodina, the LSV officially as part of the electoral alliance led by DS, and SVM, based on an agreement between the two parties (Szöcsik and Bochsler 2013).

Subsequent to the 2008 elections, the Serbian Progressive Party (*Srpska napredna stranka*, SNS) split off from the SRS, distancing itself from the latter with a decidedly pro-EU stance and taking the bulk of voters' support with it. European integration is now a valence issue since all major (and following the 2014 elections all parliamentary) political parties support Serbia's accession to the EU. The 2012 elections were again held simultaneously with regional elections. The higher levels of incongruence in 2012 reflect the fact that SNS gained a relative majority of seats in the Serbian parliament while the DS-led electoral coalition won the 2012 elections in Vojvodina.

Second-Order Election Effects

Are elections in Vojvodina second-order? When we look at turnout, a key indicator for whether the central or the regional level takes precedence for voters, Vojvodina's elections display some characteristics of second-orderness. Figure 9.2 plots the percentage of eligible voters who turned out for regional and national elections respectively and again differentiating for the regional elections between the majoritarian (second round) and the PR tier. Turnout figures are available for the regional elections of 2004, 2008 and 2012. Unfortunately, turnout figures are missing for the 2000 regional election, for the majoritarian tier in the 2012 regional election and for the national election of 2003. Therefore, our empirical basis is even more limited than in case of the analysis of congruence, and turnout data needs to be interpreted with care.

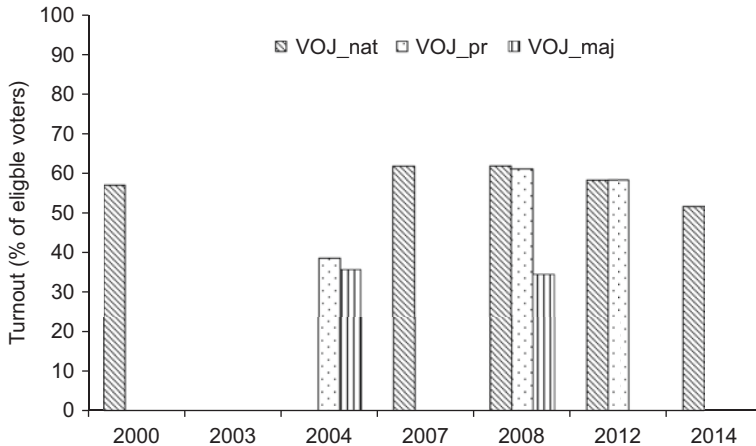


Fig. 9.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (*Notes: Shown are turnout rates per regional and national election. VOJ_nat turnout in Vojvodina for national elections, VOJ_pr turnout in Vojvodina for the proportional tier in provincial elections, VOJ_maj turnout in Vojvodina for the second round in the majoritarian tier in provincial elections. Data for the 2000 regional election, for the majoritarian tier in the 2012 regional election and for the national election of 2003 is missing. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Serbia and Montenegro*)

With the results of just four regional elections and turnout figures for only three of them, we cannot yet answer the question whether Vojvodinian elections are second-order in a conclusive way. In those instances where regional and national elections were not held on the same day (the 2004 regional elections and the second round of the majoritarian part of the regional elections in 2008), a turnout gap of around 20 percent can be observed. This might indicate that voters treat elections to the Serbian parliament as more important than elections to the regional parliament. However, the empirical basis is too thin to draw any conclusions about a trend.

By contrast, voters' substantive choices and their consequences in terms of government formation indicate that Vojvodinians have not used regional elections to punish the government at the central level. Rather, they have expressed consistent support for the DS, independent of whether DS was in opposition or in government at the central level,

Table 9.4 Elections and governments in Serbia and Vojvodina 2000–14

Parliament	Date of election and electoral system used	Government formed
Narodna skupština Srbije	23 December 2000 (PR)	DS-DA-ND-SDU-SVM-PDS-DSS-SD-RV-GSS-DHSS-ASNS-KV
	28 December 2003 (PR)	DSS-G17+-NS-SPO-SDP
	21 January 2007 (PR)	DSS-DS-G17+-NS
	11 May 2008 (PR)	DS-SPS-G17+-PUPS-SDP-SDA Sandžaka-SPO
	6 May 2012 (PR)	SPS-SNS-URS-PUPS-SDPS-PS-NS-SDA Sandžaka
	16 March 2014 (PR)	SNS-SPS-SDPS-PS (Pokret socijalista)-NS
Skupština AP Vojvodina	24 September 2000 (majoritarian)	DOS
	19 September 2004 (mixed)	DS-LSV-SVM-PSS
	11 May 2008 (mixed)	DS-LSV-SVM-G17+-SPS
	6 May 2012 (mixed)	DS-LSV-SVM

Sources: Serbian governments 2000–08: Orlović (2008, p. 603); Serbia 2012: Wikipedia; Serbia 2014: Official website of the government of Serbia. Vojvodina 2000 and 2004: Parties and elections in Europe (<http://www.parties-and-elections.eu/vojvodina1.html>); Vojvodina 2008: Wikipedia; Vojvodina 2012: Official website of the government of Vojvodina

and even when DS was ousted by newcomer SNS at the central level in 2012. The 2012 election led to Serbia's first experience with incongruent governments at the provincial and the national level (cf. Table 9.4). SNS, the party that was elected into office at the national but not the regional level, responded with calls for early elections in Vojvodina¹⁵ and attempted to overthrow the DS-led Vojvodina government (something it had already successfully achieved with the local governments and mayors of Belgrade and Novi Sad, Vojvodina's main city).

¹⁵ According to Article 8 of the Provincial decision on the election of regional MPs, the president of the parliament of Vojvodina can call early elections in the following cases: if the parliament gives up its mandate prematurely, if the provincial government is not elected within 90 days after the constitution of the parliamentary assembly or if the parliament fails to elect a new government upon resignation of the president of the provincial government for 60 days (*Pokrajinska skupštinska odluka o izboru poslanika u Skupštinu Autonomne Pokrajine Vojvodine* 2014).

In sum, whereas turnout was lower for regional elections, voters appear to not have used regional elections to punish the central government as predicted by the second-order elections model. Vojvodinians stuck to their regional DS-led government while the DS-led central government was replaced by a coalition of the newly founded SRS-splinter SNS and SPS. It remains to be seen whether more consistent conclusions can be drawn as a longer time series of regional elections becomes available. In any case, the incongruence of the vote displayed in Fig. 9.1 cannot be explained by second-order election effects. The next section explores whether regionalization is driving the Vojvodinian vote.

Regional Election Effects

Several characteristics of Vojvodina should favor regionalism. First, the region has a distinct history as part of the Habsburg Empire differentiating it from the Ottoman past of the rest of Serbia. The historical boundaries of the Habsburg Empire still play an important role in the collective identity construction of the region (Tomić 2015). Second, the region has a history of autonomy since it enjoyed a status almost on par with the other constituent republics under the Yugoslav constitution of 1974. Survey results summarized in Table 9.5 show that many citizens of Vojvodina want the province to get closer to these historical levels of self-government again though the percentage of those demanding more autonomy has been decreasing as Vojvodina was regaining competencies.

Third, the region has a particular identity defined by multicultural and multi-religious tolerance (Komšić 2006b, pp. 251–2; Lazar 2007, p. 12) and a multinational conception of regional citizenship (Stjepanović 2015). As Petsinis (2008, p. 270) puts it, Vojvodina identity ‘provides a powerful umbrella that transgresses ethnic boundaries’. This specific regional identity was manifest in high numbers of inter-ethnic marriages during communist times as well as a lower nationalist orientation, less ethnic distance and a more cosmopolitan attitude toward other nationalities than the Yugoslav average (Komšić 2006b, p. 506; Petsinis 2008, p. 270, footnote 11). In more recent times, survey research continues to confirm that Vojvodinians’ views are more favorable toward cultural

Table 9.5 Voter preferences regarding Vojvodina's status and Serbian decentralization

Year	N	Territory	Item	Decentralist (%)		Centralist (%)
				Same	More	Less autonomy
2001	1500	Vojvodina	Preferred status for Vojvodina	13.9	71.8	3.5
2002	1253	Vojvodina	Status of Vojvodina	13.9	68.5	13.5
2009	1480	Vojvodina	Preferred status for Vojvodina	41.9	41.7	6.0
2011	1000	Serbia excl. Kosovo	Decentralization & regionalization index	Vojvodina: 58.0 Central Serbia: 40.0 Belgrade: 29.0	Vojvodina: 13.0 Central Serbia: 23.0 Belgrade: 33.0	

Sources: 2001: Scan Agency, results discussed in Komšić (2006a, p. 60); 2002: Novi Sad University, results provided by Lazar (2007); 2009: Scan Agency, results obtained from Scan Agency by Christina Zuber; 2011: CeSID. Decentralizacija i regionalizacija Srbije iz ugla građana. Belgrade 2011: available from http://www.decentralizacija.org.rs/new_file_download.php?show=vesti&int_asset_id=390&int_lang_id=33 [17 February 2015]

Notes: 2001: More autonomy in 2001 is the sum of the answer categories 'autonomy of 1974' (39.1 percent), 'Republic in federal state' (5.9 percent), 'more than now, less than 1974' (21.3 percent), 'independent state' (5.5 percent). 2002: Current status in 2002 refers to 'a mixture of practically suspended powers of provincial authorities and partially returned administrative government offices' (Lazar and Stepanov 2007, p. 53) legally defined by the 1989 constitutional amendment of the Republic of Serbia and the 1990 constitution whereby Milošević stripped the autonomous provinces of their special status and suspended the legislative powers of their parliaments and the 2002 law on autonomous provinces (ibid.). More autonomy in 2002 is the sum of the answer categories 'economic, political and cultural autonomy' (57.9 percent), 'independent republic in the common state of Serbia and Montenegro' (9.8 percent), 'independent state' (0.8 percent). Less autonomy is the sum of the answer categories 'abolition of autonomy' (0.6 percent) and 'administrative region' (12.9 percent). 2009: More autonomy in 2009 is the sum of the answer categories 'autonomy of 1974' (19.6 percent), 'Republic in federal state' (3.8 percent), 'more than now, less than 1974' (14.2 percent), 'independent state' (4.1 percent)

diversity than those of citizens in the rest of Serbia. A good example is a question from an IPSOS survey in 2011 where individuals were asked about the main topic in history textbooks in Serbia. The share of respondents who were in favor of including the history of *all* ethnic groups in Serbia was 26 percent in Vojvodina compared to 16 percent in Belgrade and 17 percent in Central Serbia (Results reported in Jovanović 2014, p. 99).

However, Vojvodina provides a puzzle for scholars of territorial politics. It has territorial specificities and, as shown in Table 9.5, voters show consistent support for regional autonomy, yet this has not led to a fully mobilized center-periphery cleavage. Table 9.6 shows support for regionalist parties in Vojvodina in regional elections. The results for national elections are not displayed since LSV joined an electoral alliance headed by DS in all national elections except for 2003. The results show weaker support for regionalist parties than could be expected on the basis of voter preferences in favor of regional autonomy. The comparatively higher result for regionalist parties in 2000 is due to the fact that the electoral alliance for regime change, the Democratic Opposition of Serbia (*Demokratska opozicija Srbije*, DOS), ran both as DOS *and* with a regional list (DOSV) in Vojvodina. Members of DOSV were not identical to members of DOS and ran on the promise to re-install Vojvodina's autonomy (Korhec 2002, pp. 290–1). However, even the 2000 result remained far below the autonomist potential of 71.8 percent in favor of more autonomy for the province in 2001, as shown in Table 9.5. The results appear particularly weak when compared to historical regions with

Table 9.6 Vote share for regionalist parties in regional elections

Election	LSV		SVM		Total	
	PR	MAJ	PR	MAJ	PR	MAJ
2000		15.0		10.8		25.8
2004	9.8	0.7	8.8	8.4	18.6	9.1
2008	8.5	1.1	7.6	9.4	16.1	10.5
2012	11.6	6.3	6.5	6.6	18.1	12.9

Notes: PR results in regional elections proportional tier, MAJ results in regional elections majoritarian tier, second round. The result for LSV in the 2000 election pertains to DOSV (*Demokratska opozicija Srbije*, Democratic Opposition of Serbia). LSV *Liga socijaldemokrata Vojvodine*; League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina; SVM Hungarian, *Vajdasági Magyar Szövetség*; Serbian, *Savez vojvodanskih Mađara*; Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians

a specific identity in Western Europe. The statewide parties gain the highest vote share even in the PR tier during regional elections, the most likely scenario for a high vote share for LSV. We can, however, observe that the PR tier indeed works in favor of LSV, whereas the Hungarian minority party SVM that has a support base of voters who are territorially concentrated in districts in the North of Vojvodina is similarly successful in gaining candidate and party-list votes.

The very construction of regional identity as multicultural may be precisely the first reason that can explain why regionalist mobilization has remained comparatively weak. Serbian democratization coincided with strong nationalist mobilization along exclusivist, ethnic lines. Regionalist mobilization attempts, which due to Vojvodina's ethnic composition had to be of an integrative nature, were competing with divisive, ethnonationalist appeals. The fact that Vojvodina is a multi-ethnic region means that parties cannot mobilize voters along their regional and ethnonational identity simultaneously. Vojvodina is not a core region for a minority nation such as Catalonia is for the Catalans. Vojvodina hosts 67 percent of Serbs, 13 percent of Hungarians and a large number of smaller ethnic minority groups, such as Roma, Slovaks, Croats, Ruthenians and Germans (Statistical office 2012, pp. 22–3). Hungarians are therefore a minority also in Vojvodina, which is why their more ethnonationally oriented parties demand ethno-territorial autonomy for Hungarians in Vojvodina's North (Zuber 2013). Unlike in other regions, minority nationalism is not a natural ally of regionalism. The multi-ethnic, multi-religious composition of the province with its internally cross-cutting cleavages hampers coordination in favor of regional interests in a context where ethnically defined platforms were the dominant form of political mobilization between 2000 and 2008. Only a small minority of 1.5 percent of the regional population made use of the answer category of 'regional affiliation' when asked about their ethnic identity in the 2011 Census (Statistical office 2012, pp. 30–1). Vojvodina's ethnic minority communities are, however, very sympathetic to regional autonomy which implies that there is room for a multi-ethnic regional project. According to a 2009 regional survey conducted by the Novi Sad based SCAN Agency (2009, p. 18), support among members of the minority communities for returning the status of 1974 to Vojvodina was higher than

among the Serbs. However, during elections, the regionalist potential is divided up into the ethnic minority vote (SVM and smaller minority parties), the vote for civic mainstream parties (in particular DS) and the vote for the autonomist party LSV.

Another factor is that the composition of the regional population changed thoroughly between Yugoslav times—characterized by a specific regional culture of multicultural tolerance and civic potential, high levels of trust between ethnic groups and low levels of ethnic distance (Komšić 2006b, pp. 382, 506)—and the onset of democratic elections after the 2000s when support for regionalist parties could be openly displayed. Between 1991 and 1995, Serbian refugees from Bosnia and Croatia who had undergone radicalizing experiences during the wars were strategically resettled into Vojvodina by Milošević in order to change the ethnic makeup of the regional population in favor of ethnic Serbs, who had no previous experience with Vojvodina's culture of living together, while Croats and also some Hungarians were forced out of the province (Komšić 2006a, b, p. 383).

Finally, the statewide DS has traditionally had a strong support base within Vojvodina. Regional preferences have therefore to some extent been catered for by a statewide party, although DS's relationship toward Vojvodina's autonomy has been characterized as ambiguous. Having adopted an accommodative position in favor of broad asymmetrical autonomy in 2000, the party reduced its autonomist stance considerably during the debates about the 2006 constitution where it treated Vojvodina merely as an element of local self-government (Komšić 2013, pp. 352–3). The party's ambiguous position reflects the fact that within the party as an organization, there is a strong Belgrade but also a strong Vojvodina wing since both the city of Belgrade and the province of Vojvodina are the traditional strongholds of DS. The Vojvodina branch of the party has continuously governed the province since 2000, and it has done so in coalitions with the regionalist LSV and regionalist/Hungarian ethnic SVM (see Table 9.4).

9.4 Discussion

This chapter has analyzed regional elections in Serbia and Montenegro. This has meant dealing with various, rather than one political system where the boundaries and hierarchy between territorial units of self-government varied over the period of the analysis (1998–2014). As a federal unit of the state union of Serbia and Montenegro, Montenegro underwent a process of extreme regionalization. Already since 1998, elections in Montenegro had little in common with those at the federal level. Consequently, Montenegro seceded from the union in 2006, being the last of the former constituent republics of Yugoslavia to gain independence. Whereas the new unitary Montenegrin state witnessed an ethnicization of the Serbian vote during and after secession, this did not provide the basis for persistent regionalization and the mobilization of a genuine territorial cleavage. By contrast, Serbia chose asymmetrical decentralization, granting regional authority only to Vojvodina (and formally also to Kosovo and Metohija). Rather than aiming to carve up historical autonomies and install symmetrical regions, the Serbian state opted to maintain the boundaries of its autonomous province and the asymmetrical distribution of regional authority, though proving slow in returning competencies and financial resources that had been centralized under Milošević.

The national party system dominates elections in the province of Vojvodina, with regional branches of statewide parties gaining the bulk of regional votes and dominating regional governing coalitions. Despite a strong regional identity and a history of autonomy, no genuine regional party system has developed, and support for regionalist parties remains rather low. Hungarians are territorially concentrated in Vojvodina, but are nonetheless a minority within the province. Vojvodina is thus a historical but not an ethnic region and it has traditionally defined itself as multi-ethnic. Attempts to mobilize regionalist sentiment in Vojvodina therefore do not find a natural ally in the self-determination grievances of a national minority. This could be one reason for the comparatively high degree of nationalization. However, given the consistently autonomist preferences of voters within Vojvodina, this reason is not exhaustive. No far-reaching inferences should be drawn from our analysis since

it covered only four regional elections that were held in a period when fears of secession were omnipresent among voters and autonomist parties were often portrayed as a direct threat to the territorial integrity of the Serbian state (Komšić 2013). It could therefore be the case that voters voted strategically in favor of statewide parties with more centralist positions than the Vojvodinian median voter's ideal point in order to avoid the least preferred outcome of secession, feared to follow from autonomist demands.¹⁶ Survey-based research is called for to assess whether this explanation stands up to empirical testing. Some recent developments indicate, however, that there might be room for increased regionalization in the future. First, as desired by LSV, the next regional elections in 2016 will employ a PR electoral system. This could work in favor of the regionalist party. Second, Vojvodina's long-sitting president Bojan Pajtić was elected president of DS in May 2014. For the first time, the party's Vojvodina branch has thus come to dominate the internal organization of the statewide party that enjoys consistent support within the province. Scholars of territorial politics should therefore keep a close eye on developments in Vojvodina. Like Istria in Croatia, Serbia's multi-ethnic province provides an important counterexample to ethnically framed claims for territorial self-determination that were long dominant within the region.

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10

Slovakia: The Unbearable Lightness of Regionalization

Marek Rybář and Peter Spáč

10.1 Introduction

The Slovak Republic became an independent state in 1993. With a brief interlude between 1939 and 1945, when Slovakia existed as a Nazi puppet state, the country was a region within a larger state entity. In addition, throughout the twentieth century, the territorial administrative division in Slovakia has changed frequently, and a major restructuring of the state administration was undertaken nearly every decade (Nižňanský 2002, p. 30). The idea of subnational self-government was incompatible with Communist rule that lasted until 1989. Regional

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and local authorities exercised their powers under full control of central institutions that were themselves subordinated to the Communist party. A window of opportunity for decentralization arose in 1990, after the fall of Communism when new political representatives were elected in the first democratically free and fair elections at the national and local level. At the end of the decade, following a defeat of the illiberal government in the parliamentary elections of 1998, a regional level of self-government was established and the first regional elections were held in 2001. Similarly to most European countries, Slovakia is a unitary state. The country is divided into eight self-governing regions and nearly 2900 municipalities. Since the restoration of self-government at the local level during the beginning of the 1990s, there has been a significant increase in the number of municipalities mainly because the law on local government allows parts of municipalities and cities to 'secede' by holding a local referendum.

