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# Taking Partly Free Voters Seriously:

## How Party-Voter Linkages Affect Political Stability

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# Abstract

This dissertation looks at how party-voter linkages shape short and long-term political outcomes in the competitive authoritarian regimes of the South Caucasus. The three articles in the dissertation highlight two counterintuitive findings for hybrid regimes: While the electoral playing field is uneven and people's trust in political institutions remains low, parties still take their electorates seriously and establish linkages with them on the interpersonal, programmatic, and policy levels. Most importantly, party-voter linkages are consequential for political outcomes: (1) Party-voter contacts before elections increase partisanship; (2) whether the party puts forward concrete or ambiguous electoral promises, change turnout and party support; and 3) launching radical reforms to increase state capacity decreases ruling party support.

Facing people's low trust in political institutions, political actors in hybrid regimes have fewer supporters than necessary to win competitive elections. Hence, parties have incentives to invest in face-to-face interactions with voters before elections to garner more votes. The first article, "Talk to Her: How Party-voter Linkages Increase Partisanship in Georgia", shows that such contacts between parties and voters significantly increase overall partisanship for both the incumbent and the opposition. Since partisanship is highly correlated with turnout and party support, strengthening party-voter linkages may have a positive impact on political stability in a hybrid regime.

Naturally, electoral promises are an integral part of party-voter interactions and this is where the second article, "Promises, Lies and the Accountability Trap: Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Armenia and Georgia", complements the findings from the article on face-to-face contacts. The article analyzes the impact of electoral programs on voters' decisions to support a party, especially in a situation where an abstract promise is made without specifying the future actions of the party. Since being ambiguous is a winning strategy, the article argues, it may create a spiral of unmet expectations and disillusioned voters over time. This scenario, dubbed the "accountability trap" in the article, negatively influences political stability.

Drawing on the selectorate theory of Bueno De Mesquita and his collaborators (2005), the third article, "The Self-defeating Game: How State Capacity and Policy Choice Affect Political Survival", complements the above described findings by looking at the influence of policy-level linkages on the incumbent's electoral success. It shows that an incumbent upsetting the institutional status quo in order to increase state capacity is likely to lose elections and hence, has a negative effect on political stability.

# Table of Contents

# Introduction

## Overview

This dissertation looks at how parties and voters interact in the competitive hybrid regimes of the South Caucasus.[1] While party-voter interactions take a variety of forms and are shaped by many formal and informal rules, this study draws illustrations of such linkages at three different levels: interpersonal, programmatic and policy. Consequently, the three articles in the dissertation have a common objective: to provide evidence on the impact of party-voter linkages on political outcomes.

Despite the fact that parties and voters have operated in competitive, albeit not entirely fair, political environments in Armenia and Georgia, the dissertation demonstrates that subtle changes in party-voter linkages significantly affect political outcomes. Such subtle changes are often referred to as nudges that lead to predictable alterations of behavior (Thaler and Sunstein 2009). How well parties are able to predict their electorate's behavior is a matter of separate study. What this research shows is that, all other factors being equal, (1) party-voter contacts before elections increase partisanship; (2) whether the party puts forward concrete or ambiguous electoral promises, change turnout and party support; and (3) implementing policies to increase state capacity decreases ruling party support.

Many excellent pieces of scholarship have looked at political institutions in less than democratic settings and demonstrated that institutions matter even in non- or quasi-democratic regimes (Bunce 1999; Geddes 1999; Magaloni 2006; Brownlee 2007; Gandhi 2008; Boix and Svolik 2010; Slater 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010). However, few studies manage to show how exactly these institutions matter (Art 2013, 365). Moreover, when analyzing the impact of institutions on political outcomes, scholars often fail to differentiate institutions as causes of political outcomes from institutions and political outcomes caused by a common factor, such as elite bargaining (Pepinsky 2013, 632).

To address how institutions work and what impact they make, this dissertation departs from the most significant works in the study of non-democracies by focusing on low-key institutions and the related subtle nudges. While the overall theme of the dissertation is to

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[1] Here competitive hybrid regime and competitive authoritarian regime are used interchangeably, referring to a civilian regime in which formal democratic institutions are primary means of gaining power, but in which an incumbent's abuse of the state resources gives them a significant advantage vis-à-vis the opposition (Levitsky and Way 2010, 5).

connect party-voter linkages to specific political outcomes, three separate articles have been written, each one addressing one type of linkage at a time using different research tools.[2] The articles use best and second-best available methods for causal inference that help to determine a causal link between party-voter interactions and short-term outcomes such as partisanship, party support, and a ruling party's electoral success. These methods include a survey experiment with random assignment of information treatments (Mutz 2011; Sniderman 2011); matching and instrumental variable approaches on observational data (Guo and Fraser 2015; Stuart 2010; Ho et al. 2007; Sovey and Green 2011; Dunning 2012;) and cross-sectional time series analysis of secondary data pooled from different sources (Wooldridge 2013). While these short-term effects are well-documented in the individual articles, it is also argued that the effects of nudges, if applied repeatedly, can also influence a long-term political outcome, such as political stability.

Political stability in this research is defined as a regime's continuity, i.e. a ruler's ability to secure electoral victory for the incumbent's party. The definition is purely descriptive rather than normative and hence, it does not imply qualitative changes in regime types such as democratization of an autocracy or a democracy backsliding towards autocracy. Nevertheless, in the context of the South Caucasus, the narrow definition of political stability still has implications for regime change and regime types, since disruption in political continuity in a hybrid regime is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for regime change (Howard and Roessler 2006).

The selection of Armenia and Georgia is largely based on the substantial variation of the long-term outcome (political stability) between Armenia and Georgia, whereas key indicators, such as initial conditions, size of economy, economic growth, and conflicts, have been very similar (Way 2009). Indeed, despite considerable political and financial support from the West, as well as an increase in state capacity, Georgia under the United National Movement and its leader, President Mikheil Saakashvili (2004-2013), went through several phases of instability. At times, this instability was tackled through an extensive reliance on coercion, such as in 2007–2008 (Berglund 2014). Nevertheless, the ruling party's increasingly erratic policy-

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[2] Article 1: Turmanidze, Koba. 2017. "Talk to Her: How Party-voter Linkages Increase Partisanship in Georgia" (Unpublished); Article 2: Turmanidze, Koba. 2017. "Promises, Lies and the Accountability Trap: Evidence from Survey Experiment from Armenia and Georgia." *Caucasus Survey* 5 (3): 279-300; Article 3: Gilbreath, Dustin, and Koba Turmanidze. 2017. "The Self-defeating Game: How State Capacity and Policy Choice Affect Political Survival." *Caucasus Survey* 5 (3): 216-237.

making paved the way for its demise, brought about by the defeats in the 2012 parliamentary and 2013 presidential elections. By contrast, Armenia's Republican Party, led by President Robert Kocharian (1998–2008) and President Serzh Sargsyan (2008–2018), managed to secure regime stability through incremental policy changes leading to electoral victories, despite comparable scale of protests Georgia had faced (Babayan 2015; Novikova 2017).[3]

The three articles describe how institutions of party-voter linkage emerge and work to influence political outcomes. The first article looks at the impact of face-to-face contacts between voters and parties during election campaigns and shows that such contacts significantly increase overall partisanship for both the incumbent and the opposition. Since partisanship is highly correlated with turnout and party support, strengthening party-voter linkages may have a positive impact on political stability in a hybrid regime.

Naturally, electoral promises are an integral part of party-voter interactions and this is where the second article complements the findings from the article on interpersonal linkages. The article analyzes the impact of electoral programs (promises) on voters' decisions to support a party, especially in a situation where an abstract promise is made without specifying the intended future actions of the party. Since being ambiguous is a winning strategy, the article argues, it may create a spiral of unmet expectations and disillusioned voters over time. This scenario, dubbed the "accountability trap" in the article, negatively influences political stability.

Drawing on the selectorate theory of Bueno De Mesquita (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005), the third article complements the above described findings by looking at the influence of policy-level linkages on the incumbent's electoral success. It shows that an incumbent upsetting the institutional status quo in order to increase state capacity is likely to lose elections and hence, has a negative effect on political stability.

This dissertation is structured in the following way: the introductory chapter proceeds with a brief discussion of institutional analysis of competitive non-democracies, followed by a section on key concepts used in the three articles. It then provides a brief description of the electoral context of Armenia and Georgia, describes methods applied in the three articles and

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[3] Political continuity did get disrupted in Armenia through mass protests of spring 2018. A new government formed under prime minister Nikol Pashinyan, the protest leader, achieved a snap elections and landslide victory in December 2018 (Roth 2018; Edwards 2018b). While comprehensive analysis of Armenia's recent events is beyond the scope of this dissertation, the concluding remarks briefly discusses potential consequences of party-voter linkages for political outcomes in Armenia.

finally outlines the key findings and contributions. The rest of the dissertation text consists of the three articles augmented with supplementary materials.

## The argument

Institutions in "less-than democracies" have been studied extensively, with particular attention to three important elements: the origins of the institutions (why were they created in the first place?); how the institutions operate (do they work differently from the way they work in democracies?); and what are the effects of the institutions (do they help maintain regime stability or do they foster change?) (Frye 2012; Pepinsky 2013; Brancati 2014). In particular, the work of Magaloni (2008) and Gandhi (2008) on elections under authoritarian rule, of Brownlee (2007) regarding the degree of institutionalization of party organizations, and that of Brancati (2014) on the mechanisms through which elites retain power, have done much to "dispel the notion that institutions such as parties, elections, and legislatures are exclusive to democracies" (2014, 324) or that they amount to mere window-dressing.

However, the scholarship was much less successful in demonstrating how exactly institutions matter in less-than democracies (Art 2013, 365) and how to single out institutions as causes of political outcomes from institutions and political outcomes both stemming from a bargain among powerful groups (Pepinsky 2013, 632). Even when the impact of institutions is detectable, it is often hard to distinguish the concrete effects of colinear institutions (parties and elections, for instance) or the competing effects of the same institutions (for example, competitive elections strengthening or weakening an autocracy) (Brancati 2014, 322).

This dissertation contributes to addressing these challenges in two ways: first, by focusing on party-voter linkages at three different levels, it applies tight measures to each type of linkage as well as to respective political outcomes. Second, when connecting linkages to political outcomes, the study isolates the potential effects of other factors on political outcomes using experimental and quasi-experimental designs. To this end, this work heavily relies on the institutional analysis of politics, as well as works in behavioral economics and experimental political science. From the literature on institutions the study borrows an "institutional lens," which attributes concrete political behavior and political outcomes to institutions (Hall and Taylor, 1996; Acemoglu et al. 2001; Frye 2012; Pepinsky 2013). From behavioral economics the work adopts the thinking that a significant outcome need not necessarily come from a large-scale institutional or organizational change. Instead, behavior can be subtly pushed towards concrete outcomes (Ariely 2008; Thaler and Sunstein 2009; Thaler 2015).

When discussing the role of institutions in political outcomes, relevant scholarship distinguishes formal institutions from informal ones. It is largely accepted that institutions constitute a collection of formal and informal rules and procedures that enable and sanction certain behaviors, and hence make social interactions predictable (North 1991, 97). Yet, it is much more challenging to differentiate between formal and informal institutions. According to Helmke and Levitsky (2004), the main dividing line between the two is the mode of codification and sanctions: formal institutions are usually written and officially sanctioned, whereas informal institutions are unwritten, socially shared rules that involve unofficial sanctions (Helmke and Levitsky 2004, 727). Stokes take a metaphoric approach to distinguish between formal and informal institutions and describes the former as the rules of the game, without which the game cannot be played at all, whereas, informal institutions are like grammatical rules and are followed implicitly, like adults and most children follow grammar rules while speaking and writing (Stokes 2006, 126).

Following these definitions, elections and parties are formal institutions, while their interactions with the electorate create informal institutions that are not officially enforced, but nevertheless adhered to by parties as well as voters. Hence, linkages here refer to grammatical rules between parties and voters pertaining to the exchange of resources. From the side of the voters, resources include party loyalty and/or votes; from the side of the party, resources may take different forms: interpersonal connections, programs and policies (Kitschelt 2000, 850). Party-voter linkages create channels of accountability and responsiveness: voters can hold parties accountable for their performance; likewise, parties can learn the preferences of voters and act upon them (Kitschelt 2000, 851). Hence, linkages create rules and sanctions between parties and voters. Yet the sanctions are unofficial: there is no law that mandates voters must elect a party based on the party's past performance. Still, voters frequently do so (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008). Likewise, there are no formal regulations that enable elected officials to sanction voters who did not vote for them. Nevertheless, parties frequently do so (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Magaloni and Kricheli 2009). In other words, party-voter linkages are informal institutions and, to use the classification introduced by Helmke and Levitsky (2004), they serve as complementary informal institutions to parties and electoral rules (Helmke and Levitsky 2004, 728).

Although informal institutions complement the formal institutions to make social interactions predictable, they are subject to change. This dissertation focuses on subtle interventions, known as nudges, as the driver of such changes (Thaler and Sunstein 2009). An

intervention will qualify as a nudge if it meets at least two requirements: it should be easy (and cheap) to implement and it should not be mandatory (Thaler and Sunstein 2009). However, there is a difference in how nudges are used in its original version and in this study. For Thaler and Sunstein (2009), a nudge has a normative meaning: it is a gentle intervention by a "choice architect" "to influence choices in a way that will make choosers better off, as judged by themselves" (Thaler and Sunstein 2009, 5). This study, however, does not envisage a "benevolent choice architect." In contrast, it relies on the assumption that parties, as self-interested rational actors, nudge voters to maximize their own utility by getting voter support. Hence, nudges work not to improve the decision-making ability of voters, but to provide a reward to the nudger. In this sense, nudging as used in this study resembles marketing tricks to sell the product the seller desires, as described by Ariely (2008) rather than nudges designed to improve policy outcomes, described in Thaler and Sunstein (2009).[4]

In this study, parties are key actors in forging party-voter linkages. These actions often come in the form of nudges: subtle pushes towards a desired outcome (Thaler and Sunstein 2009, 5). The way in which parties relate to their electorates qualify as nudges for several reasons. First, nudges are small-scale pushes towards certain outcomes. In our case, parties communicate with electorates through interpersonal, programmatic, and policy channels. Interventions at interpersonal and programmatic levels are subtle enough to qualify as a nudge. Moreover, such nudges are not mandatory: while parties establish linkages on interpersonal and policy levels, voters are free to take such nudges seriously or avoid them altogether.

A case from football illustrates how formal and seemingly inconspicuous informal institutions work through nudges to influence short and long-term outcomes. In 1999, the Football Association of England decided to re-play a match between Arsenal and Sheffield United, which the former had won with a controversial winning goal.[5] The controversy was caused by breaking an informal rule in football about injuries: when a player is injured, his teammates will kick the ball out of play to allow for medical aid. As the game resumes, the ball

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[4] An example of a nudge, which is closer to a marketing trick, is The Economist's pricing structure using a decoy option: The Economist offered the digital subscription at $59, the print subscription at $125 and the print + digital subscription at $125. As Ariely (2008) proved in a lab experiment, the print subscription served as a decoy option to provide an easy comparison to the print + digital option. The decoy option would increase the Economist's revenues by about 43%. (Ariely 2008). An example of a nudge, which improves public policy outcome, is the "dollar a day" program: city government gives one dollar to teenage girls for each day in which they are not pregnant to decrease teenage pregnancy through a subtle intervention. (Thaler and Sunstein 2009, 236).

[5] The case is described in Campbell (1999).

formally belongs to the opposite team of the injured player. However, that team is expected to return the ball to their opponent. In the game between Arsenal and Sheffield United, Arsenal's Nwankwo Kanu seemed to misunderstand the unwritten rule, collected the ball directed to a Sheffield United player and passed it to his teammate, who scored.

The winning team was under pressure internally and externally. On the one hand, the football community, especially fans of Sheffield United, were unhappy due to the unfair defeat. On the other hand, Arsenal's fans considered such an unfair win a disgrace. Arsene Wenger, the club's manager, also felt uneasy about the win and he was the one who suggested that the game be re-played. Re-plays of completed matches are extremely rare in football. In fact, there were no formal grounds for a complaint or remedy, including from a club manager, but the Association took up the winner's offer nevertheless.

To use the terminology of Thaler and Sunstein (2009), the association used a nudge to lead to a tangible short-term outcome and a potential long-term outcome of the informal institution. In the short-term, the nudge imposed a burden on both teams – an additional game with quite low stakes for the teams in terms of their league standing in an environment where the players are already among the most strained in Europe. In the long-term, the nudge further reinforced the informal institution, ensuring that it will be firmly adhered to by all in the future. However, as empathetic and fair as the injury rule is, its consequences are not necessarily impartial. When consistently adhered to, it can lead to long-term consequences such as giving advantage to a winning team, since it allows the possibility of players faking injury and saving precious seconds in the last minutes of the game.[6]

## How do institutions matter?

While the previous example does not claim to equate the institutions in football and politics, it does suggest a similarity in the logic of institutions at work: formal institutional actors can re-shape informal institutions through nudges leading to tangible outcomes. Like the Football Association, parties also influence the grammatical rules of party-voter interactions through personal, programmatic and policy nudges. While each of these nudges leads to a measurable

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[6] It is well established that winning teams tend to feign injuries (Derbyshire et al., 2016). If the informal injury rule will be followed strictly, winning teams will have more incentives to dive: if the referee is tricked, they will retain the ball; alternatively, having the "injured" player on the pitch will create expectations for the opponents to send the ball out of the field, thus winning precious seconds this way.

short-term political outcome, such as party loyalty, turnout, reported party support, or real vote for the ruling party, they also influence long-term political stability.

The three articles in the dissertation directly or indirectly deal with **political stability**, which is defined as a regime's continuity, i.e. a ruling party's ability to secure electoral victory for the incumbent/incumbent's party or its designated political successor. Subsequently, the incumbent's electoral failure is treated as political instability. Ironically, such a narrow definition of political stability mimics how the concept is often interpreted by nondemocratic leaders, who often limit political competition using the excuse that they are preventing the risks of instability and chaos emanating from their political challengers.[7] Hence, political stability and instability in this research are used descriptively rather than normatively: while individual articles address various factors that help sustain political stability or facilitate instability (change of the party of power), there is no discussion of these factors promoting or hindering democratization.

While regime change is beyond the scope of this dissertation, it is worth briefly touching upon the debate regarding the function of elections in less-than democracies. Some scholars argue that competitive elections help the ruling elite to consolidate political power, as it kills two birds with one stone: on the one hand, authoritarian rulers create incentives for local actors to demonstrate loyalty through the mobilization of votes and receive subsequent rewards (Geddes 2018, 599). On the other hand, the rulers monitor voter behavior and mark potential risky areas, where citizens are dissatisfied (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009, 405).

Several important studies challenge the stabilizing effect of elections in those states that are considered to be less than democratic, arguing that competitive elections are related to a high probability of democratization (Miller 2015; Edgel et al. 2018; Teorell and Wahman 2018). However, this is not to say that repeated competitive elections directly cause the governing party defeat as correctly noted by Morgenbesser and Pepinsky (2018). As the authors argue, an autocracy is normally defeated in free and fair elections, but if such an election is allowed, the regime would already be liberalized. Hence, fair elections follow a regime's liberalization and not the other way around (Morgenbesser and Pepinsky 2018, 8).

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[7] For example, Vladimir Putin's 2017 presidential campaign highlighted the importance of his re-election for protecting "stability and harmony in the society," while blaming his political opponents for their attempts to "destabilize the country." (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty 2017). Likewise, Alexander Lukashenko called his opposition thugs that try "to undermine constitutional order, which exists in Belarus." (Belarus.by 2011).

Whether elections are causes or effects of regime change, putting political power on the ballot paper is both risky and costly, even for autocrats (Geddes 2018). Therefore, to ensure political stability, the incumbent should mimic democratic elections and nudge voters towards desired outcomes. This dissertation argues that party-voter linkages forged through these nudges have implications for political stability through three different mechanisms: partisanship, the accountability trap and the reformers' self-defeating game.

The first article in the dissertation describes how interpersonal linkages between voters and party representatives increased the level of **partisanship**. Previous research demonstrated that partisanship has two distinct dimensions. One dimension is a positive psychological attachment to a party, normally measured as an individual's self-declared identification with a political party (Dalton 2007). The second dimension looks at negative attitudes, defined as a voter's dislike of a party expressed by never casting a vote for it (Maggiotto and Piereson 1977; Rose and Mishler 1998; Vlachova 2001). Importantly, both dimensions of partisanship signal political participation and party support (Maggiotto and Piereson 1977; Miller 1991; Rose and Mishler 1998; Vlachova 2001; Dalton 2007). Hence, an increased level of partisanship should lead to party system institutionalization and enhanced political competition. Yet, the implications of partisanship for political stability under competitive authoritarianism are not straightforward: on the one hand, an institutionalized party system can aid the incumbent in strengthening its electoral base using its existing advantages in terms of accessing state resources. On the other hand, enhanced political competition may gradually decrease the gap between the incumbent and its opponents in terms of vote mobilization. Since the article shows an increased level of partisanship for the incumbent as well as for its main challenger, both scenarios seem plausible.

The second article provides evidence that programmatic linkages between parties and voters is likely to lead to an **accountability trap,** a condition that presents when voters become disillusioned with political participation due to their inability to hold elected officials accountable for their promises. The trap arises through a ruling party's 'nudge' of ambiguous promises before elections. Previous research in multiparty and two-party elections demonstrated that ambiguity is a strategic choice for parties to maximize votes across ideological or issue divisions (Tomz and Van Houweling 2009; Rovny 2012; Somer-Topcu 2015; Bräuninger and Giger 2016). Ambiguity is even more rewarding in competitive authoritarianism, where the level of party loyalty is low, voters do not trust parties and are not enthusiastic about participating in elections. As the article demonstrates, under these seemingly

unfavorable circumstances for political parties, voters react to different type of promises and are likely to favor an ambiguous promise. Consequently, repeated successful use of ambiguous promises in election campaigns creates an accountability trap: voters cannot hold their elected officials accountable for their promises due to the ambiguity of the promises made and become further disillusioned with political participation. Hence, the accountability trap weakens party-voter linkages at the programmatic level and negatively influences political stability in at least two ways: first by decreasing the legitimacy of the ruling party (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Teorell and Wahman 2018), and second, by creating fruitful ground for political outsiders, including populists and anti-systemic forces (Roberts 2015; Aytaç and Öniş 2014).

While incumbents of competitive authoritarian regimes enjoy the benefits of an uneven playing field, they also know they can be ejected from office. One way for incumbents to stave off this outcome is by providing goods to elites, who can deliver votes in order to keep them inside the winning coalition. A second way is providing goods to all, such as property rights or public education (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005). The third article argues that competitive elections have pushed the incumbents to take the second path, for which they needed increased state capacity.

State capacity is the state's ability to mobilize resources to implement the public policies it chooses, and it is operationalized as a share of actual use of resources relative to the state's potential (Arbetman-Rabinowitz et al. 2012, 17). Hence, increasing state capacity means changing policies so that more resources are extracted from the electorate. In other words, party-voter linkages are changes at the policy level. Obviously, change in policies creates instant losers and will create winners over time. Given that elections are always approaching, the incumbent faces the reformers' dilemma: increase state capacity quickly to create more winners than losers before the election, coerce or co-opt discontented actors, or risk losing office. However, if reformers *do* choose to stay in office through less than savory means, it is also likely that they have entered a **self-defeating game**, through the resulting volatility in state capacity. Coopting elites before an election takes resources away from investing in state capacity, and hence, the ability to deliver goods. Through fluctuations in the delivery of goods to elites and the general public, each group will become uncertain as to whether they can reliably expect goods in the future. Stemming from this uncertainty, a credible challenger can enter the electoral playing field and unseat the incumbent. Hence, this self-defeating game threatens political stability in competitive authoritarian settings.

## The forgotten electorate

Formal and informal institutions of party-voter linkages can influence political outcomes in a specific context, where competition for political power is meaningful. In other words, where voters make a difference in determining electoral outcomes.. This section briefly reviews the literature on regime types and often cited contributing factors for the incumbent's removal in less-than democracies. It also shows that the electorate is largely absent from the scholarship on political outcomes in non-democracies.

While an increasing number of contemporary non-democracies have accepted democratic institutions, including multi-party elections, many of them have denied the opposition's electoral victory by manipulating formally democratic institutions (Magaloni 2010, 752; Geddes 2018, 597). Such manipulation has been employed widely by "competitive authoritarian" (Levitsky and Way 2002) or "electoral authoritarian" (Schedler 2006) regimes, where leaders and their parties participate in contested elections, but also abuse state resources in order to obstruct the opposition's campaign. A competitive political environment is a double-edged sword for the incumbent: elections create periodic tensions for the regime and allow for the electoral or revolutionary victory of the opposition (Bunce and Wolchik 2010, 44). Yet, competitive elections also help the authoritarian incumbents to consolidate power and maintain legitimacy for a long time after (Brownlee, 2007).

This research adopts the conceptual characteristics of competitive authoritarianism described in Levitsky and Way (2010): a civilian regime in which formal democratic institutions exist and are widely viewed as the primary means of gaining power, but in which an incumbent's abuse of the state places them at a significant advantage vis-à-vis their opponents. Such regimes are competitive in that opposition parties use democratic institutions to contest seriously for power, but they are not democratic, as the playing field is heavily skewed in favor of the incumbents (Levitsky and Way 2010, 5). For competition this study employees a minimal standard of multi-party elections: parties should be legal, political opposition should be allowed and voters should have a choice of candidates or parties on the ballot (Hyde and Marinov 2012, 2015). Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that there is a subtle line between competitive authoritarian regimes and semi-democracies, as described by Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán (2013, 69) and partial democracies, described by Epstein and his collaborators based on Polity IV scores between 1 and 7 (Epstein et al. 2006, 555).

Of the various sub-types of authoritarianism, competitive authoritarian regimes have received a large amount of attention in recent years for a number of reasons, including the

availability of data, the possibility of conducting field research, and the more meaningful role of elections, parties, and legislatures compared to non-competitive regimes (Brancati 2014; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009). As scholarly conversations proceed in waves, after an initial interest in typologies (Brooker 2013; Ezrow and Frantz 2011; Linz 2000), attention has seemingly cemented around the study of democratic-looking institutions, such as elections, parties, and parliaments.

Three elements of authoritarian institutions have received particular attention: their origins (why were they created in the first place?), how they operate (do they work differently from democracies?), and their effects (what purposes do they serve? Do they help maintain regime stability or do they foster change?) (Pepinsky 2014). In particular, the work of Magaloni (2008) and Gandhi (2008) on elections under authoritarian rule, Brownlee (2007) regarding the degree of institutionalization of party organizations, and that of Brancati (2014) on the mechanisms through which elites retain power, have done much to "dispel the notion that institutions such as parties, elections, and legislatures are exclusive to democracies" (Brancati 2014, 324) or that they amount to mere window-dressing.

Due to unfair competition, election outcomes in competitive authoritarian regimes are a combination of two unobserved components – popular support and electoral manipulation by the incumbent (Schedler, 2006, 2). While the relative proportion of the two components is hard to estimate, electoral manipulations under competitive authoritarianism are normally subtle: co-optation and/or fragmentation of opposition forces, the use of state resources to the incumbent's advantage to control election results, biased media coverage to the detriment of the opposition, a controlled judiciary that helps avoid any significant challenge to the electoral results and the intimidation of civil society that prevents it from performing watchdog functions in full (Schedler 2010, 71). Whenever a blunter manipulation is attempted, the costs and repercussions of such an approach can be damaging to the incumbent regime and can sometimes even bring it down – as happened in Serbia (2000), Georgia (2003), Ukraine (2004), and in Kyrgyzstan (2005) (Tucker 2007; Way 2008; Bunce and Wolchik 2010).

