

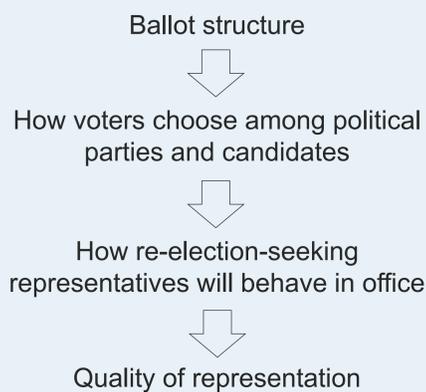
B2.7 The Personal(ized) Vote and Parliamentary Representation



Directors/ Thomas Däubler
Funding/ DFG

Context: Effects of Electoral Systems

Basic argument



Flexible list systems

- Voters have two options:
 - a) vote for party list or
 - b) express preference for candidate(s) on one list
- Members of parliament (MPs) are agents of two principals:
 - a) party selectorate deciding on list ranking
 - b) personal voters
- Seat allocation:
 - Between parties/lists:*
based on the number of ballots cast for a party
 - Within parties/lists:*
Candidates are elected if they reach the preference vote threshold ($n\%$ of the total party vote = $n\%$ of party ballots).
Remaining seats (if any) are allocated on the basis of pre-electoral list ranking.

Personalization by reform



Czech Republic

- Reduction of preference vote threshold from 7% to 5%
- Increase in number of admissible preference votes from two to four
- Change adopted in autumn 2006, first elections under new rules in 2010
- The 14 electoral districts remained unchanged.



Sweden

- Reduction of preference vote threshold from 8% to 5%
- One preference vote only (as before)
- Change adopted in autumn 2010, first elections under new rules in 2014
- The 29 electoral districts remained unchanged.

Does Personalization Affect Parliamentary Behaviour?

Effect of reform on seat allocation within lists

	CZE		SWE	
	2006	2010	2010	2014
Preference votes per ballot (mean)	.38	.68	.25	.24
MPs above threshold (%)	21	60	18	32
MPs elected out of order (%)	4	24	5	10

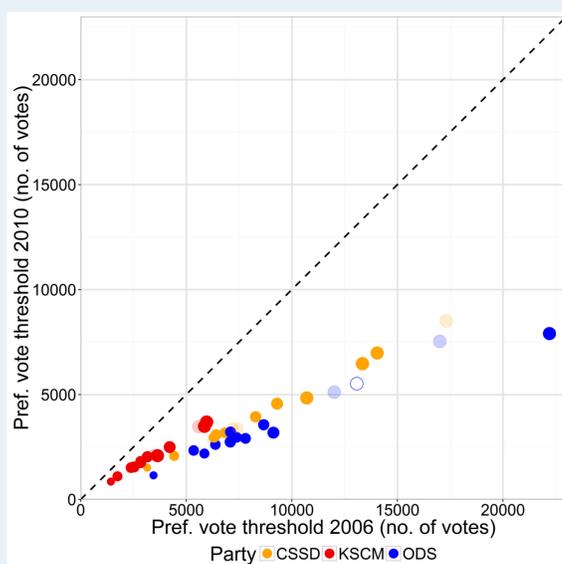
Changes between last pre-reform and first post-reform election are more pronounced in the Czech Republic than in Sweden.

Figures for Sweden do not take into account the *Sweden Democrats* since they do not use district-level lists.

First line refers to the mean of list-level (party-in-a-district-level) figures considering only lists that won at least one seat.

Third line refers to MPs with a list position that would not have led to election under a simple closed-list system (pre-electoral list rank > number of seats for list).

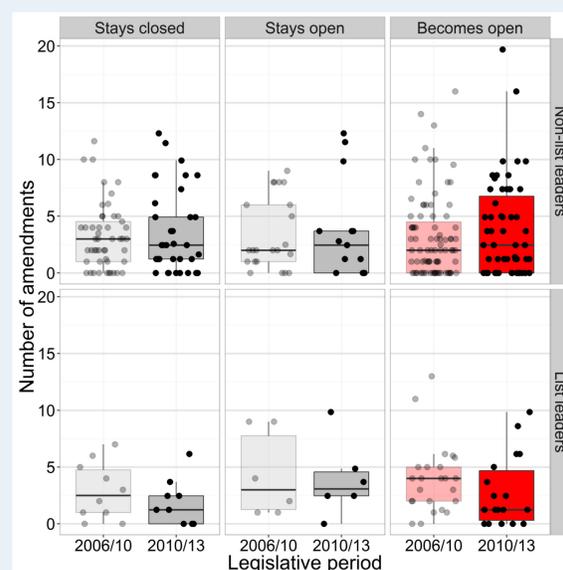
Reduction of threshold in practice (CZE)



- As background interviews with MPs show, absolute threshold size (in votes) is important for reachability.
- Absolute threshold size depends on district size (represented by circle size) and party vote share.
- Even after reform, in some lists no candidate has passed the threshold (hollow circle), or only the person on the first list rank (light fill) has made it.

Shown are lists that held seats both in the pre-reform and post-reform parliament.

Example: Change in amendment activity (CZE)



■ Legislative scrutiny in committee may become less attractive for MPs from practically open lists if personal voters care less (or know less) about this activity than party selectors do.

■ Comparison of individual amendment activity in pre-reform and post-reform period. Grouped by lists that have stayed closed, stayed open and became open. Distinguishes between non-list leaders (top row) and list leaders (bottom row).

A list is considered open if a candidate other than the list leader has reached the threshold. MPs from lists with seats in both periods and with an individual mandate of at least 200 days. Counts are adjusted for session/mandate length.