Elections in Slovakia are well covered by the academic literature but a majority of studies focus on parliamentary and presidential elections. Despite the fact that regional elections have been held four times (in 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2013), the literature dealing with regional (and local) elections remains relatively scarce (but see Mesežnikov and Nižňanský 2002; Mesežnikov 2006). Those few studies that analyze regional elections mainly provide a general overview of the election campaign and summarize the election results. Two major topics received special attention in the literature: the consistent low turnout in regional elections and the rationale for political parties to contest regional elections in electoral alliances. For example, drawing on the 2009 regional election results, Krivý (2010) shows that the regional electoral system induces parties to participate in an alliance rather than to contest elections on their own. In this chapter we would like to extend the study on Slovak regional elections, and we ask the question in how far regional elections show their 'own' dynamic when compared to national elections. The next section discusses regional government and regional elections in Slovakia, and in Sect. 10.3 we explore congruence between the regional and national vote. In Sects. 10.4 and 10.5, we assess in how far respectively second-order election effects or

regional election effects are driving patterns in the regional vote. The final section concludes.

10.2 Regional Government and Regional Elections

The territorial division of Slovakia was rather unstable as it was changed quite often throughout the twentieth century. The Czechoslovak Republic established in 1918 originally kept the land structures inherited from the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, and the Slovak territory was divided into 16 units called *župa* (county). Between 1928 and 1939, Slovakia formed a single administrative unit (*Krajina slovenská*) (Balík et al. 2003, pp. 80–1), but during the era of the wartime Slovak Republic (1939–45), Slovakia was again divided up into *župas*. However, in 1945, when the Czechoslovak state was restored, the territory of Slovakia was once again united into a single administrative district.

Districts (*kraje*) were introduced again in 1949 shortly after the Communist party took power. In practice, however, there was no self-rule and the districts were under full control of the Communist party. Both local and regional representatives thus carried out orders from above and the idea of self-government was an illusion for the next four decades. Slovakia consisted of six regions from 1949 until 1960 when the number of regions was reduced to three (Western, Central and Eastern Slovakia). After the federalization of Czechoslovakia in 1969, which created the Czech Socialist Republic and Slovak Socialist Republic as separate entities, Bratislava was established as a fourth region in 1970. This administrative structure lasted until the end of the communist rule (Volko and Kiš 2007, pp. 9–10).

After the end of communist rule in late 1989, newly elected politicians agreed to restore subnational self-government, but initially only at the local level. In 1990 the four regions inherited from the communist era were abolished and their powers were transferred to the municipalities. Direct elections of mayors and local assembly members were also introduced in 1990. The 1992 Constitution essentially preserved the *status quo*,

however, it also anticipated a second tier of self-government to be created at the regional level. In 1996 eight regions were established. These were not self-governing units but regional branches of central state administration. In addition, 79 districts (*okres*) were created which also served as local branches of de-concentrated central government. Opposition parties in national parliament as well as independent observers criticized this administrative structure for being disrespectful of 'natural' (the so-called nodal) micro-regions (for instance, Nižňanský 2002).¹ Another criticism was that the centrally appointed district officers opened up the possibility for patronage and essentially consolidated the power-base of governing parties (Rybář 2006).

The results of the 1998 parliamentary elections and the subsequent accession process to the European Union created favorable conditions for setting up regional self-government. After the election of 1998, a broad left-to-right coalition government was formed, following the defeat of the semi-authoritarian parties led by the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia (*Hnutie za demokratické Slovensko*, HZDS) leader and three-time Prime Minister Vladimír Mečiar. The new government had the creation of regional self-governing bodies as one of its main objectives. Moreover, the governing parties framed the establishment of regional self-government as part and parcel of the EU accession process. Even if the government was formally composed of four parties, however, two parties were de facto alliances of several parties. In practice, this meant that ten parties were represented in government, ranging from the post-communists to ethnic Hungarian parties to Christian democrats. Despite its fragility, the government embarked upon several ambitious reforms including regionalization and decentralization.

The only agreement among the governing parties was the adoption of *some* form of regional self-government. Their opinions diverged with regard to many crucial aspects, such as the number of self-governing regions, the method of electing regional assemblies and the powers to be devolved. The cabinet approved a bill proposing to set up 12 regions in April 2001, despite the abstention of one coalition partner and

¹ The so-called nodal regions are characterized by existence of a single center (town) with multiple links (economic, transport, social and so on) to its hinterland.

reservations from all governing parties. In summer 2001, and after many special committee meetings, coalition council negotiations, and public disagreement, the bill on regional self-government was introduced in the parliament. Two governing parties and several governmental backbenchers joined the opposition and passed a version that effectively preserved the territorial units established by the previous government in 1996. Alongside the eight de-concentrated central state administrative units, eight self-governing regions (*samosprávny kraj*) with identical boundaries were established. In the final reading of the bill, the proposal was also supported by the largest (liberal) governing party the Slovak Democratic Coalition (SDK). Its representatives argued that it was better to pass a suboptimal law than none (Scherpereel 2009, p. 188).

The passing of the bill severely divided the government. The ethnic Hungarian Coalition Party ([Hungarian](#), *Magyar Közösség Pártja*; [Slovak](#), *Strana maďarskej komunity*, SMK) wanted to leave the government, arguing that, besides breaching the principle of good coalition cooperation, the administrative division divided the ethnic Hungarian population across several newly created administrative regions. However, prompted by various EU representatives who argued that the collapse of government would jeopardize Slovakia's early accession to the EU (Rybář 2005), the SMK agreed to stay in government on two conditions: the (separate) bill on the powers of the newly created regions had to respect the original agreement of the governing parties and the bill (together with the bills on municipal and regional property) would be passed by the parliament within two months. These conditions led to the first regional elections held in December 2001. It is interesting to note that due to the self-imposed time limit of two months, there was practically no parliamentary debate. The regional tier of self-government emerged as a by-product of a larger political deal between parties in central government, with little engagement of, and explanation to, the citizens who were supposed to be the prime beneficiaries of the new administrative structure.

As a result, and unlike in the case of restoration of self-governing municipalities in 1990, citizens do not feel attached to their region. The official names of the regions were invented from scratch, presum-

ably to avoid both communist and pre-communist era connotations.² Moreover, the newly created regions cut across territories that do have some degree of historical identity, not necessarily relating to previous administrative structures but one based on geographical specificities and cultural traits. In 2001, for example, two-thirds of Slovak citizens identified with one of the cultural-historical areas, but only 6 percent identified themselves with one of the newly created administrative regions (Velšic 2002, pp. 163–4).³ Another example is the highly politicized debate on the boundaries of the regions of *Nitra* and *Trnava*. According to some criticisms, the regional borders were drawn with the objective to divide ethnic Hungarians over two administrative regions in which they constitute a minority. The ethnic Hungarian SMK party suggested the creation of a region whereby the Hungarians would form a significant part of the population (Mesežnikov 2002, pp. 131–2). But the proposal was not successful because most other parties wished to avoid the creation of territorial units with a high concentration of ethnic Hungarians (Scherpereel 2009, p. 137).

Local and regional self-governing units co-exist alongside district branches of de-concentrated state administration. The regional level of central state administration was abolished in 2001, and its competences were gradually transferred to regional self-governments, municipalities, districts and territorial units of specific ministries. Regional self-government has responsibilities in the areas of regional development, healthcare and social protection, secondary school education, environmental protection, transport and cultural development. Municipalities, regions and de-concentrated state administrative units share responsibilities in several areas (for instance, healthcare, education, transport and regional development) and their cooperation is crucial for effective implementation of policy.

²The original government proposal suggested to call the region *župa* (county) and the directly elected regional president *župan*. These names can be traced back to pre-1918 terms. Instead, the technocratic labels of respectively 'higher territorial unit' and the 'president of the higher territorial unit' were chosen.

³These include over 20 geographical areas, for instance, *Spiš*, *Liptov*, *Orava*, *Turiec*, *Zemplin* and *Gemer*, with their borders established as early as in the fifteenth century (Volko and Kiš 2007, p. 21).

The first regional elections were held in December 2001, and the regional level of self-government started to operate on 1 January 2002. The original 2001 government's bill proposed a simple majority (plurality) system to elect the president of the self-governing region (župan) and an (unlimited) block system to elect deputies of the regional assembly. None of the supporting materials underlying the bill provides justification for the choice of electoral system and the rationale for the election method was also not discussed during the parliamentary debate.⁴ Since exactly the same system has been used for local and mayoral elections since 1990, we think it is reasonable to assume that the rationale was to establish a direct link between voters and regional representatives. In the parliament, however, deputies changed the electoral system of the regional president into a majority with run-off.

In contrast to local and regional elections, a list-based PR system with a single nationwide district is used for parliamentary elections. Voters cast their votes for a nationwide list (or electoral alliance of parties) in which they may give preferential votes to up to four candidates (Spáč 2013). Only political parties (and their alliances) may present candidates for national elections. The regional electoral system is candidate-centered: voters do not vote for party lists but for individual candidates who can receive support from various parties. In addition, independent candidates can participate in regional elections when they collect 250 signatures to support their candidacy. Each of the eight self-governing regions is divided into several electoral constituencies and the number of constituencies as well as the number of deputies to be elected is determined by the regional parliament. In 2013, for example, *Trnava* region was divided into seven constituencies (the lowest number among all regions), while the *Bratislava* region was divided into as many as 18 constituencies. In the former, the average district magnitude was 5.7, while in the latter it was only 2.4. The number of seats in the regional parliament ranges from 40 in *Trnava* to 62 in *Prešov*. Since voters elect individual candidates,

⁴Altogether, only eight deputies took part in the parliamentary debate and none of them gave a justification for the proposed bloc voting system. A private member's bill proposing a single transferable vote system got support of less than a third of the deputies and was defeated. See transcript of the parliamentary proceedings of the National Council, 4 July 2001, available at <http://www.nrsr.sk/dl/Browser/Default?legId=13&termNr=2>.

they receive a number of votes equal to the number of deputies that are to be elected in their constituency. Hence, each voter receives a single ballot paper that lists the names of all candidates in alphabetical order. Party affiliation (or more often, a group of parties supporting the candidate) is listed next to the name of each individual candidate on the ballot paper. The candidates who receive a plurality of the vote are elected.⁵ Thus in practice, voters elect individual candidates in multi-member constituencies.

The electoral system for regional elections induces political parties to form electoral alliances. For example, party alliances often agree to jointly nominate (up to) five candidates when five deputies are to be elected in a constituency. Individual party affiliations (if any) of the candidates nominated by the alliance are not stated on the ballot papers. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for alliances to put forward formally independent (i.e., non-affiliated) candidates. This typically happens when a nationally or regionally well-known figure without previous political experience decides to run for public office. Within the boundaries of each region, party alliances have to be identical in all electoral districts. However, parties may, and often do, form different alliances in different regions. It happens frequently that two or more parties create an alliance in one region, but participate in different alliances in other regions. In addition, electoral alliances contesting regional assembly seats need not to be identical with alliances formed to support the candidacy for the (directly elected) regional president in the same self-governing region.

As already mentioned above, a majority system with run-off is used to elect presidents of the self-governing regions. The candidate who receives an absolute majority of votes is elected as president. In case no candidate receives an absolute majority, a second round with the two most successful candidates from the first round is held and the candidate who receives a plurality of the votes becomes the regional president. The two round majority electoral system was introduced by parliamentarians with the argument that it would give the regional presidential office more legitimacy and that it would lead to a strong and independent role for

⁵ If, for example, three deputies are to be elected in the electoral districts, the three candidates with the largest number of votes are elected.

the regional president. However, its critics argued that the main reason was to prevent the election of ethnic Hungarian candidates in the *Nitra* region. The SMK is electorally strong in *Nitra* and the party is more likely to succeed to get a candidate elected for regional president in a plurality system than in a run-off election. The majority system with a run-off, however, did not prevent a far-right candidate to win the regional presidency in the *Banská Bystrica* region in the 2013 regional election, when he defeated the candidate of the *Smer* (*Smer—sociálna demokracia*, Direction—Social Democracy) that was governing at the national level (Kluknavská 2015).

10.3 Congruence of the Vote

In this section we will explore territorial heterogeneity in the regional vote according to three congruence measures. Party system congruence contrasts the outcomes of a national election to the results for a regional election (NN-RR) and reflects differences between national and regional electorates as well as differences between national and regional elections. To tease out the sources of variation underlying party system congruence, two additional measures are introduced. Electorate congruence compares the outcomes of national election results disaggregated at the national and regional level (NN-NR) and informs about differences between national and regional electorates. Election congruence compares the results for national and regional elections in the same region (NR-RR) and this measure is indicative of dual voting or vote switching between national and regional elections.

The comparison of regional to national elections in Slovakia is complicated by the different electoral systems used for regional and national elections. Political parties are strongly induced to form alliances in regional but not in national elections and electoral alliances are abundant in regional elections, whereas most parties participate on their own in national elections. In addition, in regional elections it is impossible to allocate votes to each party while votes (and seats) are only attributed to the alliances. We allocate the total vote share for an alliance to the

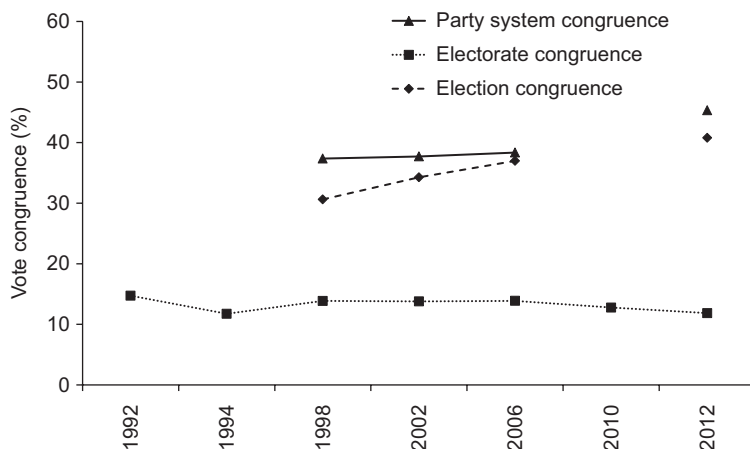


Fig. 10.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Slovakia)

electoral strongest party in the alliance whereby electoral strength is based on the results for the previous national election.

Figure 10.1 shows dissimilarity scores (high congruence between elections is indicated by low dissimilarity scores) for national election years and regional elections are compared to the previously held national elections. Electorate congruence (NN-NR) is relatively stable over time and fluctuates around 12 percent. Hence, it appears that regional electorates do not vote differently in national elections.⁶ Both party system and election congruence are lower than electorate congruence (indicated by higher dissimilarity scores). In addition, dissimilarity scores for both party system and election congruence increase over time. This result indicates that vote switching between regional and national elections increases. It should be noted that some of this dissimilarity comes from different position of independents in the two electoral arenas. Independent candidates are not permitted to participate in national elections and thus gain no

⁶A subsequent analysis (results not shown) reveals that since the 1998 national election the Western regions contribute most to dissimilarity in the vote across electorates. The four Western regions include the capital Bratislava, a stable bastion of center-right parties, two regions with high concentration of Hungarian minority and a region with a strong affiliation towards the leftist Smer.

votes, but they can compete in regional elections, and their combined vote share has increased over time: the regional average is 4.5 percent for 2001, 9.5 for 2005, 13.5 for 2009 and 17.9 for 2013.

To verify that elections are indeed nationalized, we also calculated dissimilarity scores whereby electoral alliances are treated in an alternative way. Parties tend to ally with parties that have a different ideology (i.e., alliances contain parties from the whole left-right ideological spectrum), and in many occasions cooperation is undertaken between parties that are in government and opposition at the national level (i.e., electoral alliances crosscut the government-opposition divide). Instead of allocating the total vote share to the electorally strongest party in the alliance, we also calculate dissimilarity scores whereby alliances are treated as unified actors and whereby the regional election vote share for the alliance is compared to the sum of national election vote shares for the partners in the alliance.⁷ Dissimilarity scores based on the alternative measure are similar to those displayed in Fig. 10.1 with one important exception: the trend (but not the magnitude) of increasing party system and election congruence disappears (results not shown). In the next section, we explore nationalization of elections further by looking at second-order election effects in regional elections.

10.4 Second-Order Election Effects

The second-order election model posits that turnout in regional elections is lower than for national elections because there is ‘less at stake’ in the former when compared to the latter. In Fig. 10.2 we display turnout rates for regional and national elections. There is a persistent and significant

⁷Please note that our alternative method of treating electoral alliances deviates from the approach followed in the other chapters of this book. In Chap. 1, Schakel and Dandoy suggest to allocate the vote share for the alliance to the electorally strongest member of the alliance whereby electoral strength is assessed on the basis of the results of the previous national election. This approach is suitable when the electorally strongest party does not vary much across time and when there is one strong party competing on the left as well as on the right of the ideological left-right (economic) dimension. This is not the case in Slovakia where alliances tend to consist of two or more electorally equally strong parties and where parties with left and right ideological profiles frequently join the same alliance.

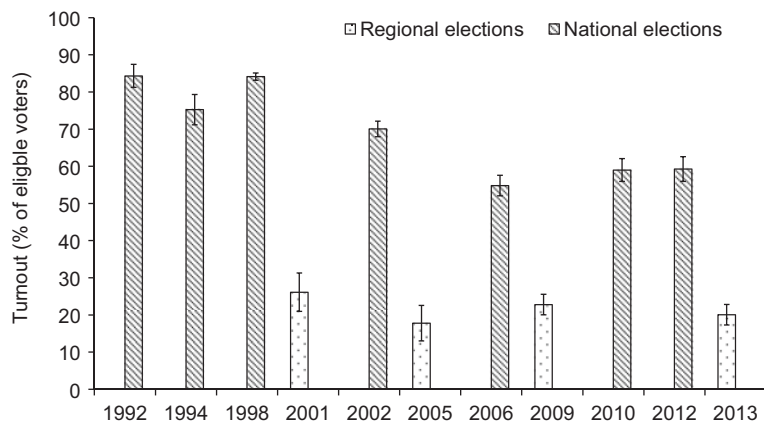


Fig. 10.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (*Notes:* Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Slovakia)

turnout gap between national and regional elections. Regional turnout varies between one-fifth and one-quarter of eligible voters. Similar to most other post-communist countries, turnout in national elections during the 1990s was comparatively very high and ranges from a high of 84 percent in 1992 and 1998 to a low of 75 percent in 1994. For the 2010s, turnout levels stabilize just below 60 percent. Hence, the turnout gap between regional and national elections amounts to more than 35 percent. One can identify several possible factors that may explain this huge difference and we grouped them into supply-driven and demand-driven explanations.

Demand-driven explanations emphasize the motivations of voters underlying their vote choice. Since less is at stake in regional elections when compared to national elections, few people care about regional politics. This is a key reasoning in the second-order election model. In addition, regional government is relatively new in Slovakia and voters may not (yet) understand their powers, resources and responsibilities. As mentioned above, regional boundaries do not correspond with the borders of historical regions and the Hungarian ethnic minority is spread over a limited number of regions. These factors contribute to a low identification of voters with their region. Voters also may find it difficult

to make a vote decision since media coverage during regional election campaigns focus overwhelmingly on national politics and regional affairs hardly receive any attention. In addition, electoral alliances consist of parties across the government-opposition divide which does not lead to a clear supply of alternative electoral choices from which the voter can choose from.