Focusing on the competitiveness and soft manipulation, several influential pieces of research argued that authoritarian elections are conceptually similar to democratic elections and that the latter is not totally free from fraud or vote-buying, or from the manipulation of electoral rules (Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009, 407). Moreover, it is argued that regimes that hold contested elections to elect national leaders are qualitatively different from those that do not hold competitive elections (Howard and Roessler, 2006, 367). Nevertheless, studies of

competitive authoritarianism have been excessively focused on electoral fraud (Magaloni 2010; Hyde and Marinov 2011; Hafner-Burton, et al. 2013; Hafner-Burton, et al. 2016), institutional manipulations (Gandhi and Przheworsky 2007; Gandhi 2008; Hale 2014), and organizational power (Magaloni 2006; Green 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010; Way 2015). Consequently, the role of voter preference and party-voter linkages for forging political stability in these contexts has not been addressed sufficiently. For instance, when looking at the factors influencing the incumbent's electoral defeat, Howard and Roessler conclude that strategic incumbent-opposition interaction and elite reckoning are more important than structural factors and public predisposition (Howard and Roessler 2006, 370). This statement is indicative of the spirit of the competitive authoritarianism literature.

Seemingly democratic institutions in the hands of authoritarian leaders are often considered to be a contributor to authoritarian longevity. In her influential work, Geddes argues that, in order to explain a regime's durability or its mode of change, regime type is the most important variable, since the political elite's motivations, incentives and constraints change according to regime type (Geddes, 1999, 140). This line of research is further developed by Brownlee (2009), who concludes that the competitiveness of elections is not a good predictor variable for regime breakdown. On the contrary, liberalized authoritarian regimes are expected to last less long than other regimes that exercise tighter measures of control over civil liberties (Brownlee, 2009, 526). Gandhi and Przeworski (2007) propose to look at levels of institutionalization in order to explain the survival of authoritarian regimes. They claim that optimal institutionalization mitigates opposition strength, i.e. autocrats, who face a strong opposition, institutionalize accordingly, and survive for periods as long as weakly-institutionalized regimes with limited opposition. The level of institutionalization is measured by elite dynamics, i.e. the number of parties which rulers decided to share power with (Gandhi and Przeworski, 2007, 1290). Structural and international factors are emphasized in Way's work, in which he claims that the survival or breakdown of an authoritarian regime can be predicted by (1) the strength of the regime's ties with the West and (2) the strength of the incumbent's autocratic party (Way, 2008, 60).

Strong party organization features as the key factor in the ruling party's success, particularly under dominant-party regimes. Here ruling parties with superior organizational structure effectively use resource advantage to supplement policy promises with patronage goods (Greene, 2007, 5). Strong party organizations also make it possible to operate the "punishment regime", where an incumbent's supporters are given some spoils and their

opponents are not (Magaloni, 2006, 20). Bunce and Wolchik recently offered an agency-centered approach, claiming that the opposition's innovative electoral strategies played a key role in bringing the autocratic ruling parties down in Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine. These innovative strategies have however developed as a combination of local initiatives, cross-national learning and transnational assistance (Bunce and Wolchik, 2010, 71).

While electoral continuity is the norm and electoral change is the exception in competitive authoritarian regimes (Bunce and Wolchik, 2010, 44), when studying electoral continuity and change, scholars normally focus on elite dynamics, institutions, and structural factors, whereas voters' preference are largely discounted. Moreover, the focus has been on grand formal institutions, such as elections, legislatures and parties, while seemingly conspicuous informal institutions, like party-voter linkages have been neglected. To be sure, many authors have discussed voter preferences and motivations to support (mostly) the ruling party (Magaloni 2006; Green 2007; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009). However, the electorate is largely treated as a relatively passive recipient of the party's promises, patronage and even coercion. Voters only become important when it comes to protests, especially after a rigged election (Beissinger 2007; Tucker 2007; Way 2009; Bunce and Wolchik, 2010). This literature review, while not exhaustive of the vast scholarship on competitive authoritarianism, is representative of the current scholarship of non-democracies inasmuch as it portrays voters as less important, if not inferior, to other factors, such as institutions, organizations, elite pacts and international linkages.

The articles in this dissertation illustrate that voters matter: they are not passive recipients of party linkages, but shape the form and content of party-voter linkages at interpersonal, programmatic and policy levels. To return to the football example described above, the Association's nudge, as well as Wenger's initial suggestion was triggered by dissatisfaction of fans of both teams because of unfair outcome. Likewise, parties take voters' preferences seriously and propose nudges that will not be ignored or avoided by voters, thus, maximizing party support. Unless voters mattered equally to parties in influencing political outcomes, we would see a zero impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship and party support.

## How to link causes and outcomes?

This section describes the methods applied in the dissertation to establish a causal link between party-voter linkages and political outcomes. To this end the study largely uses quantitative

research tools to analyze experimental and observational data. While one part of the dissertation is based on a survey experiment specially designed for this study, other sections rely on survey data collected for purposes that go beyond this research, as well as pooled cross-sectional time series data from various sources.[8] Regardless of the data type, the key objective is to establish causal links between institutions and political outcomes.

Finding causes of outcomes is normally called causal inference, a process, in which (often numerical) evidence is used to demonstrate that one set of events directly causes another set of events (Hidalgo and Sekhon 2012, 203). In order to claim that one set of events causes the other, three conditions must be satisfied: first, when the initial set of events changes, the other set of events should also change over time or across observations. Second, the first set of events should change prior to any change observed in the second set of events; and third, no third factor(s) should exist that simultaneously influences the two sets of events, and hence, independently causes changes in each set (Mutz 2011, 9).

What research design(s) are best suited to answer causal questions is a subject of debate in social sciences. Some scholars argue only experimental design helps to meet the three conditions outlined above (Gerber and Green 2012; Gerber, Green, and Kaplan 2014). Specifically, random assignment of an intervention (treatment) is the only credible way to demonstrate that the treatment causes a change in the outcome (Gerber, Green, and Kaplan 2014, 15). This view, while representing the mainstream in current social science research, is challenged on two key grounds: experimental design also suffers from a number of inefficiencies normally attributed to observational data only (Stokes 2014, 43; Shapiro 2014, 232). Moreover, even when experimental design finds a credible causal link between the two sets of events, this finding is not always generalizable beyond the participants of the experiment. In other words, many experiments have high internal validity, but poor external validity (Mutz 2011 142; Stokes 2014, 51).

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[8] Article 1 is based on survey data, including a panel component collected before after 2016 elections in Georgia (detailed methodology is described in Annex 1c). Article 2 uses primary data for survey experiment specially designed for this study and carried out in Tbilisi and Yerevan in February, 2016 (a survey instrument is available in Annex 2c). Article 3 analyses the dataset specially pooled together for this study from the following sources: (1) World Bank World Development Indicators (World Bank 2016), (2) The Database of Political Institutions (Cruz, Keefer, and Scartascini 2016), (3) Polity IV dataset (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2016), (4) National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy Dataset (NELDA) (Hyde and Marinov 2012, 2015), (5) Relative Political Performance Dataset (Kugler and Tammen 2012), and (6) data on regime type from Freedom House (Freedom House 2017).

During the dawn of experimental research in social sciences, Holland suggested that experimental design, while not exclusive, is the shortest path to distinguishing causes from effects (Holland 1986, 946). Now even scholars who mostly apply and appreciate observational data admit that experimental design is the gold standard for causal inference (Gelman 2014, 194). Following this trend, this study largely relies on the Neyman-Rubin model for causal inference, which puts counterfactual thinking at the top of the hierarchy of research designs (Holland 1986, 946-947; Dunning 2010, 107). Counterfactual thinking aims at creating a situation that results in (at least) two comparison groups: one group, which received a treatment and the other group, which approximates the "closest world" to the treated group (Holland 1986, 954; Dunning 2010, 6). Hence, the two groups should be similar on all observable and unobservable characteristics and the only difference between them should be receiving the treatment by one and not receiving the treatment by the other. Such a "closest world" is created through a random assignment of a treatment, and therefore, the only reliable cause should be a randomly given intervention (Holland 1986, 946; Dunning 2010, 6-7; Morton and Williams 2010, 76; Gerber and Green 2012, 8). This study uses a survey experiment to assess the impact of randomly assigned information treatments.

As indispensable as experimental design is for causal inference, social science research is still dominated by observational data, and hence, observational data analysis should not be abandoned (Gelman 2014, 193). The key difference between observational and experimental designs is the absence of a randomly assigned treatment in the former. Reasons for non-random assignment can be many, starting from feasibility and ending with a researcher's naïve approach to the causal question. Nevertheless, when random assignment is absent, for whatever reason, the second-best research tools are used to approximate random intervention, and, hence, increase the credibility of causal links between the two sets of events (Sekhon 2009, 497; Dunning 2010, 91; Stuart 2010, 4). From a menu of such tools, often referred to as quasi-experimental, this study uses matching and instrumental variable approaches.

One key expectation of this study is that party-voter linkages at the programmatic level are consequential for political outcomes. Specifically, the political behavior of voters will be partly conditioned by different policies promised by the parties before elections. To examine whether this expectation holds, the specially designed survey experiment randomly assigned four distinct promises (programs) to representative samples of capital cities in Armenia and Georgia: (1) an ambiguous promise to improve the economic situation in the country, (2) a state-driven promise – increase taxes and increase state investments in job creation, (3) a

market-driven promise – decrease taxes and encourage private investment in job creation, and (4) an inconsistent promise – decrease taxes and increase state investment in job creation.

The random assignment of programs ensures that the four groups are similar in all observable and unobservable characteristics, except for the treatments (policies). Therefore, the design allows us to observe the direct effect of programs on political outcomes – in this case, turnout and party support. Importantly, the experiment has high external validity, since it is administered on representative samples (Mutz 2011, 153). Hence, the findings can be generalized on the population, from which the samples were drawn.

While the impact of programmatic party-voter linkages on political outcomes was documented through a random assignment, the impact of personal linkages could not be identified straightforwardly due to the nature of the observational data. Surely, some voters received party contacts before elections, while others did not. However, party contacts were not randomly assigned and therefore, could have been endogenous to party support. Here, endogeneity refers to reverse causality or the third, unobserved factor influencing both the dependent and independent variables. For example, consider the impact of personal party-voter linkages on party support. While this study hypothesized that linkages influence party support, it was equally possible that pre-existing party support "attracted" party contacts disproportionally. Moreover, a third factor, such as voters' prior political engagement, could have influenced both linkages and party support independently from each other.

The endogeneity problem was addressed using two complementary methods: matching and instrumental variable approach. Matching is a useful tool to construct the closest world to the treated group using the group's observable characteristics (Guo and Fraser 2015). However, this method cannot make groups comparable across unobservable factors, simply because the factors are not observed (Sekhon 2009). Nevertheless, the matching approach used in this study was expected to address endogeneity at least partially due to two reasons: First, a diversity of observed characteristics of respondents that could influence propensity for "treatment" (receiving a party contact) were used for matching: type of residence, gender, age, employment status, education attainment, household income and expenditure, access to information, etc. Surely, some of these characteristics could influence partisanship and party support, but reverse causality was hardly plausible. Second, matching models excluded variables that were theoretically related to treatment and outcome, but also were subject to change due to the treatment. Such variables, to use the language of experimental research, were used in the model

as confounders and the treatment was interacted with each of them to detect heterogenous treatment effects, if any (Gerber and Green 2012, 296).

To strengthen the findings from the matched data analysis, the study applied an instrumental variable approach to the two-wave panel data in order to eliminate the endogeneity problem caused by prior partisanship. The objective was to identity an instrument, which would be related to the outcome ("post-treatment" partisanship) only through the endogenous variable ("pre-treatment" partisanship) (Angrist and Pischke 2009, 116; Wooldridge 2010, 90). While sources of reliable instrumental variable have been random assignments (lotteries), natural conditions (rainfall, disasters), institutions (land tenure type), historical shocks (colonial settler mortality), etc. (Dunning 2012, 90), this study used an index of respondents' sophistication as the instrument to estimate partisanship with as little bias as possible.

Respondent sophistication, an index of the interviewer's assessment of each respondent before the treatment, worked like political knowledge in classic (Campbell at al. 1960) and more recent studies of political behavior (Albright 2009, 259): the more sophisticated respondent was more likely to form positive or negative attitudes to political parties before the treatment, and satisfy the basic theoretical requirements for instrumental variables, such as exclusion restriction (Sovey and Green 2011, 198): Respondent sophistication measured before the treatment was not expected to have any direct effect on reported partisanship four months after the assessment took place. Instead, the effect was likely to go through endogenous pre-treatment partisanship.

As in the case of personal party-voter linkages, relating policy linkages to policy outcomes also needed to overcome the three necessary conditions of causal inference. Using panel data, where observations were countries across election-years, the objective was to relate indicators of party-voter linages at the policy level to the ruling party's electoral success. Due to the nature of panel data, the problem of reverse causality was easily eliminated through using lagged values of independent variables. However, the potential impact of the third factor on the dependent and independent variable was not straightforward to address. It is fully acknowledged that models on the panel data do not easily produce causal relations between the independent and dependent variables (Wooldridge 2012, 473). Moreover, using lagged independent variables does not automatically indicate causality without proper theoretical and/or statistical justifications (Bellemare et al. 2017, 950). Although the article uses a lagged value of independent variables in the model based on theoretical reasoning, additional

statistical tools are needed to establish a credible causal link between state capacity indicators and political outcomes.

## Competitive regimes in the South Caucasus

For good reason, much of the analysis on the South Caucasus region has been driven by research on conflict and the role of external powers explicitly (e.g. Babayan 2015; Gammer 2008; Geukjian 2012; Green and Waters 2010; Oskanian 2013; Saparov 2015) or indirectly, when examining nationalism and identity politics (e.g. Agadjanian, Jodicke, and van der Zweerde 2015; Ayoob and Ismayilov 2015; George 2009; Kemoklidze et al. 2014; Nodia 2014). In particular, the work of Zürcher (2007), de Waal (2010), and Jones (2010, 2013) has significantly enriched our understanding of conflictual dynamics in the region and the interaction between regional and external powers. Substantively, the articles in this dissertation differ from much of the scholarship on the South Caucasus in that they take a step back from the focus on nationalism, war and conflict, and the role of international powers.

This is not because conflict and geopolitics are not important, but rather a fuller understanding of the politics of the region needs to take into consideration domestic policy-making and the linkages between domestic actors – specifically parties and voters. More needs to be said about the role of local elites and especially the citizens of the two countries, their preferences and, more generally, the interaction between autocratic leaders and voters. As such, the contributions build on and expand some of the themes touched on in Wooden and Stefes (2012) pertaining to transition politics and opportunities for and obstacles to democratization (Babayan 2015; Berglund 2014; Mac Ginty 2013), including corruption and patronage (Kupatadze 2016; Nasuti 2016; Stefes 2006), voter reaction to policies (George 2014), and the impact of subtle interventions on voting behavior (Driscoll and Hidalgo 2014).

Apart from a short period in the early 1990s during which some limited pluralism existed, Azerbaijan has emerged as an increasingly closed and non-competitive authoritarian regime centered around the exploitation of natural resource wealth and the establishment of a rentier economy (Radnitz 2012; Sultanova 2014). Continuous imprisonment of prominent journalists, human rights defenders, activists and political opposition representatives (Human Rights Watch 2016) precludes any meaningful contestation. As such, the Azerbaijani case can only offer very limited insight into the debates at hand, and therefore the country is not discussed in this dissertation.

By contrast, for a large part of the post-Soviet period, Armenia and Georgia fall into the category of competitive authoritarian regimes. According to Freedom House, both countries remained mostly in the "partly free" category of countries (Freedom House 2017). This trend is largely confirmed by the Polity IV scores, where both countries have been "stuck" between democracy and autocracy since attaining independence from the Soviet Union (Polity IV Project 2015) (Graph 1).

**Graph 1. Average score of political rights and civil liberties**
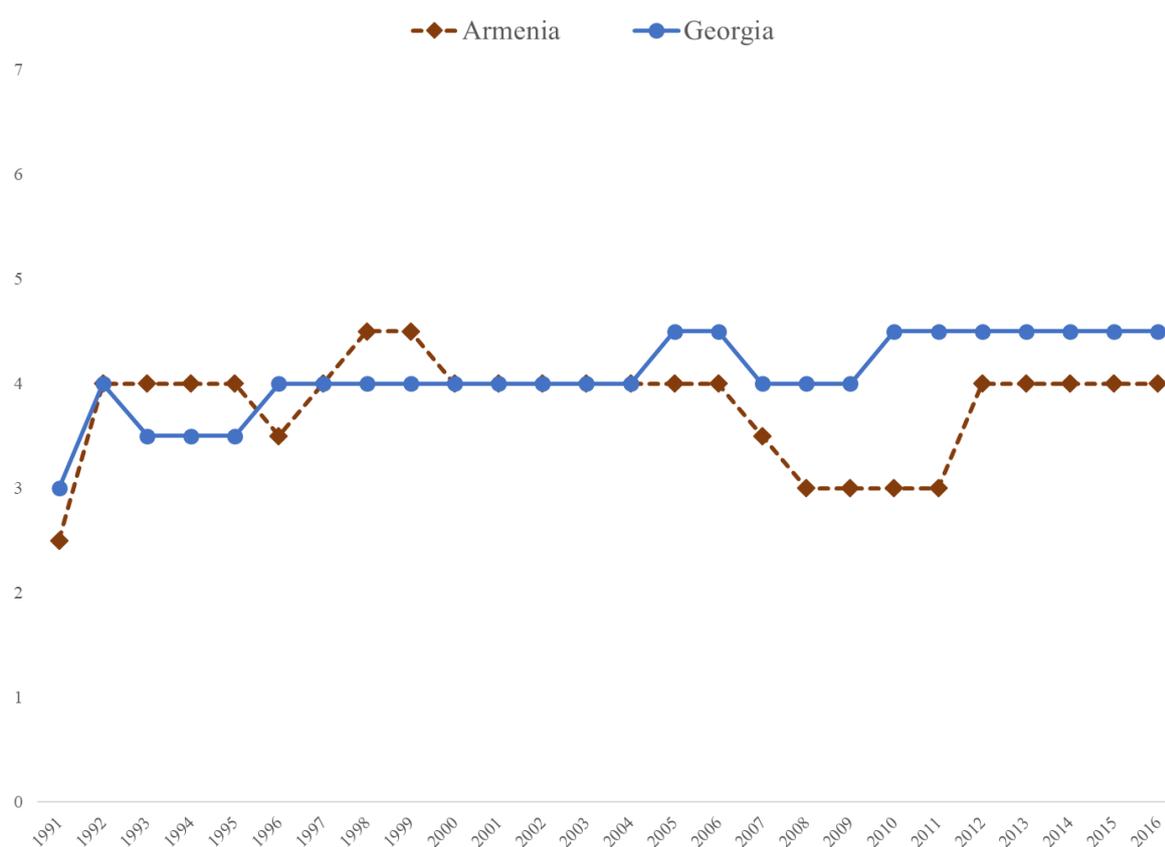


*Source: Freedom House. Reversed scores (1=least free; 7=most free).*

Before looking at specific examples of party-voter interactions and their consequences, it is important to describe the context of such interactions in Armenia and Georgia, specifically, the uneven playing field, economic conditions and political attitudes. Arguably, poverty, high uncertainty inherent to competitive authoritarianism, and attitudes to elections and participation, have significant implications for both party-voter linkages and political outcomes (Magaloni 2006; Lupu and Riedl 2012; Bunce and Wolchik 2010; Kitschelt and Kselman 2013).

Armenia and Georgia experienced large economic declines at the dawn of their independence: from 1990 to 1994 GDP dropped by 51% in Armenia and by 72% in Georgia (World Bank 2016a, 2016b). The two economies began recovering in the mid-1990s, as incremental growth was recorded by both countries. This growth accelerated in the 2000s, reaching 12% in Armenia and 8% in Georgia on average until the countries were hit by the 2008 global economic crisis (World Bank 2016a, 2016b). Still, economic growth did not translate into the reduction of either poverty or inequality: Georgia remained highly unequal with its GINI coefficient fluctuating around 0.4. While Armenia has been relatively more equal, the GINI coefficient has not moved below 0.3 (World Bank 2016a, 2016b). Moreover, although poverty has been declining in both countries since 2010, it has remained substantial: 25% of the population earned less than USD 3.10 a day in Georgia and 15% in Armenia in 2014 (World Bank 2016a, 2016b).

Although elections have been held regularly in the South Caucasus and, with the exception of Azerbaijan, competition has been real, surprisingly little has been written about the elections, and typically, whatever has been written, focused on individual electoral rounds (Berglund 2014; Fumagalli 2014; Mueller 2014). Fewer studies focus on explaining voting behavior and electoral outcome (Schofield et al. 2012; Driscoll and Hidalgo 2014; George 2014.) In fact, ironically and somewhat surprisingly, electoral politics in the de facto states has attracted greater attention than the competitive political dynamics in countries such as Georgia and Armenia (Ishiyama and Batta 2012; Ó Beacháin 2012, 2015; Smolnik 2012; Von Steinsdorff 2012).

While elections on unfair playing fields are common, election-day fraud can result in authoritarians being thrown out of office (Sjoberg 2016; Tucker 2007). Political elites in Armenia and Georgia seem to have learned this lesson: Looking at cases of election-day fraud in Armenia and Georgia over the past decade, and using methods from the field of election forensics, Gilbreath and Balasanyan (2017) show that election-day irregularities have not been significant in either country. Yet, Georgia's elections have had less election-day fraud than Armenia's during this period. In principle, the freer the environment, the more an authoritarian must rely on means other than election-day fraud to retain office, because in such environments they are less capable of coercing the population without reaping greater repercussions. Indeed, the ruling parties of both countries have been active in securing the support of the electorate before election day. In Georgia, officials have been more oriented towards policies directed to

the masses of voters, whereas in Armenia, the ruling elite have largely favored incremental changes and elite co-optations (Shubladze and Khundadze 2017).

Public opinion partially echoes the findings of election forensics: a plurality of Armenian voters has assessed election results as unfair for the past decade, whereas very few voters believed in the fairness of elections (as low as 10% in the last wave of 2017) (CRRC 2017). In contrast, assessments of election fairness by Georgian voters dramatically increased after the 2012 parliamentary elections to a record 56% and remained solid (around 40%) after subsequent elections (CRRC 2008-2017). In addition to distrusting elections, Armenian voters also do not trust key political institutions, such as parliament, executive government and the president. Moreover, trust has been equally low in other areas of contestation in competitive authoritarianism (Levitsky and Way 2002) – the media and courts. While distrust of these institutions has also prevailed in Georgia, it has been relatively less pronounced than in Armenia (CRRC 2008–2017).

## Graph 2. Trust to institutions (trust minus distrust)



Source: www.caucasusbarometer.org
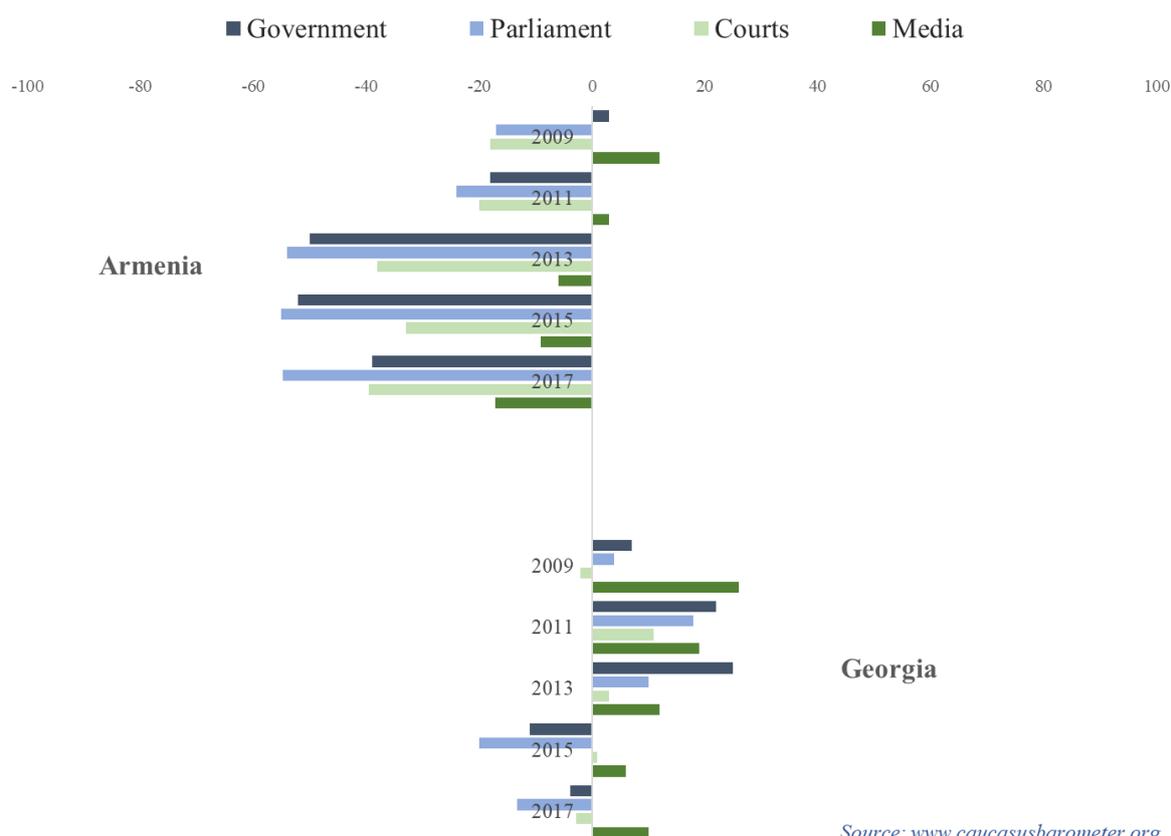
Somewhat paradoxically, while people distrust key democratic institutions in each country, appreciation of democracy has been quite high: a plurality of voters in Armenia and Georgia reported in 2017 that democracy was preferable to any type of government (CRRC

2017). However, it is worth noting that public support of democracy has declined in both countries: between 2011 and 2017, support for democracy decreased from 65% to 52% in Georgia and from 55% to 48% in Armenia (CRRC 2008–2017).

What roles do voters assign to the government to solve their most pressing problems? The two countries differ significantly in this respect. In terms of political ideology, Armenian voters lean towards the left and Georgian voters lean towards the right: a majority of Armenian voters endorse increased state ownership of businesses, whereas a plurality of Georgian voters support increased private ownership of businesses (CRRC 2013). This trend described above is confirmed by a survey experiment carried out in Tbilisi and Yerevan described in article three in more detail: voters in Yerevan were significantly more supportive of state intervention in the economy compared to voters in Tbilisi.

Correspondingly, people in Armenia have a much higher expectation that the state should solve people's problems than in Georgia: while a large majority of Armenia's population look to the government as the people's parent, Georgians are split almost equally on the question of whether government should take care of people like parents take care of their children or whether the people are the government's bosses and hence, should control it (CRRC 2017).

Given the stagnant economic conditions and the inability of politicians to significantly improve people's lives, should we expect party-voter linkages to matter at all? Findings from the three articles demonstrate that such linkages still matter: voters that react to the incumbent's policies are influenced by direct contact and even care about promises that parties make prior to the elections. The consequences of each set of linkages for political outcomes are summarized below.

## How do the linkages work?

This section describes how party-voter linkages at different levels predict political outcomes. The three linkages discussed in the study are not exhaustive of all existing party-voter interactions in competitive non-democracies. To be sure, the three linkages can and often do work simultaneously and even push political outcomes in different directions. While the study provides convincing illustrations of the political consequences of each linkage taken separately, it does not assess any direction of cumulative effect of the linkages taken together. Moreover, the study does not claim that linkages are the only or the most significant determinants of political outcomes in competitive authoritarianism. Nevertheless, each of the three articles

illustrates the impact of one particular type of linkage, while it is assumed that the impact of other types of linkages are held constant.

## Personal linkages

This dissertation opens with the article *Talk to her: How party-voter linkages increase partisanship in Georgia*, which looks at the impact of party-voter contact during election campaigns on partisanship using two waves of survey data under different ruling parties (2012 and 2016). Analysis of the two survey waves is complemented by findings from a panel survey of 2016, which provides additional support to causal inferences in the article. Accepting that increased partisanship is associated with more political participation and predicts party support well (Miller 1991; Green et al. 2002; Dalton 2007), the article argues that increased partisanship is a significant step towards party system institutionalization, and hence, political stability.

While the article analyzes the impact of face-to-face interaction between party and voter, it also describes competing party machines at work, launched by the (then) presiding United National Movement (UNM) and adopted by other parties, including its successful challenger the Georgian Dream Coalition. Having ousted the previous ruling party (Citizens Union of Georgia) after rigged elections that were followed by mass protests (the Rose Revolution of 2003), the UNM restrained themselves from participating in significant electoral manipulation on the day of the election and strategically invested in the party machine to ensure solid electoral support. The machine, much like those operating in Argentina (Stokes 2005), Greece (Andronikidou and Kovras 2012) or Mexico (Langston and Morgenstern 2009), operated as a network of party activists, who actively campaigned on behalf of the party before the elections.

The network was also fused with public institutions at the levels of central and local government. While the surveys that were analyzed do not offer sufficient information about the types of linkages the machine fostered with the voters, qualitative evidence hints towards a mixture of programmatic and clientelistic appeals (Kitschelt 2000). Hence, the ruling party, in addition to promoting its rather general, if not vague, electoral program, promised private benefits to the voters in exchange for votes, such as state employment, and community-level investments in the infrastructure.

The article finds a significant impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship: those contacted by a party reported partisanship at 7 to 14 percentage points higher than voters who

were not contacted. Using various matching techniques to pair contacted and non-contacted voters in each survey wave, and analyzing drivers of reported partisanship by the same individuals before and after elections, these findings are reliable across different statistical models.

Another noteworthy finding is counterintuitive for a competitive authoritarian regime: contrary to the expectation that the party machine would benefit the ruling party only, party contacts worked for the incumbent, as well as for the opposition almost equally. Moreover, this finding holds for both election periods under two different ruling parties. In practice, this means more people voting in elections, as well as more people voting for each of the two opposed camps. While this effect is not likely to be lasting, over time this process could lead to both increased electoral competitiveness and a more institutionalized party system. Yet, the overall increase of partisanship does not suggest that the ruling party's advantage is diminishing: while the incumbent and opposition increase their support base reported before the election, the incumbent still enjoys an initial advantage in terms of popular support, and face-to-face interactions are not likely to overcome this gap.

## Programmatic linkages

The second article *Premises, lies, and the accountability trap. Evidence from survey experiment in Armenia and Georgia*, challenges the studies where voters are often assumed to be of tertiary importance in less than democratic contexts – the regime can manipulate, buy, or outright steal their votes. Yet, there is ample evidence to suggest that voters have stable preferences that are grounded in the significant economic conditions they face in Georgia (George 2014; Babunashvili 2017) and elsewhere (Breder and Drazen 2005; Seligson and Tucker 2005). Moreover, experimental evidence of this dissertation confirms that programmatic linkages *do* matter to electoral outcomes: voters respond to electoral programs differently, and hence, programmatic linkages between party and voters influence the party's electoral success.

This finding is based on a survey experiment conducted in the capital cities of the two countries in focus - Tbilisi (Georgia) and Yerevan (Armenia), where the respondents were randomly assigned to one of four promises of a hypothetical party: (1) an ambiguous promise, (2) a state-driven promise, (3) a market-driven promise, and (4) an inconsistent promise.

Armenian and Georgian voters responded differently to the promises: type of promise had effect on the decision to vote or not in Yerevan, but not in Tbilisi. While a state-driven promise significantly decreased support to the party in each city, the market-driven and the

inconsistent promises were significantly less popular in Tbilisi compared to Yerevan. Considering the responses of all voters, an ambiguous promise was the safest option for the party in Tbilisi, while other types of promises would substantially decrease the party's reported support.

These findings also highlighted a learning element of the elections (Converse 1969; Fiorina 1981; Bartels 2001; Dinas 2014): Having experienced a more competitive political environment and even electoral change of government, voters in Georgia assessed different promises with a higher variability compared to Armenian voters. At the same time, Georgian voters appreciated ambiguous promises more than Armenian voters did, confirming the advantage of ambiguity in a competitive political environment (Somer-Topcu 2015).

These findings, coupled with declining trust in political parties, parliaments, executive governments, and courts in each country (CRRC 2008–2017), signal voter dissatisfaction and disillusionment with politics, which is expected to be reinforced via the accountability trap. The accountability trap, the article argues, emerges when voters are unable to hold their elected officials accountable for their performance due to the ambiguity of the promises and as a result, become disillusioned with political participation. These findings echo Svolik's (2013) two alternative paths of democratic development: whether "bad" politicians undermine public support for democracy or "good" politicians help to consolidate it through reinforcing voter belief in accountability. Yet, the persistence of economic problems, the mediocre performance of elected officials, declining trust in institutions, and decreasing appreciation of democracy hint at less optimistic paths for both countries.

## Policy linkages

Despite similarities in economic conditions, Armenia and Georgia followed very different policy-making paths in the 2000s. The ruling elite of Armenia changed policies incrementally, while after the Rose Revolution abrupt changes started in Georgia in the most important policy areas, such as law enforcement, education, economic policy, and more generally, public administration. What role did the various policy-making paths play in political (in)stability?

The third article in this dissertation *The Self-Defeating Game: How State Capacity and Policy Choice Affect Political Survival*, develops an argument about the reformer's dilemma. Drawing on scholarship on how autocratic stability is crucially linked to state power (Way 2009) and building on the selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005), the article contends that the chance of the incumbent's party remaining in office is at least in part a

function of the capacity of the state they hold power over. Analyzing cross-country data over the past 40 years, the article finds that if the incumbents succeed in increasing state capacity, it increases their chances of staying in office. However, the reformer should also be wary of the volatility stemming from reform. Specifically, volatile state capacity measured as a standard deviation of the state capacity indicator significantly decreases the incumbent's electoral success. Cross-country analysis is complemented by two case studies from the South Caucasus to illustrate these points: while Georgian state capacity developed in fits, jumps, and starts, in Armenia, state capacity developed at a slow and steady pace for most of its independence. As the aphorism goes, slow and steady wins the race with politicians being thrown out of office in Georgia and the incumbent in Armenia maintaining power considerably longer. Based on this analysis, the article argues that a self-defeating game is at work for reformers.

World Bank Governance indicators provide support for the various paces of party-voter linkages in the two countries (World Bank 2016a, 2016b). Specifically, the control of corruption and government effectiveness indicators mark two different paths taken by those in power in Armenia and Georgia: while both indicators changed incrementally in Armenia through the 2000s, Georgia saw steep advances after the Rose Revolution though 2012 (Graph 3). Following Innes, control of corruption and government effectiveness can be interpreted as indicators of relative balance between the ruling party and private interests (Innes 2014, 89). Hence, increased government effectiveness and decreased corruption signal incumbent state capture, which Grzymala-Busse defines as the extraction of state resources by the elite for the sake of the political party (Grzymala-Busse 2008, 640).

**Graph 3. Control of corruption and government effectiveness**
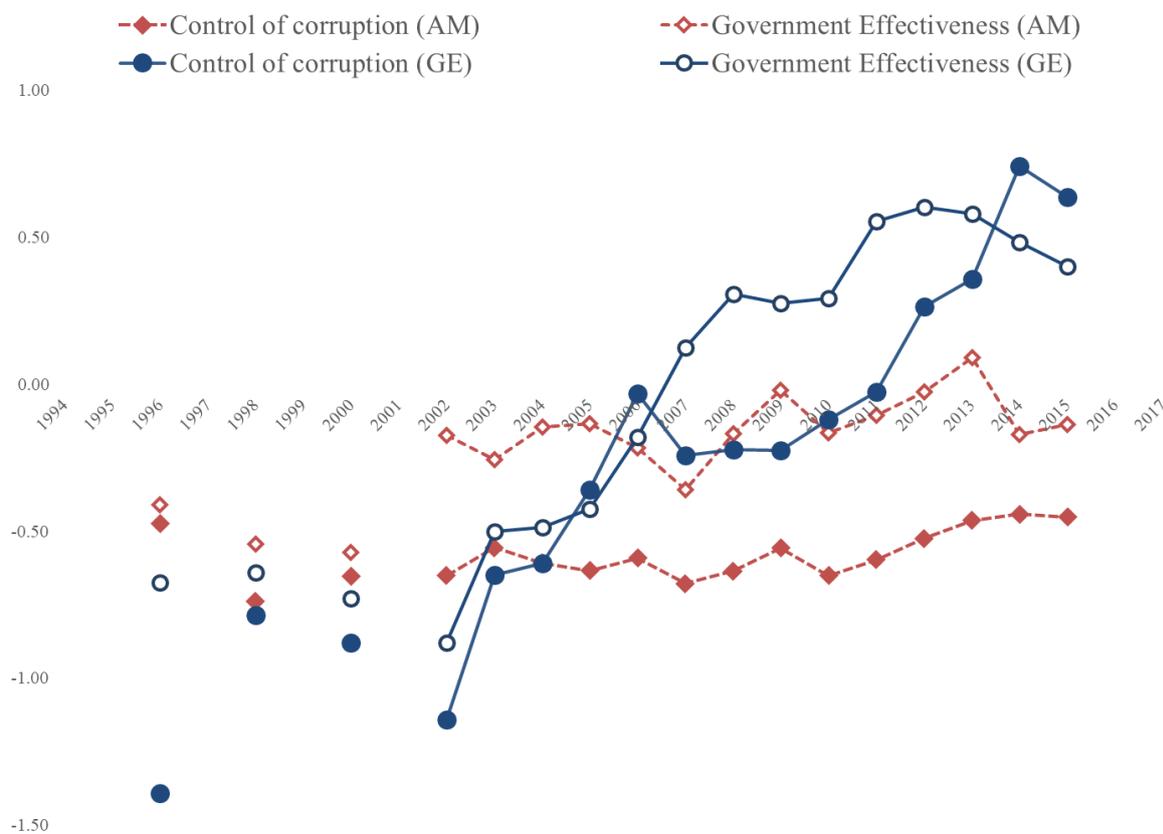


*Source: World Bank Governance Indicators.*

Yet incumbent state capture does not necessarily mean that the elite uses state resources for its private material gain only: rather, extracted resources are often applied to design institutions that distribute benefits to supporters (Grzymala-Busse 2008, 641). Substantial increases in the control of the corruption score together with comparable increases in the government effectiveness in Georgia show that the ruling party successfully defeated elite private interests. The same cannot be observed in Armenia. However, the governing parties in both countries responded to voter preferences in an autocratic way: Armenia slowly and steadily implemented policies to the benefit of private interests and maintained their winning coalition (PFA 2013; Shubladze and Khundadze 2017). Georgia launched large-scale policy reforms, but swam "against the current" in the words of president Saakashvili.[9] Consequently,

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[9] Mikheil Saakashvili, president of Georgia between 2004 and 2013, described his approach to policy making in his 2017 interview in the following way: "We had conceptual disagreements. They [the leadership of the United National Movement that left the party] were doing surveys and saying that people want to hear about this, these are popular issues for the people and we should develop a program which does not irritate people by talking

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UNM policies did not address voters' most significant concerns in a meaningful way, such as unemployment, poverty, and overall quality-of-life (Rekhviasvili and Polese 2017).

## Contribution

The dissertation intervenes in the debates on comparative authoritarianism and the politics of the South Caucasus, where it makes several contributions. First, in terms of the "big picture" the articles take up the challenge launched by Pepinsky (2014) to unpack the life of authoritarian regimes. As noted elsewhere, (Art 2012; Fumagalli 2016b) they certainly do more than just survive or collapse. The articles in this dissertation detail their policies and seek to capture their impact on political outcomes. Second, this dissertation seeks to provide a more dynamic framework to capture the linkages and interactions between parties and voters by looking at their reactions to party contacts (article one) electoral programs (article two), and government policies (article three). Third, following the institutional turn in the study of comparative authoritarianism, this dissertation focuses on formal and informal institutions at the micro-level and analyzes how institutions gain enough momentum to persuade demobilized voters and contribute to political stability. Crucially, the dissertation shows that what the incumbents promise and whether they lie, make grand and unrealistic promises or embark on entirely contradictory pledges, makes a difference, as they cause an accountability trap.

Last, but not least, methodologically, this study also seeks to contribute to the scholarship on the South Caucasus by complementing the qualitative research already undertaken with a more decisively quantitative and mixed-methods angle. This is still rare in research on the region (for a notable exception see Driscoll and Hidalgo 2014; Driscoll, Berglund, and Blauvelt 2016), including in the work on electoral politics. In addition to official statistical data on elections and policies, the articles use primary micro-data on political polls from both countries to address voter preferences, party identification, and voting behavior. This data is analyzed for the first time in this dissertation and is also made available for further analysis.[10]

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about something else. … I think very differently: you should not trudge behind the processes, should not follow the current, because only dead fish drift along with the current. You should be ready to swim against the current. The direction of the current may change, but your direction should never change." (new.on.ge 2017).

[10] Data sets and replication codes are available: Article 1: https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/talk2her. Article 2: https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/promises. Article 3: https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/self-defeating-game.

# Talk to Her: How Party-Voter Linkages Increase Partisanship in Georgia[1]

## Introduction

Partisanship, an individual's affinity to a political party, is viewed as advantageous for democracy: citizens who display a preference towards a particular political party are normally more informed about and involved in public affairs than nonpartisans (Green et al 2002). Moreover, partisanship creates a prism, through which citizens view, perceive, and assess politics and policies (Bartels 2002, 138). Consequently, partisanship strongly predicts participation in elections and vote choice (Miller 1991, 557; Dalton and Weldon 2007, 181). In other words, high levels of partisanship are associated with the predictability and stability of a political system.

In contrast, nonpartisanship is associated with uncertainty and instability: low partisanship is associated with high vote shifts from one party to another (volatility), which is problematic for party system stability (Powell and Tucker 2014, 124) and electoral accountability (Tóka 1998, 592). Moreover, nonpartisan voters are more likely to be vulnerable to the influence of radical parties, anti-establishment movements, or plebiscitarian leaders (Klingermann and Wattenberg 1992, 149; Sanchez 2009, 493). Such risks are real in democracies, as illustrated by the recent election results in Western Europe and the United States (Wodak and Krzyżanowski 2017).[2] Yet, the impact of nonpartisanship can be even more significant in hybrid regimes, where democratic institutions are not fully embraced by the political class or voters, and often times coexist with authoritarian institutions (Levitsky and Way 2010, 5). Indeed, such political systems are characterized by volatile election results, and large shifts of voters from one party to another create a sense of unpredictability and instability (Lupu and Stokes 2010, 91; Lupu and Riedl 2013, 1345).

While there are substantive studies on types and reasons for voting volatility (Powell and Tucker 2014; Grabtree and Golder 2016), there is a lack of research on the mechanisms of increasing partisanship, especially outside of established democracies. As such, by using original survey data from Georgia, this article aims to fill this gap by examining whether a type

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[1] Data and replication codes are available at: https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/talk2her

[2] Recent election results in Austria, France, and Italy are described in the Guardian (2017), in Schultheis (2017), and in the Economist (2018) respectively.

of party-voter linkages, face-to-face interactions between voters and party candidates during the pre-election campaign, increase partisanship in Georgia, a hybrid regime slowly moving towards democracy (Freedom House 2017). The impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship is illustrated through the analysis of survey data collected soon after Georgia's 2012 and 2016 parliamentary elections (National Democratic Institute 2012; National Democratic Institute 2016), and a panel survey of 1,217 voters before and after the 2016 parliamentary elections (National Democratic Institute 2016). All three data sources lead to the same conclusion: party-voter linkages significantly increase overall partisanship, at least in the short-run. Moreover, party-voter linkages benefit the incumbent and opposition equally – a counterintuitive finding in the context of unfair political competition in a hybrid regime.

Georgia is a suitable case for such analysis, as Georgia's elections in 2012 and 2016 resemble democratic elections in that they featured multiple parties, an independent election administration, pluralistic media, and free choice for voters on the day of the election. However, both elections also had some features of hybrid regimes, as the incumbents took actions to shape political competition to their own advantage by manipulating legislation, by utilizing administrative resources, and in a few cases, intimidating the electorate (Gilbreath and Balasanyan 2017). Moreover, the share of voters with no party identification has been substantial for the better part of the last decade – between 30 and 50%.[3] While voters have not shown much enthusiasm for political parties, party-voter linkages were intensive: more than 40% of voters were contacted by at least one candidate or their representative prior to both the 2012 and 2016 elections.

The main findings of this article make two key contributions: first, they show that campaigns matter even for partly free voters. Despite low public trust in political parties and low expectations from elected officials, voters are enthusiastic to interact with party candidates or their representatives during election campaigns and even build, at least temporarily, party loyalties. As the level of partisanship increases over time, it can lead to lead to increased political stability. Second, the article shows how an institution of party-voter linkages, established by the incumbent to make the most of the uneven playing field, can become useful in enhancing political competition if the opposition also gains resources to launch and operate an equally vast network of party-voter interactions.

The article is organized in the following way: a brief overview of the consequences of nonpartisanship is followed by two hypotheses. The rest of the article introduces data, describes

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[3] Historical data on partisanship from Georgia is available in National Democratic Institute (2017, 44).

analytical tools, reports results, and illustrates how party-voter linkages have worked to boost partisanship in Georgia.

## The perils of nonpartisanship

Weakened connections between parties and voters have become a feature of advanced and newer democracies (Dalton 2000, 199; Bustikova and Zechmeister 2017, 93). In less than democratic settings, party-voter links have traditionally been weaker (Dalton and Weldon 2007, 183). Here scholars often talk about unstable party systems (Powell and Tucker 2014, 124) or "party non-systems" (Sanchez 2009, 496) where parties have weak connections with societal groups, and correspondingly, voters have no durable party identifications. It is debated whether low levels of partisanship cause voter shifts from one party to another or if the frequent emergence of new parties provides voters little time to build stable party identification (Tavits 2008, 542). Nevertheless, nonpartisanship has been associated with low levels of institutionalization and accountability of the political system (Tóka 1998, 592).

Nonpartisanship is believed to have a negative impact on democracy, where voter concerns are normally articulated and addressed by political parties. If many voters lack an affinity with any political party, they may abstain from participating in elections, since nonpartisanship predicts low turnout (Miller 1991; Dalton and Weldon 2007). In addition, nonpartisans can be more vulnerable to newly established anti-systemic or populist parties (Sanchez 2009, 493; Ezrow et al. 2013, 1560; Powell and Tucker 2014, 124) or even a plebiscitarian government leading to a dictatorship (Klingermann and Wattenberg 1992, 137). Both scenarios are bad for democracy: while the first decreases the legitimacy of election results, the second opens a way to political outsiders, who can significantly destabilize or even alter the political system.

As undesirable as nonpartisanship is, developed democracies have relatively effective safeguards against the perils of party-voter misalignment. These include complex institutions that guarantee free and fair elections, the division of power across different branches of government, the rule of law and the accountability of elected officials. Where these institutions are weak or even lacking, nonpartisanship can work as a double-edged sword: On a positive note, a sizable share of nonpartisan voters can enhance political competition in an underdeveloped party system, since it is less likely to have an easily predictable winner and loser(s). Moreover, both the incumbent and the opposition will have significant incentive to reach out to nonpartisans to impress them by delivering on promises (the incumbent) or

promising alternative policies (the opposition). Such a process may help party system institutionalization.

Yet, negative effects of low level of partisanship are also likely: a sizable share of nonpartisan voters means that stakes of supporting or opposing a party is quite low. When the playing field in not even, the incumbent is normally using its resource advantage and turn nonpartisan voters into the incumbent supporters. Moreover, weak institutions, including weak parties, often invite extremist parties and populist politicians who mobilize voters against the establishment and undermine an already weak democracy (Levitsky and Loxton 2013, 110; Ezrow et al. 2013, 1559).

Unstable political parties are especially pronounced in hybrid regimes, where democratic and autocratic practices coexist and compete. While parties normally enjoy a free and fair environment to compete for elected office in democracies, in hybrid regimes, ruling parties skew the playing field to their advantage, thus making it very hard for the opposition to compete (Schedler 2002, 42). The skewing normally happens through the misuse of state resources by the incumbent, which seriously impedes the opposition's chances of winning elections (Green 2010, 808; Levitsky and Way 2010, 57). Still, elections create the possibility to defeat the incumbent either via the ballot box (Howard and Roessler 2006, 370) or through ousting them during post-electoral protests (McFaul 2005, 13; Kuzio 2006, 384; Beissinger 2009, 72).

Parties use a myriad of tools to contact voters, including face-to-face meetings, neighborhood rallies, telephone calls, mails/e-mails and fliers. Surely, not every mode of contact is equally effective as demonstrated by studies primarily from advanced democracies. For example, in the Unites States, the largest impact appears to come from face-to-face meetings. As Gerber and Green (2000) show, the effect of any contact on turnout is substantial, but more so with face-to-face contact, which increased turnout by 10 percentage points, while the effect of mail and phone contact was smaller, albeit still significant (Gerber and Green 2000, 660). While this and follow-up studies by Gerber and Green are mainly concerned with the mechanisms to increase turnout in advanced democracies (Green et al. 2003; Gerber et al. 2008), this article looks at the impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship in Georgia's hybrid political system, focusing on face-to-face contact as the mechanism of persuading voters. Despite the uneven playing field, party-voter linkages are expected to have a positive effect on party affinity among voters. This leads to:

*H1: Party-voter linkages increase the share of partisan voters in the short-term.*

The impact of party-voter linkages is conditioned by political context and the organization of party-voter interactions by parties. An uneven playing field and resource advantage gives many options to the incumbent to win voter loyalty and, at the same time, maintain the impression of electoral integrity in the face of international and local observers. The most important characteristic of the uneven playing field is access to state resources, which are not available to the opposition (Magaloni 2006; Gandhi and Lost-Okar 2009; Green 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010). These resources can be used to establish charismatic, programmatic, and clientelistic linkages with the electorate (Kitschelt 2000, 855): some voters will be persuaded by the party program, while others will require immediate benefits individually or at the community level, such as employment or investment in local infrastructure. Only the party in power can deliver such benefits without being accused of bribing voters directly. After all, the party can easily disguise the distribution of private benefits as part of a general government program.

While the ruling party has a resource advantage, this still does not guarantee victory due to the large number of nonpartisan voters. As such, the party leadership needs to utilize its resources effectively to learn about voters' preferences. In other words, the party needs to know which segment of voters will alone be persuaded by the leader's charismatic speeches, which segment will be pleased with their promises, and which segment requires immediate favors. This intelligence is normally collected by a network of activists working on the margins between the party and the state (Stockes 2005; Green 2007; Gans-Morse et al. 2013). While early examples of such networks, also known as party machines, come from advanced democracies, it is common in developing democracies and hybrid regimes, such as Mexico's under the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) (Langston and Morgenstern 2009) or the Peronist machine in Argentina (Stokes 2005). For analysis in this article, it is particularly relevant to note that Stokes' model of machine politics predicts a greater focus on nonpartisans, since supporters of one's own party need no additional effort, while supporters of the opposition will be costlier to persuade (Stokes 2005, 323). Based on the research briefly outlined above, this article also expects that incumbents with resource advantages will provide the ruling party with a disproportionate benefit of party-voter linkages:

*H2: Party contacts increase the share of voters who name the incumbent as the closest party in the short run.*

The two hypothesis of the impact of party-voter linkages and on the incumbent advantage are directly related to the old debate on stabile versus dynamic components of partisanship, exemplified by classic works of the Michigan school (Campbell et al. 1960) and its rational choice critiques (Fiorina 1981): The former school looks at partisanship as voters' stable, self-declared closeness to a party, which is a result of early socialization and changes slowly (Campbell et al. 1960). In contrast, the rational choice approach considers partisanship subject to change, since it reflects voters' retrospective assessment of politics and policies (Fiorina 1981; Fiorina 2002).

Partisanship, defined as self-reported psychological attachment to a political party, has been the focus of political behavior for the past half century (Campbell et al. 1960; Green et al. 2002). This is a positive form of partisanship. Yet, negative partisanship, formed through dislike, if not hatred, of a particular party or parties has also attracted scholarly interest since "hostility hypothesis" of Maggiotto and Piereson (Maggiotto and Piereson 1977).

Indeed, some works in old and new democracies show that negative partisanship reinforces positive one: people, who dislike a party are more likely to show higher loyalty to the party of their own choice (Maggiotto and Piereson 1977, 747; Abramowitz and Webster 2016, 16). Moreover, negative partisanship increases turnout even when controlling for the impact of positive partisanship, especially among nonpartisans (Mayer 2017, 6). Also, negative partisanship seems to be more dynamic than positive partisanship, since the former is more related to ideology and the latter more rooted in long-standing cleavages that define voters' identity (Mederios and Noël 2014, 1024). Most importantly, negative partisanship does not seem to be a feature of established party systems only: as demonstrated on the cases of post-communist countries, negative partisanship significantly shapes political behavior even when parties are not yet strong and party loyalties are still fragile (Rose and Mishler 1998; Vlachova 2001)

While scholars largely agree that partisanship has a stabile component, pace and drivers of the change are still debated (Fiorina 2002; Bartels 2002). Starting from Fiorina (1981), followers of the rational choice school argue that individuals closely watch personal and country-wide conditions, evaluate them and hence, update their party identification (Fiorina 1981, 234; Weinschenk 2010, 488). A branch of rational choice literature focuses on the role of economic factors in vote choice. Although the focus is party vote instead of party identification, the literature provides convincing evidence that voters react to changing economic conditions and punish the party responsible for poor outcomes (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008; Nadeau et al. 2012; Plescia and Kritzinger 2017). It is noteworthy that incumbent

punishment for poor economic performance is declining with the age of democracy, which suggests that voters are more likely to turn their backs to incumbent parties in new democracies than in established democracies (Bochsler and Hänni 2018).

If partisanship is a stabile attitude, it should not change due to subtle interventions. In other words, pre-existing partisanship should explain most of current partisanship, while party-voter linkages before elections should not be relevant. On the other hand, if partisanship changes only due to rational considerations, voters' assessments of economic conditions should matter and not party-voter linkages. While data and scope of this article is not sufficient to answer the question of partisan stability convincingly, the analysis below incorporates relevant variables to isolate the impact of party-voter linkages from the impact of stabile component of partisanship (lagged partisanship) as well as voters' ongoing assessments of own and country-wide conditions. Such an approach helps to address alternative explanations of short-term increase of partisanship.

The two hypotheses about the impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship are tested on the case of Georgia, which, has not only had an unstable party system, but has also had a hybrid regime during much of its independence since 1991 (Levitsky and Way 2010). The country has also been a testing-ground for major political instability for the past quarter century and only saw electoral change of power in 2012 (Fairbanks 2004; Jones 2013; Berglund 2014; Mueller 2014).

Parliamentary elections of 2012 marked a significant turning point in the history of the country's political competition: while the ruling United National Movement (UNM) lost the election, it did not disappear from the political scene and maintained its status as the largest opposition party after the 2016 parliamentary elections. This electoral shift, unusual for hybrid regimes, happened in the context of significant nonpartisanship. While just over 40% of voters reported no party identification before elections of 2012 and 2016 (National Democratic Institute 2012; CRRC 2016), a significant portion of nonpartisans voted, and hence, decided the fate of the winners and losers.

The rest of the article describes data, methods and models applied in the analysis, followed by the discussion of the main findings. The section before conclusions provides contextual details of Georgia's uneven playing field, party competition and party-voter linkages.