Supply-driven explanations focus on candidates and political parties. Here, one can mention the internal organization of political parties. Most Slovak political parties are highly centralized organizations controlled by a small circle of (usually founding) leaders. Parties have a clear top-down command structure and a low number of rank and file, and internal party dissent is limited or non-existing (Rybář 2011). Since 1998, when a single nationwide electoral district for parliamentary elections was introduced, regional offices lost influence including those of the less centralized parties. An absence of a regional-level cadre results in few regionally based political leaders who could attract voter support. In addition, political parties do hardly invest in regional election campaigns. Anecdotal evidence suggests that candidates share the bulk of financial expenses among themselves. In contrast to parliamentary elections, parties do not receive public funding when they win seats in regional assemblies. As a result, parties and candidates are neither capable nor willing to invest resources in a regional election campaign. Similar conditions apply to European Parliament elections and turnout does not exceed 20 percent in these contests. Slovakia registers the lowest turnout levels among all EU member states (see Spáč 2014).

Another factor contributing to second-order election effects concerns electoral timing. The national parliament and the regional assemblies are all elected for four-year terms. The only exemption was the first national election held in 1990 that were organized under a special constitutional provision that the term will last only for two years. Regional elections are held simultaneously in all eight regions in November. The first three regional elections, in 2001, 2005 and 2009, were held about three years after a national election. Regional elections are held horizontal simultaneously and are held just before the national election campaign starts both of which are favorable conditions for second-order election effects. In autumn of 2011, the center-right government of Iveta Radičová did

not survive a confidence vote that resulted in an early election in 2012. The regional election in 2013 was thus held one year after the national parliament had been elected. But this change in electoral timing does not appear to have affected turnout levels (see Fig. 10.2).

Another second-order-election effect is that government parties lose vote share while opposition, new and small parties, as well as regional parties win vote share. This electoral behavior comes about while discontent voters tend to be over represented when turnout is low. Only disgruntled voters are motivated to cast a vote in a second-order election in which there is less at stake and these voters use their vote to send a signal of discontent to the parties in national government. In other words, regional elections may be used as an ‘opinion poll’ for the national government.

As mentioned above, the regional electoral system provides strong incentives for parties to form alliances. It is not uncommon that parties from the opposition and government form alliances to compete in regional elections. In addition, it is not possible to disaggregate total vote shares for an alliance to its constituent members. Hence, we display second-order election effects in Table 10.1 for three types of electoral alliances: those consisting of solely governing parties, those consisting of solely opposition parties and those that are composed of both government and opposition parties (mixed alliances). Second-order election effects are calculated by comparing the total vote share for an alliance to the combined vote share for the parties in an alliance for the previously held national election. Table 10.1 also displays vote share change for new parties, that is, parties which are established in between regional and previously held national elections.

Table 10.1 Second-order election effects: vote share swings

Election year	Alliances and parties of			
	Government	Opposition	Mixed	New parties
2001	-5.2	-8.4	-8.4	1.6
2005	2.9	-12.3	-4.1	0.0
2009	-15.5	-9.5	-5.9	10.3
2013	-15.1	0.9	-4.4	0.0

Notes: Shown are vote share swings (percentage of votes) between regional and previously held national elections for (mixed) alliances of government and opposition parties and new parties

With the exception of the election of 2005, governing parties and their alliances tend to lose vote share in regional elections in comparison to the previously held national election. This supports the expectations based on a second-order election model. However, in contrast to these expectations, alliances of opposition parties also tend to lose votes in regional elections. Similarly, mixed alliances lost voters in all four regional contests held since 2001. New parties record considerable gains but only in 2009. This is because both *Sloboda a Solidarita* (Freedom and Solidarity, SaS) and *Most-Híd* (Bridge in Slovak and Hungarian) used the 2009 regional contest as a test election for their political viability, and they successfully ran for national parliament a year later. They not only secured parliamentary representation but entered the new coalition government as well.

The results presented in Table 10.1 provide mixed evidence for second-order election effects. On the one hand, parties/alliances in national government lose vote share while new parties gain vote share in national elections. On the other hand, parties/alliances in opposition also lose vote share. Overall, most parties and alliances tend to lose vote share in regional elections and this begs the question who wins regional elections. Independent candidates cannot run for national parliament but they are allowed to participate in regional elections. A success of even a single independent candidate results in lower levels of support for parties participating in regional elections. It appears that independent candidates win sizeable vote shares in regional elections and this is further discussed in the next section on regionalization of the vote.

Other evidence points towards the subordinate status of regional elections to national contests. The importance of regional elections has been regularly questioned by some senior political figures. For example, leader of the Smer and Prime Minister Robert Fico repeatedly questioned the rationale for having as many as eight self-governing regions, and openly doubted their status and importance. After the 2009 and 2013 regional elections, he even expressed his party's readiness to change the existing administrative structure, but the party has not introduced any proposal to change the status quo.

Regional elections in Slovakia may be conceived as 'barometer elections' whereby voters do not use their vote to punish parties in national

government. Rather, the regional vote indicates the electoral prospects of parties in the upcoming national election. This electoral dynamic is reinforced by extremely low party continuity and very high party turnover in national politics: the average life-span of a parliamentary party is about ten years (Spáč 2012). Newly established and rebranded parties use regional elections as a stepping-stone for the next parliamentary election. Even when they expect only modest results, they contest regional elections in order to help to establish their name and to present their leaders and programs to the voters in the hope for better results in the upcoming national election. The electoral timing of regional elections in the national election cycle reinforces the ‘test’ character of the regional contests. Regional elections held in 2001, 2005 and 2009 were followed only one year later by the parliamentary elections of respectively 2002, 2006 and 2010. The barometer status of regional elections, however, may have changed, since early parliamentary elections were held in 2012 and the last regional election of 2013 was held a year after instead of a year before a national election.

10.5 Regional Election Effects

In this section we explore in how far regional elections are regionalized by looking at three indicators. We look at vote shares for independent candidates and regional parties and we discuss in how far the regional vote is driven by socio-economic cleavages that may coincide with regional boundaries.

As mentioned above, independent candidates cannot contest national elections but are allowed to compete for regional seats. Their growing importance is one of the most visible consequences of the regional level of politics in Slovakia. The combined vote share won by independent deputies rises steadily since the first regional election: from 4.5 percent in 2001 to 9.5 percent in 2005, 13.5 percent in 2009 and 17.9 percent in 2013. In the regional election of 2013, independents constituted the

second largest (hypothetical) group of deputies in the regional assemblies, surpassed only by the Smer party.⁸

The success of independent candidates in regional elections can be explained by the fact that most Slovak political parties are not membership organizations; their organizational presence at the local and regional level is minimal and parties have difficulties in mobilizing the regional voter. What one can observe in regional elections is perhaps best described as an increasing 'departyisation'. This trend is also visible at the local level. Independent councilors and mayors account for a plurality of all locally elected public officials. 'Departyisation' is also present at the national level, as is exemplified by the success of a loosely organized entity called Ordinary People and Independent Personalities (*Obyčajní Ľudia, OĽaNO*), which gained parliamentary representation in the national elections of 2012 and 2016.

A second indicator for regionalization of the vote is the total vote share won by regional parties. Regional parties are practically absent in Slovakia, which in large part can be explained by the fact that the whole country represents a single electoral district in parliamentary elections. During regional elections, parties tend to present candidates in all eight self-governing regions. However, the SMK can be considered as a regional party. The party fields candidates in all regions but concentrates most of its candidates in four regions. The SMK typically presents no more than one or two candidates in *Žilina*, *Trenčín*, *Prešov* and *Banská Bystrica* but it presents itself to the voters in full strength, either as a single party or as a member of a party alliance, in *Bratislava*, *Trnava*, *Nitra* and *Košice*, where the bulk of SMK voters (ethnic Hungarians) reside. The SMK is particularly strong in *Nitra*, and in this region the SMK induces other parties to significantly alter their electoral strategies. All major non-Hungarian parties typically unite in a single alliance, comprising both governing and opposition parties, to run against the SMK. This effectively means that

⁸ Even though exact numbers of deputies for each party cannot be determined from the official election results, each political party headquarter knows how many of their members have won a regional seat. In 2013, the daily Smer published that the largest number of deputies (161) were Smer nominees. Christian democrats were the second largest party with 57 elected deputies. Hence, the 73 elected independent deputies would be the second largest 'party' group in Slovakia. See <http://www.sme.sk/volby-vuc/2013/vysledky/>.

voters in *Nitra* have a choice between Hungarian and Slovak candidates, as ethnicity becomes the main differentiating aspect of candidates.

Finally, we look at the socio-economic cleavages that may drive the regional vote. Pink and Voda (2012) show that the impact of socio-structural cleavages on the vote has been unstable across time even in national elections. In other words, support for political parties is moderately linked to cleavages but the impacts of a cleavage changes frequently for each party.⁹ In general, the impact of cleavages is weaker in regional elections but there are persistent and significant differences in regional election results across the country. In the economically more developed areas of Slovakia, such as the *Bratislava* region, center-right parties dominate, while the populist (HZDS) and left parties (Smer) record lower vote shares. Similarly, left parties tend to be stronger in areas with higher levels of unemployment, such as the borderline zone between eastern and southern Slovakia (Gajdoš 2013). However, these observations need to be interpreted with care since other factors may mitigate the effect of a socio-economic cleavage. Most importantly, even if ethnic Hungarians are concentrated in the economically underdeveloped areas in the South, they tend to vote for the ethnic (and quasi-regional) SMK rather than a left party. Another example are the well-developed urban areas in the *Banská Bystrica* region. Voters in this region traditionally tend to vote for liberal and center-right parties but in the 2013 regional elections, parties from the left and even an extreme right candidate dominated. Overall, we find very limited evidence for regionalization.

10.6 Discussion

The analysis of national and regional elections presented in this chapter reveals that elections are highly nationalized in Slovakia. This high degree of nationalization is maintained by several factors. The establishment of regional government undertaken between 1996 and 2001 did not respect

⁹The explanatory potential of the structural variables (economic status, urban versus rural residence, secular versus religious identification and center-periphery status) with respect to electoral gains of political parties in the national elections varies between elections (see Pink and Voda 2012, pp. 239–42).

cultural-historical territorial boundaries. As a result voters' identification with and attachment to their regions is rather low. Regional government is not considered important by voters and political actors. Turnout in regional elections is almost 40 percent lower than participation rates in national elections. In addition, in 2013, the Smer—one of the main political parties in Slovakia and which even formed a single party majority government between 2012 and 2016—openly questioned the rationale for having eight regions and suggested that three or four regions would be sufficient. Hence, even political parties who potentially may benefit from controlling regional administrations do little to mobilize citizens to participate in regional elections.

Another contributing factor to the nationalization of regional elections is the weak organizational capacity of political parties at the local and regional level. Slovak political parties *de facto* do not exist as membership organizations and their territorial organizational structure is highly centralized. It is a small circle of party leaders who take all major decisions without the involvement of activists and rank and file. Moreover, unlike in parliamentary elections, political parties receive no public funding for their activities (and electoral performance) in regional elections and instead parties rely on financial contributions from individual candidates.

Yet, the nationalization of regional elections does not translate into second-order election effects. Overall, government parties tend to lose vote share in regional elections but this can also be explained by a high turnover of political parties in the Slovak party system as a whole. The average life-span of parties is less than ten years and this is also the case for governing parties. The poor electoral performance in regional elections could be an indication of the terminal stages of the existence of a party.

There are particular regional electoral dynamics but these cannot be interpreted as a regionalization of the vote. Most important is the preponderance of electoral alliances that is caused by the different methods of electing regional and national representatives. Regional assembly members are elected by simple plurality in multi-member districts whereas a list-based PR system with a single nationwide district is used for parliamentary elections. As a result, parties ally in regional elections and these alliances frequently crosscut left-right and government-opposition dimensions of political competition.

Another notable and important regional election dynamic has been the rise of independent candidates. However, this trend is more properly interpreted as ‘departyisation’ of regional politics rather than regionalization. This trend has emerged from the local level, where independent mayors and councilors form the largest group of elected officials. The list-based PR system for national elections has prevented the spill-over of this trend to the national level. However, non-conventional and ostensibly non-partisan political groupings have been successful at gaining popular support, as is exemplified by the success of the OĽaNO party in the national election of 2012 (Baboš and Malová 2015) and 2016. Political leaders tend to argue that party membership does not matter much at the regional (and local) level when they form electoral alliances consisting of parties with divergent political ideologies. The growing number of independent deputies in regional assemblies indicates that such statements may become a self-fulfilling prophecy.

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11

Turkey: Provincial Elections as a Barometer of National Politics

Emanuele Massetti and Sait Aksit

11.1 Introduction

A defining feature of Turkey is the highly centralized character of the state organization. This characteristic was partially inherited from the Ottoman era, and it was strengthened, in the context of nation-state formation, after the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 1923 (Mardin 1973). For the period of our study (1961–2014), the general structure

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and principles of local government are outlined in articles 112, 115 and 116 of the 1961 Constitution and articles 123, 126 and 127 of the 1982 Constitution. In these constitutions there is no reference to principles that justify regional representation, such as subsidiarity or bottom-up democracy let alone the recognition of ethno-regional minorities. Local administration is merely mentioned in terms of local branches of (central) public administration (Keleş 2009, p. 146). The 1982 Constitution prescribes that local administration should be regulated by law with the objective of ensuring the functioning of local services in conformity with the principle of the integrity of the administration, securing uniform public service, safeguarding the public interest and meeting local needs properly (1982 Constitution, Art. 127). What is more, modernization and development along with indivisibility and integrity of the nation-state emerge as the dominant inspiring ideas in defining the system of administration. Indeed, a proper regional tier of government was never seriously considered.¹ Instead, a three-tier local government was put in place, including provincial administrations (*il özel idareleri*), municipalities (*belediyeler*) and village administrations (*köyler*). The absence of regional governments leaves the provincial administrations as the highest tier of government below the central state. Therefore, this chapter analyzes the interaction between elections for the provincial councils and elections for the national parliament.² It is, however, important to keep in mind that Turkish provinces are understood as territorial areas around a city (the provincial center), whose name identifies both the city

¹ Regions in Turkey are defined on the basis of geography, economic conditions and public service requirements (1982 Constitution, Art. 126) and were actually established within the European nomenclature framework of territorial units for statistics (NUTS) with law no. 4706/2002. The NUTS regions do have corresponding development agencies that were established in response to EU accession criteria but do not have corresponding political/administrative governance structures (see Loewendahl-Ertugal 2005). There are 12 NUTS1 regions (Istanbul, West Marmara, Aegean, East Marmara, Mediterranean, West Anatolia, Central Anatolia, West Black Sea, East Black Sea, North-Eastern Anatolia, Central-Eastern Anatolia and South-Eastern Anatolia) and 26 NUTS2 sub-regions. Only, in the case of Istanbul NUTS1, NUTS2 and the provincial unit coincide. While in the cases of Ankara and Izmir, there is a coincidence between the respective NUTS2 and the provincial units.

² Presidential elections in Turkey were introduced very recently within a formally parliamentary constitutional framework. The first presidential election was held in 2014.

and the province. Therefore, Turkish provincial administrations are both conceptually and legally part of the local government. Indeed, a number of Turkish provinces have gradually come to coincide, both territorially and administratively, with the expanding metropolitan centers.

Given the three-tier structure of local government and the simultaneous election of village, municipalities and provincial administrations, studies and analysis of provincial elections have tended to be merged within the encompassing category of local elections. In media reports and in the political debate, the substance of local elections per se is usually restricted to counting the number of municipality mayors gained by each party. However, since political parties consider local elections as a midterm vote of confidence (Çitçi 1996, p. 7), their importance rests primarily on what these elections can say about the appeal of parties at national level in terms of vote shares. In this respect, provincial elections are more interesting than municipal elections for a number of reasons: first, their total electorate coincides with the national electorate; secondly, the electoral system is based on party lists and is virtually the same as the one used for national parliamentary elections; and thirdly, the generally low profile of candidates for provincial councils (*vis-à-vis* candidates for city mayors) makes provincial elections more based on party preferences.

The extant literature on local elections is rather limited, and it largely confirms the second-order nature of these elections: turnout in all types of local elections, including provincial ones, has generally been lower than parliamentary elections; and political debate tends to revolve around party positions on national issues rather than local issues (Çitçi 2005; Kösecik 2005, p. 254; Çarkoğlu 2009, p. 300). There have been several approaches to the study of local elections in Turkey. Some scholars simply replicated national election studies at the local level, either investigating the determinants of party choice (Özcan 2000; Akarca and Tansel 2006) or the territorial distribution of vote for parties (Çitçi 2005; Çarkoğlu 2009, 2014). Turan (2008) produced a very interesting and a long-term description of local elections' results alongside socio-economic and political developments. Only a few studies provide a systematic comparison of electoral behavior at the national and local level (İncioğlu 2002; Uyar 2009). In particular, Uyar's PhD thesis represents the only study covering a long period (1961–2009) and placing explicitly the analysis of local

elections within the analytical framework of the second-order election model. His conclusion is that Turkish local elections fall more within the model of barometer elections, as formulated by Anderson and Wards (1996), than the model of second-order elections (Uyar 2009, p. 84).

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the nature of provincial elections in Turkey. In particular, we want to evaluate to what extent provincial elections in Turkey follow the second-order election or the barometer election models. The next section provides a more detailed description of the institutional layers of government in Turkey, highlighting the weak position of the provincial tier, which is tightly controlled from above (the central government) and, at same time, ‘hollowed-out’ from below (the metropolitan municipalities) by the continuous growth of urban centers. Section 11.2 also reviews the rather thin literature on provincial/local elections. Section 11.3 analyzes party system, electorate and election incongruence of the vote using the three indexes proposed in Chap. 1. In this section we focus on the substantively different levels of incongruence (particularly due to electorate incongruence) between two subsets of provinces: those primarily populated by ethnic Kurds and all the others. The fourth section deals directly with second-order election ‘symptoms’, such as the level of turnout and gains/losses for different types of parties (government; opposition; new; not represented in Parliament). Section 11.5 analyzes the electoral growth of the main ethno-regionalist (pro-Kurdish) party in Turkey, the Peace and Democracy Party—Peoples’ Democratic Party (*Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi*, BDP—*Halkların Demokratik Partisi*, HDP).

11.2 Provincial Government and Provincial Elections

The system of a centralized state with provincial administrations was inherited by the Turkish Republic from the Ottoman Empire through the 1913 Temporary Law on General Administration of Provinces.³ Although

³The Ottoman Empire undertook a reform of the provincial administration—from ‘*eyalet*’ to ‘*vilayet*’—with the 1864 Province Regulation (1864 *Vilayet Nizamnamesi*), which was highly

there were changes in 1929 and 1949 and revision and simplification in 1987 (Law no. 3360), the law was only thoroughly revised in 2005 (Law no. 5302) (Kapucu and Palabıyık 2008, p. 138; Keleş 2009, p. 139). The structure of the provincial administrations is constituted by the provincial council (*il genel meclisi*) whose members are elected through popular vote; the provincial standing committee (*il encümeni*) whose members are elected among the members of the council and appointed members by the governor from among the high level bureaucrats at the provincial level; and the governor (*vali*) who is appointed by the central government and is a civil servant of the Ministry of Interior. Law no 5302/2005 intended to strengthen local autonomy by ending the tradition whereby the governor was the chair of the council, replacing him by a president who is elected among the council members and by enabling the councils to convene once a month instead of twice a year. Governors remain, nonetheless, the most powerful provincial authority, as they chair the standing committee, can legally challenge the decisions taken by the provincial council and coordinate the executive/bureaucratic branch of the legislative council which acts as ‘an advisory body that is continuously at the side of the Governor’ (Ersoy 2015, p. 6). The changes to the structure of the standing committee with Law no. 6360/2012 do not diminish the authority of the governor despite a move towards increasing the number of elected members. The highly centralized character of the Turkish state is also reflected in the limited budget allocated to sub-state administrations, with the share of (all three tiers of) local government expenditures accounting for 15 to 20 percent of total national expenditures (Bindebir 2004; Koyuncu 2012). In spite of some attempts to reform and strengthen local government, this has remained weak given the tutelage of the central administration and limited available resources (İncioğlu 2002; Bayraktar 2007).