## Data and methods

Expectations about election outcomes in Georgia have normally been shaped by a handful of publicly available surveys, supported by external donors who promote political competition and democratic institutions in the country. This article uses data from such surveys carried out by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers Georgia (CRRC-Georgia) shortly after 2012 and 2016 parliamentary elections on behalf of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI).[4] The analysis of the two post-election polls is complemented by a panel study, which interviewed 1,217 respondents before and after the 2016 parliamentary election.[5]

The dependent variable in this study is partisanship as reported by respondents in post-election surveys. Partisanship or party identification, used interchangeably in the article, is defined as an individual's self-reported affinity to a party. Following the tradition established in the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, this article measures partisanship using a survey question, "Which party is closest to you?" (Dalton and Weldon 2007, 182). Partisans are those voters who pick a party that is "closest to them". Likewise, nonpartisans do not name any party, answering "no party", "don't know" or refuse to answer the question. To address the two hypotheses of partisanship and the incumbent advantage, two types of dependent variable are used: the first is a dichotomous variable (partisans vs nonpartisans). The second type not only differentiates nonpartisans from partisans, but also classifies the latter into affiliates of the incumbent party, the main challenger party of the incumbent, and other smaller opposition parties grouped together.

The main independent variable of interest is the party-voter linkages computed from two separate survey questions: first, whether the respondent was contacted by a party candidate or representative at home, in the workplace or in the neighborhood, and second, whether the respondent could recall the party, on behalf of which the contact was made. Hence, party-voter linkage is defined as face-to-face contact with a representative of any political party during the pre-election period. Respondents were free to name as many parties as they could recall. They could also list all types of contacts they had experienced. Normally, respondents reported more

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[4] Survey results are available at CRRC's online data analysis platform at http://caucasusbarometer.org/en/datasets. Diagrams from public presentations can be downloaded from NDI's website: https://www.ndi.org/georgia-polls. Each survey was administered on nationally representative samples of the adult population of Georgia after the elections of 2012 and 2016, in the month of November. The sample size was 1,947 in 2012 and 3,141 in 2016.

[5] The 2016 panel survey is a subsample of the 2016 post-election survey. It is also carried out by CRRC-Georgia for National Democratic Institute.

than one type of contact by more than one party. Hence, we can only describe party-voter contact in aggregate. Looking at the effects of particular types of contacts or contacts of each party, while desirable, is not feasible given the structure of the questionnaire.

Key covariates of post-election partisanship in this article are drawn from the Michigan and the rational choice schools to address the impacts of the stabile and dynamic elements of partisanship. Hence, analysis in the following sections differentiate between four types of covariates of post-election partisanship: lagged partisanship, retrospective evaluations, political engagement, and sociodemographic characteristics.

While assessing the impact on party-voter linkages on post-election partisanship, one needs to control for the impact of pre-existing partisanship, no matter how it was formed. To this end, the article uses two types of lagged partisanship: positive and negative (Campbell et al. 1960; Maggiotto and Piereson 1977; Rose and Mishler 1998; Bartels 2002). Positive type of partisanship is defined and measured in the same way as the dependent variable (post-election partisanship) with a temporal difference: it is a lagged value of positive partisanship as reported in the pre-election survey.

Negative partisanship has been measured using two approaches: as negative (hostile) attitude to the opposition party or its candidate(s) (Maggiotto and Piereson 1977, 746; Abramowitz and Webster 2016, 14), and as individual's declared decision to "never vote for a party" (Rose and Mishler 1998, 221; Vlachová 2001, 493; Medeiros and Noël 2014, 1035). Following the latter approach, this article defines negative partisanship as the respondents' reported negative predisposition with any party. The measure of negative partisanship comes from a survey question "which party you will never vote for?" As in the case of positive partisanship, respondents that name any party are "negative partisans," whereas those, who answer "no party", "don't know" or refuse to answer the question, are nonpartisans.

Respondents' retrospective evaluations of household and country-wide conditions helps to examine whether voters update pre-election partisanship through their perceptions (Fiorina 1981; Weinschenk 2010). Specifically, retrospective evaluations include four indicators: (1) perceived improvement in the household's economic conditions since the last election, (2) general assessment of the country's direction, (3) government approval, and (4) approval of the country's membership in the European Union (EU). The latter question can also be regarded as indirect endorsement of government, since the EU membership has been the government's declared foreign policy goal for many years.

Additional covariates include two indicators of political engagement: political knowledge and political participation (Dalton and Weldon 2007; Albright 2009). Political

knowledge is measured using a question on naming the Member of Parliament elected from the respondent's district, whereas political participation is operationalized as reported willingness to vote (in the panel survey) and reported past turnout (in post-election surveys). Lastly, all models include respondents' social-demographic characteristics, such as settlement type, age groups, gender, education attainment, employment status and household's economic standing measured by an index of possession of durable goods and household expenditure (Nadeau at al. 2013; Lewis-Beck et al. 2008; Weinschenk 2010).

To establish a reliable causal link between party-voter linkages and post-election partisanship, two inherent issues with observational data should be addressed: making sure that there are no observable differences between the group that was contacted by a party and the group that was not contacted. Unless the two group are almost identical to each other, it will be problematic to argue that party contact increases the level of partisanship. Equally serious issue for causal inference is a stabile element of party identification, which is a source of endogeneity. Surely, individuals' past and present partisanship will be related, but it is highly likely to assume a third, unmeasured factor, which shapes partisanship at two different points of time. Under the condition of endogeneity, estimated effect of party-voter linkages on post-election partisanship will be biased.

Using 2012 and 2016 waves of post-election surveys and a panel survey before the 2016 parliamentary elections, this article applies two types of quasi-experimental research designs to estimate the effect of party-voter linkages correctly. Specifically, to address the issue of equivalence between contacted and not contacted groups, the article applies two different matching techniques within each of the 2012 and 2016 post-election surveys. In addition, the problem of endogeneity is addressed using an instrumental variable approach on the 2016 panel data.

While imitating experimental research, matching offers a solution to at least two significant problems inherent to observational data analysis. First, it reduces the dependence of findings on statistical models that researchers select out of countless possible options (Ho et al. 2007, 213; Sekhon 2009 489). Second, matching can deal with endogeneity, which in this case refers to the simultaneous effect of another factor on both dependent and independent variables.[6] While the 2012 and 2016 surveys show a non-trivial positive effect of party contacts, there are at least two sources of endogeneity. First, voters, who were already partisan

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[6] There is an ongoing debate about whether matching is an adequate technique to address endogeneity. See very accessible discussions in Nielsen (2010) and Blattman (2010).

before being contacted, could recall the contacted party more easily than nonpartisan voters. Second, parties could have found it easier to contact voters, who already had positive predispositions towards any political party. In other words, hardcore nonpartisans would be less accessible during the campaign period, since they will be less motivated to meet party representatives than partisan voters. Similarly, nonpartisans would be less likely to remember and report their contacts with party candidates or their representatives after elections.

The article argues that matching should address these endogeneity problems for several reasons. First, the survey data contains information on quite a few of the observed characteristics of respondents that influence propensity for "treatment," i.e. party contact. Such characteristics are as close to factual data as can be in a survey: type of residence, gender, age, employment status, education attainment, household income and expenditure, access to satellite signal receivers, etc. Surely, some of these characteristics can influence partisanship too. Yet, it is highly improbable that the variables used for matching would be influenced by whether the respondent was contacted by a party or not. Second, matching models used in this article exclude variables that are directly related to the outcome (partisanship) or potentially related to both treatment and outcome at the same time, but subject to change due to the treatment. Examples of such variables are retrospective assessments and attitudes to specific policies. These variables are used in the regression models on matched datasets to control for their impact on partisanship. Moreover, these variables interact with the party-voter contact variable (treatment) to check if there is a heterogenous treatment effect.[7]

Another significant issue related to the impact of party-voter linkages is to isolate the impact of linkages from the impact of pre-existing (lagged) partisanship. Surely, voters, who were partisan before elections will be more likely to stay partisan after elections compared to voters who reported no pre-election party affiliation. Such continuity is likely to be conditioned by one or more unobserved factors. Hence, pre-election partisanship is endogenous to post-election partisanship, and, hence estimated impact of party-voter linkages on post-election partisanship will not be reliable. In such situations a solution is offered by the instrumental variable approach. An instrumental variable should correlate with endogenous variable (pre-

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[7] Matching approaches used in this article envisages some loss of cases, since not every "treated" case will be feasible to match with an identical "untreated" case. Nearest Neighbor matching successfully matched 73% of cases in 2012 n=1,430) and 85% in 2016 (n=2,668). Mahalanobis metric distance matching retained less cases through successful matching: 47% in 2012 (n=918) and 50% in 2016 (1,566). The descriptive statistics of all variables used in matching, as well in further analysis is available in appendix 1a.

election partisanship) but not with any unobserved cause of the outcome (post-election partisanship). In other words, the instrument should be related to post-election partisanship only through pre-election (lagged) partisanship (Angrist and Pischke 2009, 116; Wooldridge 2010, 90).

Sources of reliable instrumental variable are random assignments (lotteries), natural conditions (rainfall, disasters), institutions (land tenure type), historical shocks (colonial settler mortality), etc. (Dunning 2012, 90). Yet, studies similar to this article also use lagged socio-demographic variables, such as gender, age, income, etc. (Lewis-Beck et al. 2008, 84; Weinschenk 2010, 477). While it is perfectly feasible to employ socio-demographic characteristics as instrumental variables, such an approach will be hard to justify. For example, one can easily exclude reverse causality when using respondents' income as an instrument for pre-election partisanship. However, the instrument is not likely to have affect on the post-election partisanship only through pre-election partisanship. It is more likely that some unobserved indicator of the respondent's ability simultaneously defines her economic activity (income) and political attitudes (partisanship).

The panel survey of 2016 contains questions to assess the respondents' general abilities. Respondents do not see these questions and are not asked to answer any of them. Instead, interviewers are asked to reflect of each respondent's attitude and behavior during the interview. The interviewers are also requested to assess respondent's knowledge and understanding of questions during the interview. While each respondent is assessed on seven different questions, responses are highly correlated, suggesting that the seven questions measure a single dimension. Hence, a single summative index of the items, for lack of a better term, called respondents' sophistication in this article, is used as the instrument for both positive and negative partisanship before elections.[8]

Respondents' sophistication, as computed here, echoes, the political knowledge measure described in Albright (2009). Building on the suggestions of Campbell and his collaborators (1960), Albright confirmed with new data analysis that political knowledge and partisanship go hand in hand through cognitive mobilization (Albright 2009, 259). Likewise, more sophisticated respondent should be more likely to report partisanship, and therefore, it should serve as a valid instrument. Indeed, the instrument is significantly related to both

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[8] Values of the instrument range from 0 to 7, where 0 denoted the lowest, and 7 represents the highest level of sophistication. Appendix 1b shows the composition of the instrument, including original question wordings, approach to recode responses and correlations of the seven items.

indicators of pre-election partisanship: one standard deviation increase in the value of the instrument is related with 1.7-time higher probability of reporting positive partisanship and two times higher probability of reporting negative partisanship. While this correlation is not very strong, the instrument meets basic theoretical requirements for instrumental variables, such as exclusion restriction (Sovey and Green 2011): Respondents' sophistication, as assessed to interviews before elections, is not expected to have any direct effect on reported partisanship four months after the assessment took place.

Instrumental variable analysis is implemented in two stages: first stage model estimates pre-election partisanship using the instrumental variable (respondent's sophistication) and covariates, such as retrospective evaluations, political engagement and socio-demographic characteristics. On the second stage post-election partisanship is explained by estimated pre-election partisanship, party-voter linkages and covariates. Models use two-stage least square and bivariate probit regression estimators as suggested by Angrist and Pischke (2009, 202).

Matched data analysis also takes two consecutive steps: at the initial stage of matching, relevant matching variables are identified and propensity for treatment (party contact) is estimated using logistic regression models. At the second stage, treated and untreated cases are matched in the 2012 and 2016 post-election waves nearest neighbor matching Mahalanobis metric distance matching approaches (Guo and Fraser 2015). As a result, two distinct datasets are constructed through the two matching approaches, where each treated individual is paired with the most similar untreated individual (Ho et al. 2007). The subsequent analysis is performed on both pre-matching and matched datasets.

To address the first hypothesis regarding the impact of party contacts on partisanship, logistic and binomial probit models are run and marginal effects are reported. To examine whether party-voter interactions provide an advantage to the incumbent (the second hypotheses), multinomial logistic regression is used, where the dependent variable has three categories: non-partisans, supporters of the incumbent and supporters of the main opposition party. All models are reported with robust standard errors taking into consideration clustering of observations.

## Analysis and results

## Covariates of partisanship

Partisanship has been strongly related to reported voting intention in Georgia: According to the pre-election survey, the two types of partisanship significantly increases probability of voting for a party in upcoming elections: voters, who express positive partisanship before elections are 33 times more likely to vote for a party than voters without positive partisanship. Negative partisanship also has a significant, but less strong relationship with voting: negative partisans are six times more likely to name a party they intend to vote compared to those, who shows no negative attitude to any party.

While reported partisanship in pre-election polls is not directly comparable to official election results, discrepancies between the two suggest that during the campaign parties successfully reach out to nonpartisan voters, which significantly influences expected election outcomes. For example, prior to the 2012 elections, 38% declared the ruling United National Movement (UNM) as the party closest to them, while the opposition Georgian Dream coalition was named by 14% (National Democratic Institute 2012). In fact, the UNM received slightly over 40% and the coalition almost 55% (Central Election Commission of Georgia 2012). Likewise, before the 2016 elections, 19% identified themselves as GD affiliates and 15% named UNM as the closest party (CRRC 2012). In reality the GD received almost 49% and the UNM just above 27% (Central Election Commission of Georgia 2016).

Before analyzing the impact of party contacts on partisanship and party identification, the article describes the correlates of partisanship in Georgia on the example of the 2016 panel survey. Since this is a single country study looking at each individual in two snapshots, it is not possible to see the impact of institutional factors such as party system characteristics, competition, or electoral rules (Orriols and Martínez 2014; Lupu 2015).

Moreover, taking the nature of the data into consideration, this section makes no causal inference between partisanship and attitudes or opinions. Instead, using panel data, it describes whether post-election partisanship is related to its stabile component (indicators of pre-election partisanship) or whether it is formed, at least partially, as a "running tally" based on the short-term retrospective evaluations of individual and national matters (Fiorina et al. 1981). A variable on party-voter linkages is also included in the model, but its impact will be re-examined and discussed latter in the text. The model also includes covariates describing

respondents' socio-demographic characteristics that change slowly, if at all, between the two waves.

To illustrate reasoning behind different types of variables, consider respondent's age, which may shape individual's partisanship due to different periods of socialization (Campbell et al. 1960; Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2011, 392), whereas the reverse causal link is hardly possible. Similarly, a specific position on a foreign policy issue or the perceived economic condition of a respondent's household can drive one's partisanship towards or away from specific parties (Fiorina 1981; Weinschenk 2010). However, it is equally possible that such a position is formed due to pre-existing party affiliation, since the latter provides a prism for individuals to assess facts and events in a biased way (Campbell et al. 1960; Bartels 2002).

Graph 1. Covariates of post-election partisanship
Marginal effects. Logit estimates of panel data, 95% CIs
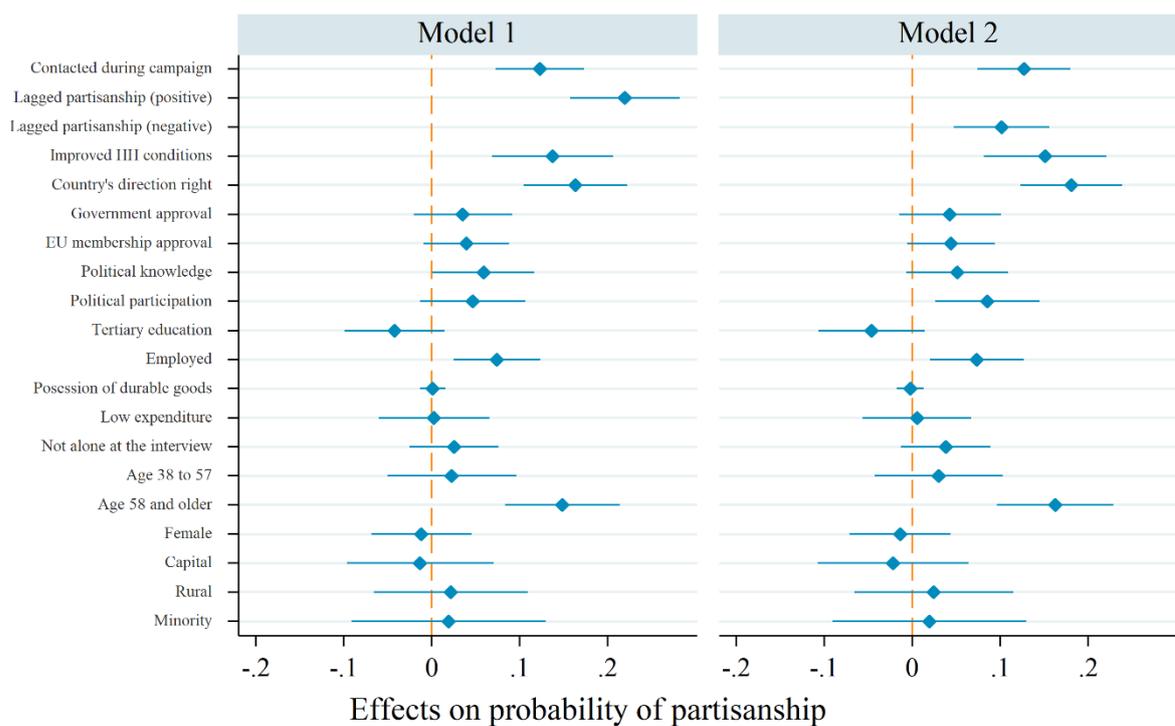


NDI/CRRC 2016

*The graph shows marginal effects of all covariates included in models. Full tables of estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

Graph 1 shows a summary of the two logistic regression models, where all covariates are the same except for the two indicators of lagged partisanship. All models suggest a similar hierarchy of relations between post-election partisanship and types of variables. Expectedly, the strongest relationship is observed between post-election partisanship and lagged partisanship, followed by retrospective evaluations and social-demographic characteristics. Positive type of partisanship shows the strongest relation, followed by negative type. While the influence of lagged partisanship is predictable, two theoretically relevant correlates of partisanship, political knowledge and political participation, are positively, but weakly related to partisanship.

Results regarding the influence of retrospective assessments is mixed: perceived improvements in households' economic conditions during the last electoral circle as well as positive assessment of the country's general direction is strongly related to post-election partisanship. In contrast, government approval makes no difference for partisans and nonpartisans, while approval of the country's foreign policy priority (the EU membership) is positively related to people's affinity with a political party.

Most of social-demographic characteristics of respondents, such as settlement type, gender, education and households' economic status, appears not significant for partisanship. Yet, age and employment status seem to influence partisanship positively: people are more likely to report partisanship as they reach retirement age. This is in line with earlier studies of post-communist countries, according to which trust to political parties increases with age (Pol-Eleches and Tucker 2011, 392). Also, employed people more often reported partisanship after the elections than people, who are not employed.

Last but not least, the indicator of party-voter linkages is strongly and positively related to post-election partisanship. Interestingly, if post-election partisanship is replaced with either indicators of pre-election partisanship as the dependent variables, party-voter linkages will have no effect. This observation is not incidental, since the election campaign had not gotten underway before the pre-election survey was completed and hence, no intensive party contacts were expected. Therefore, it is tempting to attribute post-election increase in overall partisanship to party contacts during the campaign. However, a spurious relationship between party-voter contact and post-election partisanship is equally possible, since some observable factors, such as a voters' pre-election partisanship, as well and their social-demographic characteristics and economic conditions, can influence the probability of party-voter interactions and post-election partisanship simultaneously, making it look as if there was a causal link between the two.

Following two sections will offer two distinct tools, matching and instrumental variable approaches, to address the potentially spurious relationship between post-election partisanship and party-voter contacts during the campaign and establish a causal link between contacts and partisanship with the least possible bias.

## Talk works

At the descriptive level, it looks like talk works: while 41 percent and 45 percent of voters reported a party contact before the 2012 and 2016 elections respectively, the level of partisanship among contacted voters was 13 percentage points higher in 2012 and 18 percentage points higher in 2016 than the level of partisanship of voters who were not contacted. In the 2016 panel data, almost exactly one haft of the 1,207 respondents reported party contact and they also reported 17 percentage point higher partisanship compared to voters who were not contacted.

To validate the impact of party-voter linkages, the article follows the plan outlined in the methods section: at the first stage, the Nearest Neighbor and Mahalanobis matching algorithms are used to match individuals who are most similar across matching characteristics and only differ in terms of reporting or not reporting a party contact during the election campaign. This step is followed by binomial logistic regression models using the pre-matched and matched data sets, where the dependent variable is post-election partisanship and the key independent variable is party-voter contact. As in the above section, all models control for the influence of covariates, such as social-demographic characteristics, retrospective evaluations, political knowledge and political participation.

Overall, the article reports three different models on each of 2012 and 2016 surveys, using one pre-matched and two matched datasets per wave (graph 2). In all models, party-voter contact is a statistically significant predictor or partisanship with a substantial magnitude. The effect sizes are comparable in 2012 and 2016 models and range from eight percentage point (Mahalanobis matched data for 2012) to 13 percentage points (Mahalanobis matched data for 2016). In other words, holding the effect of other covariates at their means, probability of reporting partisanship after 2012 and 2016 elections was 8 to 13 percentage points higher among the contacted voters than among the voters, who did not interact with party representatives during the election campaign.

Among the control variables, social-demographic variables seem to be less important than retrospective evaluations and political engagement. Among the variables on retrospective

evaluations, government approval and positive assessments of the country's general direction positively influences probability of partisanship in most models. Perceived improvements in household economic conditions is also a significant factor for partisanship, but it has reversed the sign between the waves: while in the 2012 models, reported improvements in household economic conditions predicts a lower level of partisanship, in the 2016 models the effect becomes just the opposite. Endorsement of the country's foreign policy priority (EU membership) significantly increases the probability of partisanship in 2016, but not four years earlier. The two expected close correlates of partisanship, such as political knowledge and political participation, have a significant positive impact in most models of both waves (with the exception of the Nearest Neighbor matched data in 2012 for past turnout).

Graph 2. Marginal effects of covariates on post-election partisanship
Logit estimates of matched data, 95% CIs
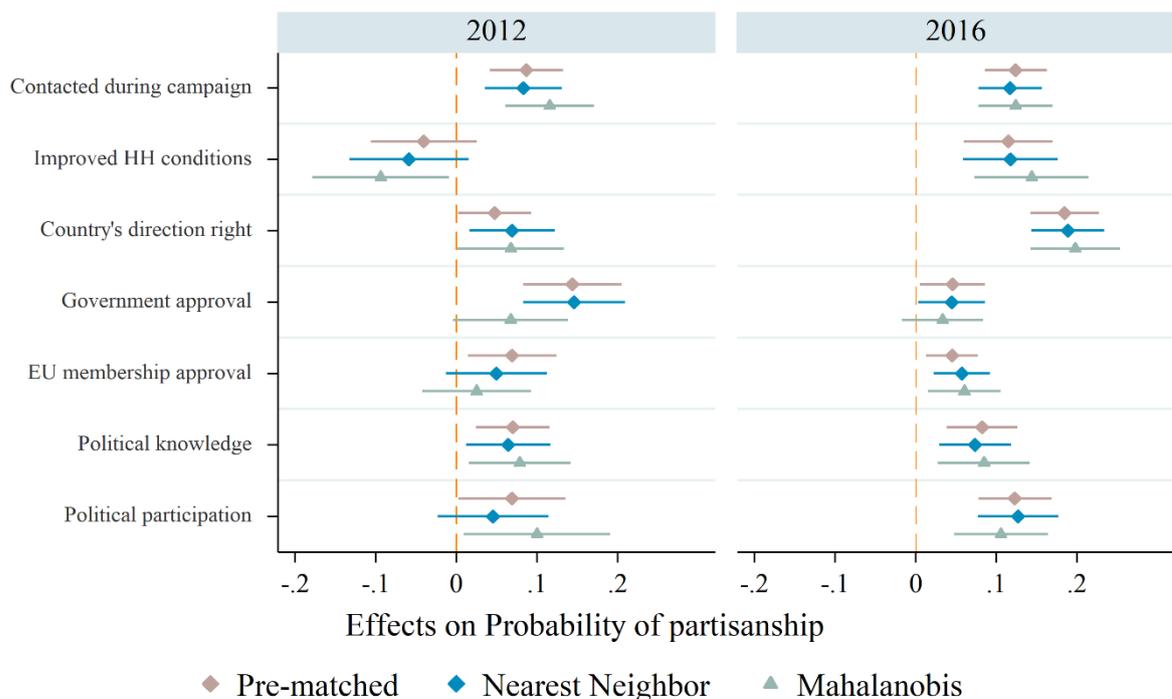


NDI/CRRC 2012; NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models include socio-demographic controls that are not shown on the graph. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

Hence, all models confirm the first hypothesis that party-voter linkages increase probability of post-election partisanship. While several other variables, mostly retrospective evaluations and political knowledge, have impacts of substantive importance, their inclusion in the model does not significantly diminish the impact of party contact. Yet, it is worth

checking whether party contacts work differently in the groups with different evaluations of household and country-wide matters as well with voters with different levels of political engagement. This will show if the effect of contact was at all conditioned by positive retrospective evaluations and high level of political engagement.

### Graph 3. Marginal effects of contacts on post-election partisanship
### Logit estimates of matched data, 95% CIs
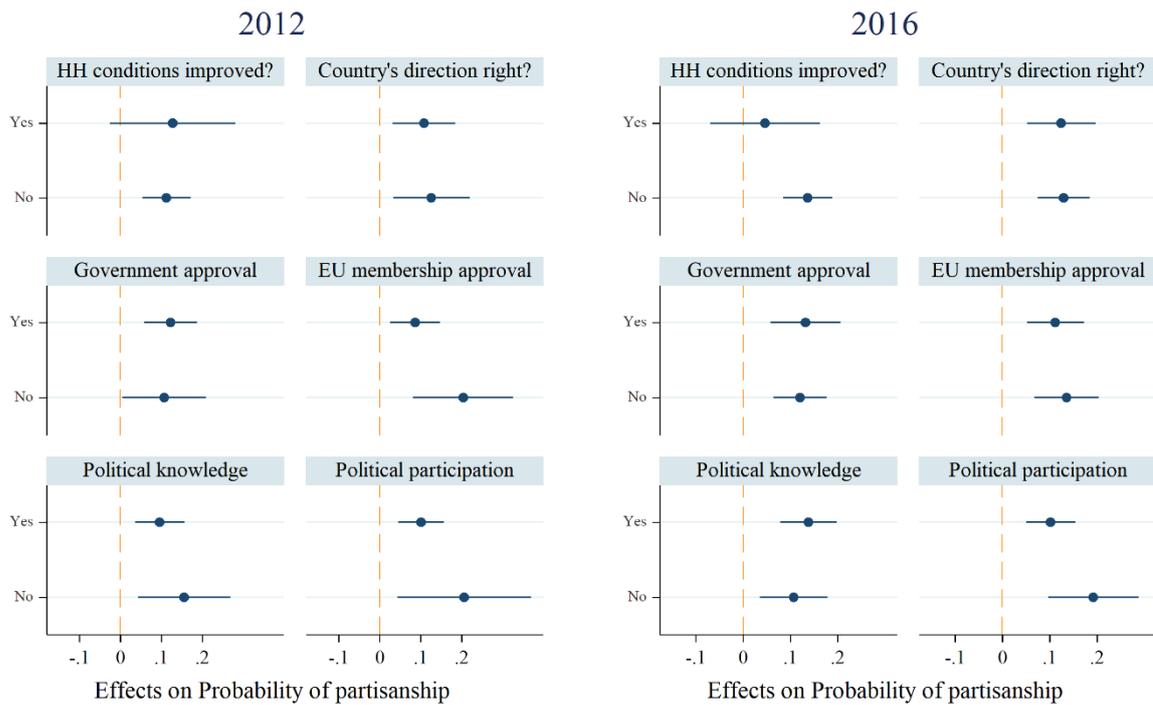


NDI/CRRC 2012; NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models are coming from the matched data set using Mahalanobis metric distance approach. All models include socio-demographic controls. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

When interacting party-voter contacts with the six different variables on the graph 3, all models show a common trend: party contacts significantly and positively influence the groups with positive and negative retrospective evaluations. Moreover, the effect is comparable and positive for the groups with high and low level of political knowledge and high and low level of political participation (voted vs did not vote in the past elections). An exception is perceived improvements in household economic conditions, where party contact seems to increase partisanship among those who did not perceive any improvement but show no impact on those who reported improvement of the situation.

21

While the analysis using matching approach documents the significant positive effect of party-voter linkages on the level of reported partisanship, the data and method used in the analysis is not sufficient to isolate the impact of pre-existing partisanship. Since the matched data sets do not contain any information on respondents' partisanship before she was contacted by party representatives, it is not possible to attribute increased probability of partisanship among the contacted to party-voter contacts only. Analysis of panel data from 2016 helps to address this inefficiency of the matched data as it measures attitudes and opinions for the same individuals at two different points of time.

The panel data provides an opportunity to have a closer look at three additional questions: first, how stable is partisanship, i.e. how much of this post-election partisanship is explained by pre-election partisanship? Second, whether party-voter linkages remain a significant factor in shaping post-election partisanship considering the impact of pre-election (lagged) partisanship; third, whether party-voter linkages have a differential impact on pre-election partisans and pre-election nonpartisans.

Graph 4. Marginal effects of covariates on post-election partisanship
Bivariate probit estimates of panel data, 95% CIs
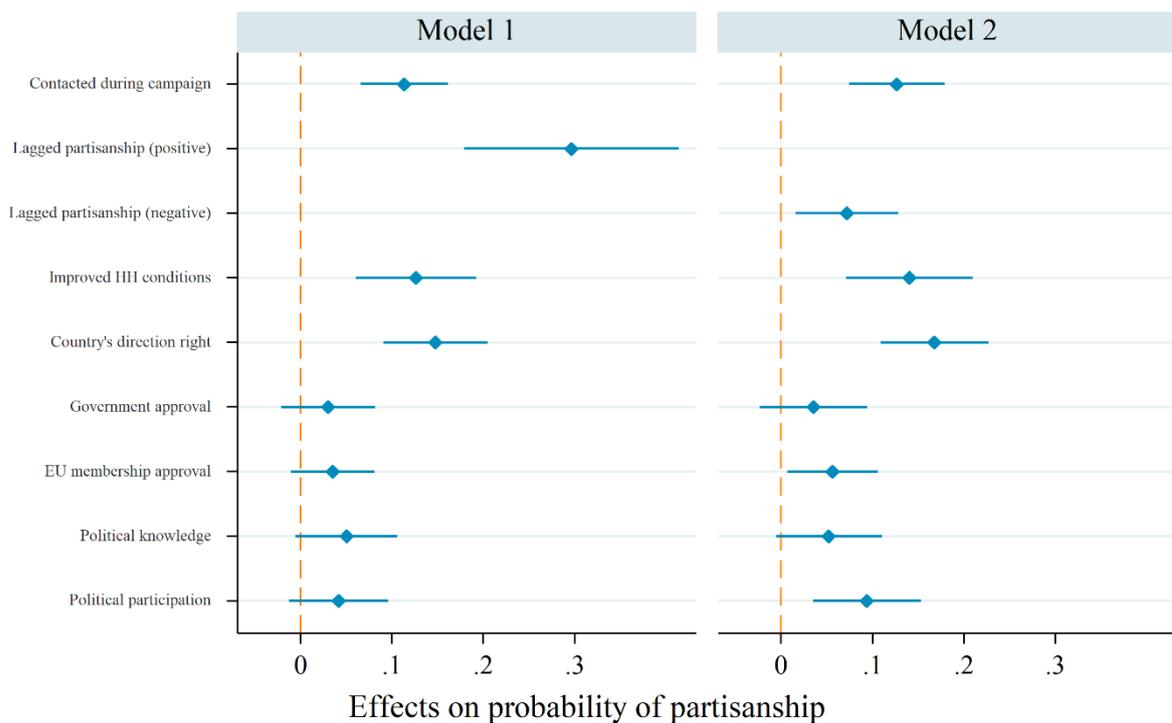


NDI/CRRC 2016

*The graph shows only second stage covariates. Both models include socio-demographic controls not shown on the graph. Full tables with all estimates, including estimates of 2SLS models, are available in the appendix 1a.*

Graph 4 summarizes the results of the three models of bivariate probit models, where at the first, the two indicators of pre-election partisanship are estimated using the instrumental variable (respondents' sophistication) and the second stage equation includes party-voter linkages with covariates on retrospective evaluations, political engagement.[1] As expected, different types of lagged (pre-election) partisanship is the most important predictor of post-election partisanship in both models. If prior to the elections a voter names a party that stands closest to them, she is on average 30 percentage points more likely to remain partisan after the elections compared to pre-election nonpartisans. The effect of negative partisanship is modestly positive: seven percentage points on average. The rest of the results mimic the findings from the matched data models: households' perceived change of economic conditions and assessment of the country's general direction are significant predictors of partisanship. Yet, most importantly finding of this study is the stabile effect of party-voter linkages: no matter how pre-election partisanship is measured, contacted voters show on average 10-13 percentage point increase of probability to be partisan after the elections compared to non-contacted voters. Moreover, contacts appear to be as significant for pre-election partisans as for pre-election nonpartisans: interaction between the three types of lagged partisanship with party contacts (graph 5) confirm that the probability of increased partisanship is 10 to 15 percentage points for each group approximately.

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[1] Appendix 1 also reports the two-stage least square models. Results are broadly comparable with one difference: estimates of pre-election partisanship(s) through the two-stage least square models, have larger confidence intervals than the same estimates from binomial probit models. However, the effect of party-voter linkages does not change in either models.

Graph 5. Marginal effects of contacts by lagged partisanship
Bivariate probit estimates of panel data, 95% CIs
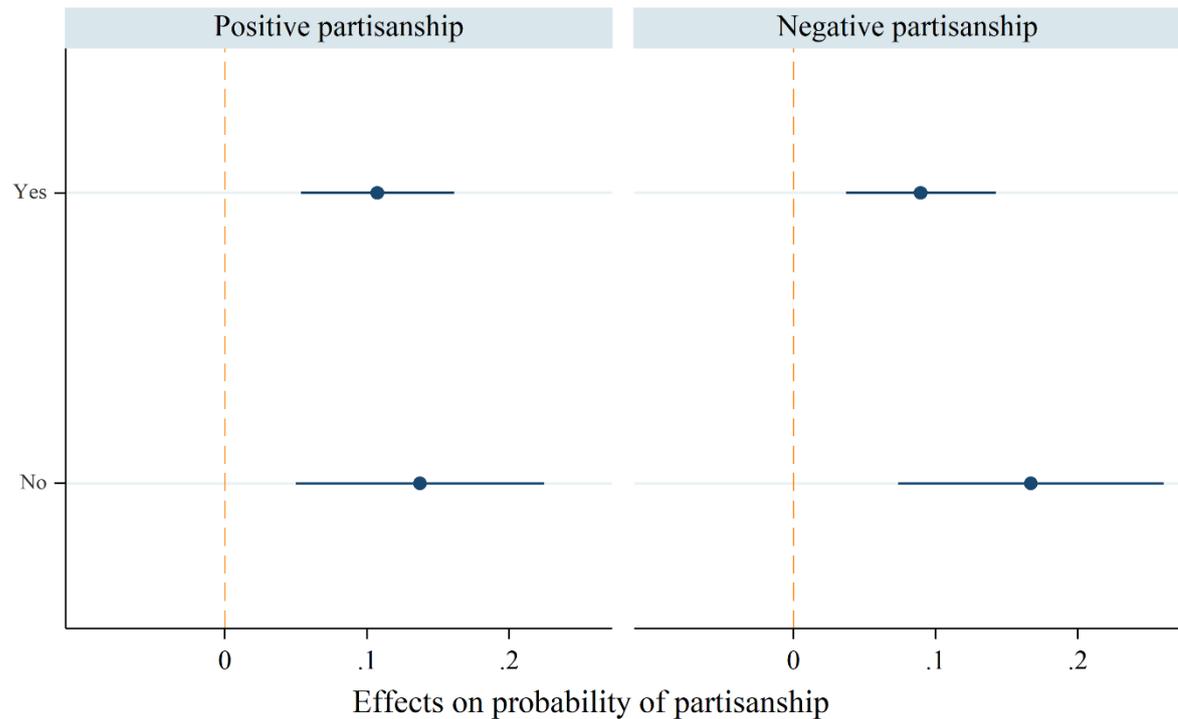


NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models include controls on retrospective evaluations, political engagement and socio-demographic characteristics. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

The positive impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship is a noteworthy factor in a hybrid regime, since it signals the significance, if not prevalence, of the competitive means for winning voter loyalty. However, the question remains whether the impact of party-voter contacts should be attributed to the ruling party, which, as a rule, possesses far greater resources than any opposition competitor. In other words, does the incumbent use its resource advantage to contact more voters and boost its support this way, while the opposition cannot afford such extensive contacts and hence, cannot increase its own party affiliation beyond its core support? Next section addresses this question.

## For whom the talk works?

Descriptive statistics show that the incumbent indeed makes more contacts during election campaign than any opposition party (38% of the voters reported such contact in 2012; and 45% in 2016). Election monitoring organizations also observed the incumbent advantage in party-voter linkages: out of 1280 public meetings monitored during 2016 election campaign, 43%

was organized by the incumbent Georgian Dream party followed by its main challenger United National Movement at 24% (ISFED 2016, 32). Nevertheless, excessive contacts with the electorate is not necessarily advantageous for any party, including the incumbent. To illustrate this point, suppose a nonpartisan is repeatedly contacted by the incumbent party representative, with a menu of promises. Unless the voter feels that the incumbent had fulfilled its previous promises and/or believes in the capacity of the incumbent to deliver promises, the contact may actually become counterproductive. Moreover, parties frequently campaign by focusing not as much on themselves or their advantages, as they do against their competitors, especially against the incumbent. Following this logic, contact with the opposition may not persuade nonpartisans to align with a concrete opposition party, although it may still take their potential support away from the incumbent.

Keeping potential positive and negative effects of party contacts on the support of particular parties, the results of two types of analysis is reported below: multinomial logistic regression results on the matched data from 2012 and 2016 post-election surveys, and instrumental variable models on 2016 panel data. The dependent variables in the models are reported party affiliation for the incumbent party, the largest opposition party (UNM), and affiliation with none of the parties (nonpartisans). The independent and control variables are the same as in the previous models: party-voter contacts, respondents' socio-demographic characteristics, retrospective evaluations, political engagement.

Multinomial logistic regression results on graph 6 illustrate marginal effects of contacts on partisanship on the matched data using Nearest Neighbor and Mahalanobis matching approaches. All models for the 2012 wave show a significant positive impact of party contact for the Georgian Dream, then the opposition coalition against the ruling United National Movement, whereas contacts made no difference for the affiliates of the incumbent. In contrast, models for 2016 suggest that contacted voters were more likely to report their affinity to the incumbent as well as to the opposition.

## Graph 6. Marginal effects of contacts on post-election partisanship
### Multinomial logit estimates of matched data, 95% CIs

2012       2016
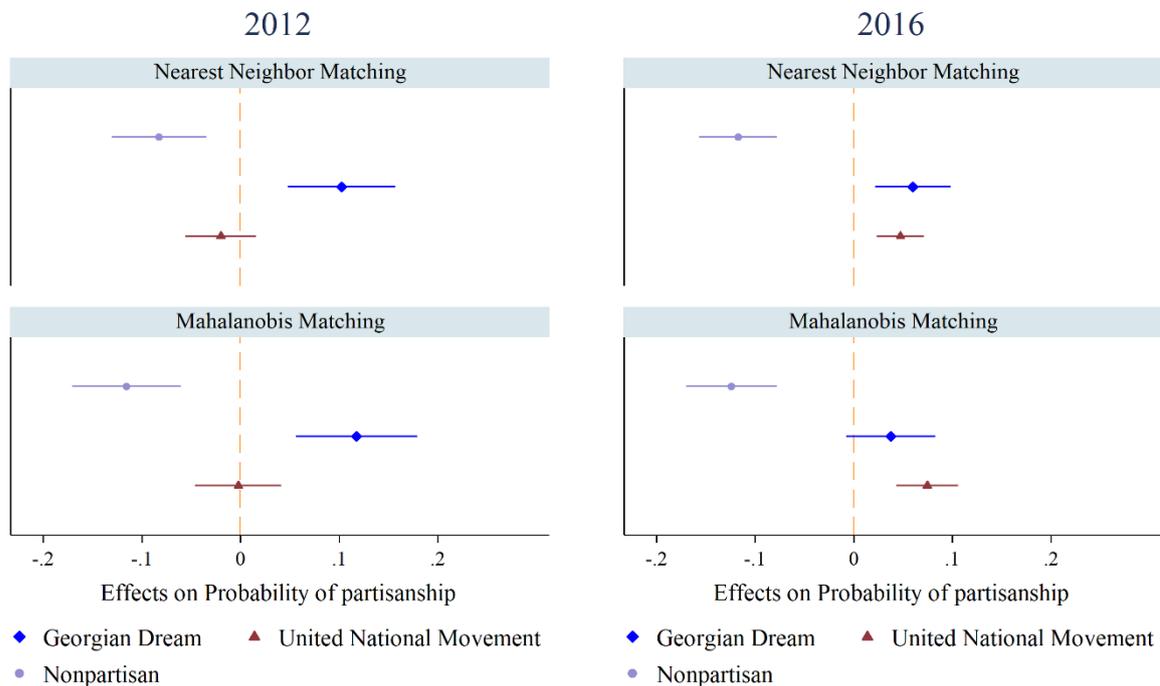


NDI/CRRC 2012; NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models include controls on retrospective evaluations, political engagement and socio-demographic characteristics. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

As important as party-voter linkages might be for increasing party affiliation, both with the ruling party and the opposition, the question remains as to how voters with different pre-dispositions towards specific issues respond to party contacts in terms of their party affiliation. For example, are contacted voters with positive views about the country's direction more likely to report their affinity with the ruling party or the opposition? The same question could be repeated regarding other covariates of partisanship in the reported models, such as government assessment, political knowledge or foreign policy endorsement.

Graph 7 illustrates the overall advantage of the opposition parties by showing the interactions of party contacts with six different covariates per survey wave to predict the effects on party identification with the Georgian Dream and United National Movement: In 2012, the Georgian Dream benefited from party-voter linkages across the board except for the groups who did not approve of the government and did not vote in the past elections. Likewise, in 2016, contacts helped the United National Movement, now the main opposition party, to increase probability of its affiliates in all groups except for those who reported their

household's economic conditions as improved during the election cycle. It looks like party-voter contacts helped the incumbent party mostly among those, who were relatively better satisfied existing conditions: approved country's general direction and government.

### Graph 7. Marginal effects of contacts on post-election partisanship
### Multinomial logit estimates of matched data, 95% CIs
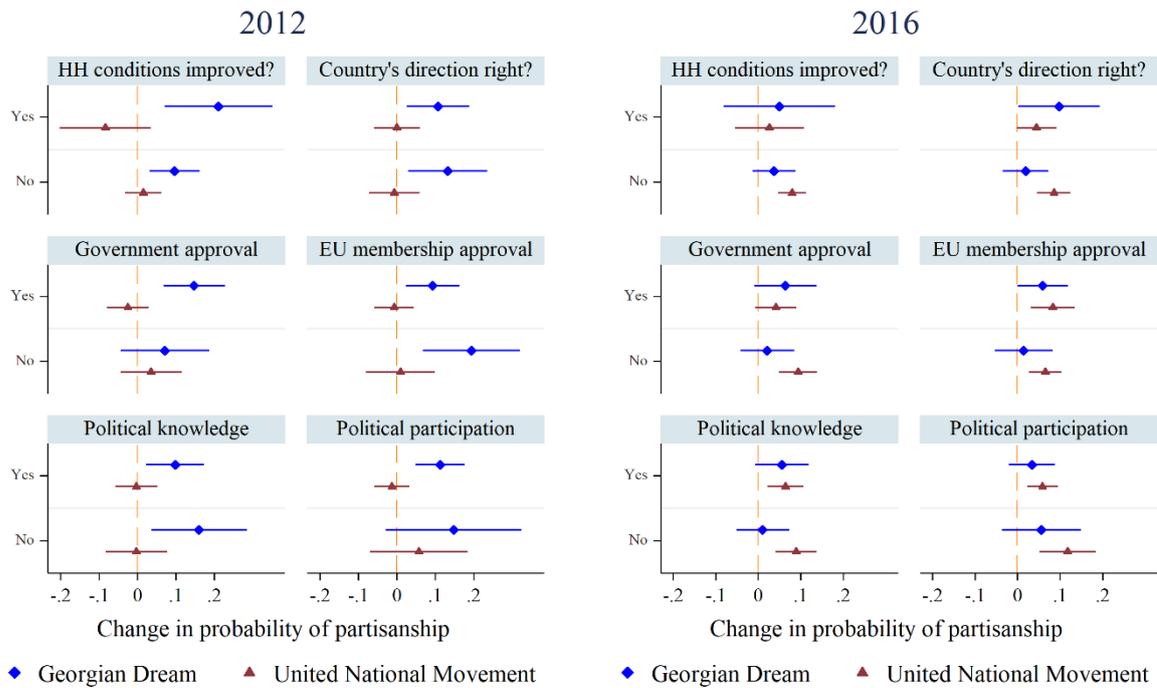


NDI/CRRC 2012; NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models are coming from the matched data set using Mahalanobis metric distance approach. All models include socio-demographic controls. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

Results of panel data analysis largely confirms key findings of the matched data analysis: Graph 8 shows the interaction effects of party contacts with pre-election partisans vs nonpartisans according to the two indicators of lagged partisanship. The two competitors seem to benefit from party-voter linkages quite similarly with a slight advantage to the Georgian Dream, the ruling party. Specifically, contacts with nonpartisan voters seem to increase probability of ruling party affiliation after elections in case of negative and positive indicators of pre-election partisanship. However, contacts with nonpartisans, whether positive or negative, are less successful for the opposition party. Hence, the ruling party, considering its resource advantage in a hybrid regime, does not have a monopoly on the benefits of party-voter linkages. This is the most significant conclusion of the present analysis.

Graph 8. Marginal effects of contacts by type of lagged partisanship
Bivariate probit estimates of panel data, 95% CIs
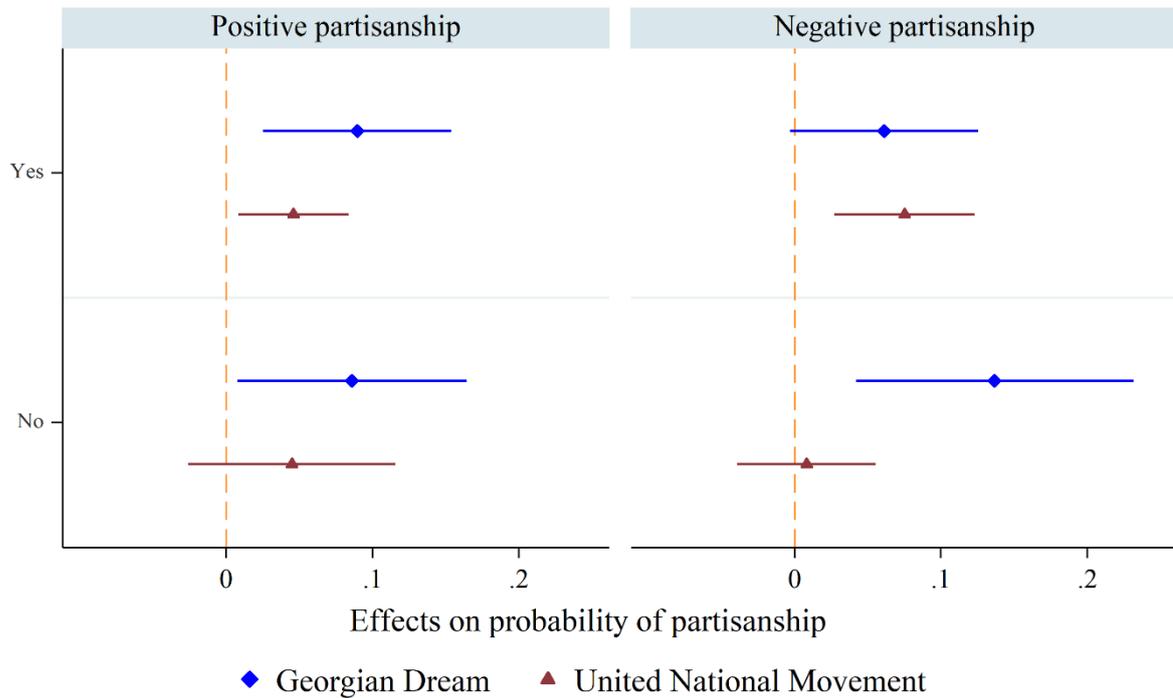


Effects on probability of partisanship

◆ Georgian Dream    ▲ United National Movement

NDI/CRRC 2016

*All models include controls on retrospective evaluations, political engagement and socio-demographic characteristics. Full tables with all estimates are available in the appendix 1a.*

Based on the reported findings, the second hypothesis about an incumbent advantage is not supported by the data, which contradicts the scholarship on less than democracies focusing on the incumbent advantage (Magaloni 2006; Green 2007; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009; Levitsky and Way 2010). Therefore, the finding is more optimistic for a hybrid regime than the hypothesis envisaged: party-voter linkages seem to increase overall partisanship and hence benefit the incumbent as well as other parties (or at the very least, the incumbent's main challenger).

The finding about a benefit of party-voter linkages for the incumbent and the opposition put Georgia's elections closer to democracies than to competitive authoritarian regimes. Yet, the question remains how lasting is the effect observed at two different snapshots. The surveys used in this article do not provide enough evidence to answer this question directly, but indirect indicators make the lasting effect doubtful. On the one hand, partisanship remains quite low despite several election cycles and corresponding spikes of self-reported party identification. On the other hand, party-voter linkages seem to deactivate as soon as the elections are over.

This is quite rational on behalf of the parties, since maintaining the network is expensive. As for maintaining the party-voter ties, this responsibility is transferred to elected officials at the national and municipal levels. Paradoxically, rather than maintaining, the ties break here: 27% of the population reported having any contact with majoritarian MPs from their electoral districts in 2014, considerably lower compared to the spread of pre-election contacts (National Democratic Institute 2014).

While this study showed a statistically significant and sizable impact of party-voter linkages on partisanship, there are several limitations in the data to be addressed in future research. First, this article could not compare the impact of different contact types. Surely, face-to-face interactions are most effective as demonstrated experimentally (Gerber and Green 2002), but they are also quite expensive and time consuming. Further research is needed to see if there are faster and cheaper ways to create party-voter linkages, for example, using social media.[2] Moreover, available data for this article does not include the timing and frequency of party contacts, which would be useful in assessing the efficiency of each parties' strategies. Overall, once party-voter contacts work, additional research could be of good service to political parties in Georgia and in similar contexts of less than even playing field to identify and promote the most cost-effective forms of party-voter linkages.

## Party-voter linkages under "fragile democratic gains"

### Uneven playing field

For the past few years, Georgia's regime type has leaned towards a democracy. The Polity IV project classified the country as a democracy in 2016 (Marshall and Elzinga-Marshall 2017, 48). Yet, Freedom House still lists Georgia among "partly free" countries, also noting its "fragile democratic gains" (Freedom House 2017b). Classification of regime types and the relevance of elections for its hybridity are beyond the scope of this text. Nevertheless, this article follows the claim that elections with some authoritarian features are conceptually similar to democratic ones, since the latter are not totally free either from fraud and vote buying or from manipulation of electoral rules (Magaloni, 2008; Gandhi and Lust-Okar, 2009, 407).

Previous research shows that Georgian voters behave similarly to their peers in democracies in at least two ways: first, vote choice in Georgia has been partly related to the

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[2] Earlier research on 2012 parliamentary elections showed that Georgian parties mainly used social media for external relations instead of communicating with their electorate (Kakachia et al. 2014).

incumbent's past performance as demonstrated by the analysis of official election statistics (George 2014) and survey data (Babunashvili 2017). Moreover, experimental evidence suggests that the Georgian electorate not only differentiates between ideologically divergent electoral promises, but also reacts to them differently as well (Turmanidze 2017). With these similarities in mind, the article describes the electoral environment in Georgia by focusing on the parliamentary elections of 2012 and 2016 and analyzes in what ways they reflect characteristics of elections under hybrid regimes.

After the Rose Revolution of 2003, the Georgian political scene was similar to a dominant party system, as described by Green (2010). The United National Movement (UNM), the party that led the 2003 Rose Revolution, controlled the parliament, presidency and local authorities, whereas the opposition parties were too many, too small, and often dominated by a single leader (de Waal, 2011, 8). This situation changed in October 2011, when Georgia's wealthiest citizen with assets worth in excess of $6 billion, declared his willingness to run for political office and consolidate the opposition parties by creating the Georgian Dream (GD) Coalition.

A consolidated opposition is considered a significant factor in ousting the party of power in less than free and fair electoral conditions (Howard and Roessler 2006, 371). In Georgia, the consolidation was largely made possible by Ivanishvili's persona as a reclusive philanthropist who had no previous interest in politics. A crucial factor was Ivanishvili's personal financial resources, which amounted to the equivalent of about half of Georgia's gross domestic product at the time.[3] Whereas until his involvement, the opposition parties had virtually no chance of receiving donations of any significance because of state pressure on potential donors, Ivanishvili's money guaranteed a bankroll for the opposition, and thus created a serious challenge for the ruling party.[4]

Correspondingly, the government immediately got to work on further skewing the already uneven playing field. Its first step was revoking Ivanishvili's Georgian citizenship on grounds that his dual (French) citizenship was not in accordance with Georgian law. As a next step, the State Audit Agency began scrutinizing GD finances and fined Ivanishvili on several

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[3] According to the World Bank, Georgia's GDP in 2017 was about 15 billion in current US dollars (World Bank n.d.)

[4] Opposition donors had routinely been harassed through state audits and fines, as described in the case of "voluntary" donations of business shares to the state (see Kakheti Information Center 2011) and uninvestigated violence against an opposition parliament member (see On.ge 2016).

occasions totaling ₾48 million (about $90.9 million) (Civil.ge 2011). Moreover, Ivanishvili's Cartu Bank was taken over by the state in order to raise the money that Ivanishvili failed to pay in fines (Kevanishvili 2012).

While the government's strategy was to make the most of the uneven playing field, it had no power to fully restrict political competition due to extensive linkages to the West. In general, linkages with western democracies are considered an obstacle for leaders inclined to authoritarianism to shut down democratic institutions (Levitsky and Way 2010, 186). Indeed, Georgia's strong links with the West and western conditionality did not allow President Saakashvili to suppress the opposition fully in 2012 (Lebanidze 2014, 211). Despite Ivanishvili's lack of Georgian citizenship, a specially introduced temporary constitutional amendment gave citizens of European Union countries the right to participate in Georgian elections (Legislative Herald of Georgia 1995),[5] following western pressure to ease the domestic political tensions. Also, after much advocacy from local civil society organizations, heavily financed by western donors, the "must carry" legislation made it obligatory for the government to transmit all TV channels, which in turn ensured that opposition voices were accessible to the electorate during the lead-up to the election (Mchedlishvili 2012). These legislative retreats of the government significantly improved the pre-election environment for the opposition. However, the ruling party still commanded vast administrative resources to its advantage, such as the manpower of civil servants and local administrations.

For the 2016 elections, the ruling party and the opposition of four years prior changed places. It was the first time in the history of Georgia's independence that a party that was out of power did not disintegrate and was still competing in the next elections. Previous ruling parties such as Round Table – Free Georgia (1990-1991) and the Citizens Union of Georgia (1995-2003), disintegrated and never participated in elections following a coup and the Rose Revolution, respectively (Nodia and Scholtbach 2006, 103).