The debate and the interest in local government increased especially since the 1970s along with the changing social structure of Turkey. In this respect, the social problems associated with internal migration and

influenced by the centralistic French model (Keleş 2009, p. 138). In geographical terms, the provinces established during the republican period are comparable with the counties (*livalar/sanjaks*)—that is, the second layer of local administration—defined by the 1864 regulation. The counties were mostly named after the city and town centers around which they were established.

urbanization were the main factors driving the need for restructuring. The share of population living in province and district centers increased from 32 percent in 1960 to 44 percent in 1980, 59 in 1990, 65 in 2000, to 76 percent in 2010.⁴ As a result, two restructuring processes could be observed since the 1980s. First, the increasing number of urban centers led to an increase in the number of provinces, from 67 to 81 in the period 1989–1999. Second, the growth in size of urban centers led to the concentration of resources at the level of municipalities within the three layered local administrative system and to the establishment of metropolitan (greater city) municipalities—initially in İstanbul, Ankara and İzmir and then in other 27 large cities.⁵ These metropolitan municipalities were created by uniting several district municipalities and, given continuous urban expansion, their territorial coverage has come to coincide with the whole province. Municipalities in general are considered as the most important tier of administration within the framework of local government in Turkey for a number of reasons. First, provincial administrations are chaired by governors who are civil servants appointed by the Ministry of Interior. Therefore, provincial elections are only for the election of the provincial council: a rather toothless institution which meets few times a year and can be used as a sort of advisory body by the governor. Secondly, mayors and municipal decision-making bodies are all directly elected, and they play a crucial role in the provision of local services (Kapucu and Palabiyık 2008, p. 143). Thirdly, recent reforms—since the mid-2000s—increased the number of metropolitan municipalities to 30, extended their geographical area of responsibility to provincial boundaries and while doing so abolished the respective provincial administrations. As of 2014, 77 percent of the total population lives within metropolitan municipality boundaries. As such, metropolitan municipalities are crucial in terms of increasing political influence and visibility as well as in the distribution of resources and expansion of networks of political patronage (İncioğlu 2002, pp. 73, 78).

⁴The data on population of province/district centers and towns/villages is retrieved from the website of Turkish Statistical Institute: <http://tuik.gov.tr/>

⁵Although there is no minimum threshold for the population of a province, only provinces with a population exceeding 750,000 people can be converted into a greater city municipality (Metropolitan Municipality Law No. 5216/2004).

The reforms in 2000s expanded the duties and responsibilities of provincial administrations and introduced a two tier responsibility framework (Law no. 5302/2005, Art. 6), whereby some responsibilities and duties (on health, agriculture, industry and trade, provincial environmental plans, public works and settlement, soil conservation, erosion prevention, social services, kindergartens and orphanages, land procurement for primary and secondary schools, construction and maintenance of schools) apply throughout the provincial territory; and other responsibilities and duties (building planning, roads, water, sewage, solid waste management, environment, emergency aid and rescue services, culture, arts and tourism, forestation, parks and landscape works) only apply in those territories of the province which are outside of the municipalities' areas. It is interesting to note that the increase in policy responsibilities did not come along with a matching increase in financial resources. Indeed, several tasks and responsibilities are undertaken by regional agencies of the central government, though under the coordination of the provincial governors.

Due to the fast growth of the main urban centers and consequent recent reforms in local government with Law no 6360/2012, 30 provincial councils have been dissolved and absorbed into the administration of the respective metropolitan cities.⁶ While this reform might have led to a rebalancing of powers between elected institutions (metropolitan municipality mayor and council) and appointed governors, the same law (6360/2012) also established the Investment Monitoring and Coordination Directorates (*Yatırım İzleme ve Koordinasyon Başkanlığı*). Their tasks and duties were set with a directive that was published in April 2014 and that puts the directorates under the leadership of the governors. This, some argue, strengthens the political power of the central administration in the provinces/metropolitan municipalities via the governors (Önez Çetin 2015, p. 251; Karagel and Üçeçam Karagel 2014, p. 183).

A distinct difference between the provincial administrations and the municipalities lie in their financial resources and fiscal autonomy. As a

⁶The first metropolitan municipalities (*Büyükşehir Belediyeleri*) were established in 1984 with Law no. 3030.

consequence of the changes made in 2012 under Law no. 6360/2012, the share of general budget tax revenue to be apportioned to metropolitan municipalities is 4.5 percent, other municipalities receive 1.5 percent, while only 0.5 percent is allocated to provincial administrations. In addition, provinces also have lower fiscal autonomy vis-à-vis municipalities, with the former raising only 20 percent of their budgets and the latter 40 to 50 percent (Ersoy 2015, p. 9; Bindebir 2004, pp. 6–7).

After the 1960 *coup d'état*, the electoral system for the National Assembly changed from a plurality system to proportional representation with a d'Hondt formula. Electoral rules were reformed at the local level too. Mayors, who were previously indirectly elected by the municipal councils, became directly elected with a plurality system. The PR system adopted for national elections was also used for the election of provincial and municipal councils. This uniformity of electoral systems across the national and provincial/municipal assemblies was left unchanged by the new rules introduced after the military coup of 12 September 1980 (Law No. 2972/1984, on Election of Local Governments, Neighborhood Masters and Neighborhood Executive Committees). The electoral system for the mayors was not altered, while the rules for electing the national and provincial/local assemblies were changed virtually in the same way. The new law introduced a 10 percent threshold, which is applied at the national level for national elections and at the district level for provincial elections. In addition, the new electoral law prescribed compulsory voting in all types of elections.

The number of provincial council members is determined according to the population of districts. Districts with a population of up to 25,000 send two, districts with population of 25,001–50,000 send three, districts with population of 50,001–75,000 send four and districts with population of 75,001–100,000 send five members to the provincial council.⁷ A

⁷The size and population of provinces varies significantly across Turkey. Turkey's 81 provinces are divided into 984 districts. *Bayburt*, the smallest of the provinces with three districts, has a population of around 78,000. Its provincial council is composed of only eight members. *Afyonkarahisar*, the biggest of the 51 provinces with a provincial administration, has a population of 700,000, 18 districts and a provincial council composed of 50 members. The average number of seats for the 51 provinces that currently have provincial councils is 24.5 members based on the 2014 provincial council elections, excluding the greater cities where the provincial administrations are abolished. Turkey's biggest city, *Istanbul*, which has a population of around 14 million and is divided into 39

similar system of distribution is exercised in the case of municipal council elections except for the bonus members: the party which receives the highest vote share in the defined municipality gains the quota seats in that particular municipality.

The new electoral law kept the rigid implementation of horizontal simultaneity for all provincial elections and vertical simultaneity for the elections of all three tiers of local administrations. It stipulates that local elections would be held every five years on the last Sunday of March which has been the case for all election years except for the 1999 elections when general and local elections were held on 18 April. Provincial elections (and local elections in general) in Turkey, therefore, lend themselves to be perceived as tests for national politics.

11.3 Congruence of the Vote

In this section we discuss longitudinal variation using three indexes that measure the level of incongruence: electorate congruence (NN-NR), which measures the level of territorial dis-homogeneity in national elections' results across the various provinces; election congruence (NR-RR), which measures to what extent provincial electorates vote differently in provincial elections compared to the previous national election; and party system congruence (NN-RR), which measures both horizontal and vertical dis-homogeneity in voting behavior. We analyze variation in the values of the three indexes during the period between the first national election held after the 1960 *coup d'état* (1961) and the last provincial election (2014).⁸ In this period the electoral system (proportional representation) has remained stable, with the important exception of the

districts, used to have 277 provincial council members before the provincial administration was abolished with the 2012 reform. The average number of seats for the provincial councils was 40.5 members based on the results of 2009 provincial council elections. Istanbul's greater city municipality council is currently composed of 310 members.

⁸ Because of the absorption of 30 provincial councils by greater municipalities' councils, data referring to the 2014 provincial elections are a mix of 'real' provincial council elections (in 51 provinces) and greater municipalities' council elections (where these replaced the provincial councils). The electoral systems for the election of provincial councils and greater municipalities councils are extremely similar, both based on proportional representation.

introduction of a high (10 percent) national threshold and compulsory voting after the 1980 *coup d'état*. The electoral system has also remained overall homogeneous, including post-1980 changes, across national and provincial elections.

Local elections have also been a sort of stepping stone for the ‘Kurdish question’ to be openly posed by pro-Kurdish parties within Turkish public institutions. The Kurdish question—that is, the recognition of a separate Kurdish ethno-national identity, the right of this minority to preserve and cultivate their language, the overcoming of widespread discriminations and of uneven economic development as well as the debate on the constitutional/institutional means to pursue (or not) these purposes—is as old as the Turkish Republic. However, since the mid-1990s, the issue has been taken into electoral politics by an ethno-nationalist (Kurdish) party emanating also from the armed nationalist movement led by the outlawed PKK. The new party, BDP-HDP,⁹ remained out of national parliament until 2007, due to the 10 percent national threshold and its own insistence to enter elections as a party rather than with individual candidates presented as independents. Following the latter strategy, it managed to be represented after the 2007 and, even more, the 2011 election.¹⁰ However, since the 1999 local elections, it had already captured some provincial councils and, most importantly, some municipal administrations in the South-East.

Considering the various cleavages that shape the Turkish party system, we decided to give particular visibility to ethnic Turkish versus Kurdish identities (and Turkish versus Kurdish nationalism) because data show that this is the one which most affects territorial (that is, provincial) dishomogeneity of the vote. To be sure, other cleavages, such as the rural-urban one and the secular-religious one (which were originally rather

⁹The pro-Kurdish party changed its name several times, due to bans and restyling. The original name was People’s Democracy Party (HADEP), then changed into Democratic People’s Party (DEHAP), then again into Democratic Society Party (DTP), and finally into Peace and Democracy Party (BDP). Lately, in an attempt to reach leftist voters beyond the ethnic (Kurdish) electorate, the party has also created a new label Peoples’ Democratic Party (HDP) with which it participates in elections outside the Kurdish populated provinces in Eastern and South-Eastern Turkey. We use the label BDP-HDP for the whole period 1995–2014.

¹⁰In the national election held on 7 June 2015, the pro-Kurdish party has managed to increase its votes and seats reverting again its strategy, that is, successfully competing as a party.

linked together), are also responsible for territorial dis-homogeneity in voting behavior. However, capturing the urban-rural divide with a study based on provinces as units of analysis is not easy, as an increasing number of provinces include both rural and urban areas. In addition, the rapid and massive process of urbanization has led big Western cities, such as Istanbul and Izmir, to host a considerable amount of rural-born and religious-oriented population. Indeed, election studies aiming to capture the impact of social identities on voting behavior using territorial units of analysis need to go as deep as to distinguish between different neighborhoods within city municipalities (Çarkoğlu 2009).

We, therefore, limited ourselves to try and sort provinces in which the majority population is supposedly ethnically Kurdish from the rest of the country. As there are no official data on ethnic identities, we relied on a rather recent study which reports the percentage of ethnic Kurds at the level of statistical macro-regions (Ağırdır & Pultar 2010). This study maintains that the Kurds represent 79.1 percent of the population in the macro-region South-Eastern Anatolia, 64.1 percent in Central-Eastern Anatolia and 30 percent in Northern-Eastern Anatolia (Ağırdır & Pultar 2010, p. 20). In order to be relatively sure to have selected provinces with a Kurdish majority, we excluded the provinces *Erzincan*, *Erzurum* and *Ardahan* from Northern-Eastern Anatolia. In spite of the high percentages of Kurdish population at the macro-regional level, we also excluded some provinces from Central-Eastern Anatolia (*Malatya* and *Elazığ*) and from South-Eastern Anatolia (*Adıyaman*, *Gaziantep* and *Kilis*). This operation leaves us with 15 provinces (out of a total 81) that can be reasonably considered as Kurdish majority provinces: *Ağrı*, *Batman*, *Bingöl*, *Bitlis*, *Diyarbakır*, *Hakkari*, *Iğdır*, *Kars*, *Mardin*, *Muş*, *Şanlıurfa*, *Siirt*, *Şırnak*, *Tunceli* and *Van*.¹¹

Figure 11.1 reports the level of party system (NN-RR) incongruence, which measures differences in electoral results between national elections in Turkey and provincial elections in each province. Taking aside the

¹¹ It is important to note that the share of ethnic Kurds varies substantively also within this subset of provinces. In some of them, such as *Kars* and *Şanlıurfa*, which are populated also by other ethnic minority groups (Caucasian and Arabic respectively), the Kurdish majority is just an informed assumption; whereas other provinces, such as *Hakkari* and *Şırnak*, are commonly considered as populated almost exclusively by ethnic Kurds.

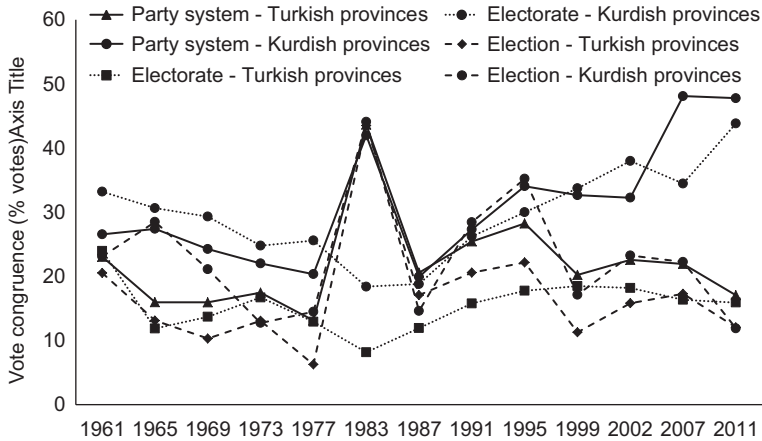


Fig. 11.1 Congruence between the regional and the national vote (Notes: Shown are average dissimilarity scores for Turkish majority and Kurdish majority provinces. See Chap. 1 for the formula. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Turkey)

deviant values of the *sui generis* 1983 election,¹² it can be easily observed that provincial ‘party systems’ in Kurdish majority provinces are remarkably more different from the national party system than in Turkish majority provinces. The periods pre- and post-1980 *coup d’état*, however, differ in one important respect: between 1961 and 1977, the values for the Kurdish majority provinces were decreasing and converging with those of Turkish majority provinces, whereas since 1991 and, even more, since 2002, there has been a growing and diverging trend. Since 2007, the levels of party system incongruence in Kurdish majority provinces have been

¹²The 1983 election was held under the tutelage of the military regime that imposed major restrictions on which parties and politicians could participate. In crude terms, besides two parties imposed by the military establishment, the only party emanating from the civil society was the center-right Motherland Party (*Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP), a successor of the outlawed Justice Party (*Adalet Partisi*, AP). However, by the time of the subsequent provincial elections, in 1984, some of the restrictions had been lifted, allowing a wider and more freely formed electoral offer, which attracted more than two thirds of the votes that in 1983 had gone to the two parties of the military establishment. That is why the election and party system incongruence indexes (NR-RR and NN-RR)—which are computed comparing the 1984 provincial elections results with those of the 1983 national election results—reached those exceptional values in 1983. Conversely, the restricted electoral offer of the 1983 election produced the lowest level of electorate incongruence (NN-NR) across provinces (see Fig. 11.1).

higher than the ones found in Western European regions with strong regionalist parties, such as the ‘Celtic regions’ in the UK, the ‘special status regions’ in Italy or the ‘historic regions’ in Spain (McEwen 2013; Massetti and Sandri 2013; Gomez Fortes and Cabeza Perez 2013). The following figures will clarify the sources of this considerable dissimilarity.

As shown in Fig. 11.1, electorate incongruence is a major source of party system overall incongruence. While in Turkish majority provinces the electorate appears as nationalized as in some Western, relatively homogeneous, countries—roughly at the same level as Germany (Jeffery and Middleton 2013) or Norway (Rose and Hansen 2013)—in Kurdish majority provinces, the level of electorate incongruence has been always considerably higher. In the 1960s, this was mainly due to the presence of national (Turkish) parties, such as the New Turkey Party (*Yeni Türkiye Partisi*, YTP), which had its electoral strongholds in rural areas. Indeed, the sharp decline of the YTP from the mid-1960s triggered a nationalization trend in the Kurdish majority provinces. However, since the mid-1990s, the emergence of pro-Kurdish ethnic parties, which entered elections either as parties or, in order to get around the 10 percent national threshold, as independent candidates, resulted in a sharp increase of regionalization (that is, de-nationalization) of the vote. In 2011 the level of electorate incongruence in Kurdish majority provinces overcame, for instance, the scores found by other scholars in Spanish ‘historic regions’ or in the Italian ‘special status regions’ (Gomez Fortes and Cabeza Perez 2013; Massetti and Sandri 2013). Indeed, electorate incongruence in Kurdish majority provinces is on a sharp rising trend and, therefore, strongly diverging vis-à-vis the rather steady values of the Turkish majority provinces.

Finally, as reported in Fig. 11.1, the election incongruence (NR-RR) is also partially responsible for the higher values of party system incongruence in Kurdish majority provinces vis-à-vis Turkish majority provinces, as the values for the former are, in most cases, higher than for the latter. In addition, they considerably diverged from those of Turkish majority provinces during the 1960s, mainly due to the presence and success of independent candidates. However, the contribution of election incongruence to the overall party system incongruence is much smaller and inconsistent vis-à-vis that of electorate incongruence. This means that

Turkish and Kurdish majority provinces tend to vote rather differently and they do it coherently across national and provincial elections.

Aside from the 1960s, both sets of provinces appear to have followed similar fluctuations in their election incongruence. This can be explained by factors that affected voters independently of their ethnic identity. First, the peculiar nature of the 1983 national election determined this exceptional value for that year (see footnote 12). Second, the timing of the elections appears extremely important in determining some ups and downs in the index values, with lower scores being recorded when the national and provincial elections were held just few months one after the other (1969, 1973, 1977) or even on the very same day (1999). Third, the level of structuration/fragmentation of the party system also seems to affect, though to different degrees, both Turkish and Kurdish majority provinces. Indeed, the structuration of the party system implies a certain continuity in the electoral offer available to voters and in electoral behavior, including between national and provincial elections. In periods in which the party system was more magmatic, due to the sharp emergence of new parties and/or sharp decline of old parties, like in the 1990s, the election incongruence index shows an evident rising trend. This has been more evident in the Kurdish majority provinces, because they were heavily affected both by the appearance on the scene of a pro-Kurdish party (HADEP) and by the rise of the Islamist Welfare Party (*Refah Partisi*, RP). The latter party also affected the level of election congruence in Turkish majority provinces, together with the re-emergence of the secular nationalist Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*, CHP) and the traditionalist ultra-nationalist Nationalist Action Party (*Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi*, MHP), as well as the persistence of divisions within both the center-right (Motherland Party, *Anavatan Partisi*, ANAP and True Path Party, *Doğru Yol Partisi*, DYP) and the center-left (Social Democrat Populist Party, *Sosyal Demokrat Halkçı Parti*, SHP and Democratic Left Party, *Demokratik Sol Parti*, DSP). The downward trend in the most recent elections appears to be, indeed, determined by the consolidation of the current party system. In Turkish majority provinces, votes are monopolized by three parties: the dominant (Islamist, conservative and populist) Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP), the main opposition party CHP and the second opposition party MHP. All

parties have relatively stabilized their levels of support between national and provincial elections. Similarly, in Kurdish majority provinces, the vote has gradually stabilized under the duopoly of the pro-Kurdish party (BDP-HDP) and the AKP. The latter has, therefore, imposed itself as the only true Turkey-wide party, although its grip in Kurdish majority provinces has been recently declining in favor of the BDP-HDP.¹³

11.4 Second-Order Election Effects

The second-order election model rests on, more or less explicit, assumptions concerning the institutional structure and the dynamics of party competition. We should observe marked second-order symptoms under the following circumstances: a stable two-party system underpinned by a plurality (or majoritarian) electoral system, horizontal simultaneity (i.e., the whole national electorate is involved in second-order elections at the same time), mid-term-like electoral cycle vis-à-vis the national (first-order) election, a considerable gap between the institutional powers (and budget) of the state vis-à-vis other levels of government, absence of compulsory voting legislation and territorial homogeneity in terms of ethnicity and national identities. In the case of Turkey, only some of these conditions are fully present. First, the gap between the institutional competences (and budgets) of the provinces and those of the central state is enormous. In addition, it is worth reminding that the provinces are mainly run by unelected and government-appointed governors, while the elected provincial councils have very limited powers. Second, all provincial elections are held in all provinces at the same time and, in most cases, in a mid-term-like timing vis-à-vis the national elections. On the other hand, since 1961 Turkish elections (both national and provincial) were held under PR and produced multi-party systems, which were often (especially in the 1980s–1990s) unstable and subject to numerous party splits and mergers. Before the emergence of the cur-

¹³In the June 2015 national elections (not included in this study), the decline of the AKP in Kurdish majority provinces, as well as in Kurdish neighborhoods within Western Turkey's cities, appears to have sharply accelerated.

rent pre-dominant party system characterized by single-party (AKP) governments, the general rule had been that of coalition governments. Finally, Turkey is ethnically divided between Kurdish populated provinces of the East and South-East, and the rest of the country. It should not come as a surprise, therefore, if the two most evident indicators of second-order elections—lower turnout, government parties’ losses and electoral cycle (i.e., government losses increase in midterm second-order elections and diminish when second-order elections are held close to national elections)—do not fully conform with the expectations of the second-order election model.

We first look at the level of turnout, as reported in Fig. 11.2. First of all, it is interesting to note that the introduction of compulsory voting after the 1980 *coup d’état* has produced higher levels of turnout compared with the previous period in both national and provincial elections. As far as differences between national and provincial elections are concerned, in line with the second-order election model, turnout in each provincial election has been systematically lower than in the previous national election in the period 1961–1989. However, the lowest turnout ever was recorded in the 1969 national election. Indeed, the 1960s saw

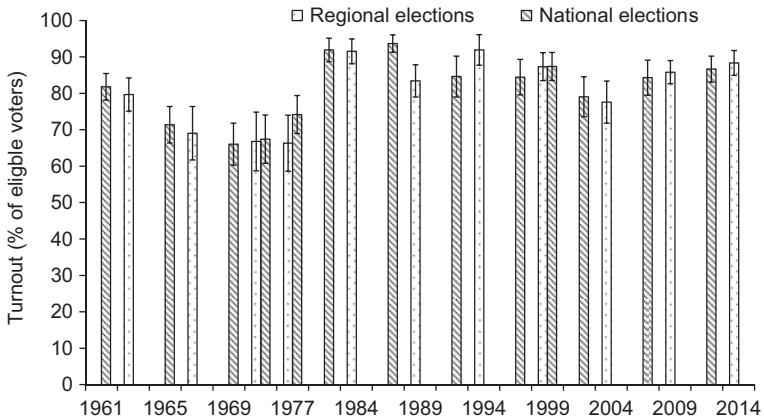


Fig. 11.2 Turnout in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average turnout rates and their standard deviations per regional and national election. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Turkey)

a decreasing trend in turnout, independently of the type (national or provincial) of the election.

More importantly, in the last two decades, we find three couples of elections in which provincial elections (1994, 2009 and 2014) recorded a higher level of turnout than the previous national elections (1991, 2007 and 2011). In particular, the growing trend in the level of turnout that can be observed since the 2007 national election could be explained in terms of growing polarization, especially along the lines of the secular/religious cleavage, which has contributed to mobilize the opposing electorates on elections days. In addition, looking at the cases when turnout in provincial elections was lower than in national elections, we see that in most cases these turnout gaps were rather minor. We can therefore conclude that turnout in Turkish provincial elections tends to be lower than in national elections but the extent of turnout differentials is rather limited (statistically insignificant) and the occurrence of this trend is far from being systematic.

The second major indicator of 'second-orderness' is the magnitude and, more importantly, the systematic occurrence of government parties' losses. Figure 11.3 reports gains and losses in provincial elections compared with the previous general elections for four types of parties: government parties, opposition parties, new parties and parties that existed at time of the previous national elections but were not represented in national parliament at the time of the provincial election. Out of 11 observations, 7 appear to substantiate second-order expectations: 1961, 1977, 1987, 1991, 1999, 2007 and 2011.

In all these cases, except 1991, we can observe a pattern of government losses in front of opposition gains. In the 1991 observation (that is, the 1994 provincial election vis-à-vis the 1991 national election), government parties were the main losers but the opposition parties also lost, with new parties gaining their lost votes. However, out of the abovementioned seven observations, four do not comply with the second-order election model. First, government losses are expected to be primarily originated by a drop in turnout, which would over-penalize government parties. In contrast, in the 1991, 2007 and 2011 observations (i.e., in the 1994, 2009 and 2014 provincial elections), government losses occurred in the context of an increased level of turnout (see Fig. 11.2). In addition,

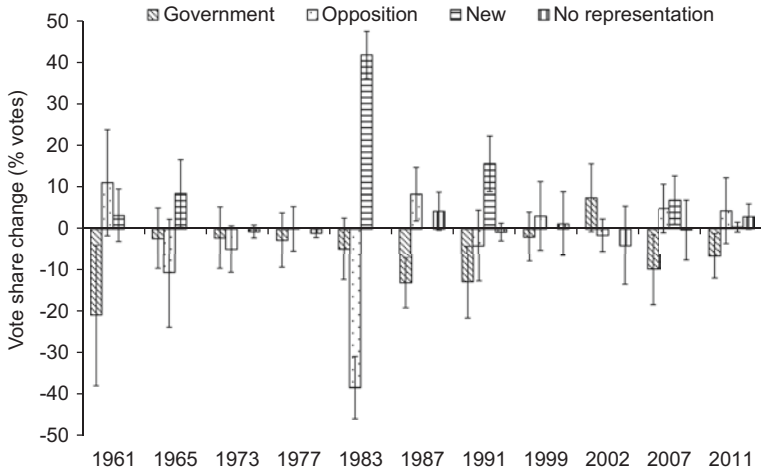


Fig. 11.3 Change in vote share between regional and previous national elections (*Notes:* The figure displays changes in total vote share for parties in national government and opposition, new and no representation parties. Shown are regional averages and their standard deviations. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Turkey)

contrary to the expectations of the second-order election model, we find government parties' losses (albeit very modest) in the 1999 observation, which reports the differences between national and provincial elections held on the same day and with the same level of turnout.

Therefore, also in the case of government losses (and opposition/new/no representation parties' gains) we find little (and mixed) evidence in support of the second-order election model. To be sure, the absence of clear-cut second-order symptoms does not mean that provincial elections are first- (or one and a half) order elections. We, rather, subscribe to the established scholarship which sees these elections as almost completely subdued to the dynamics of national politics. However, because of some characteristics of Turkish politics, such as a proportional voting system, multi-party systems with coalition governments (until 2002) and party system instability (particularly in the 1980s and 1990s), the results of provincial vis-à-vis national elections do not easily fit in the second-order model. Provincial elections can be seen as barometer elections, which

signal the developments in the electoral market in between national elections, and which can be (and are) taken very seriously given the relatively high level of turnout. Indeed, especially in the period 1961–1977, the results of provincial elections could determine the making and breaking of government coalitions (Çitçi et al. 2001). In particular, the provincial elections of 1963, 1973 and 1977 triggered changes in government: minor coalition partners abandoned CHP-led governments immediately after they lost heavily in the November 1963 and again in the September 1973 provincial elections; while Justice Party (AP) led government collapsed soon after their Islamist junior coalition partner scored poorly in the November 1977 provincial elections. In later periods, especially due to the higher frequency of single-party governments, particularly in the 1980s or since 2002, provincial elections did not have a crucial impact on government formation at national level but they still represented important signals on the electoral popularity of parties in the national arena.

11.5 Regional Election Effects

As discussed in Sect. 11.2 of this chapter, provincial elections do not have any effect on provincial executives. They simply determine the composition of the rather powerless provincial assemblies. The heads of provincial administrations, the governors, are appointed by the central government independently of the results of provincial elections. Given the high pace of urbanization, the provincial capitals are ever more representative of their respective provinces. Indeed, the new law on local government (2012) has assimilated 30 provinces with their metropolitan cities. The mayors in the capital and/or metropolitan cities can, therefore, be seen as elected executives that counterbalance (more than the provincial assemblies) the powers of appointed governors. Looking at the correspondence between the political ‘color’ of mayors of the main cities (the 30 metropolitan cities and the 51 capital cities of the provinces) and the ‘color’ of the national government can thus represent an indicator for regionalization of executive government in the provinces. Yet, since mayors are directly elected with plurality rule, we refer to different elections (not those for provincial councils). More importantly, since Turkey has had a

single-party (AKP) government since 2002 and since mayors are single-person institutional positions, we can only have either provinces with full congruence (when we find an AKP mayor) or full incongruence (when we find a mayor of any other party or an independent). The AKP captured about 70 percent of the metropolitan cities/provincial capitals in 2004, about 55 percent in 2009 and about 60 percent in 2014. Among the provincial capitals gained by the AKP, some were in Kurdish majority provinces: seven in 2004, six in 2009 and three in 2014.

In spite of this statewide dominance of the AKP, which confirms it as the only true Turkey-wide party, a clear emerging trend towards regionalization of the vote can be clearly identified. These trends tend to reflect primarily the secular-religious cleavage, whereby the secular nationalist CHP remains the dominant party in the European (Thrace) and Aegean provinces, and the Turkish-Kurdish cleavage, whereby the BDP-HDP increasingly contests electoral supremacy in the Kurdish majority provinces with the AKP. In particular, with the 2014 provincial/local elections, the BDP-HDP won the capital cities in 11 out of the 15 Kurdish majority provinces, while most capital cities in the Aegean and Mediterranean provinces, with the noticeable exception of Antalya, were won by the

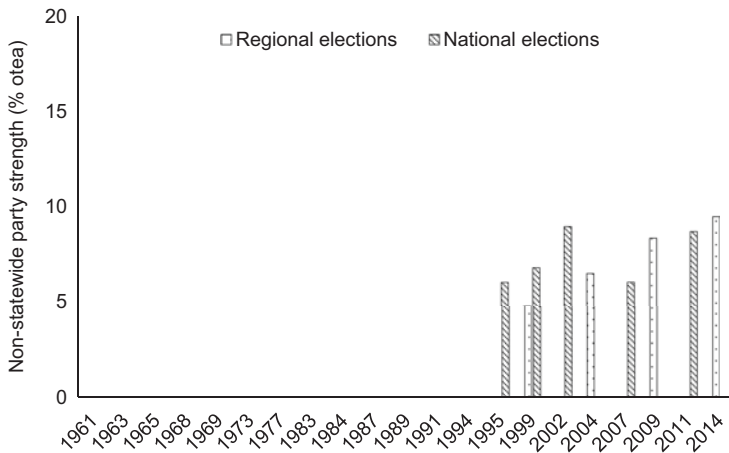


Fig. 11.4 Non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections (Notes: Shown are average vote shares obtained by non-statewide parties in regional and national elections. More details can be found in the country Excel file on Turkey)

CHP (*Tekirdağ, Çannakkale, İzmir, Aydın, Muğla* and *Hatay*) or by the MHP (*Mersin* and *Adana*).

Figure 11.4 shows how the electoral strength of regional parties, that is, the pro-Kurdish BDP-HDP, has increased since 1995, reaching its peak in the latest provincial elections in 2014. To be precise, pro-Kurdish parties can be better defined as ethnic (rather than regional) parties, as they appealed to all Kurdish voters: those leaving in the Kurdish heartland of Eastern Turkey and those, many, who migrated to Western Turkey. These parties, which we indicate with their latest label BDP-HDP, have also been regionalist in the sense that they have channeled claims for regional autonomy or at least for the strengthening of local/provincial government. However, their regionalist claims have often been posed in rather ambiguous and unspecified terms. This was mainly due to the parties' uncomfortable position of being between a rock (the Kurdish separatist guerrilla of the notorious PKK) and a hard place (the authoritarian-prone Turkish state) (Barkey 2000; Barkey and Fuller 1998). As a consequence, pro-Kurdish parties have so far developed a more pro-minority rights ideological profile (Güney 2002), along the lines of several ethnic parties in Eastern Europe, rather than a regionalist profile, as it is found more commonly in Western Europe.

Figure 11.4 also shows that there are no signs of 'dual voting' (Jeffery and Hough 2006a, b), where the vote share for the ethno-national BDP-HDP would be systematically higher in provincial than national elections. Rather, in line with our findings on electorate (NN-NR) and election incongruence (NR-RR), there seems to be a general trend of increasing support for the BDP-HDP that proceeds across national and provincial elections.

11.6 Discussion

Turkey is a country marked, on the one hand, by a very centralized government system and, on the other hand, by the presence of important cleavages strictly linked to territory. In the current party system, the two most evident cleavages are the ethno-national (Turkish/Kurdish) and the religious one (secular/religious). Both of them are producing a strong

territorialization of the vote. First, the ethno-national cleavage has left Turkish nationalist parties (CHP and MHP) virtually inexistent in the Eastern provinces mostly populated by Kurdish, while the pro-Kurdish BDP-HDP has not managed to expand its electoral appeal much beyond its ethnic constituency. Secondly, CHP's traditional support for radical secularism has increasingly limited its electoral appeal to the provinces of the Aegean coast, where people adopt more 'Western life styles', at least in terms of dressing styles, alcohol consumption and leisure activities. In the present situation, the dominant AKP is the only party which has been (so far) able to reach across the ethno-national cleavage and the only one which receives Turkey-wide electoral support.

Yet, the increased territorialization of vote does not seem to have changed the overall nature of provincial/local elections. They seem to remain closely tied to national politics, following or anticipating trends that manifest themselves in national elections. Party system incongruence is mainly due to electorate incongruence. In provinces characterized by high electorate incongruence, we do not find evidence of systematic 'dual voting'. Election incongruence does not seem to be determined by local issues but, rather, by general shifts in party preferences and changes in the supply side of the electoral market intervened between the provincial election and the previous national election. When provincial elections are held close to (or together with) national elections, election incongruence drops considerably.

Arguably, the absence of a truly regional tier of government, the limited powers of local administrations (especially provincial elected bodies) and horizontal and vertical simultaneity across local elections help to keep these elections in the shadow of national politics. However, the manifestation of this subordination of provincial elections to national ones does not seem to take the shape envisaged by the second-order election model. Rather, provincial elections appear to represent barometer elections signaling the evolution of the electoral market since the previous national election. The deviation from the second-order election model can arguably be attributed to the lack of some basic conditions, such as a stable two-party (or two-bloc) system underpinned by a single member plurality (or majority) voting system. In contrast, Turkish politics has been shaped, since 1961, by proportional representation and multi-party

(or dominant party) systems. In addition, most parties are based on considerably strong and enduring social identities, which favor the mobilization of their respective electorates in all types of elections. Moreover, the introduction of compulsory voting after the 1980 *coup d'état* might have prevented drops in turnouts and, as a consequence, avoided the manifestations of some second-order symptoms. The outcome of this set of conditions is that the results of provincial elections, rather than being interpreted as exceptional vis-à-vis the previous national election and doomed to go back to normal at the following national election, can be interpreted as a revelation of how electoral preferences have evolved since the last national election and in which direction they are heading to in the view of the next national election. In other words, barometer elections do not follow expected patterns vis-à-vis national elections; they just follow the development of the electoral market virtually in the same way as national elections.

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12

Conclusion: Towards an Explanation of the Territoriality of the Vote in Eastern Europe

Arjan H. Schakel

12.1 Introduction

This book sets out to explore the territoriality of the vote in ten Eastern European countries which provide for ample opportunities to analyze nationalization processes of electoral politics. These countries recently democratized after decades of communist party rule and have re-established or introduced regional elections during the 1990s and early 2000s except for Turkey which has held provincial elections before. In addition, ethnoregional minorities are omnipresent across Eastern Europe but are often dispersed across regional and national borders. The countries also vary highly with regard to regional authority, and powerful regions may be found in the (con-)federal countries of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia and Montenegro (until 2006), whereas weaker

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regional government is present in authoritarian Russia and in the unitary countries of Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey (Hooghe et al. 2016). Scholars of democratization processes in authoritarian and post-communist countries have paid much attention to the consolidation of national elections but territorial heterogeneity of the vote (Bochsler 2010a; Tiemann 2012), and regional elections have received very little scholarly interest (Romanova 2013; Tucker 2002).

To remedy this national-level outlook and ‘national bias’ (Swenden and Maddens 2009, p. 4–5), we have asked experts to study processes of nationalization and regionalization of regional and national elections in their country according to a common analytical framework. Each country chapter describes congruence between regional and national elections according to dissimilarity between regional and national party systems, electorates and elections. The authors then explore the extent to which nationalization (second-order election effects) or regionalization (non-statewide parties and electoral alliances) underlie regional electoral dynamics. With regard to the independent variables, each chapter investigates the impact of territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral institutions on regional electoral behavior (top-down approach), but the country experts also propose additional causes for diverging regional party systems (bottom-up approach). Adopting a similar analytical framework throughout this book and also in our previous book on regional and national elections in Western Europe (Dandoy and Schakel 2013) puts us in an excellent position to compare regional electoral dynamics between Eastern and Western Europe. The first objective of this chapter is to investigate in how far variables proposed to explain territoriality in the vote in the West have similar explanatory power for electoral outcomes in the East. More in particular, I will assess the impact of territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral institutions on congruence between the regional and national vote and on second-order effects in regional elections.

A second objective of this concluding chapter is to account for regional electoral dynamics which are distinctive for Eastern European countries. In Chap. 1 we observe that electoral dynamics in the East stand out in

two respects when compared to elections in the West. First, party systems in the East are highly dynamic and there is a marked degree of volatility between elections whereby parties constantly enter and leave the electoral arena. This leads us to hypothesize that second-order election effects may manifest differently in regional elections. For example, due to voter discontent, government parties lose vote share, but new parties instead of opposition parties attract the protest vote. A second marked difference is an abundance of electoral alliances in the East whereby the participating parties tend to change across regions and between national and regional elections. In Chap. 1 we hypothesized that electoral alliances have an important impact on electoral dynamics but that it is difficult to determine beforehand whether electoral alliances can be conceived as a sign of nationalization or regionalization of elections. Electoral alliances may serve as a means for statewide parties to secure votes in a region but may also serve as a means for non-statewide parties—which tend to be electorally strong in particular regions—to exchange votes for seats in national parliament or for policy concessions. The country chapters provide for an in-depth qualitative examination of electoral alliances and these findings will help to determine when and where alliances regionalize or nationalize elections.

This leads to the third aim of this concluding chapter which is to take stock of the insights provided by applying a bottom-up approach in the country chapters and which helps to gain further understanding of regional electoral dynamics. I will discuss three factors in particular: the impact of historical (regional) territorial boundaries, weak regional government, and the rules regulating regional elections. The second and third sections analyze congruence of elections and second-order election effects and compare Eastern to Western European regions. In the fourth section, I discuss the insights which surface from applying a bottom-up approach in the country chapters. In the final section, I discuss the implications of our findings and point out fruitful avenues for further research.