Electoral shift in power significantly influenced the country's commitment to democracy as demonstrated by the improved Polity IV ratings noted above. However, the playing field was still not even. The Georgian Dream Coalition tried to intimidate the former ruling party by sending its leaders to jail. For example, the former prime minister, defense minister and the mayor of Tbilisi were put on trial for misuse of power while holding public

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[5] Article 104[4] of the Constitution was amended on 22 May, 2012. The amendments specified that the right to vote and be voted for was extended to those citizens of EU countries that were born in Georgia and had resided in Georgia for the past 5 years. The amendment was set to expire on January 1, 2014.

office (Buckley 2013; BBC News 2014). Moreover, as soon as president Saakashvili completed his term in 2013, the prosecutor's office launched an investigation against him. Saakashvili left the country and has not returned since to avoid prosecution (Antidze 2014). Parallels to his past tactics were inevitably drawn when Saakashvili lost his Georgian citizenship under the GD government in 2015 (Civil Georgia 2015). Saakashvili has not regained it since.

In addition to the actions targeted at weakening the opposition party, three factors contributed to the uneven playing field before the 2016 elections: intimidation of pro-opposition media, unfree courts and electoral reform with some characteristics of gerrymandering (Sichinava and Gilbreath 2016; Freedom House 2017b). The case of opposition Rustavi 2 TV channel illustrates the ruling party's attempt to neutralize the opposition media. The same case also shows political influence over the justice system: Soon after the turnover of political power, former owners of Rustavi 2 declared that they were forced to sell it at lower than market price due to pressure from the UNM during the previous administration. Georgian courts, including the Supreme Court, decided to return the privately-owned TV company to its original owner based on the original owner's testimony. However, the court decision was so controversial that in an unprecedented move, it was suspended by the European Court of Human Rights until further investigation could take place (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty 2017).

Consequently, a OSCE/ODIHR report for the 2016 elections highlighted the resource advantage of the ruling party, such as the reallocation of funds in municipal budgets tailored towards infrastructure projects, huge advantages in corporate donations, and the use of administrative resources (OSCE/ODIHR 2016, 13). Nevertheless, the elections were assessed as "competitive, well-administered and fundamental freedom[s] were generally respected" (OSCE/ODIHR 2016, 1).

In sum, Georgia's modest gains in democracy rankings have done little to fundamentally change the election environment. The political scene remains skewed in favor of whoever is in the position of power, relying on the use of administrative resources. This largely means unfailingly using the sheer men-power of the civil service as the foot-soldiers for the campaigns, gently nudging the business for corporate donations and showcasing infrastructural improvements just in time for the next elections. However, the ruling party has not resorted to election day violence, physical intimidation of opposition or over vote-buying. Care for the international image and reliance on various foreign partners not only for legitimacy but also economic stability of the country has precluded descent into authoritarianism. In Georgia's neighborhood value of this achievement can not be underestimated.

## Linkages

Party-voter linkages in Georgia were pioneered by ruling parties and operated at the intersection of public and private spheres. At the center of these linkages stand coordinators, temporary party employees, who at times are also employed by central or local governments. These coordinators are normally hired before election campaigns and they are the busiest in the course of the election campaigns and during preparations before the campaigns officially start. While the coordinators first appeared with the onset of more peaceful political processes in Georgia, during the rule of Eduard Shevardnadze's Citizens Union of Georgia, they were neither visible nor a major force in electoral campaigns. The United National Movement (UNM) is largely credited with defining the meaning and the scope of work for the coordinators during its rule in 2003-2012. The UNM envisioned the coordinators as the link between the population and the party. Hence, they were the people who knew the community, its problems and concerns well. Their task was to disseminate the party's message and organize the party's meetings with communities, as well as to collect information on their voters and supporters in the small administrative units they were responsible for (Nodia and Scholtback 2006, 256). The coordinators would also ensure that people show up at party rallies and events.

Strengthening the institution of coordinators as a means of persuading voters with direct contact and oversight was clearly a break with the violent and volatile stage of Georgian politics during the 1990s and early 2000s. Instead, the use of a face-to-face canvassing model, relying on a mix of persuasion and subtle intimidation, was a recipe to secure votes without resorting to election day violence and significant vote-rigging. This was particularly important for the UNM – not only to signal the maturation of Georgian democracy, but also to distance itself from its predecessor, the Citizens Union of Georgia, which it ousted in the peaceful Rose Revolution in 2003 (Fairbanks 2004).

The predominant image of the coordinators is that of middle-aged busy-bodies of the neighborhood, who would come knocking at the door in the evening during pre-election times to ask who the family was planning to vote for, ask for the adults' IDs, and record their ID number in their notebook, which happened to look suspiciously similar to official voter ID rosters. The coordinators would have no legal power to force any of this, and the population would often reluctantly agree to provide all of the requested information. The coordinators would then appear outside the polling stations on election day, their papers in hand, marking off the voters who came to vote. Throughout the day they would also encourage voters in the neighborhood who had not yet voted to go to the polls.

33

The Georgian Dream (GD) coalition has also capitalized on the coordinators for much of the legwork, so much so, that there are estimates of a 50 to 1 ratio of voters and coordinators in the country (Tsuladze 2017). The coordinators have become such a fixture in Georgian elections that they are frequently noted in election observer reports and statements by local and international organizations. While ostensibly the coordinators' presence in the vicinity of the polling stations does not violate any law, their presence as the eyes and ears of mostly the ruling party, is viewed as intimidating and limiting the genuine expression of voter preferences (International Republican Institute 2014, 3).

The extensive network of coordinators had to be supported financially, so the UNM, while in government, took liberties with public funds and offices to keep its party coordinators salaried and engaged. This kind of practice has been documented in Georgia: the local governments usually hired extra staff in the months prior to the election without any clear need or justification, and the national government initiated large-scale but short-term employment programs (Transparency International Georgia 2010, 9; Transparency International Georgia 2008). These initiatives were effectively just handing out cash without conceivably employing anyone at nominally productive places of work. Instead, the new employees, particularly of local government bodies, were very much busy working to ensure the UNM's electoral victory.

This merger of party and state became a major problem for the UNM once it lost power in 2012. The GD government started prosecuting UNM leaders and sent Tbilisi Mayor Gigi Ugulava to prison for creating 712 fictitious jobs for the coordinators in one municipal body, thus misusing ₾4 million (about $2 million) (Prosecutors Office 2015). Other major casualties included the former Prime Minister Ivane Merabishvili and former Minister of Health and Social Protection Zurab Chiaberashvili, who were charged with misusing ₾5 million (about $2.5 million) for fictitiously employing 22,000 UNM coordinators and supporters through state employment programs (civil.ge 2013). Allegations that Tbilisi City Hall had installed its coordinators as condominium chairs and paid them monthly salaries caused significant changes in the municipal spending programs (For.ge 2013).

The UNM as a party has survived losing power and some members of its leadership, but apparently has not managed to retain the coordinator corps in full, illustrating that only the governing party can effectively afford to maintain such an extensive and expansive body of activists. While there is no comprehensive information available, some evidence suggests that certain former UNM coordinators switched sides after 2012 and now work for the Georgian Dream (Interpressnews 2017).

Aside from the unsurprising hiring of its active members at all levels of government, the GD in contrast to the UNM, has not resorted to paying its coordinators with funds taken from the state coffers, at least on a large scale. One reason for this may be that the GD does not want to give the UNM or any other critic a reason to cry foul over double standards. Also, the legitimate state funding of qualified political parties has disproportionately allocated to GD. Moreover, as with every ruling party in modern Georgia's history, the GD enjoys significant private and corporate donations. In 2016, the GD received 16 times more in donations than the UNM, the runner-up party according to the election results (OSCE/ODIHR 2016, 13).

Grassroots political engagement already has an established history and significance in Georgian politics. However, since there is little sincere altruistic or value-based participation in this grassroots activism of the coordinator corps, it is notoriously expensive to maintain. Only the ruling parties, with their disproportionate access to political donations and liberal use of budgetary resources can afford this luxury. However, the very fact that all ruling parties (as well as the aspirant parties) see the value of individual engagement for building political support is a significant indicator for the value of democratic process over the hard-core tactics for ensuring political power for all parties involved in the Georgian political process.

## Conclusion

This article documented a sizable positive impact of party-voter linkages on the level of partisanship in a hybrid regime. The article also described the primary vehicle of party-voter contacts – an extensive network of party activists intertwined with state institutions when operated by the ruling parties. These networks not only increased partisanship to the advantage of the incumbent, but also contributed to strengthening political competition through increased voter loyalty to the largest opposition party.

This finding largely challenges the existing scholarship on elections in hybrid regimes, where party-voter linkages are considered a tool in the hands of ruling parties to distribute patronage and intimidate voters (Magaloni 2006; Green 2007; Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009), and the opposition attracts demobilized voters only in extraordinary, revolutionary situations (Bunce and Wolchik 2010). Yet, the findings presented in this article suggest that even under the conditions of uneven playing fields, party-voter linkages increase loyalty to the opposition as well, which would not be possible if elections were only about patronage and intimidation.

While the lasting effect of such linkages in the context of Georgia remains to be studied further, evidence from other polities with a longer history of party competition, shows that a

party's investment in grassroots activities brings rewards over time (Lupu and Stokes 2010). Hence, learning through elections and sustained party contacts can boost partisanship (Converse 1969; Fiorina 1981; Bartels 2000; Dinas 2014, 450), which can contribute to a more stable party system. Such a learning opportunity lies ahead of Georgian voters as they go through multiple cycles of elections, even if they are not fully free and fair.

When interpreting the positive effect of party-voter linkages on partisanship as a potential catalyst for party institutionalization, the unusual development of Georgia's political competition since the 2012 parliamentary elections is worth noting: the incumbent United National Movement was opposed by a wealthy man, who had resources equivalent to about half of the country's GDP. Despite the uneven playing field, the challenger could use his extensive resources to build and operate a grassroots network comparable to the scale and complexity of the state-backed UNM's party machine. While such conditions do not happen often, it is not altogether rare either, at least in the post-Communist world. For example, the largest opposition party in Armenia – the Tsarukyan Alliance – is run by wealthy businessman Gagik Tsarukyan, who also seems to have strong political and business connections with former President Kocharyan (Nedolyan 2013, 10; Petrosyan 2013, 17). Likewise, political parties in Ukraine are normally backed by wealthy oligarchs, who can coincidentally also enjoy the political benefits of media ownership to bid for political power (Markus and Charnysh 2017, 20).

While the findings of the article are substantial, several questions require further investigation in order to fully understand the workings of party-voter linkages. First, the lasting effect of party-voter linkages needs to be evaluated. To do so, additional survey questions and even survey experiments would be useful. Second, an important direction of further research would be an in-depth study of the content of linkages. Specifically – do parties communicate their programs to the electorate or promise only private benefits? Moreover, given a history of strong negative party identification in the post-Communist space (Rose and Mishler 1998; Vlachová 2001), do party activists primarily promote their parties or campaign against the main competitor? Lastly, if the linkages boost partisanship, which in turn facilitates accountability through party institutionalization (Tóka 1998), party-voter linkages contribute to the public good, hence, research should look at different alternatives and best practices to encourage party-voter linkages before and between elections.

# Promises, Lies and the Accountability Trap. Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Armenia and Georgia[1]

## Introduction

Where there are elections, there are promises. Moreover, during the election campaigns politicians often make ambiguous promises about improving voters' lives, while disguising the steps needed to accomplish these promises as well as the consequences of those actions. Indeed, recent research has demonstrated that the impact of election promises go well beyond cheap talk: promises influence voters' prospective voting decisions as well as help them to hold elected representatives accountable for broken promises (Corazzini et al. 2013; Born, van Eck, and Johannesson 2017). At the same time, ambiguous promises are the norm rather than the exception in political competition (Rovny 2012; Somer-Topcu 2015).

Politicians in Armenia and Georgia have not been short on grand electoral promises. Some of these promises would qualify as cheap talk, while others, taken together, are incompatible. In either case, attempts to garner votes through conflicting or ambiguous promises are problematic for democratic accountability. If voters are not certain about the promises their elected officials made, they will struggle to hold them accountable for the success or failure of corresponding policies. At the same time, if ambiguity brings actual benefits to a party, it will repeat over time and I argue create an accountability trap, wherein politicians cannot be held accountable at the ballot box for their promises.

Do voters in Armenia and Georgia pay attention to election promises at all and if so, do ambiguous promises produce positive returns for politicians? Is there any difference between voters in Armenia and Georgia in terms of reacting to distinct types of electoral promises? This article investigates these questions based on a survey experiment carried out in Tbilisi, Georgia and Yerevan, Armenia. I show that not only do voters react to different promises differently, but that they give an advantage to the party, in both turnout and support, which comes up with an ambiguous promise. Ambiguity is more advantageous for turnout in Yerevan than in Tbilisi, while Tbilisi voters appreciate ambiguity more than voters in Yerevan in terms of party support.

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[1] Reprinted from *Caucasus Survey* with permission of Taylor and Francis: Turmanidze, Koba. 2017. "Promises, Lies and the Accountability Trap: Evidence from Survey Experiment in Armenia and Georgia." *Caucasus Survey* 5 (3): 279-300. Data and replication code are available at: https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/promises

A key driver of ambiguity is the mismatch between the preferences of voters and politicians. When such a mismatch happens, politicians benefit from ambiguity in several ways. First, they attract voters with diverse preferences by avoiding clear positions on divisive policy issues (Rovny 2012; Somer-Topcu 2015). Second, they signal flexibility in future actions, which voters appreciate, especially those with relatively weakly defined policy preferences or without an aversion to risky decision-making (Aragones and Neeman 2000; Tomz and Van Houweling 2009). However, attempts to win votes through ambiguous promises become problematic for democratic accountability, especially if parties continuously apply strategic ambiguity and then fail to deliver the promised policies once in office (Somer-Topcu 2015). Although there is scarce empirical research on strategic ambiguity beyond mature democracies, parties in hybrid regimes also have incentives to disguise positions on important policy matters.

Poor economic conditions are perhaps the most significant driver of ambiguity. Many hybrid regimes struggle with poor economic performance, and large segments of their populations are economically deprived. According to Keefer (2007), the imperfections of political competition condition poor economic performance: there are no credible linkages between politicians and voters; on the other hand, voters have less than perfect information about politicians and policies (Keefer 2007). Facing economic hardship and imperfect information on potential solutions and/or remedies, voters demand policies that will have tangible impacts on their lives. However, such policies are hard to implement without producing a substantial number of losers in the short-term before long-term solutions are realized. Hence, politicians will be cautious in making promises, and when they do, they will emphasize the benefits and disguise the costs. This pushes parties to make general appeals without specifying the course of their future actions; in this article, this type of abstract promise is referred to as Type A ambiguity. Hybrid regimes are also known for low levels of partisanship and underdeveloped party systems (Lupu and Riedl 2013). Hence, most individual parties have fewer supporters than they need to win elections. Therefore, each party has an incentive to come up with a promise that will appeal to potential supporters of other parties and unaffiliated or largely alienated voters. At the same time, parties need to retain their current support, and thus, offer attractive promises to their own supporters. This situation pushes parties to choose policy positions that please their own supporters and appeal to other voters (Bräuninger and Giger 2016). This encourages another type of ambiguity: parties combine practically inconsistent policy positions, which I call type B ambiguity.

Parties, as rational actors do, adapt to changing realities and update their strategies accordingly. If one party succeeds with vague promises, others will follow. Ultimately, if

multiple parties offer ambiguous positions, voters will find it increasingly hard to (1) select the party that best represents their interests and (2) hold the party of power accountable to its promises. Unmet expectations alienate voters from political parties, which pushes politicians to be even vaguer in the next round of elections to win angry voters back. If such a game is repeatedly played between the voters and politicians, political com- petition enters an accountability trap: while democratic institutions are formally present and ostensibly function, voters continuously fail to hold elected officials accountable for the policies they promised.

## Lying to victory: election campaigns and strategic ambiguity

In political systems that warrant a diminutive adjective before the word "democracy", democratic institutions ostensibly function, but the accountability of elected leaders to the electorate remains problematic (Collier and Levitsky 1997; Diamond 2002; Schedler and Sarsfield 2007; Art 2012). While numerous studies look at the structural reasons which contribute to or hinder accountability, (Gandhi and Przeworski 2007; Teorell 2010; Levitsky and Way 2010), the role of voter-politician interactions over electoral promises have not been investigated sufficiently. In this section, I review the demand- and supply-side drivers of ambiguity, and then discuss the expected consequences for democratic accountability. As noted above, empirical research on ambiguous positioning in hybrid regimes is not available, to the best of my knowledge. However, according to most studies from mature democracies, ambiguity provides parties electoral benefits. The literature provides several mechanisms that are not theoretically related to the level of democratic development. For example, supply-side mechanisms, such as signaling flexibility after winning elections (Aragones and Neeman 2000), the need to appeal to supporters as well as potential opponents (Bräuninger and Giger 2016; Somer-Topcu 2015), or differences in ideological orientation and technical approaches inside the party's elite (Lo, Proksch, and Slapin 2016) can work in the context of hybrid regimes. Likewise, demand side mechanisms also apply to voters in hybrid regimes, since risk-taking, optimism, and projection are not features of voters in developed democracies alone (Tomz and Van Houweling 2009; Jensen 2009).

However, there are additional mechanisms at work in hybrid regimes that facilitate ambiguous messaging on the politician's part. Starting from the demand side, the most important factor is poor economic conditions. Like many hybrid regimes, Armenia and Georgia have faced economic hardship since independence (World Bank 2016a; also see Fumagalli and Turmanidze 2017 for an overview). A majority of households in each country experience stark

economic problems. Unemployment has remained at the fore- front of the public's mind at the national level: approximately 45% of the population of Armenia, and 50% of the population of Georgia have considered the economy the number one problem in the country for the last five years (CRRC 2015a). Approximately every third adult surveyed in each country reports being unemployed, i.e. they do not have a job, but are interested in working and would be ready to start work in two weeks if they found one. This has been a stable trend for at least the last five years. While surveys capture perceived unemployment, the official unemployment rate is much lower, because the government employs a different methodology to calculate it (Gutbrod 2013). The scale of overall poverty is well illustrated by the database of Georgia's Social Service Agency (Social Service Agency 2015): about 40% of the population applied for subsistence aid in 2015 and only ¼ of the applicants actually received assistance. Although the maximum subsistence aid is only GEL 60 (USD 28 approximately) per person per month, a substantial share of the population is eager to go through the lengthy process to obtain assistance, including the application and scoring of the household's socio-economic conditions by a social agent, even though it is a rather meagre amount of assistance.

Hybrid regimes are characterized by a low level of partisanship (Lupu and Riedl 2013). This is even more pronounced in post-communist countries, where low trust in political parties is conditioned by communist legacies and the poor performance of newly formed political parties (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2011). Moreover, these countries have very high electoral volatility and most significantly, this volatility is caused by new party entries and old party exits (Powell and Tucker 2014). Such party systems are dubbed "party non-systems" due to their unpredictable nature and outsized openness to political outsiders (Sanchez 2009).

Just as the party systems show high instability, political parties are also poor in terms of their expected electoral support. Political parties are among the least trusted institutions in Armenia: approximately 60% of the population distrusted them in both 2013 and 2015. Parties face relatively less distrust from the Georgian electorate. However, distrust increased from 27% in 2013 to 42% in 2015.

Importantly, distrust in parliament and executive government has been increasing in both countries, with a plurality distrusting rather than trusting these institutions (CRRC 2015a). In addition, the public in both countries do not expect the party system and domestic politics to improve. According to the Caucasus Barometer, 38% of voters reported Georgian domestic politics was moving in the wrong direction in 2015, a threefold increase over the same figure two years prior. In Armenia voters are even more negative, with almost half reporting that the country's domestic politics is heading in the wrong direction (CRRC 2015a). In Georgia,

40

CRRC/NDI surveys since April 2015 show that a plurality of Georgians support "no party" (CRRC 2015b). The percentage of voters that state no existing party stands close to their view ranges from 38% to 50% in different survey waves. Moreover, voters are largely uncertain about their future votes: even among likely voters, 50% are not sure which party would be their first choice if elections were held tomorrow. This is problematic for a young democracy, since disengaged voters may opt not to participate in elections. As a result, immature democratization can be undermined through decreasing the legitimacy of elected politicians and weakened accountability mechanisms (National Democratic Institute 2016).

Poor economic conditions and low levels of institutionalization contribute to a range of uncertainties. According to Lupu and Riedl (2013), political competition in hybrid regimes is organized by the context of the regime, as well as economic and institutional uncertain- ties. Parties and voters cannot credibly predict what the regime type will be in the future. Moreover, hybrid regimes are more vulnerable to external economic shocks and have little leverage to offset their impact compared to established democracies. Finally, institutional uncertainty implies that there is low predictability of the relative standing of formal rules to informal practices (Lupu and Riedl 2013).

Such conditions establish solid ground for specific voter-party linkages: facing economic problems and uncertain economic perspectives in the future, voters seek to elect a political force which maximizes their utility by producing tangible results very quickly. Considering economic and institutional uncertainties, rational politicians will be better off if they supply ambiguous, if not contradictory promises. Following the findings from mature democracies, I expect that ambiguity will attract voters from potentially competing electoral camps, and thus, will increase turnout and party support. Hence, I test two hypotheses:

*H1: Type A ambiguities (abstract promises) will be advantageous for the party in terms of turnout and expected support.*

*H2: Type B ambiguities (promising inconsistent policy positions) will be advantageous to the party in terms of turnout and expected support.*

The impact of electoral promises on voters is mediated by political context, which has both similarities and differences between Armenia and Georgia. While the two countries are similar in terms of economic conditions, salience of unemployment and poverty, low levels of partisanship and low trust in politicians, Georgian voters have experienced more competitive

elections than voters in Armenia, at least for the past few election cycles. Indeed, election forensics tests reported in this special issue show that elections have been consistently freer and fairer in Georgia than in Armenia (Gilbreath and Balasanyan 2017). Moreover, Georgian voters have been exposed to more diverse policies for the past two decades compared to Armenian voters (Gilbreath and Turmanidze 2017; Shubladze and Khundadze 2017; also see Babunashvili 2017 on retrospective voting in Georgia). Ultimately, political competition catering to fundamentally different policies resulted in electoral change of the ruling party in Georgia in 2012, which has not yet happened in Armenia's electoral history. A competitive political environment, especially among ideologically diverse political camps, should increase the value of ambiguous electoral promises, since parties have a need to reach out to the voters that have closer affinity with the competitor. Hence, I expect voters in Georgia to appreciate ambiguous promises more than in Armenia:

> *H3: Ambiguous electoral promises will have a higher effect on turnout and party support in Georgia than in Armenia*

## Measurement: ambiguity is what ambiguity does

I understand ambiguity as a multiplicity of projected actions related to a particular electoral promise. This article addresses two types of ambiguity. The first type is an abstract promise, which may imply a myriad of actions from politicians. For the sake of simplicity, I call this type A ambiguity. Examples of type A ambiguity are abundant in Armenia and Georgia. For the 2010 local elections the United National Movement came up with a highly general programme called "Work instead of words" (United National Movement 2010). The programme focused on poverty reduction and job creation, mixing concrete steps like reduction of taxes with highly abstract statements promising "initiatives."[2] A good illustration of a type A promise in Armenia comes from the Prosperous Armenia party. During the 2012 parliamentary elections, the party said it would challenge the system of oligarchy, but did not present any clear plan to do so (Nedolyan 2013). To take another example, in the 2017 election campaign, the Tsarukyan Bloc, led by the Prosperous Armenia party, came up with a list of

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[2] "Initiatives mean promotion of entrepreneurship, development of education, refining legislation and creating more jobs in Georgia." (United National Movement 2010).

promises that would require almost half of the state's existing revenue. However, the party did not bother to describe how they would cover the additional expenses (Kayserian 2017).[3]

In contrast to type A ambiguity, type B ambiguity entails promising specific actions, but if politicians carry out one action, it will be hard, if not impossible, to carry out the other. Examples of inconsistent promises are even more common in both countries. The United National Movement, a radical liberalizer of the Georgian economy, tried to mix market- driven solutions to employment and poverty with redistributive policies in the 2012 campaign. While developing a favorable environment for business and foreign direct investment were at the heart of job creation in the programme, the party also promised a GEL 1000 voucher for each household to ease economic hardship (United National Movement 2012).[4]

Electoral programme of Georgian Dream Coalition, the main challenger of UNM in 2012, also contained contradictory promises about freedom of business from government interference and decreasing utility fees, despite the fact that private companies operated all utility business in the country (Georgian Dream 2012). Contradictory statements in electoral programmes seem to be less common in Armenia, since its major parties choose to use direct economic incentives to win votes instead of electoral premises based on political ideologies (Iskandaryan 2012). Still, the ruling Republican Party has been notorious for combining progressive rhetoric with serving the interests of large business (Kayserian 2017; Nedolyan 2013). Before the 2012 parliamentary elections, President Sargsyan, the party leader, made several promises to separate business interests from political office, including establishing an ethics committee, whereas his party continued to commit to oligarchic interests (Lorusso 2012, 4; Pertosyan 2013).

Studies about ambiguity can be divided into two major groups: theoretical and empirical. Theoretical studies normally understand ambiguity as the probability distributions of voters' perceptions about the party or candidate's policy position (Alesina and Cukierman 1987; Aragones and Neeman 2000; Jensen 2009). These studies do not assess ambiguity empirically, but derive its positive or negative effects from formal models. In contrast, empirical studies offer concrete measures of ambiguity. However, observational and

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[3] Some commentators claim that the ruling Republican Party chose to have ambiguous promises for the 2017 parliamentary elections and avoid concrete targets to be achieved, since they have a record of not delivering what they had promised. https://sut.am/en/archives/708

[4] 1000 Georgian Lari was approximately 600 US dollar in 2012.

experimental studies differ on both the computation and interpretation of measures of ambiguity.

Observational studies often look at voters' assessments of parties as a measure of ambiguity. Somer-Topcu (2015) applied this approach using data on 43 elections from nine European countries. Ambiguity is equated to perceptual disagreement among the voters regarding the ideological position of the party. Voters' assessments are based on country-specific political polls. At the same time, voters' perceptual disagreement (ambiguity of party positions) is used as a measure of the party's strategy to put forward broad- based appeals to voters (Somer-Topcu 2015).

Other works rely on expert assessments to make a judgement about the party's ambiguity. Cahill (2016) uses Chapel Hill's Expert Survey data to measure ideological clarity, which takes a high value if experts consistently gave the same score to the party on an 11-point ideological scale. A low value on this variable indicates ambiguity, since experts were not certain where to place the party ideologically (Cahill 2016). Likewise, expert assessments provide the basis for the ambiguity measure for Rogowski and Tucker (2016). Their work focuses the US congressional elections of 2006 and contrasts the ideological positions of the candidates as evaluated by expert-observers to the positions of voters. The authors use the term "unpredictability" in the same way as I use ambiguity in this article. Specifically, their measure is a standard deviation of each district's expert placement of the candidates (Rogowski and Tucker 2016, 10).

A different approach is applied in Lo, Proksch, and Slapin (2016) as well as in Bräuninger and Giger (2016); both works use the formal electoral platforms of the parties instead of expert assessments. Both studies assume that words in manifestos are not used randomly, but are selected to signal certain ideological positions. Since manifestos are drafted by different party leaders following different tactics and strategies, a certain degree of ambiguity on one or more issues in parties' formal programmes is unavoidable (Lo, Proksch, and Slapin 2016). Hence, both studies base their measurements of clarity and ambiguity on formal analysis of party manifestos: Lo, Proksch, and Slapin (2016) use text- scaling, which counts the number of words signaling ideological positions and assesses the party's overall ambiguity or clarity (Lo, Proksch, and Slapin 2016, 595). Likewise, Bräuninger and Giger (2016) use the Wordscore approach to count, compare and contrast words with certain ideological connotations. Subsequently, the standard deviation of the word positions is computed to denote the diversity of positions within the manifesto, which is the same as ambiguity (Bräuninger and Giger 2016).