12.2 Congruence Between Regional and National Elections in Eastern and Western Europe

Territoriality of the vote can be usefully explored by looking at congruence between regional and national elections. Party system congruence subtracts vote shares in regional elections from those won in national elections, sums absolute values across parties, and divides the sum by two while one party's gain is another party's loss (see Chap. 1, p. 6). Party system congruence is an informative measure on the overall difference between regional and national party systems, but it conflates two underlying sources of variation while it compares regional to national *elections* as well as regional to national *electorates*. To disentangle the sources of variation, two additional measures are included. Electorate congruence keeps the type of election (national) constant and compares regional to national electorates while election congruence keeps the level of aggregation (regional) constant and compares regional to national election results within a region. In Chap. 1 we compare dissimilarity between Eastern and Western European countries and observe that party system dissimilarity tends to be relatively high in the East which is mainly due to higher election incongruence (Table 1.2). In this section we assess in how far the same explanatory model can account for election congruence in the East and West. Before introducing the independent variables, we first break down variance in dissimilarity scores across countries, regions, and elections. In Table 12.1 we display the results of a hierarchical linear model which contains a constant only and which clusters dissimilarity scores within regions and countries. In this analysis, and the analyses that follow in this chapter, we include elections for Western European countries and Turkey which have been held since the 1990s.

The constant can be interpreted as an overall mean and collaborates the insights discussed in Chap. 1: party system dissimilarity is higher in the East than in the West, and this is mainly due to incongruence between regional and national elections rather than between regional and national electorates. Table 12.1 reveals another interesting finding. Variance apportioning across countries, regions, and elections is the same

Table 12.1 Variance decomposition of congruence scores in Eastern and Western European countries

	Party system congruence		Electorate congruence		Election congruence					
	East	West	East	West	East	West				
Country	36.02	24 %	51.65	25 %	107.91	44 %	54.53	40 %	17.95	11 %
Region	49.67	33 %	122.72	59 %	75.95	50 %	125.80	51 %	3.57	3 %
Election	62.69	42 %	32.90	16 %	20.28	13 %	13.29	5 %	76.84	57 %
Constant	27.98		22.00		14.83		16.84		21.56	
N elections	1312		1166		1312		1166		1243	
N regions	302		261		302		261		292	
N countries	10		13		10		13		10	

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013).

Notes: Shown is variance in congruence for Eastern and Western European countries for elections held since 1990.

Party system congruence: dissimilarity between the national vote at the national level and the regional vote in the region (NN-RR)

Electorate congruence: dissimilarity between the national vote at the national level and the national vote in the region (NN-NR)

Election congruence: dissimilarity between the national vote at the regional level and the regional vote in the region (NR-RR)

between East and West for electorate congruence but is strikingly different for election congruence. Not surprisingly electorates differ mostly across regions (about 50 percent) and countries (about 40 percent). However, variation in election congruence is highest between regions for Western European countries (66 percent) but hardly varies between regions in Eastern European countries (a mere 3 percent). In the East, election congruence varies mostly across elections (57 percent) and countries (40 percent). This may signal that regional elections are second-order elections whereby regional electorates respond in similar ways to cues originating from the national electoral arena. These observations have important implications for the analysis of congruence between regional and national elections. Dynamic factors can be expected to have more explanatory power in the East whereas static factors should have more traction in the West. In this section, we present a model to analyze congruence between regional and national elections and we explore second-order election effects in further depth in the next section.

Table 12.2 presents the results of a hierarchical linear regression model on party system, electorate and election dissimilarity scores which are clustered within regions and countries. The models include a first-order autocorrelation coefficient while congruence scores may correlate across elections. Dissimilarity scores are pooled in regions and countries and thereby our dataset represents a typical cross-section time-series dataset. The robustness of our results are assessed by estimating Prais-Winsten models to control for serial correlation and with panel corrected standard errors to control for clustering of congruence scores within regions, and the models include country dummies to accommodate for clustering of elections and regions within countries (Beck and Katz 1995, 2011). The results appear to be highly robust and I do not report on these analyses (the results can be requested from the author).

The first independent variable introduced into the models is the turnout gap between regional and national elections (Table 1.3) which is operationalized by subtracting regional from national turnout (i.e., positive values indicate that turnout is lower for regional elections). The turnout gap allows us to observe in how far dissimilarity can be ascribed to lower stakes for regional elections which arouse less interest among voters except for those who would like to use the regional election as an

Table 12.2 Explaining congruence between regional and national elections in Eastern and Western European regions

	Party system congruence			Electorate congruence			Election congruence		
	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.
East dummy	18.08	8.84	*	-8.99	7.12		46.27	8.98	**
Turnout gap	-0.15	0.04	**	-0.16	0.02	**	-0.26	0.04	**
East	0.15	0.05	**	0.23	0.03	**	0.28	0.05	**
Rokkan region	6.88	1.50	**	9.23	1.62	**	3.78	1.24	**
East	11.46	1.51	**	15.33	1.63	**	1.54	1.26	
Non-statewide party strength	0.05	0.04		-0.05	0.02	*	0.07	0.04	
East	0.40	0.04	**	-0.06	0.03	*	0.33	0.05	**
Regional authority	1.24	0.20	**	0.28	0.14		2.00	0.19	**
East	1.30	0.37	**	0.05	0.25		0.45	0.41	
Simultaneity local	-6.11	1.48	*	-0.66	1.00		-4.68	1.47	**
East	-5.57	6.12		7.01	5.74		-8.61	5.58	
Simultaneity regional	-4.39	2.21	*	-5.43	1.65	**	-2.02	2.07	
East	-6.62	1.32	**	0.98	0.77		-6.20	1.38	**
Simultaneity national	-2.40	1.38		-1.88	0.82	*	-5.74	1.46	**
East	-3.99	1.51	**	2.47	0.94	**	-10.27	1.55	**
Regional more PR	3.18	1.51	*	4.30	0.86	**	4.65	1.62	**
East	8.86	3.92	*	3.86	2.51		11.05	4.04	**
Regional more MAJ	-0.15	4.03		-0.92	4.21		6.97	3.39	*
East	-5.44	0.81	**	-3.17	0.46	**	-5.92	0.86	**
Constant	5.89	5.13		14.08	3.88	**	-16.90	5.16	**
Rho	0.20	0.04	**	0.61	0.05	**	0.20	0.04	**
Variance country	119.53	42.66	**	74.33	27.13	**	143.43	48.17	**
Variance region	44.84	4.47	**	58.05	5.57	**	22.35	3.50	**
Variance election	49.59	2.46	**	29.28	3.56	**	57.84	2.87	**

(continued)

Table 12.2 (continued)

	Party system congruence			Electorate congruence			Election congruence		
	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.
Log likelihood	-8293			-7342			-8223		
Wald chi ²	499		**	308		**	552		**

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013).

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Shown are the results of a mixed effects linear regression model whereby 2349 elections are clustered in 562 regions and 23 countries. Election congruence scores are not available for ten cantons in Bosnia and Herzegovina (30 observations).

instrument to voice their discontent. This would indicate nationalization because the regional vote is based on cues arising from the national electoral arena which induce voters to switch their vote from parties in government to parties in opposition (Schakel and Dandoy 2013a, b).

The effects of territorial cleavages are assessed by a dummy variable indicating whether an election is taking place in a Rokkan region (Table 1.5). Differences in party vote shares can also be caused by different degrees of politicization of territorial cleavages. Non-statewide party strength in regional and national elections tends to be highly correlated and cannot be introduced into the models at the same time (Pearson R is 0.88, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, we include a variable non-statewide party strength which is operationalized by subtracting the total vote share won in a regional election from the total won in the previously held national election (Table 1.5). Dissimilarity resulting from non-statewide party strength is a clear indication of a regionalization of the vote (Schakel and Dandoy 2013a, b).

The model further contains three types of institutional variables. The impact of regional authority is assessed by the regional authority index (Hooghe et al. 2016; Table 1.6), and higher scores should lead to incongruence and a regionalization of the vote. Regions which have more powers also have more opportunities for political parties to cater party manifestos and policy towards regionally based preferences which in turn

helps them to galvanize the regional voter (Thorlakson 2007, 2009). The effect of electoral cycles is evaluated by introducing three dummy variables respectively indicating whether a regional election is held simultaneously with local, (other) regional, or national elections (Table 1.6). Increasing simultaneity should lead to a nationalization of the vote and lower dissimilarity scores because increasing stakes induces voters to turn out (Schakel and Dandoy 2014) and cast a ballot, while statewide parties are encouraged to set up a nationwide campaign and to compete in subnational elections (Jeffery and Hough 2006a, b).

Finally, differences between regional and national vote shares may also be induced by the incentives produced by electoral systems especially when these differ between regional and national elections. Regional elections can be held under more proportional or majoritarian rules and we include dummy variables for both situations (Table 1.6). Dissimilarity should increase under more proportional rule while the number of votes needed to win a seat will be lower making it easier for non-statewide parties and independent candidates to gain representation (Carey and Shugart 1995; Neto and Cox 1997). Hence, we may expect a regionalization of the vote although this is dependent on the presence and size of an electoral threshold. Regionalization can also be expected for elections which are held under majoritarian rule with single or multiple member districts whereby candidates and parties only have to mobilize voters within a district (Benoit 2001; Moser 1995). However, since a majority or plurality of the votes is needed to win a seat, it can also be expected that mostly statewide parties will manage to surpass this threshold. Thus, it is not clear from the outset whether regional elections held under more majoritarian rule leads to a regionalization or nationalization of the vote.

We explore differences between the East and West by introducing a dummy variable which scores positive for Eastern European regions and the interactions between this dummy and each of the independent variables. Based on the variance partitioning presented above (Table 12.1), we may expect that the dynamic factors (turnout gap and non-statewide party strength) have greater traction in the East whereas the relatively static variables (Rokkan region, regional authority, simultaneity between elections, and electoral system differences) are likely to have more explanatory power in the West.

Interestingly, electorate congruence is similar across European countries but the positive and statistically significant beta coefficient for the East dummy re-confirms, but now with control variables, the observations from Tables 1.2 and 12.1 that dissimilarity between regional and national party systems and elections is larger for Eastern European countries. All our hypotheses are confirmed because the beta coefficients for the independent variables have their hypothesized sign and reach statistical significance. However, some independent variables resort different effects depending on where in Europe the election takes place. Rokkan regions, regional authority, and regional more PR seem to have a similar impact, though there are some nuanced differences. Rokkan regions and regional more PR tend to have stronger effects in Eastern than in Western European regions. And regional authority impacts on election congruence in Western but not in Eastern Europe.

Six independent variables have a different impact in the East than in the West. First, a turnout gap of 1 percent increases dissimilarity by 0.15 to 0.28 percent in Eastern Europe but decreases incongruence with similar magnitudes in Western Europe. These effects are also apparent for electorate congruence which compares regional to national electorates for national elections whereby differential turnout between regional and national elections should have no impact at all. These results can be explained by the differential degrees of party system stability over time. First, lower turnout rates for regional elections induces second-order voting across Europe but the protest vote is captured by opposition parties in Western Europe but by new parties in Eastern Europe. A turnout gap reduces dissimilarity in the West but increases it in the East because opposition parties often tend to contest elections across the statewide territory, whereas new parties regularly compete in particular regions. The validity of this explanation is further assessed in Sect. 12.3 where we explore second-order election effects.

A second independent variable with a differential effect in the East and West is non-statewide party strength. This variable is operationalized as the difference in total vote share between regional and previously held national elections. It reduces electorate congruence in both Eastern and Western European countries and this is not surprising considering that in most regions non-statewide parties compete in both national and

regional elections rather than in exclusively one type of election. Non-statewide party strength increases party system and election dissimilarity in the East but not in the West, and a 1 percent difference in total vote share translates into a 0.3 to 0.4 percentage point difference in congruence. This result is a bit surprising since non-statewide parties in the West tend to win larger vote shares in regional elections compared to national elections (Table 1.5): the difference is 2.47 percent in the West but 1.08 percent in the East (the difference of 1.40 percent is statistically significantly different: $t = 5.60$, $p < 0.001$, two sample t-test with unequal variances). However, non-statewide party strength does not differ between East and West for regional elections (5.17 versus 5.57 percent; $t = 2.44$, $p < 0.01$, two sample t-test with unequal variances) but it is higher for national elections (4.10 versus 3.10 percent; $t = 2.31$, $p < 0.05$, two sample t-test with unequal variances). Given the operationalization of congruence, non-statewide party participation in national elections contributes to dissimilarity for all regions whereas exclusively participating in regional elections contributes to dissimilarity of the vote for only those regions where the non-statewide party is competing.

The simultaneity variables also play out differently in the East when compared to West, but the direction of the impact is the same and holding elections concurrently may decrease dissimilarity up to 10 percent. When regional elections are held concurrently with local elections, it decreases dissimilarity in the West but not in the East. Simultaneous regional elections affect electorate congruence in the West but election congruence in the East. The differential impacts of simultaneity with local and other regional elections can be ascribed to varying 'electoral cycle regimes' (Schakel and Dandoy 2014; Table 1.6). Almost all regional elections in the East are held concurrently with local (94 percent) and other regional elections (96 percent), whereas in the West there is much more variation (respectively 57 and 73 percent). Hence, it is practically impossible to disentangle the effects of local and regional simultaneity in Eastern European countries. Incongruence is also reduced when regional and national elections are held on the same day but it positively impacts electorate congruence in the East but negatively in the West. Concurrent regional and national elections occur in federations (Bosnia and Herzegovina and Russia) in the East but (almost exclusively) in one

unitary country (Sweden; Table 1.6) in the West and thereby simultaneity with national elections may tap into the heterogeneity of electorates.

A final variable which has a different impact across Europe is regional more MAJ which scores positive when a regional election is held under more majoritarian rule than a national election (i.e., a mixed or majoritarian regional versus a proportional or mixed national electoral system; Table 1.6). This variable decreases incongruence in the East but increases election dissimilarity in the West. However, this result comes about because regional majoritarian systems can have a regionalization as well as a nationalization effect. Majoritarian electoral systems boost vote shares for independent candidates and locally based parties in regional elections in Greece, Switzerland, and Slovakia (Bochsler and Wasserfallen 2013; Skrinis 2013; Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10), whereas in Russia these systems help the statewide party United Russia to secure majorities in the regions (Hutcheson and Schakel, Chap. 8). In the next section, we will explore nationalization of regional elections in further depth by comparing second-order election effects between Eastern and Western European regions.

12.3 Second-Order Election Effects in Regional Elections in Eastern and Western Europe

The second-order election model is widely applied to explain regional election outcomes (Hough and Jeffery 2006). According to this model, voters behave differently in regional than in national elections: they (1) turn out less and (2) disfavor parties in national government and cast their vote for parties in national opposition and small parties, and (3) the extent to which voters behave in this way depends on the timing of the regional election in the national election cycle. Second-order election effects are smallest when regional elections are held close to the previous or next national election but are largest when they take place at mid-term of the national election cycle (see Chap. 1, pp. 4–5). In Table 12.3 we analyze second-order election effects between regional elections held in the East and those held in the West. Regional election results are

Table 12.3 Explaining second-order election effects in regional elections in Eastern and Western European regions

	Turnout gap			Government parties			Opposition parties		
	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.	Beta	S.E.	Sig.
East dummy	32.15	7.20	**	-22.26	5.23	**	3.06	3.83	
Simultaneity local	-4.74	1.32	**	0.32	1.37		-0.82	1.03	
East	-5.42	4.64		17.47	2.89	**	-5.14	2.14	*
Simultaneity regional	6.16	1.76	**	1.20	1.95		-2.19	1.40	
East	-3.84	1.20	**	1.12	1.58		3.75	1.37	**
Time	4.65	0.80	**	0.64	1.03		1.04	0.88	
East	0.46	0.54		1.58	0.68	**	-2.42	0.56	**
Time ²	-1.32	0.21	**	-0.74	0.27	**	-0.30	0.23	
East	-0.04	0.16		-0.52	0.19	**	0.24	0.16	
Regional authority	-0.44	0.16	**	0.00	0.17		-0.20	0.12	
East	-2.25	0.32	**	0.08	0.21		-0.30	0.16	
Rokkan region	-1.23	0.95		-2.29	1.15	*	-0.75	0.76	
East	1.04	0.99		-2.17	1.18		1.70	0.81	**
Regional more PR	-1.89	1.47		-2.19	1.73		-0.29	1.43	
East	2.39	3.54		3.73	2.68		-11.11	2.07	**
Regional more MAJ	-0.53	2.64		-3.33	2.18		-2.20	1.86	
East	4.90	0.76	**	8.36	1.02	**	-3.25	0.91	**
Compulsory voting	-2.71	1.41		-0.26	1.40		0.84	1.14	
Constant	12.78	4.27	**	-1.27	4.01		5.22	2.80	
Rho	0.40	0.02	**	0.10	0.03	**	-0.01	0.03	
Variance country	91.00	31.96	**	6.72	3.38	*	3.83	1.72	*
Variance region	0.00			12.55	2.65	**	0.35	1.22	
Variance election	60.18	2.08	**	86.71	3.25	**	71.89	2.39	**
Log likelihood	-8104			-8963			-8560		
Wald chi ²	175		**	172		**	104		**
N regions	562			559			557		
N elections	2368			2421			2400		

Source: Western European election data is obtained from Dandoy and Schakel (2013)

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Shown are the results of a mixed effects linear regression model for regional elections held in 10 Eastern and 13 Western European countries

compared to previously held national elections and second-order election effects are measured by a turnout gap (derived by subtracting regional from national turnout) and swings in total vote share between regional and previously held national elections for parties in national government and opposition.

As independent variables we include local and regional simultaneity, regional authority, Rokkan region, regional more PR, and regional more MAJ which are similarly operationalized as above (Table 12.2). Second-order election effects are expected to be smaller when regions have more authority, when elections are held in Rokkan regions, and when simultaneity is increasing. Regional more PR and MAJ are introduced as control variables because differences in electoral systems may affect the extent to which voters vote strategically or sincerely (Gschwend 2007; Karp et al. 2002). The variable time (i.e., the number of years between a regional and a previously held national election) and time squared (time²) are introduced to assess the impact of the placement of the regional election in the national election cycle. The expectation that second-order election effects are highest at mid-term in the national election cycle (i.e., two years when national elections are held every four years) is confirmed when we observe a positive beta coefficient for time but a negative beta coefficient for time². Finally, a dummy variable is included which scores positive when a regional election has been held with compulsory voting (Table 1.6) and this should reduce second-order election effects.

I explore differences between the East and West by introducing a dummy variable which scores positive for Eastern European countries and the interactions between this dummy and each of the independent variables. I employ hierarchical linear regression models whereby turnout gaps and vote share swings are clustered within regions and countries and which include a first-order autocorrelation coefficient. To test for the robustness of our results, I also estimated Prais-Winsten models with an autocorrelation coefficient to control for serial correlation and with panel corrected standard errors to control for clustering within regions and with country dummies to accommodate for clustering of elections and regions within countries (Beck and Katz 1995). The results appear to be highly robust and I do not report on these analyses (the results can be requested from the author).

The statistically significant beta coefficients for the dummy variable indicating whether elections take place in Eastern Europe reveals that the turnout gap is 32 percent points larger and that government parties lose 22 percent more vote share in the East. This result suggests that second-order election effects are stronger in the East which is in contrast with what we observed in Chap. 1 (Tables 1.3 and 1.4). However, opposition parties do not seem to gain from the significant loss in vote share of government parties. We will come back to this finding below.

Regional authority reduces the turnout gap in both the East and West, and a one-point increase in regional authority index score reduces the turnout gap by 2.3 percent points in the East and 0.4 percent points in the West. Government parties seem to fare less well in Western European Rokkan regions whereas opposition parties gain an electoral boost in Rokkan regions in Eastern Europe. This difference may be caused by differences in electoral mobilization of territorial cleavages. Above we compare non-statewide party strength between Eastern and Western European countries and it appears that it is not different for regional elections but is higher in the East for national elections. Hence, non-statewide parties are more successful in gaining representation in national parliament and oppose national government in the East but not in the West. Compulsory voting does not resort an impact, but given the time scope of the analysis—elections since 1990—this result is not surprising because the obligation to turn out as well as the enforcement of this rule has been decreasing over time (Birch 2009).

Holding regional elections concurrently with local and other regional elections boosts regional turnout and decreases the turnout gap. In Eastern European regions, government parties profit but opposition parties do not benefit nor suffer when regional and local elections are held simultaneously. As noted above, about 95 percent of regional elections in the East are held concurrently with local and other regional elections, and thereby the positive beta coefficient for the variable *simultaneity regional* is cancelled out by the negative beta coefficient for *simultaneity local*. The placement of the regional election in the national election cycle affects the turnout gap in the West (the turnout gap difference for years 1, 2, 3, and 4 is respectively 3.3, 4.0, 2.1, and -2.5 percent) but not in the East. Parties in national government in the East appear to lose vote

share beyond the third year (vote share swings for years 1, 2, 3, and 4 are respectively 1.1, 1.1, 0.1, and -2.0 percent), whereas parties in national opposition seem to lose vote share in a linear rather than a quadratic relationship with time (vote share swings for years 1, 2, 3, and 4 are respectively -2.2 , -3.9 , -5.1 , and -5.8 percentage points).

When opposition parties do not seem to benefit from discontent with parties in national government, the question rises which parties do? In Chap. 1 (pp. 13–14), we propose to look at new parties because party systems in Eastern Europe tend to be relatively volatile and many parties enter and leave the electoral arena. The results for the variables regional more PR and MAJ, which reach statistical significance in Eastern European countries only, suggest that new parties attract the discontent voter. Opposition parties lose 11 percent vote share when regional elections are held under more proportional rule, whereas they lose 3.3 percent vote share under more majoritarian rule. Furthermore, government parties gain 8.4 percent vote share, and the turnout gap increases with 4.9 percent under more majoritarian rule. These results suggest that the permeability of proportional rule allow independent candidates and new parties to enter the regional electoral arena whereas with majoritarian rule statewide parties are able to capture the regional vote.

To gain more insight into second-order election effects in Eastern Europe, I re-ran the models of Table 12.3 with two amendments. On the dependent variable side, I introduce six types of parties. I differentiate between the largest and smaller government and opposition parties, which allows us to observe whether the largest parties tend to attract more voter discontent than smaller parties. New parties are defined as parties which did not participate in the previous national election and which make their first appearance in the regional electoral arena. Second, no representation parties participated in the previous national election but did not manage to win a seat in the national parliament. On the independent variable side, we include four variables which tap into the effects of electoral alliances. Electoral alliances are virtually absent in Western European elections but involve more than half of the party vote shares in Croatia (58 percent) and the Slovak Republic (59 percent), about a third of the party vote shares in the Czech Republic (38 percent), Hungary (33 percent), and Romania (33 percent), close to one-fifth in Poland (18 per-

cent) and one-tenth of the party vote shares in Vojvodina (8 percent). In Russia and Turkey, there are practically no electoral alliances, and when they are present, as is the case in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the partners constituting the alliance do not change across the territory. The vote share won by an electoral alliance can often not be broken down to the partners of the alliance. In many countries electoral alliances present one candidate list whereby seat shares are allocated at the party list level and the party affiliation of candidates who win a seat is often not administered. Since most electoral alliances involve the same senior statewide parties while the junior parties tend to change across the regions, we decided to assign the vote share won by an electoral alliance to the senior party of the coalition (pp. 19–20). Senior parties are parties which obtained the largest vote share in the previous national or regional election compared to the smaller, junior parties involved in the electoral alliance.

When parties participate in an electoral alliance in one type of election or in one region but present their own list in another type of election or in another region, then this electoral alliance strategy directly affects the vote share swing between regional and national elections. We kept track of electoral alliances and their vote shares by introducing four dummy variables (Schakel 2015a, b). A senior party can be in alliance in a national or regional election and thereby attract a larger vote share than when it would have participated in the election on its own. We capture these strategies by introducing two dummy variables labeled ‘in alliance national’ and ‘in alliance regional’. Junior parties can participate in an alliance in one election (where the vote share is ascribed to the senior party) but present their own list in another election. These alliance strategies are captured by the dummies ‘out regional alliance’ (in an alliance in regional elections but out of that alliance in national elections) and ‘out national alliance’ (in an alliance in national elections but out of that alliance in regional elections). Our unit of analysis is the region hence we calculated the proportion of party vote shares in a regional election affected by the four electoral alliance strategies. Table 12.4 presents the results of hierarchical linear regression models which are similarly operationalized as above (Table 12.3) but with the addition of the electoral alliance variables and run separately for six different types of parties. I also employed similar Prais-Winsten robustness models as described above,

Table 12.4 Explaining second-order election effects in Eastern European regional elections

	Government largest		Government smaller		Opposition largest		Opposition smaller		New representation		No representation							
	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.						
Simultaneity local	15.15	2.94	**	0.79	2.73	-6.17	2.56	*	-1.60	2.30	-3.33	2.54	-2.75	0.67	**			
Simultaneity regional	-0.96	1.79		1.46	1.20	-2.78	1.22	*	6.79	1.48	**	-1.54	1.02	-0.43	0.78			
Time	2.21	0.77	**	-1.09	0.55	*	-0.34	0.49		-1.88	0.55	**	0.27	0.41	-0.37	0.29		
Time ²	-0.45	0.22	*	0.05	0.16		-0.13	0.14		0.33	0.16	**	0.36	0.12	**	0.09	0.07	
Regional authority	0.02	0.23		0.08	0.21		-0.01	0.20		-0.14	0.19		-0.20	0.18		0.00	0.04	
Rokkan region	0.82	1.25		-3.14	1.10	**	-0.29	0.74		1.80	0.73	**	0.12	0.59		0.73	0.48	
Regional more PR	6.98	3.08	*	-2.73	2.63		-1.65	2.79	**	-7.85	2.72	**	6.36	2.69	**	-1.67	0.56	**
Regional more MAJ	9.58	1.21	**	-1.58	0.80	*	-2.34	0.84	*	-1.36	1.01		-5.18	0.71	**	-1.23	0.49	**
Out alliance national	14.48	5.31	**	-5.07	3.49		8.47	3.41	**	-20.92	4.08	**	-3.46	2.95		7.74	2.18	**
In national alliance	6.47	5.76		21.25	3.64	**	-28.50	4.02	**	27.02	5.01	**	-7.98	3.41	*	-10.45	2.39	**
Out alliance regional	-31.13	6.03	**	23.70	3.80	**	-19.27	4.33	**	26.50	5.48	**	-3.41	3.60		10.69	2.61	**
In regional alliance	19.75	5.08	**	-29.47	3.23	**	-19.30	3.57	**	25.29	4.38	**	1.15	3.00		-10.64	2.07	**
Constant	-21.76	4.04	**	-0.54	3.41		11.39	3.36	**	-3.49	3.25		9.84	3.32	**	2.90	1.17	*
Rho	0.22	0.04	**	0.37	0.04	**	-0.11	0.04	**	-0.26	0.04	**	0.01	0.04		0.02	0.03	
Variance country	9.45	6.03	*	9.65	5.88	**	13.88	7.40	**	8.76	5.60	*	23.03	14.28	*	0.00	0.00	

	Government largest		Government smaller		Opposition largest		Opposition smaller		New representation		No representation							
	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.	Beta	S.E.						
Variance region	0.00	0.00	9.37	2.55	**	3.43	1.18	**	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00						
Variance election	126.63	5.25	**	57.42	3.51	**	51.63	2.25	**	87.95	3.73	**	37.27	1.47	**	25.09	0.98	**
Log likelihood	-5018			-4506			-4499			-4772			-4252			-3972		
Wald chi ²	142	**		365	**		172	**		213	**		166	**		71	**	

Notes: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Shown are the results of a mixed effects linear regression model whereby 1311 elections are clustered in 302 regions and 10 countries

and I ran models whereby 'zero-cases' were excluded (for instance, when there are no smaller government parties because there is only one party in national government or when new parties did not participate in the regional election). The results appear to be highly robust and we do not report on these analyses (the results can be requested from the author).

Regional authority and Rokkan region do not resort much impact on vote share swings. As expected simultaneity with local and regional elections decreases second-order election effects and benefits the largest government and smaller opposition parties to the detriment of the largest opposition and no representation parties. The placement of the regional election in the national election cycle has a quadratic relationship with vote share swings for the largest government party and the smaller opposition parties. In the first year, the largest government party increases its vote share by 1.8 percent, and the peak is achieved in the second and third years at 2.6 percent and then the vote share gain decreases to 1.6 percent in the fourth year. Smaller opposition parties incur a loss of 1.6 percent in the first year which increases to losses of 2.4 and 2.7 percent in the second and the third year and then reduces to a 2.2 percent vote share loss in the fourth year. Vote share swings for the smaller government and new parties follow a linear trajectory over time. Smaller government parties are confronted with a vote share loss of 1.0 percent in the first year which increases to 2.0, 2.8, and 3.6 percent with the subsequent three years. New parties start with a win of 0.6 percent in the first year which increases to 2.0, 4.1, and 6.8 percent during the following three years.

Interestingly, the largest government party benefits to the detriment of smaller government, opposition and no representation parties no matter whether regional elections are held under more proportional or majoritarian rule. However, the two variables have a different impact on new parties which gain 6.4 percent vote share under more proportional rule but lose 5.2 percent vote share under more majoritarian rule. This result collaborates the findings above and strongly suggests that in Eastern European countries, new parties are able to attract the protest vote of the discontent voter and they are especially able to do so when the regional election is hold late in the national election cycle and is held under more proportional rule.

A striking finding in Table 12.4 is that electoral alliances clearly have a large impact on vote share swings for all types of parties except for new parties. It is important to note that the alliance strategies within elections are correlated with each other. The strategy 'in regional alliance' is strongly associated with the strategy 'out alliance national' (Pearson's R of 0.62, $p < 0.001$) and the strategy 'in national alliance' is strongly correlated with the strategy 'out alliance regional' (Pearson's R of 0.68, $p < 0.001$). The largest statewide government and opposition parties gain vote share (or reduce their vote share loss) in regional elections by forming alliances with smaller parties (in regional alliance). The junior parties involved in these electoral alliances tend to be smaller opposition parties which lose vote share in regional elections (out alliance national) although it should be noted that the recorded loss can result from the way in which we assign vote shares won by electoral alliances. When a party scores positive on 'out alliance national', it means that the vote share for national elections is set at zero because the vote share won by the alliance is allocated to the senior party. But the party receives a positive vote share in regional elections because there the party presented its own list of candidates which leads to a positive vote share swing. It appears that especially smaller government and opposition parties form alliances for national elections and thereby receive higher vote shares (in national alliance) to the detriment of the largest opposition, new and no representation parties. The largest government and opposition parties will incur vote share losses when junior members of an electoral alliance for preceding national elections decide to participate in regional elections on their own (out alliance regional).

Electoral alliances matter for second-order election effects but it is difficult to tell whether the collaboration between parties signals nationalization of regional elections by statewide parties or regionalization of national elections by non-statewide parties. To gain more insight, we built up on the insights provided by the inductive (bottom-up) approach included in the analytical framework of the book. Interestingly, the empirical evidence indicates that electoral alliances are used in both ways. Through the formation of pre-electoral alliances, the three major statewide parties HDZ (*Hrvatska Demokratska Zajednica*, Croatian Democratic Union), HSS (*Hrvatska seljačka stranka*, Croatian Peasant

Party), and SDP (*Socijaldemokratska Partija Hrvatske*, Social Democratic Party of Croatia) in Croatia have been able to deliver the county governor in all 21 counties except for *Istarska* which remains the stronghold of IDS (*Istarski Demokratski Sabor*; Istrian Democratic Assembly) and *Osječko-baranjska* county were the HDSSB (*Hrvatski Demokratski Savez Slavonije i Baranje*; Croatian Democratic Union of Slavonia and Baranja) has managed to form the county government in since 2005 (Koprić et al., Chap. 3). However, for national elections the IDS frequently enters into electoral alliances with the SDP in order to secure seats in national parliament. For the HDSSB it is difficult to form an electoral alliance with one of the statewide parties because the party originates from a split-off from the HDZ.

Whereas electoral alliances tend to follow the left-right dimension of party politics in Croatia, in Slovakia alliances are formed that cross-cut the left-right dimension of political competition and the government-opposition divide at the national level. The electoral system and the subordinate status of regional to national elections induce political parties to form electoral alliances. For national elections proportional rule is applied, whereas majoritarian rule is employed for regional elections. Party affiliations of candidates are often not recorded on the ballot paper and this allows parties to form electoral alliance across the left-right and government-opposition divide. Regional elections tend to attract less than 25 percent of the voters which are the lowest recorded turnout rates across Eastern and Western Europe (Table 1.3). Hence, parties try to increase the visibility of their candidate lists and frequently present nationally or regionally well-known persons on their ballot papers. Parties and alliances are not required to present the same candidate lists across the regions for the regional assembly elections nor for the directly elected regional president. As a result, parties form different alliances within and between regions with only one notable exception of the Nitra region. In this region the SMK (Hungarian, *Magyar Közösség Pártja*; Slovak, *Strana Madarskej Komunity*—Party of the Hungarian Community) represents the Hungarian minority, and all major non-Hungarian parties typically unite in a single alliance to compete against the SMK. This effectively means that ethnicity becomes the main differentiating aspect of candidates (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10).

Further and more detailed evidence concerning the use of electoral alliances by statewide and non-statewide parties is provided in the chapters on the Czech Republic and Romania. In the Czech Republic, the KDU-ČSL (*Křesťanská a Demokratická Unie—Československá Strana Lidová*; Christian Democratic Union—Czechoslovak People's Party) tailors the title of its candidate lists towards the region, for example, Coalition for the Pardubický Region, Coalition for the Královéhradecký Region, and so on. A closer look at the candidate lists reveals that the KDU-ČSL usually partners up with groups of non-partisans or with marginal local parties. For example, the Coalition for the Pardubický Region presented a list of 50 candidates in 2012, 22 candidates were members of KDU-ČSL, 4 were members of a local party, and the rest were non-partisans. Members of KDU-ČSL and non-partisans usually take turns on the candidate lists, so that the list of elected representatives appears to be well-balanced between party members and non-partisans (Pink, Chap. 4). This strategy strongly suggests that electoral alliances are used by statewide parties to capture the regional vote. However, the UDMR (*Romániai Magyar Demokrata Szövetség*; Democratic Alliance of Hungarians in Romania), a party which represents the Hungarian minority in Romania, clearly shows that electoral coalitions are used by ethnoregional parties to obtain policy concessions from central government. Since 1996, the UDMR has provided support for various statewide parties across the left-right political spectrum and through coalition bargaining the party managed to secure extensive linguistic rights in education and local administration, as well as a restitution of buildings, churches, and museums, which had been nationalized by the former communist regime (Dragoman and Gheorghiuță, Chap. 7).

The discussion on the question whether electoral alliances can be interpreted as nationalization of regionalization of elections clearly reveals that adopting an in-depth, qualitative perspective is pertinent for understanding the nature and causes of electoral dynamics. In the next section, I will further draw upon the insights provided by applying the inductive part of the analytical framework in the country chapters and address the question which factors contribute to the subordinate status of regional elections.

12.4 Understanding Regional Electoral Dynamics in Eastern Europe

In the previous section, we observed that second-order election effects play out differently in Eastern than in Western European regions. This finding is corroborated by the country experts for all seven non-federal countries included in this book, that is, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey. The authors observe that the expectations of the second-order election model only partly bear out yet they still conclude that regional elections are subordinate or subject to national politics. Rather one may speak of regional elections as ‘barometer’ or ‘test’ elections signaling the popularity of national government which does not necessarily and often does not depend on the timing of the regional election in the national election cycle (see the chapters on Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey). In this view, regional elections signal the developments in the electoral market in between national elections which can be more or less favorable for government parties. For example, Gagatsek and Kotnarowski (Chap. 6) show that vote shares for opposition parties in Polish regions positively and statistically significantly correlate with regional unemployment rates, which suggests that dissatisfaction with national (economic) policy is driving the magnitude of second-order election effects. In general, dissatisfaction with parties in government seems to prevail but opposition parties do not benefit. Compared to the Western European voter, it seems that Eastern European voters tend to be more often dissatisfied with the complete party offer and are more inclined to opt for new contenders and are more willing to experiment with their vote and give less experienced parties a chance to assume office. Although second-order election effects are hardly traceable in the three federations, the authors of the country chapters on Bosnia and Herzegovina, Russia, and Serbia and Montenegro (Chaps. 2, 8, and 10) nevertheless conclude that significant nationalization of regional elections has taken place. In this section we are interested in identifying the factors and variables that can explain these regional electoral dynamics in Eastern Europe which escape the conceptual lens of the second-order election model.

The common analytical framework allows authors to propose factors or variables that are important to understand or explain regional dynamics in their country. It is striking to observe that the conditions conducive for the nationalization of regional elections mentioned by the (con-)federal country experts are the same kind of factors contributing to the subordinate status of regional to national elections identified by the authors with an expertise in the non-federal countries. In Chap. 1 (pp. 19–27), we mention territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral systems as three sets of independent variables that impact regional elections in Western European countries (Dandoy and Schakel 2013). These variables are derived by a ‘stakes-based’ approach which stipulates that regional-scale factors and processes will play a larger role when the regional electoral arena becomes more relevant for voters and parties (Hough and Jeffery 2006). In this section we focus on variables that appear in several country chapters, and we will categorize and discuss them under the headings of territorial cleavages, regional authority, and electoral systems.

Territorial Cleavages

Territorial borders have frequently changed in Eastern Europe. During the 1800s and early 1900s, many Eastern European countries were governed by two empires. The Austrian Empire (1804–1867) and the Kingdom of Hungary (1526–1867) which both merged into the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (1867–1918) included the territory of current Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovak Republic, and Vojvodina and covered large parts of today’s Poland and Romania. During the same time span, the Ottoman Empire (1299–1923) comprised present Bosnia and Herzegovina and Turkey and also included large parts of Serbia and Montenegro and Romania. Historical regions are territorial entities which were adopted from the previous regime or created and maintained during the Austrian(-Hungarian) and Ottoman Empires but were often abolished in the late 1940s when the communists seized power. During communist rule new tiers of regional government were established which did not exist for long because these were liquidated or significantly reformed

in the early 1990s. Only in Russia, Serbia, and Turkey can the current regional borders be traced back to those of the early 1900s, but significant boundary changes and a significant number of splits and mergers have taken place in these countries except for Vojvodina in Serbia.

Given the recent nature of today's regional territorial borders, it is likely that voter preferences and party competition are not (yet) aligned with the territorial boundaries of current regional government. Hence, several country chapters analyzed incongruence between regional and national elections for 'historical regions' in addition to the current institutional regions. The country experts provide ample of evidence that dissimilarity in the vote between regions is higher when electoral results are analyzed according to the territorial boundaries of historical regions instead of contemporary regional government. Pink (Chap. 4) compares election congruence scores in the Czech Republic across three 'Crown Lands' which existed during the nineteenth century and observes that party system and election incongruence is higher in Bohemia than in Moravia and Silesia. In Bohemia the Christian and Democratic Union-Czechoslovak People's Party (KDU-ČSL) tends to receive less voter support in national elections but attracts the protest vote in regional elections because the party is perceived as the genuine opposition party in national parliament. The current Polish territory was partitioned between Prussia and the Austrian and Russian empires during the nineteenth century, and Gagatsek and Kotnarowski (Chap. 6) find that electorate dissimilarity scores are higher for the Austrian part. In contrast to the Prussian and Russian parts, the Austrian territory enjoyed a considerable level of autonomy: it had its own parliament, there was a ministry in the Austrian government dedicated to Polish affairs, and some Poles were members of the Austrian government.