44

Measuring ambiguity in observational studies is understood as problematic due to the endogeneity problem: such studies cannot distinguish between at least two types of voters: (1) voters who select the party due to its ambiguity and (2) voters who have strong party identification and pay little attention to the party programme in the first place. Hence, several works proposed an experimental approach to establish a causal link between ambiguity and political behavior. The pioneering work in this respect was Tomz and Van Houweling (2009). They randomly assigned clear and ambiguous candidate positions to online survey respondents to see the impact of ambiguity/clarity on reported voting decision. The authors designed fictitious scenarios about government services in health and education and tested whether voters would choose the precise or ambiguous promise. The "precise candidate" would indicate precisely an option on a 7-point scale ranging from "decrease services a large amount" to "increase services to a large amount". The "vague candidate" would only indicate either increase or decrease, but stay ambiguous about the extent of change (Tomz and Van Houweling 2009, 88). Thus, these authors operationalize ambiguity as imprecision in policy positions.

Another innovative experimental approach incorporates the random assignment of campaign messages from a fictitious candidate that appeals to different social groups. In this approach all messages are quite general, but the difference between ambiguity and clarity stems from the designated group: targeted appeals are specific, since they pander narrowly to defined groups (for example, Latinos in the United States). In contrast, ambiguity is assessed as a general appeal, targeted to broad groups like workers, the middle class, etc. (Hersh and Schaffner 2013).

This study's measure of ambiguity addresses several limitations of the cited studies: following the study of Tomz and Van Houweling (2009), I solve the endogeneity problem and isolate the impact of ambiguous promises through a survey experiment. Moreover, the approach allows the comparison of two types of ambiguity and different types of ambiguous promises to concrete state-driven ("leftist") and market-driven ("rightist") electoral promises. Moreover, I mimic a real electoral context by providing information treatments directly to respondents through face-to-face interviewing, acting in the way party activists do during door-to-door campaigns. Significantly, I design promises that are easy to understand and straightforward. Yet, easiness also implies limitations: the approach oversimplifies both the party-voter communication process and its content. Surely, party-voter communication is not a one-off event, like it is in this study design. Moreover, parties normally have more sophisticated promises, both on the ambiguous and consistent sides than researchers can

feasibly offer in a survey. Also, parties take time to explain and persuade voters about the feasibility of their promises. This factor is also disregarded in the design.

Measuring what ambiguity does to voters is problematic without addressing region-specific challenges. To be sure, parties in Armenia and Georgia have not been short on ambiguous promises. Hence, hearing about such promises would not sound artificial to voters. However, I faced two challenges: First, I wanted to test party promises to touch areas of high policy salience to ensure that respondents would pay due attention to small nuances in the electoral promises. Second, as noted above, political parties do not have good reputations in either of the countries in the study. Therefore, our objective was to detach party statements from real party programmes as much as possible. I describe in the next section how I addressed these challenges.

## Research design

The problem of endogeneity was addressed using random assignment of party promises through a survey experiment. This approach is considered a convincing way to establish a causal link between a randomly assigned intervention and the outcome (Mutz 2011). In our case, interventions took the form of information treatments: I randomly assigned to adult residents of Tbilisi and Yerevan a different electoral promise. I selected capital cities in each country for two reasons: first, I wanted to achieve relative homogeneity across primary sampling units while covering a population large enough to be split into several comparable groups. Second, the research team wanted to have close oversight over random walk and random assignment protocols, and this was most realistic in the capital cities.

The Caucasus Research Resource Centres (CRRC) administered the survey on representative samples in each city in February 2016, using face-to-face Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). The survey design combined stratification and clustering, where strata were the administrative districts of each city and clusters (primary sampling units) were electoral precincts. The final dataset includes 906 responses from 56 precincts in Tbilisi and 954 responses from 59 precincts in Yerevan.[5]

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[5] The original random sample had 63 electoral precincts in Tbilisi and 61 precincts in Yerevan. The targeted number of interviewer attempts in each precinct was set at 40. After fieldwork control and follow up analysis, I cancelled the results of 7 precincts in Tbilisi and 2 in Yerevan. The response rate was 36% in Tbilisi and 42% in Yerevan using AAPOR standards. For details regarding the response rate formula see

The survey used CAPI to ensure the random assignment of information treatments. Enumerators were instructed to identify households via a random route protocol from a randomly identified staring point in each precinct. As enumerators identified a potential respondent using a Kish selection table and the respondent agreed, the survey software in the tablet computer randomly assigned treatment types to the respondent. Thus, each interviewed individual saw only one treatment, and it was technically impossible for him or her to see other treatment versions.

To address the issue of low partisanship and distrust in political parties, no particular party name was included in the survey instrument. Moreover, to discourage the respondents' negative experience with party promises, I applied vignettes. The decision was motivated by the vignette literature, which shows that such vignettes improve respondent's self-assessments and reduce measurement error (King and Wand 2007; Hopkins and King 2010). Following this approach, I constructed vignettes around a typical Georgian house- hold, where the household head had an unstable, poorly paid job.[6] The description of the household was constant across the vignette versions and the only information that varied was the electoral promise of the hypothetical party campaigning in the district where the household lived. As suggested by Hopkins and King (2010), I placed vignettes before the self-assessment questions. In this way, I attempted to decrease respondents' immediate negative attitudes to political parties. Significantly, I also intentionally primed the respondent to project his or her political behavior using the story of the vignette character.

I addressed the challenge of respondents' attention by keeping unemployment, the most salient national issue in both countries, at the core of the information treatments. Thus, the treatment scenarios emphasized different hypothetical policy options for job creation. The first group received a vignette, where the party promised to improve the economic situation in the country with no specific details provided, a type A ambiguous promise. Since this type of promise has been universal in both countries and also the least that parties have traditionally promised, I treat the type A ambiguous (abstract) promise as a reference category and assess

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http://www.aapor.org/Education-Resources/For-Researchers/Poll-Survey-FAQ/Response-Rates-An-Overview.aspx

[6] The vignette read as follows: "[Name] lives in a town in [country]. He does irregular jobs from time to time to support his family. Before the parliamentary elections a new party organizes a political campaign in [Name's] town aiming at job creation." A full survey instrument is available at https://github.com/crrcgeorgia/promises.

the impact of other treatment conditions in comparison to the type A ambiguous promise in the regression models.

Another treatment group was created by the random assignment of a state-driven solution to job creation: the party would increase taxes and invest the additional revenues to create more jobs. The next group received a market-driven policy solution, according to which the party promised to decrease taxes and enable/encourage private companies to expand businesses and create more jobs. The final treatment provided a combination of the state-driven and market-driven solutions: decrease taxes and increase government investment in the economy to promote job creation. Due to random assignment, I expected a roughly equal number of respondents receiving each type of information treatment. Indeed, the number of completed interviews were distributed approximately equally between the three treatment groups and in the control group (Table 1).

**Table 1. Distribution of cases by treatments and study locations (percent, number in parenthesis)**

| Treatments | Content of Treatments | Completed Interviews | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | | **Tbilisi** | **Yerevan** | **Total** |
| Ambiguous A (Abstract) | The party promises to significantly improve the economic situation in the country. | 25.28 (229) | 24.74 (236) | 25.00 (465) |
| State-driven | The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will increase taxes by 25% and spend all additional revenue from increased taxes to establish new enterprises. | 25.06 (227) | 24.84 (237) | 24.95 (464) |
| Market-driven | The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will decrease taxes by 25%. As a result, people will be able to spend the money saved on taxes to establish new enterprises. | 24.72 (224) | 24.63 (235) | 24.68 (459) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will decrease taxes by 25% and spend a large amount of money to establish new enterprises. | 24.94 (226) | 25.79 (246) | 25.38 (472) |
| Total | | 100 (906) | 100 (954) | 100 (1860) |

I designed the survey instrument so that respondents heard about the vignettes immediately after introductory questions. These questions asked about the respondent's trust in his or her neighbors, the salience of unemployment and taxes, and attitudes towards state intervention in the economy. Since the treatment vignettes contained information about

unemployment, taxes and the state's role in addressing these issues, it was important to learn about the respondent's responses prior to the treatment vignettes.

After the treatment vignettes, each respondent was asked their opinion about the (1) probability that the person in the vignette would participate in elections, (2) probability that the person in the vignette would support the political party described in the vignette, (3) probability that the respondent herself would participate in elections, and (4) probability that the respondent herself would support the party described in the vignette. I con- sider questions regarding the vignette character's voting behavior as a logical continuation of vignettes, serving only priming functions. Thus, I only use responses about the respondent's reported voting and party support as outcome variables.[30]

The remaining survey instrument included questions relevant for explaining voting behavior: political knowledge, political efficacy, attitude to risk-taking, households' economic conditions and the respondent's demographic records. All respondents answered each of these questions. Table 2 summarizes all variables per study location used in this analysis. It is worth noting that the study location has a significant impact in all models with a different direction on different dependent variables: while voters from Tbilisi are on average twice as likely to report participation in elections as voters from Yerevan, they also report lower support to the party compared to the voters from Yerevan.

## Findings: promise a little or nothing?

In this section, I analyze data for Tbilisi and Yerevan and compare results. Examining the impact of electoral promises on (1) respondent's reported likelihood of voting, and (2) respondent's reported readiness to support the party separately by study location, I can observe whether the level of political competition mediates the impact of ambiguous and non-ambiguous promises.

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[30] The outcome variables are coded as follows: reported readiness to vote and reported party support variables are dummies, where code 1 means "will vote/will support the party" and code 0 has the opposite meaning ("will not vote/will not support the party"). Uncertain responses ("hard to tell whether I will vote/support the party") as well as "Don't know" and "Refused to answer" are excluded from analysis.

Graph 1. Treatment effects on uncertain answers, logit models
Pairwise comparisons with Sidak corrections, 95% CIs
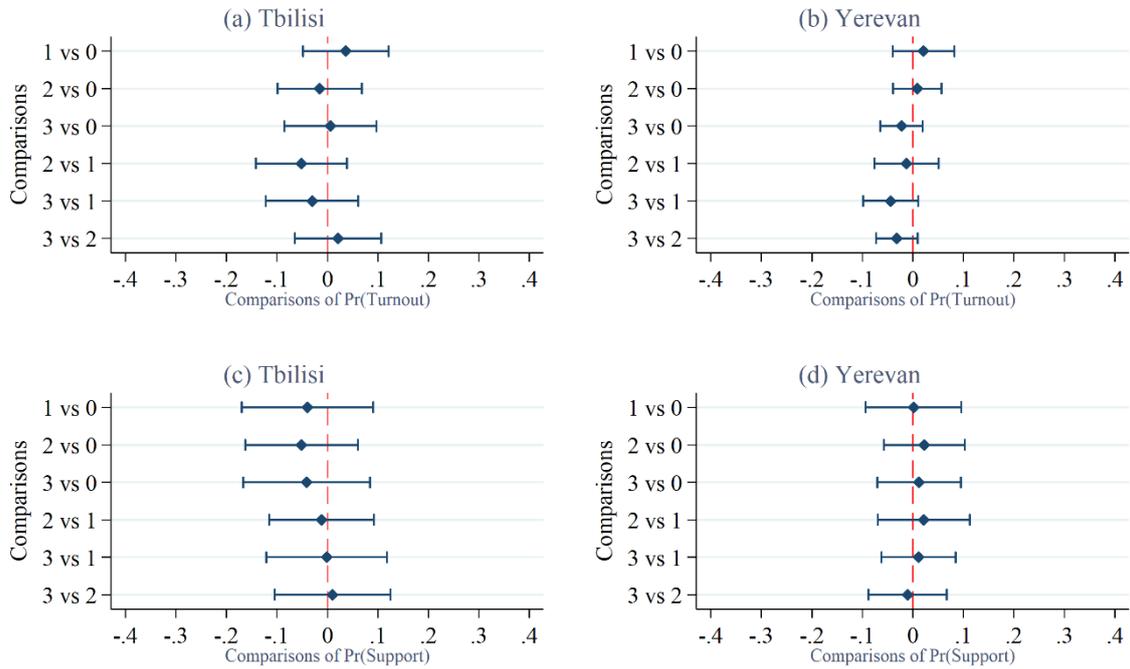


0=Ambiguous A (Abstract); 1=State-driven; 2=Market-driven; 3=Ambiguous B (Inconsistent)

Before looking at the effects of electoral promises on turnout and party support, it is necessary to check whether any particular type of electoral promise encouraged or discouraged the respondent to abstain from answering the questions on the outcome variables. In other words, it is necessary to establish that uncertain answers on the outcome variables are independent from the treatment conditions. Thus, I first check the balance of uncertain answers across the treatment conditions using pairwise comparisons with a relevant correction.[31] The test helps to compare the values of the dependent variables across all treatment conditions: six groups in total. The results of the test show no significant difference between any pair of treatment conditions for each of the two dependent variables (Graph 1). Therefore, I conclude that treatment conditions have no impact on the respondents' decision to give uncertain answers to the turnout and party support questions.

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[31] I group "don't know" and "hard to say" answers in the group of uncertain answers. I used Sidak's correction of pairwise comparisons, a conservative test. However, even without corrections, the treatments do not seem to have any influence on the probability of having an uncertain answer to the questions on turnout and party support.

Subsequently, I ran logistic regression models to estimate average treatment effects per study location, Tbilisi and Yerevan.[32] In the analysis I pay more attention to the substantive size of the effect than to mere statistical significant (Gross 2015).[33] Following this logic, if a treatment effect ranges from −5% to 15% at 95% confidence, and hence, fails to meet the conventional levels of statistical significance, its potential impact is worth discussing more than a statistically significant effect between 1 and 3% at the same level of confidence.

Logistic regression analysis with treatments produces comparable results for reported turnout and party support across the study locations: no electoral promise is more advantageous than the abstract promise (type A ambiguous) in either turnout or party support (Graph 2). The advantage of the abstract promise is especially pronounced on the impact of turnout in Yerevan and on party support in Tbilisi. Also, the state-driven promise is most disadvantageous compared to the abstract promise: it has a sizable negative impact on turnout and party support in the Yerevan sample and an even larger negative impact on party support among Tbilisi voters.

The model described above allows the comparison of treatment effects with the reference category – the ambiguous A (abstract) promise in our case. I discuss below the impact of each treatment compared with the other treatment effects. However, before that we shall see whether other important covariates change the observed effects significantly. Obviously, electoral promises are not the only factors that condition the individual's decision to go the polling station and support a party. A factor (covariate) may shape the voter's response independently of the treatment condition. For example, if a voter believes that voting is his or her duty, she may respond positively to the voting intention question regardless of the treatment vignette (electoral promise). Additionally, covariates may mediate the treatments and bring about heterogeneous treatment effects, when treatment conditions have different impacts on different segments or target populations (Gerber and Green 2012). For example, if a voter is libertarian in her economic thinking, she will endorse the party with the market-driven promise more than the party promising something else. Hence, the effect of a market-driven promise

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[32] For all models, I report robust standard errors, addressing the clustering of responses, which allows the observations to be independent across clusters, but not within clusters.

[33] Following this approach, large-size point estimates with wide confidence may not meet conventional requirements of statistical significance. However, its potential impact could tell a better story than a small-size point estimate with very narrow confidence intervals and high statistical significance (Gross 2015, 785).

will be larger for libertarian voters, compared to the voters who follow a different political ideology.

Graph 2. Treatment effects on turnout and party support (Logit, treatments only)
Marginal effects, 95% confidence intervals
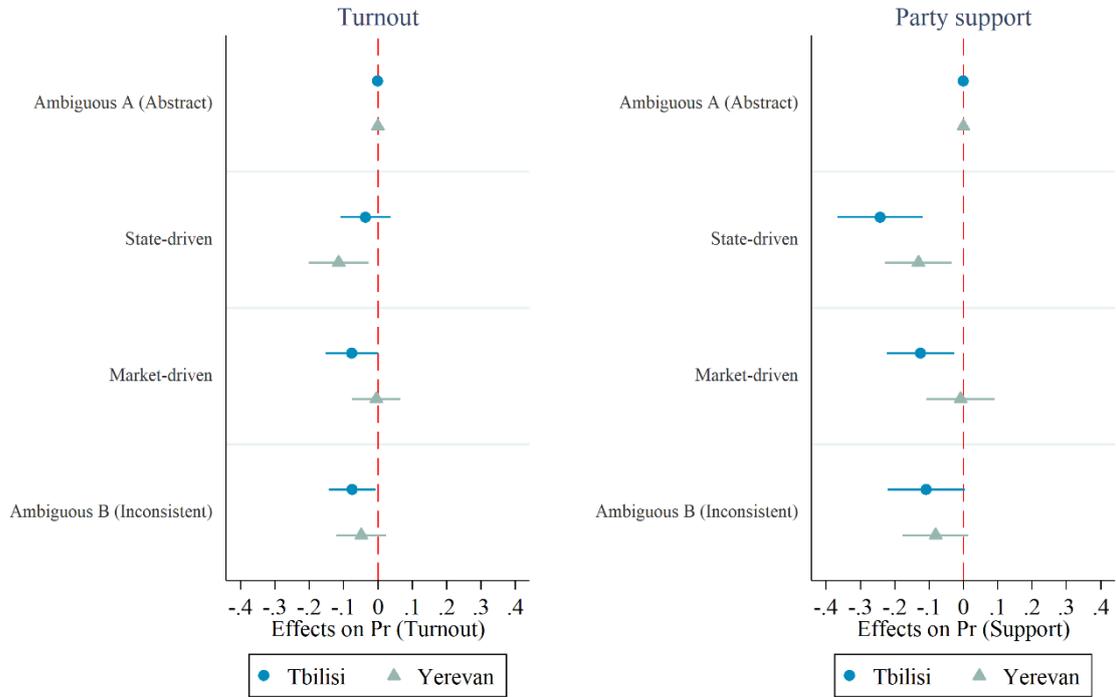


Below, I assess the impact of several covariates derived from the survey instrument that describe voters' personal characteristics and political attitudes looking at both the independent impact of the covariate as well as heterogeneous treatment effects. The impact of covariates on turnout and party support is displayed on Graph 3. Importantly, several covariates have significant independent impacts on the outcome variables, but the magnitude of treatment effects stay the same as in the base model with treatments only.[34]

I start by controlling for the impact of voters' individual characteristics, such as gender, age and education, which significantly varies per study location: while females are more likely to turnout for elections than males in Tbilisi, respondent gender has no impact on party support in either city. As expected, the youngest age group (18 to 38) is less likely to vote and support the party in Tbilisi compared to the reference category of voters – 60 years or older. Yet, age makes no difference in either turnout or party support for voters in Yerevan. Education has no

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[34] Tables with interactions are presented in the online Appendix A (see supplemental data).

relevance for turnout in either city. Yet, voters with tertiary education are less likely to support the party, independently of its promise, than voters with less than tertiary education in Tbilisi. Voters' individual characteristics mediate the treatment effects very weakly: in the turnout models, there is no statistically significant interaction between the individual characteristics and treatment conditions. Yet, in the party support models, voters with tertiary education, who received the market-driven treatment, were more likely to support the party.

Graph 3. Treatment effects on turnout and party support (Logit with covariates)
Marginal effects, 95% confidence intervals
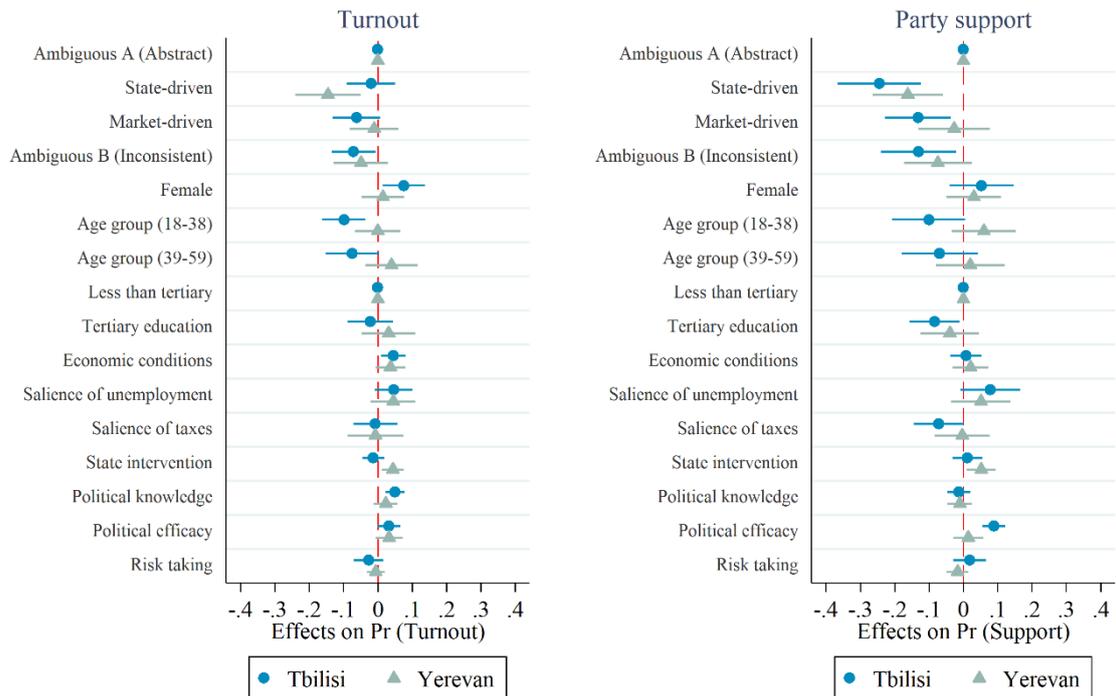


Recent experimental research shows that poverty leads to diminished cognitive performance at the individual level and hence, results in short-term, irrational decisions (Mani et al. 2013). Following this finding, I include a measure of relative deprivation and examine whether poorer respondents are more likely to respond positively to ambiguous policy promises. Relative deprivation is measured by a straightforward question about the respondent's assessment of his or her household's economic conditions com- pared to neighboring households. The models suggest that relative deprivation may have a small, positive impact, but it is statistically significant only in the case of reported turnout in Tbilisi. Contrary to my expectations, the interaction effects of relative economic deprivation with treatment conditions have no significance in either study location.

Since the treatment vignettes are designed around unemployment and taxes, it is logical to control for the impact of these issues' salience.[35] It is expected that if unemployment or taxes are salient for the voter, she will be more likely to vote in elections and support the party than the voter for whom these issues are not important, regardless of the electoral promise. Expectations are partially confirmed: while the salience of taxes and unemployment have no independent significant impact in the Yerevan sample, the salience of unemployment has a positive impact in Tbilisi: voters, who care about unemployment are more likely to participate in elections and are more likely to support the party compared to those, who do not regard unemployment as a salient issue. Interestingly, the salience of unemployment and taxes influences party support in the opposite way in Tbilisi: While the salience of taxes makes party support less likely, the salience of unemployment encourages party support, no matter the type of electoral promise. It is worth noting that unemployment and taxes do not produce heterogeneous treatment effects, and hence each treatment group is influenced by these variables at the same rate.

Electoral promises in the treatment conditions are designed to mimic a simple ideological division regarding the state's role in the economy. Hence, it is expected that voters will respond to each treatment through her own ideological predispositions. Therefore, the respondent's prior beliefs about the state's role in the economy should influence her responses on reported turnout and party support. I control for such influences by including an index in the model which assesses the respondent's support for state intervention.[36]

Support for state intervention can have a positive or negative effect on voting behavior independently of the treatment condition. Importantly, this covariate can also stimulate heterogeneity of treatment effects: those who endorse state intervention will be more likely to be affected by the state-driven promise. Likewise, the market-driven promise will have a larger impact on respondents who do not support state interference in the economy.

The models show that support for state intervention has a small, positive impact on turnout and party support in Yerevan, but not in Tbilisi. Unexpectedly, state intervention

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[35] The survey instrument includes two questions that help to measure issue salience: (1) how much does unemployment / taxes concern the respondent personally and (2) how often does he or she discuss unemployment / taxes with people close to them. Using these two questions, I compute a salience dummy for each issue coded as 1 if the respondent is personally concerned with the issue and reports discussing it with people close to him or her "always" or "often".

[36] The index is the sum of agreements of four different questions on the state's role in the economy.

produces a weak heterogenous treatment effect in Yerevan party support models only: its interaction with the ambiguous B (inconsistent) promise positively influences party support.

Trusting what political parties promise should be mediated by people's actual knowledge of the country's political realities. Hence, I introduce a political knowledge score as a covariate. Although the computation and interpretation of political knowledge has been duly criticized recently (Boudreau and Lupia 2011), I calculate the index as the sum of correct answers on four simple factual questions.[37] While the independent impact of political knowledge can be positive or negative on voting behavior, I expect voters with a high level of political knowledge to be less supportive of ambiguous promises. Importantly, political knowledge positively influences reported readiness to vote in Tbilisi only, whereas it shows no significant impact in other models for either study location. Contrary to my expectations, I cannot find a significant impact of interactions between political knowledge and the treatment conditions on either of the dependent variables.

Additionally, I control for the impact of political efficacy, which is expected to have a positive impact on voting behavior: a higher political efficacy score should correlate with a higher probability of voting and a higher probability of supporting any political party regardless of the treatment condition.[38] Likewise, when voters with high political efficacy scores are exposed to non-ambiguous promises, they are expected to have a higher probability of turnout and party support. I find a small positive impact of political efficacy on turnout models in both study locations but a sizable positive effect on party support only in Tbilisi. Findings are weaker when interacting the political efficacy score with the treatments: interactions with both state-driven and market-driven promises have a significant positive impact only in the party support models for Yerevan. Lastly, I included a covariate measuring general attitudes towards risk taking. As reported in Tomz and Van Houweling (2009), risk-takers are expected to favor ambiguity in promises. The index of the risk-taking covariate is not statistically significant in

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[37] The index aggregates correct answers on questions on who approves the state budget, who is the commander in chief of the military, which is politically the most powerful office officially, and which parties are in the government coalition.

[38] I compute the political efficacy score as an index of four questions that ask about the respondent's agreement or disagreement to the following statements: (1) how qualified does the respondent feel to participate in politics, (2) how well informed is he or she about political processes, (3) whether he or she believes that people's opinions matter for politicians, and (4) whether he or she thinks that people have a say in politics.

any model.[39] Moreover, I did not find any evidence that the risk takers are more likely to appreciate ambiguous electoral promises compared to risk averse people. Overall, the inclusion of several theoretically relevant variables in the models and their interactions with the treatment conditions did not change coefficients from the base models with only treatment variables. Therefore, I conclude that our findings regarding the treatment effects are strong and reliable. Yet, the treatment effects reported above were assessed in comparison to the reference group – the type A ambiguous (abstract) promise. Since the treatment includes four groups, including the reference group, there is a need for appropriate adjustments to take into consideration multiple comparisons (Mitchell 2012). I visualize this pairwise comparison on Graph 4.