The Czech Republic and Poland are examples where 'historical regions' lead to territorial heterogeneity in the vote without a territorial concentration of ethnic or regional minorities. Croatia and Romania are two countries where historical regional boundaries and ethnoregional territorial concentration overlap and which lead to significant territorial heterogeneity in the vote. Koprić et al. (Chap. 3) observe higher dissimilarity scores for Istria when compared to the four other historical regions of Dalmatia, Slavonia, Central Croatia, and the metropolitan

region of Zagreb. Istria has been ruled for centuries by the Venetian Republic (697–1797), and high proportions of Italian speaking people can still be found in the coastal areas of Istria. The regionalist party Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS, Croatian: *Istarski Demokratski Sabor*, Italian: *Dieta Democratica Istriana*) has participated in all national elections since 1992 and has governed Istarska County since the first county election of 1993. Party system and electorate dissimilarity scores are significantly higher for countries encompassed by the historical region of Transylvania in Romania. This historical region was part of the Hungarian Kingdom and three counties in Eastern Transylvania are inhabited by Szeklers, a Hungarian-speaking ethnic minority descending from ancient settlers, who defended the Eastern borders of the medieval Hungarian Kingdom in exchange for extensive autonomy granted by the Hungarian King. The historical autonomy of Szeklerland or Székelyland (*Székelyföld* in Hungarian and *Ținutul Secuiesc* in Romanian), which covers almost entirely the counties of *Harghita*, *Covasna*, and *Mureș*, is currently invoked for the recognition of a special autonomous status for ethnic Hungarians in Transylvania (Dragoman and Gheorghită, Chap. 7). Obviously, the territorial concentration of minorities matters for the territorial heterogeneity of the vote no matter whether the concentration overlaps with historical regional boundaries or not. In Turkey, the Kurdish minority is scattered across the territory but tend to be geographically concentrated in 15 provinces. When these 15 provinces are compared to the remaining provinces, it appears that the difference in party system and electorate incongruence has been steadily increasing since the 1990s and is more than 30 percent higher in Kurdish provinces (Masseti and Aksit, Chap. 11).

Since there are many instances whereby present day territorial boundaries of regional government split up territorially concentrated minorities and intersect and cross-cut the borders of historical regions, the question may be raised what argumentation was underlying this conscious choice of politicians? In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the drafters of the Dayton Peace Agreement drew regional institutional borders in such a way that the three ethnic groups—Bosniaks, Croats, and Serbs—form majorities in their regions. As a result, there are two completely different party systems between the entities of *Republika Srpska*, in which Serbs constitute

80 percent of the total population, and the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina which encompasses Bosniaks and Croats. Within the Federation there are ten cantons whereby either Bosniaks or Croats constitute a majority except for two cantons (Hulsey and Stjepanović, Chap. 2). However, ample of evidence is presented in other country chapters that politicians more often sought to divide up ethnoregional minorities in order to 'curb' regionalism and to prevent (excessive) regionalization of elections.

In the Czech Republic, regional government was introduced after an intense debate of eight years whereby the proponents of the reinstatement of the nineteenth century 'Crown Lands' were overshadowed by the opponents who feared that strong regions would challenge the unity of the country or would interfere with the autonomy of municipalities. As a result, regional borders were drawn in a 'random' manner and split up historical regions into smaller units and leading to a number of municipalities to swap regions and induced some regions to change their name (Pink, Chap. 4). Similarly, the number and boundaries of regional government have also been heavily debated in Croatia, and in an effort to weaken the opposition parties, the dominant Croatian Democratic Union (HDZ) managed to split up five historical regions into 21 counties against the advice of scholars and experts who indicated that this would lead to inefficient government (Koprić et al., Chap. 3). In addition, when regional reform was debated in 2000, politicians discussed whether the new governmental tier could adopt the label 'region', but the answer was negative out of fear that this word could reinforce autonomy demands of Istarska County (Koprić et al., Chap. 3, footnote 6).

Further evidence is reported by Gagatsek and Kotnarowski (Chap. 6) who note that in Poland, the fear of excessive regionalization and secession was explicitly voiced by right-wing politicians during parliamentary debates on regional reform. In addition, in Slovakia the Hungarian minority is distributed over two regions so that the Hungarian minority will not be able to get their 'own' region (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10). In Romania a similar reasoning underlies the decision in the early post-communist years to keep the 41 counties and

the capital Bucharest which were established in 1968. The status quo has been kept because Transylvania is divided up into nine counties which prevents the Hungarian minority—and especially the Szeklers Hungarian minority which is concentrated in the counties of Mureş (36.5 percent), Covasna (71.6 percent), and Harghita (82.9 percent)—to have a region of their own (Dragoman and Gheorghiuță, Chap. 7).

The dominant hypothesis in the literature is that the presence of ethnoregional minorities leads to territorial heterogeneity in the vote especially when minorities are territorially concentrated. However, the chapters on Serbia and Russia show that ethnic minorities forming a significant minority or majority in a region is not a sufficient condition for regionalization of elections. On the contrary, it may even help the nationalization of elections. In Russia, political elites in the ethnic republics and autonomous regions may re-orient their electoral ‘machines’ to deliver electoral support for the center against concessions for their regions (Hutcheson and Schakel, Chap. 8). In Vojvodina, an autonomous region in Serbia, voters show consistent support for regional autonomy, yet this has not led to a fully mobilized center-periphery cleavage. This is because the Vojvodinan vote is split between three parties: a state-wide party (*Demokratska stranka*, Democratic Party, DS) which has an electoral stronghold both in the region and in the capital and therefore cannot take up radical positions, a regionalist party (League of Social Democrats of Vojvodina, *Liga socijaldemokrata Vojvodine*, LSV) which is strongly in favor of increasing the province’s autonomy, and an ethnic party (*Vajdasági Magyar Szövetség*, Alliance of Vojvodina Hungarians, SVM) which mobilizes the vote along Hungarian ethnonational identity (Zuber and Džankić, Chap. 9). The relationship between ethnic identities and territory is complex and subject to manipulation by politicians as is nicely illustrated by the case of Montenegro. From 1998 until 2006 the ethnic and territorial cleavage largely overlapped and Serb voters supported the common state of Serbia and Montenegro. After independence in 2006, the Serb vote became detached from the territorial cleavage and related almost exclusively to ethnic identity, which has not yet resulted in new territorial demands *within* Montenegro (Zuber and Džankić, Chap. 9).

Regional Authority

Several scholars have been interested in the effects of regional authority on the nationalization of elections. The idea is that regional candidates will adopt their own party labels when regional government makes the important decisions but stick to statewide party labels when essential policy-making power lies with national government (Chhibber and Kollman 2004). Political candidates respond to the locus of power in order to make sure that regional based preferences are translated into policy (Thorlakson 2007, 2009). In Chap. 1 (Table 1.7), we compare regional authority scores between Eastern and Western European regions, and we notice that the seven Eastern non-federal countries score on the low end of the scale. Regional government typically falls in between a central government outpost and self-government. Regions often have limited policy-making capacity and implement cultural and educational policies on behalf of the central government. Fiscal autonomy is also limited and frequently regions can only set the rate for minor taxes such as tourism and vehicle registration and they remain fiscally reliant on shares in tax revenues collected and distributed by central government. Many regions have no borrowing autonomy, no role in central government decision-making, and executive power is regularly shared with central government.

The question rises why weak regional government is omnipresent in Eastern European unitary countries despite the presence of territorial cleavages and ethnic minorities. One explanation is that regions have been kept weak to curb regionalization. In the previous section, I already alluded to this explanation. The fear of excessive regionalism has been explicitly expressed during parliamentary debates in the Czech Republic and Poland when parliamentarians discussed regional reform. In Romania, the sensitive ethnic situation in Transylvania, where the Hungarian minority resides, has prevented regional reform and the status quo introduced in 1968 whereby Transylvania is divided up into nine counties has been kept. Similarly, in Slovakia, regional boundaries have been drawn so that the Hungarian minority is split across two regions.

The post-communist non-federal countries underwent regional reform while negotiating accession to the European Union, and in order to be granted membership, these countries needed to adopt the *acquis communautaire*. Despite EU-accession criteria, it seems that politicians have done the minimum in order to keep regional government as weak as possible. One characteristic of regional government in non-federal Eastern European countries is that regional executive government is either practically absent (Hungary) or powers are executed by (Turkey) or shared with (Poland and Romania) an official who is appointed or needs to be approved (Croatia until 2001 and Russia since 2005) by central government.

Curbing regional executive power is an effective tool for nationalization of the vote as is exemplified by Russia. Hutcheson and Schakel (Chap. 8) show that significant nationalization of regional elections has taken place during the 2000s, and they relate this to reforms in 2000 when regional governors lost their seat in the powerful upper chamber of national parliament and in 2005 when gubernatorial elections were replaced by a system whereby regional parliaments confirm presidential nominees. Direct gubernatorial elections were reintroduced in 2012, but prospective candidates are required to collect nomination signatures from between 5 and 10 percent of deputies in a region's municipal assemblies from at least four-fifths of municipal councils and regional assemblies. Regions are also allowed to replace direct elections with appointment by the head of state.

Another way of weakening regional executive government is to increase competition between subnational tiers by strengthening local government. For example, in Croatia a reform in 2005 introduced the category of large towns with more than 35,000 inhabitants which have almost the same competences as counties. Similarly, in Turkey the number of metropolitan municipalities has gradually increased from 3 in 1984 to 16 in 1999 to 30 in 2013, and a reform in 2012 extended their geographical area of responsibility to provincial boundaries and abolished the respective provincial administrations. In 2014, no less than 77 percent of the total Turkish population lived in metropolitan municipalities (Massetti and Aksit, Chap. 11). Another means to weaken regional government is through deconcentrated central government offices. In Slovakia, eight

self-governing regions share competencies with 79 okres (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10), and in the Czech Republic, 14 *kraje* shared competencies with 73 *okresy* until 2003 when the *okresy* were abolished (Pink, Chap. 4). The best example of introducing competing subnational tiers is Hungary where 19 counties (*megyék*) are ‘hollowed out’ from below by municipalities forming micro-regions (*társulás*) and local government associations (*kistérség*) and by 198 districts (*járás*) which are subdivisions of county level central government agencies (*megyei kormányhivatal*). Further ‘side-ways hollowing out’ is caused by cities with county rank (*megyei jogú város*) and a parallel deconcentrated central government structure with more than 40 agencies (*kormányhivatal*). Finally, county government is ‘hollowed out’ from above by regional development councils (*fejlesztési tanácsok*) (Dobos and Várnagy, Chap. 5).

Electoral Rules

Regional reform often goes hand-in-hand with regional electoral system reform and it appears that politicians in Eastern European countries often resort to electoral institutional engineering with the intention to benefit the party in power and/or to curb regionalism. The most effective mean to restrain regional parties is by outlawing them and by increasing entry requirements for competing in elections. Nationalization in Russia is achieved through outlawing interregional and regional parties and by imposing territorial penetration requirements and minimum participation criteria for parties. Federal legislation stipulates a 5 percent threshold (was 7 percent) and stipulates that at least 25 percent (was 50 percent) of the deputies have to be elected from party lists. As result, most regions changed their electoral system from majoritarian rule to a mix of proportional and majoritarian rule. Nationalization is further enhanced by replacing regional elections that took place on their own cycles by bi-annual and later annual ‘unified days of voting’ in which all regional legislative elections due that year are held simultaneously (Hutcheson and Schakel, Chap. 8). In Turkey Kurdish regionalism is restrained by prohibiting Kurdish parties to compete in elections and by imposing a 10 percent electoral threshold in national but also in provincial elections

at the district level. As a result, Kurdish candidates only manage to win a seat in national parliament when they compete in elections as independent candidates in districts with a high percentage of Kurdish voters (Masseti and Aksit, Chap. 11).

Electoral engineering also occurs in genuinely democratic countries. In Croatia electoral district boundaries and rules translating votes into seats were constantly amended during the 1990s by the HDZ to secure its dominance at the local, regional, and national levels. Once its dominance was secured, majority rule was replaced with proportional rule in 2000, and since then both the HDZ and SDP need to enter into pre-electoral alliances with minor statewide and regional parties to be able to 'capture' the regional vote (Koprić et al., Chap. 3). In Slovakia, a two round majority electoral system for the election of the regional president was introduced with the argument that it would give the regional presidential office more legitimacy and that it would lead to a strong and independent role for the regional president. However, opponents of majority rule argued that the main reason was to prevent the election of ethnic Hungarian candidates in the Nitra region (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10).

Once in national government and enabled by its two-thirds majority in national parliament, Fidesz (*Magyar Polgári Szövetség*, Hungarian Civic Alliance) in Hungary quickly reformed the electoral system for national and regional elections and these reforms effectively increased the entry requirements for new parties. For national elections a mixed electoral system with a national (partially) compensatory list is applied. Since 2012 parties need to present candidates in at least 27 single-member districts, nine counties, and in Budapest but before the reform parties could participate in the compensatory list when they appeared on the regional lists in seven counties. For regional elections, districts were merged, and as a result an average party needs 6.7 times more recommendations in order to be allowed to present a list in regional elections. Before the reform of 2010, there were on average 22.1 party lists per county and this number decreased to 3.8 in 2010 and 5.6 in 2014 (Dobos and Várnagy, Chap. 5).

Holding elections at the same time is also an effective means for nationalizing the vote. Simultaneity between local, regional, and national elections can decrease dissimilarity up to ten percentage points (Table 12.2) and concurrent elections seem to be the norm in Eastern

Europe (Table 1.6). However, the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina shows that simultaneity is not a sufficient condition for a nationalization of the vote. Despite full simultaneity between cantonal, entity, and confederal elections, dissimilarity in the vote is high at all territorial scales (Hulsey and Stjepanović, Chap. 2). The country chapters also reveal two other conditions that are conducive for the subordinate status of regional elections in Eastern European countries. Statewide party interest in regional elections is increased when participation is rewarded. One major incentive for competing in regional elections is when parties receive a financial bonus for every seat they win in regional parliament. In the Czech Republic, parties receive almost 9000 euros in state finance for every regional mandate. Although this is significantly less than the 32,000 euros reward for a seat in the national assembly, the large number of regional seats (675 regional versus 200 national seats) still makes for an important revenue resource (Pink, Chap. 4). In Slovakia, regional elections are ‘low-stake affairs’ for political parties because they do not earn a financial bonus when they win regional mandates. As a result, independents have increasing chance to compete in regional elections and win seats but candidates need to finance their campaigns by themselves (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10).

Another bonus which increases statewide parties interest to participate in regional elections is access to media. In Poland, the electoral law specifies that parties which manage to present candidates in at least half of the constituencies and a list in each region have access to free airtime on national TV and radio. This is a very strong incentive for statewide parties to run a nationwide regional election campaign, and, consequently, parties represented in national parliament win all 561 regional mandates except for one seat in 2006 and 20 seats in 2010 (Gagatek and Kotnarowski, Chap. 6). Another contributing factor to nationalization of regional elections is *cumul des mandats*, that is, the practice to combine and accumulate electoral mandates which allows politicians to reap and accumulate the benefits of elected offices at various territorial levels. The magnitude of *cumul des mandats* can be quite considerable, and until its abolishment in 2012 on average about a fifth of elected national politicians in Hungary also occupied seats in local and/or regional assemblies (Dobos and Várnagy, Chap. 5).

12.5 The Way Ahead

In this concluding chapter, I set out to answer the question in how far regional elections in Eastern Europe require their own explanatory model. A comparison between Eastern and Western European regions reveals that the former stand out by a larger degree of incongruence between regional and national elections. This does not mean that Eastern European elections are to a higher degree regionalized. On the contrary, it appears that dissimilarity in the vote can be explained by second-order election effects whereby government parties lose vote share and opposition, small and new parties win vote share in regional elections in comparison to previously held national elections. Regional elections in Eastern Europe probably do not require their own explanatory model but second-order effects do play out differently. For example, it appears that especially new parties benefit from voter dissatisfaction with national government and the magnitude of second-order election effects does not seem to depend on the placement of the regional election in the national election cycle. Hence, the terms ‘barometer’ and ‘test’ elections are used in many country chapters to describe regional electoral dynamics.

The conclusion that most regional elections in Eastern Europe are nationalized seems to be justified. Second-order election effects are thought to come about because voters, politicians, political parties, and the media consider regional elections to be low-stake affairs and voting, campaigning, and reporting about elections are conducted with a national frame. The inductive part of the analytical framework applied in the country chapters reveals ‘best practices’ on how to achieve high levels of nationalization. Create institutional boundaries which cross-cut the boundaries of historical regions or split up territorially concentrated ethnic minorities. Keep regional government weak by introducing competing tiers of subnational government or by curbing regional executive government. In addition, hold elections simultaneously and under majoritarian rule which provides for strong incentives for regionally based parties to enter into electoral alliances with statewide parties. Finally, impose minimum participation criteria or ban regional parties altogether and

introduce other rules which incentivize statewide parties to compete in regional elections such as a financial bonus for every regional seat won.

In this final section, I would like to address two additional issues which come to the fore in several country chapters and which affect the study of elections in general. The first concerns the level of aggregation at which territorial heterogeneity in the vote is studied. Evidence presented in the chapters on Croatia, Czech Republic, Poland, Romania, and Turkey invariably shows that dissimilarity in the vote is higher when election outcomes are studied at the level of 'historical regions' or at the territorial level where ethnoregional minorities reside rather than at the territorial scale of current regional government. In other words, one may severely underestimate territorial heterogeneity in the vote when one focuses on institutional regions. This potential caveat has not only analytical repercussions but also raises practical and normative questions. At the practical level, one may ask in how far territorial heterogeneity in the vote can matter for government formation and policy-making when the heterogeneity of preferences is not translated into seats in regional assemblies and national parliaments. A normative question which pops up is whether it is allowed in a democracy that politicians purposefully draw regional institutional boundaries so that they cross-cut the boundaries of regions citizens identify with or that politicians intentionally introduce electoral systems which significantly raise the hurdles for ethnoregional parties to gain representation. The most important lesson to draw is that in order to be able to address these research questions, it would be very important to collect election data at the lowest territorial scale which often is at the constituency level. This would allow for aggregating election results at any desirable higher territorial scale.

The second issue I would like to raise involves an apparent paradox. Most regional elections in Eastern Europe are clearly second-order and/or subordinate to national elections. In great part this is not surprising considering that many regional borders do not match and often cross-cut the boundaries of cultural and historical regions citizens identify with. A survey held in 2001, when Slovakia held regional elections for the first time, indicates that two-thirds of Slovak citizens identify with one of the 20 cultural-historical areas (former counties which origin can be traced back to the Kingdom of Hungary, 1526–1867) but only 6 percent identified

themselves with one of the newly created self-government regions (Rybář and Spáč, Chap. 10). Yet, even when citizens do not identify with or feel attached to present day regional government, public opinion data evidently shows that more than an absolute majority of citizens find regional elections important and regional elections are often ranked higher than European elections or elections for an upper chamber. The percentage of citizens that classify regional elections as important is 58 percent for the Czech Republic (Pink, Chap. 4), and more than 60 percent of Polish respondents were interested in the upcoming subnational elections of 2010 (Gagatek and Kotnarowski, Chap. 6). Why do we observe second-order election effects such as low turnout whereas citizens indicate that they find regional elections important? Do citizens give socially preferable answers or do citizens find it valuable that they have an opportunity to vote for regional government when they would like to (but which does not often happen)? Or do citizens appreciate regional elections because they can be used as an instrument to voice their discontent with national government? These questions are important because their answers have consequences for democracy in multi-level party systems. When regional elections are second-order, they are about national and not regional issues, and this weakens the prospects for regional democracy. Nevertheless, voters may perceive second-order regional elections as an effective instrument to correct national policy and thereby national democracy may be reinforced at the regional level. However, these questions can only be answered when we ask citizens whether and why they find regional elections important. Hence, election voter surveys with representative samples across regions would be a very welcome addition to the study on territorial heterogeneity of the vote.

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