Graph 4. Pairwise comparisons of treatment effects (Logit models)
Sidak's corrections, 95% Confidence Intervals
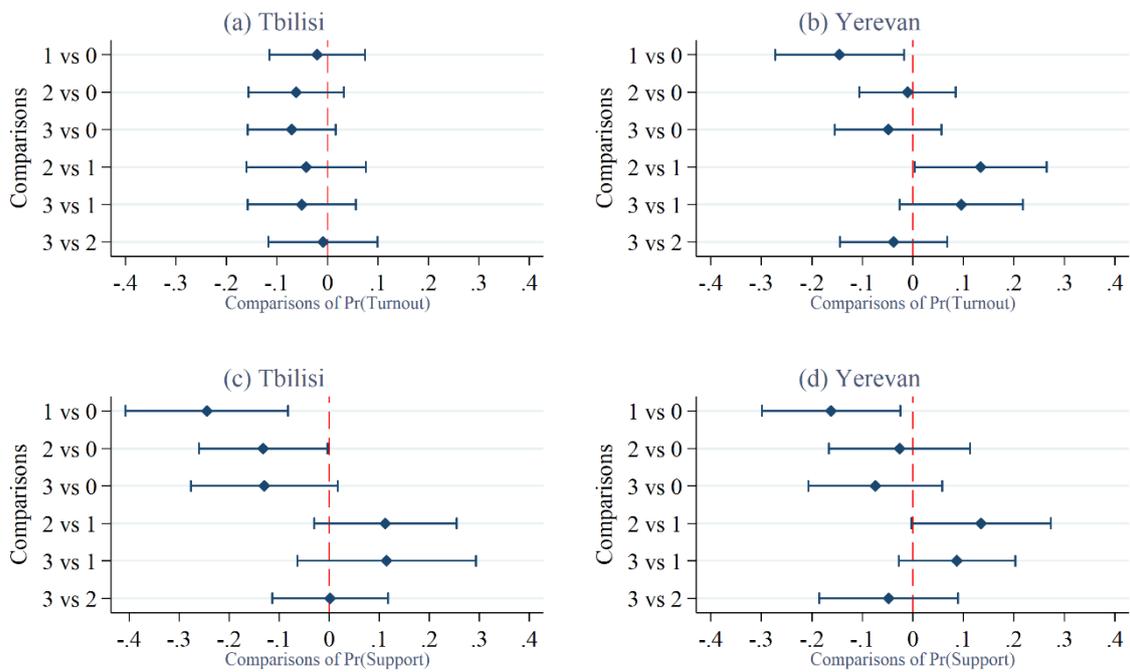


0=Ambiguous A (Abstract); 1=State-driven; 2=Market-driven; 3=Ambiguous B (Inconsistent)

Following the logic of prevalence of substantive impact over statistical significance, I conclude that for the Yerevan voters the state-driven promise is the worst, and no electoral promise beats the ambiguous A (abstract) promise: while the abstract promise increases the probability of party support by about 15% compared to the state-driven promise, it is no worse

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[39] The risk variable is an index averaging (1) self-assessment of the respondent's riskiness, (2) reported frequency of taking risks related to the respondent's health, and (3) reported frequency of taking risks regarding the respondent's financial matters.

than the market-driven or inconsistent promise. At the same time, the party will do 14% better if it comes up with a market-driven promise and approximately 10% better if puts forward a type B inconsistent promise compared to the state-driven promise. These observations hold for both the turnout and party support models.

In Tbilisi, while electoral promises are not relevant for turnout, treatment effects on party support are stronger than in Yerevan: the type A ambiguous (abstract) promise gives a significant advantage to the party compared to any other promise (24% in the case of the state-driven promise and 13% for the market-driven and inconsistent promises). Moreover, if a party makes a market-driven or type B ambiguous promise, it will do better than a party with the state-driven promise by approximately 11%.

Overall, I find convincing evidence that ambiguity is advantageous: if a party promises nothing (ambiguous A), it will do better in Tbilisi, and at least not worse in Yerevan. While it is expected that people do not appreciate increased taxes and hence, prefer an abstract promise to the state-driven promise, the abstract promise is still more beneficial for the party in Tbilisi than the market-driven promise, a costless option for voters. For the voters in Yerevan, the market-driven promise is as good as the ambiguous A (abstract) or ambiguous B (inconsistent) promise. Moreover, the abstract promise has a sizable advantage over the inconsistent promise in Tbilisi, but has none in Yerevan. I explain this by a different level and mode of competitiveness between Armenia and Georgia as stated in hypothesis III: while leading parties in Armenia are considered to be ideologically neutral (Iskandaryan 2012), Georgia's two largest parties according to vote share in the 2012 and 2016 elections, offer significantly different policies to voters: whereas the United National Movement's 2012 programme mostly focused on economic growth and targeted social assistance, the Georgian Dream, the challenger, discounted the role of economic growth in its expansive programme and highlighted the importance of redistributive policies instead (United National Movement 2012; Georgian Dream 2012). Not only have Georgian voters seen highly polarized contests of policy ideas, they also experienced tangible benefits from policy shifts after the 2012 government change in terms of more accessible healthcare and government programmes to promote agriculture and local production. At the same time, the United National Movement retained a sizable amount of popular support in the 2016 parliamentary elections, hence keeping the electorate relatively polarized between the flowers of fast growth and redistribution. Such a polarized context should have created favorable conditions for ambiguous promises, which is reflected in the results of the experiment.

## Discussion

In this study I find strong evidence that ambiguity gives an advantage to a political party. Type A ambiguity (abstract promise) is better than promising a state-driven policy and not worse than promising a market-driven solution. I also find that ambiguity is not limitless in the eyes of voters: an inconsistent promise (type B ambiguity) will give the party worse results compared to the abstract promise. These findings contribute to understanding the problem of accountability in hybrid regimes. If ambiguity continues to be a winning strategy, voters will become increasingly uncertain about what was promised and subsequently find it hard to weigh received services against promises. While mature democracies have many established institutions, including opposition parties, civil society organizations and the media to assist voters in the strive for accountability, hybrid regimes have such mechanisms, but they are often weakly institutionalized. Once the winning political force is in power, the vagueness of promises gives considerable flexibility to the political elite's actions, which will result in actual or perceived under-delivery of promises. The poor performance of elected leaders and voters' inability to hold them accountable contributes to voter disillusionment and detachment from political parties. Political parties then react to the detachment by putting forward even more ambiguous promises, hoping to please as many segments of voters as possible. As a result, a successful party becomes even less likely to deliver what it promises, which in turn creates cycles of unrealistic expectations, unworkable policy proposals, and disillusioned voters – an accountability trap. Moreover, the accountability trap creates fruitful ground for representation crises, which often open the doors for political outsiders to enter the political scene and dramatically destabilize the political system (Roberts 2015; Aytaç and Öniş 2014). Recent developments in Turkey demonstrate that such processes may easily result in a full-scale backslide to authoritarianism.

This study looked at the impact of ambiguity in a static way. Therefore, the findings relating to the accountability trap should be generalized with caution. The electoral process is a repetitive game, where voters and politicians continually update information about the expected costs and benefits of their actions as well as about potential winners and losers. However, the experiment described in this article reduced the electoral process to a one-off interaction between voters and a hypothetical political party. Hence, the findings should be examined again using an experimental setting, most likely in the lab, where voters have repeated interactions with political parties. Moreover, party labels and party types were intentionally detached from the treatment vignettes in this research. However, as previous

scholarship shows, the role of ambiguity plays out differently when it comes from the ruling party, opposition party, an established party or a newcomer (Lo, Proksch, and Slapin 2016; Cahill 2016).

Finally, I designed the treatment vignettes to address only the economic dimension of political competition. It is clear from the survey experiment that the premise about increasing taxes repelled voters' support, whereas surprisingly, the promise about reducing taxes was not appreciated at all. Further study is needed to understand whether dislike of state-driven policies and a neutral attitude to market-driven policies is specific to taxation and employment or can be generalized to other policy domains such as foreign policy or policies related to identity and culture (see Babunashvili 2017 on the importance of foreign policy dimension). Moreover, I looked at the programmatic aspect of electoral promises, whereas clientelistic promises could be equally relevant in the context of hybrid regimes (Kitschelt and Kselman 2013). Follow-up studies should test if the logic observed on programmatic promises can be extended to clientelistic linkages between voters and parties.

## Conclusion

The survey experiment in Armenia and Georgia experiment provides four important conclusions: first, an abstract electoral promise is better than promises containing concrete policy potions, whereas an inconsistent promise is not advantageous for the party; second, increased state intervention aimed at solving the most pressing issues will not be supported if this requires increased taxes; third, the promise about decreasing taxes and promoting market-driven mechanisms of job creation yields no more support than an ambiguous promise (same as ambiguous in Yerevan and even less in Tbilisi); fourth, political competition matters: while more experience with competitive political environments in Georgian let Tbilisi voters differentiate electoral promises, they also showed a greater appreciation of ambiguous promises compared to the voters in Yerevan.

These findings are relevant for hybrid regimes in at least three respects. First, we observe a source of an accountability trap: since voters do not mind ambiguous promises supplied by political parties, the end result will be the failure of the party in power to deliver on its promises and the subsequent disillusionment of the electorate to the already underdeveloped democratic process. Second, not surprisingly, voters are more concerned with their immediate losses (increased taxes) than potential long-term benefits (creation of new jobs). Such conditions may force parties to emphasize long-term benefits in programme and

disguise the fact that there is no such thing as a free lunch. Third, political competition is a double-edged sword: when political parties compete over ideologically different promises, it helps voters to differentiate electoral promises and make voting decisions accordingly. However, such a competition also increases the chance of success for ambiguous promises, since ambiguity is advantageous in the polarized environment. Hence, it seems that the winning strategy for political parties is, if you have to lie about promises, promise nothing.

# The Self-defeating Game: How State Capacity and Policy Choice Affect Political Survival[1]

## Introduction

Over the last four decades, authoritarians have been removed from office at the ballot box in numerous locations, from Gambia to Georgia. In some cases, the elections ushered in a transition to democracy, while in others the newly elected leaders continued with some variant of hybrid governance, combining democratic and authoritarian features, or with outright authoritarianism (Carothers 2002; Brownlee 2009). At the same time, elections have become the primary means of legitimizing a government, with even fully authoritarian governments like Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan holding elections to bolster their legitimacy (Ó Beacháin and Kevlihan 2015). Moreover, in a large subset of authoritarian regimes, which Levitsky and Way (2010) describe as competitive authoritarian, elections are considered the main means through which power is contested. While numerous authors have looked at regime change, moving from democracy to autocracy or the reverse, through the lens of state capacity (e.g. Andersen et al. 2014), fewer studies have explored how state capacity contributes to the electoral success of the incumbent regard- less of regime type. In this article, we suggest that the chance of an incumbent's party remaining in office is related to the capacity of the state they hold power over, with successful investment in state capacity improving an incumbent's chances of political survival. Yet, we also suggest that volatility in state capacity is likely to increase an incumbent's chance of being unseated through elections. To define state capacity, we combine two definitions: While Kugler and Tammen (2012) define state capacity as the ability of governments to "appropriate portions of the national output to advance public goals" (Kugler and Tammen 2012, 2), Rogers and Weller (2013) define it as "the ability to implement public policy." We combine these to the state's ability to "appropriate portions of the national output" to "implement public policy". This definition is used in order to avoid the normative aspect of Kugler and Tammen's definition, "public goals," while also keeping the extraction part of the definition which Kugler and Tammen rightly highlight. We measure state capacity

using Relative Political Extraction (RPE), i.e. actual extraction divided by predicted extraction (Arbetman-Rabinowitz et al. 2012).

Our expectations regarding the impact of state capacity on political survival grow out of selectorate theory (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005), which suggests incumbents keep office through maintaining a winning coalition through the provision of public and private goods. Bueno De Mesquita et al. suggest that a leader's competence is an important factor in their maintenance of a winning coalition since a leader which can do more with less will be able to provide more goods than a potential challenger. We build on this argument to suggest that the competence of the state an incumbent holds power over – state capacity – is also important, because a more competent state will be able to deliver more with less, and the leader at the helm of that state will, in turn, be more able to engender supporter loyalty through the provision of greater amounts of goods than with a less competent state.

If increased state capacity means the ability to extract more resources to provide more goods, then a leader should be interested in investing in state capacity, because it will increase their chances of survival. However, investments in state capacity entail the short term diversion of resources from other activities and have learning and transaction costs. Hence, investment is likely to result in the fluctuation of state capacity and the amount of goods a leader can deliver in the short to medium term. In turn, the coalition members which keeps a leader in office may become uncertain over the value of future benefits they will receive, may be affected and/or disagree with the specific investments the leader makes, and potentially be uncertain over their status in the leader's coalition. From this uncertainty, we hypothesize that coalition members become more likely to defect and to turn the leader out of office. Notably, investments in state capacity often take the form of reform, which we define broadly as a policy change, significantly altering the rules of the game in a given policy field. Given that many reforms lead to short term losers followed by the creation of winners over time, a would-be reformer must attempt to maintain their winning coalition, while consistently generating losers if reform continues. With elections approaching, the reformer faces a dilemma – either turn to less than savory means to maintain a winning coalition or lose office. Through turning to the provision of private goods or coercion, however, the reformer will create uncertainty among coalition members about their status in the winning coalition as well as the future value of winning coalition membership, thus leading to higher chances of defection. This process opens the door for a challenger to make a credible offer of greater future returns, attract defectors from the incumbent's winning coalition, and unseat the incumbent. Given the possibility of a credible

challenger emerging, we argue that this process is a self-defeating game for the reformer, which we call the reformer's dilemma.

In order to empirically ground this theoretical argument, the article combines a large-n regression analysis with case studies from Armenia and Georgia. The regression analysis on a pooled data set of 981 multiparty elections across 142 countries between 1976 and 2012 provides strong evidence of the positive effects of state capacity growth and the negative effects of state capacity volatility on regime survival. The case studies complement the statistical findings by showing how state capacity volatility in Georgia contributed to Mikheil Saakashvili losing office, after he and the United National Movement (UNM) had entered the reformer's dilemma, and in contrast, how in Armenia slow and steady growth has allowed the incumbent to retain office.

The findings are significant to the literature on the South Caucasus as well as selectorate theory for a number of reasons. First, the article provides a different look at state capacity development in Georgia and Armenia, thus adding to the emerging literature on the subject (Rekhviashvili and Polese 2017). Second, we make a contribution to selectorate theory by situating state capacity growth, and state capacity volatility within the theoretical framework. Third, we discuss the role of state capacity volatility in regime survival, a novel contribution to the literature on state capacity. Finally, the normative implications of the article are also significant. For those working to develop state capacity for the benefits it brings to the public, we show that it also has the potential to help authoritarians maintain power, an important consideration for those working on development both in the region and further afield.

## Incumbent survival and state capacity

A significant amount of literature has explored regime stability and change, rather than political survival defined as the incumbent's party retaining office following an election instead of the regime type changing. For example, Levitsky and Way (2010) attempt to parse out the factors that contribute to stable and unstable competitive authoritarian regimes. Schedler (2013) looks at electoral authoritarianism in a similar manner. Moving beyond regime type, Bueno de Mesquita et al. (2005) proposed selectorate theory as a regime-type neutral explanation of political survival. Selectorate theory suggests that every polity has three primary groups – residents, the selectorate, and the leader/incumbent. Residents are within the territory of a state, but are not members of the selectorate. The selectorate are those who can choose the leadership e.g. the enfranchised broadly conceived. Within the selectorate is the winning coalition, which

"is defined as a subset of the selectorate of sufficient size such that the subset's support endows the leadership with the political power over the remainder of the selectorate as well as over the disenfranchised members of society" (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005, 51). To stay in power, the incumbent must maintain their winning coalition. In order to maintain a winning coalition, an incumbent can use the provision of either public or private goods. While the benefits of public goods like infrastructure, education, and the rule of law accrue to all members of a polity, private goods directly benefit members of the winning coalition.

To unseat the incumbent, a challenger must generate a winning coalition equal to the size of the incumbent's plus one. To do so, they must make a credible and better offer of some basket of public and private goods. If an individual defects, the challenger can only guarantee a one-time payoff, because it is unclear whether the defector will be needed to maintain, and therefore remain in, the winning coalition following a transfer of power. Hence, a potential defector must weigh their chance of being in the challenger's winning coalition against the benefits they receive and will receive from membership in the current winning coalition. The theory allows for a greater chance of defection in the case of higher affinities between challenger and coalition member than between incumbent and winning coalition member. In sum, an individual is only likely to defect from a winning coalition if the rewards of the one-time payment, plus the returns from being part of the winning coalition in the future, discounted to account for uncertainty over membership in that future coalition, is greater than the rewards of being within the current winning coalition. All else equal, winning coalition members will defect if they prefer the challenger, which Bueno de Mesquita et al. refer to as a coalition member and a leader's affinities. This set of circumstances leads to what Bueno De Mesquita et al. refer to as the loyalty norm, which means that individuals are generally more likely to stay within the leader's winning coalition rather than defect to the incumbent all else equal (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005).

It is nonetheless possible for an incumbent to be unseated as a cursory glance at politics shows. Selectorate theory suggests four circumstances that may lead to the ousting of an incumbent. First, a challenger can be more competent than an incumbent, and hence could make a more appealing offer than the incumbent can make about the amount of goods to be distributed. Second, an economic shock combined with incomplete information about the economy among the selectorate in tangent to the competence of the leader and challenger can lead to defections and the overturning of an incumbent. Third, affinities between selectors and leaders are only revealed over time; hence, uncertainty over a leader's affinity for a selector and whether the selector will be kept in the winning coalition could lead them to leave for a

challenger, particularly in the early days of a leader's incumbency. Fourth, individuals will be more likely to defect if they have a greater affinity for the challenger than the incumbent all else being equal (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005).

Although the quantity of goods distributed is dependent on the amount of resources available, and a competent incumbent can do more with less, we argue that the capacity of the state which the leader controls also matters. A more capable state should also be able to deliver more than a less capable state, thus increasing the incumbent's resources and chances of staying in office. Moreover, a more competent state is also likely to ease the introduction of difficult policy or to prevent poorly thought out policies from being as damaging as they might otherwise be. If state capacity does increase an incumbent's chance of survival, it also means that incumbents who want to remain in office should also want to increase the capacity of the state they run. To do so, they should invest in state capacity (Besley and Persson 2009). Our first hypothesis suggests that if such investments increase state capacity, it will positively influence the incumbent's political survival:

*H1: State capacity growth during the incumbent's term in office will increase the chances of the incumbent's party winning elections.*

Investments in state capacity, however, require resources, which are drawn from those available to the incumbent. This in turn diverts resources from the provision of public and private goods during the period of investment, leading to a less than maximum level of goods provision and potentially a decline in the amount of goods provided. More- over, during the period of investment, the state will have both learning and transaction costs associated with engaging in new activities or changing the flow of activities. In turn, this will put strain on the state and lead to the provision of either lower quality or fewer goods for a time. The above process will lead to fluctuating levels of state capacity, i.e. state capacity volatility. The fluctuations in the delivery of goods to the winning coalition in turn have the potential to lead to defections through uncertainty about both the future level of returns that the incumbent can provide and the incumbent's affinities for members of the winning coalition. Hence, our second hypothesis suggests that state capacity volatility will harm the incumbent's political survival:

*H2: State capacity volatility during the incumbent's term in office will decrease the chances of the incumbent's party winning elections.*

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Uncertainty over future returns could result from a number of sources, but three clear causal pathways are present. First, incomplete information about the investment could lead to uncertainty over whether the resulting lull in service provision is permanent or merely a stopgap between reaping the benefits of a leader's investment. If a coalition member is not fully aware of why their allocation of goods during the period of investment has declined or is less than it could be, they may suspect that they are less secure in their position within the winning coalition than previously thought, nudging on defection. This is particularly likely in large winning coalition systems wherein information is less likely to be near full. Second, given that returns on investments are not guaranteed, investments will be associated with increased uncertainty over the value of membership in the winning coalition. Challengers who can make a credible offer of higher returns, will in turn become more appealing, again encouraging defection. Third, on top of uncertainty over returns, investments are fundamentally about policy, and if the policy change goes against a selector's interests and preferences, then it is likely to change the selector's affinity for the incumbent. Although the above causal pathways are all likely, they are not necessary or sufficient conditions to lead to defection. Jointly, however, they represent potential causal pathways through which investment in state capacity can lead to defections from the incumbent, and eventually their unseating. Notably, the presence of multiple investments in state capacity will compound uncertainty about the overall situation when it comes to returns, selector membership in the winning coalition, and affinities. Hence, multiple investments are likely to increase the chances of defection.

## Data and methods

To test the above hypotheses, we use a mixed methods research design. First, we test the impact of state capacity growth and volatility on the incumbent's electoral success using statistical analysis of pooled cross-country data. Second, we illustrate how state capacity growth and volatility works for or against the incumbent's electoral success discussing particular cases of reform in Armenia and Georgia.

To pool relevant data, we identified relevant variables to operationalize the concepts discussed in the theoretical section above as well as to control for several alternative paths to an incumbent's electoral success or failure.[2] In the pooled dataset we retain only country cases

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[2] Data sources: (1) World Bank World Development Indicators (World Bank 2016a), (2) Data- base of Political Institutions (Cruz, Keefer, and Scartascini 2016), (3) Polity IV dataset (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2016), (4) National Elections Across Democracy and Autocracy Dataset (NELDA) (Hyde and Marinov 2012, 2015), (5)

with multiparty elections, because an incumbent cannot lose an election in single party systems, meaning there is no variance on the outcome in such elections. As suggested by Hyde and Marinov (2012), we use three variables from the NELDA dataset to define multiparty elections as legislative or executive elections at the national level, where (1) parties were legal, (2) political opposition was allowed and (3) voters had a choice of candidates on the ballot. Overall, 1244 multiparty elections were held in 142 countries from 1976 to 2012. However, the NELDA dataset coded only 1093 cases as the incumbent's party winning or losing, the dependent variable in our models (Hyde and Marinov 2012, 2015). Moreover, several covariates in the merged dataset had missing values, and hence, we ended up with 981 election-years across 142 countries between 1976 and 2012.[3]

For the analysis, the key independent variables of theoretical importance are growth in state capacity and state capacity volatility. Due to the difficulty in operationalizing state capacity, a brief discussion of the literature is in order. Scholars have proposed a number of dimensions of state capacity and numerous operationalizations. Some of the proposed dimensions include extractive capacity (e.g. Cheibub 1998), bureaucratic administrative capacity (e.g. Bäck and Hadenius 2008; Englehart 2009; Fortin 2010, 2012; Hamm, King, and Stuckler 2012; Hendrix and Young 2014; Hendrix 2010), coercive capacity (e.g. Hendrix and Young 2014; Kisangani and Pickering 2014; Richani 2010), infrastructural capacity (e.g. Fortin 2010, 2012), fiscal capacity (e.g. Besley and Persson 2009) and legal capacity (e.g. Besley and Persson 2009). Recognizing the complexity of the concept, Hendrix (2010) divides the literature into three theoretical state capacity groupings: bureaucratic/administrative capacity, quality and coherence of political institutions, and military/coercive capacity. While not contesting the theoretical validity of each of these dimensions, carrying out factor analysis on 15 different commonly used measures of state capacity, Hendrix finds that bureaucratic administrative capacity, which he defines as the state's "ability to collect and manage information", is the main explanatory factor (Hendrix 2010, 274).

While operationalizing state capacity is notoriously difficult, we argue that a measure of state capacity should meet several requirements. First, it should be descriptive rather than normative. Some widely-used indicators of state capacity (e.g. the World Bank's World Governance Indicators or Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom) are based on

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Relative Political Performance Dataset (Kugler and Tammen 2012), and (6) data on regime type from Freedom House (Freedom House 2017a).

[3] A full list of countries is available in the online appendix.

expert assessments. While expert assessments do not exclude the possibility of a comprehensive description of state capacity, its validity may also suffer from underlying normative factors, such as greater appreciation of democratic than autocratic and hybrid governance. Indeed, most of these indicators show a bias towards democracies and are highly correlated with the polity IV and Freedom House democracy scores.[4] Second, the measure should be relative. While a country like Azerbaijan clearly has greater state capacity than Georgia in absolute terms, arguably given the resources Georgia has, it may be doing relatively better than Azerbaijan. Third, a measure of state capacity should measure the state's success at collecting resources. In selectorate theory, the policy the state most wants to implement is the collection of resources, because its leader needs them to stay in office. Given that the officials that fill bureaucracies also likely want to keep their jobs, and are at least partially dependent on the leader to do so, they too should aim at maximizing the collection of resources.

Given the challenges associated with operationalizing state capacity, we attempt to balance the pitfalls described above, while also being realistic in recognizing that there is potentially no perfect operationalization of state capacity. To do so, we use Relative Political Extraction (RPE) (Arbetman-Rabinowitz et al. 2012). RPE provides a strong proxy for bureaucratic administrative capacity as it, "approximates the ability of governments to appropriate portions of the national output" (Kugler and Tammen 2012). RPE is calculated as actual extraction divided by predicted extraction (Arbetman-Rabinowitz et al. 2012). Actual extraction is the tax share of GDP taken from the World Bank Development Indicators for each country-year. The predicted extraction level is estimated using the predicted values for tax share of GDP from a regression which takes into account access to natural resources, exports and agricultural production.[5]

The use of RPE meets the criteria we outlined above: it is neutral to regime type, since democracies and autocracies are equally likely to extract available resources at high or low

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[4] For example, across countries with multiparty elections the World Bank's estimates of control of corruption and government effectiveness have quite strong correlations with Polity IV democracy scores (r = 0.54 and r = 0.58, respectively). Likewise, Heritage Foundation's economic freedom score correlates with the Polity IV democracy score at r = 0.54.

[5] The authors use two formulas, with one for developing and one for developed countries (Arbetman-Rabinowitz et al. 2012, 40). We looked at the estimates of both formulae and they show identical results. In this article we use the formula, which the authors intended for developing countries and includes share of agricultural production in GDP.

rates. Moreover, the measure is relative, because it takes into account how well a state is doing in comparison to how well one would expect the state to do given the structure of its economy. Also, it incorporates key structural features of the national economy such as dependence on natural resources, share of agricultural output, share of exports and overall wealth, and hence, approximates a state's ability to extract available resources to implement public policies the leader chooses.

Using RPE, we construct the model to account for growth as well as volatility of state capacity as the key independent variables. We measure state capacity growth as the average growth rate of RPE during the four years before the election year. Likewise, we operationalize state capacity volatility as the standard deviation of RPE during the four years before the election year. To account for the level of state capacity an incumbent adopts from their predecessor, we also include lagged values of RPE for one year.

In addition to the dependent and the key independent variables, we included several control variables relevant to incumbent electoral success in order to address alternative explanations of political survival. Surely, regime type is a significant factor in political survival: all else equal, democracies are less likely to keep parties of the chief executive in power for a long time. Among other factors, this is primarily due to institutions that mitigate the incumbent's advantage. Hence, from a myriad of democracy assessment scores we selected regime type as defined by Freedom House, since it allows for the most straightforward interpretation (Freedom House 2017a).[6]

Since we look at competitive elections across different regime types, it is very likely that the quality of elections has significant variance across and inside the countries in our dataset. Indeed, competitiveness of elections as we adopt it in this article, does not necessarily imply free and fair choice for the electorate. As Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski (2014) show, incumbents frequently tolerate electoral competition, but if the results are unlikely to be in their favor, they may resort to extra-legal activities such as pre-election violence and electoral fraud. Cross-country analysis has demonstrated that such activities increase the incumbent's chance of retaining office (Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski 2014). To this end

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[6] We also checked whether other measures of democracy changed the model estimates significantly. Hence, we replaced Freedom House regime types with (1) Polity IV scores (Marshall, Gurr, and Jaggers 2016), and (2) vote share of opposition parties (Cruz, Keefer, and Scartascini 2016). In all models state capacity growth and state capacity volatility, the variables of theoretical relevance, keep significance as well as comparable effect size. We show all models in tables the appendix 3.

we include a dummy variable from the NELDA dataset which approximates electoral fraud (Hyde and Marinov 2012; Hafner-Burton, Hyde, and Jablonski 2014).[7]

As expected, quality of elections, as measured by the NELDA variable and regime type, as measured by Freedom House, are highly, but not perfectly correlated. In total, 556 elections had significant concerns regarding fairness, from which 8% happened in regimes dubbed as free by Freedom House, 46% happened in partly free regimes and 46% in not free regime types. Nevertheless, the poor quality of elections determines the election outcome only partially, with the other important factor being polices designed to the benefit of particular constituencies. A study from a hybrid regime demonstrates, such policies work to the advantage of the incumbent even in the constituencies with the highest exposure to electoral fraud (George 2014, 329). Still, quality of elections correlates highly with regime type, and hence, we address their impact in two separate models: we include regime type in model 1, whereas the impact of the election quality is controlled for in model 2.

Selectorate theory suggests economic shocks combined with incomplete information about the economy gives a signal about the incumbent's competence to the winning coalition, which is relevant for political survival (Bueno de Mesquita et al. 2005). The vast literature on economic voting also has highlighted the impact of economic performance on the incumbent's chances of staying in office through elections. Normally, poor economic performance is disadvantageous for an incumbent (Duch 2007; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier 2000. For a critical review see Anderson 2007; Healy and Malhotra 2013). Therefore, we include a lagged value of per capita GDP growth from the World Development Indicators (World Bank 2016a).

Another dimension of the incumbent's economic performance is public perceptions of the economy, which is also related to incomplete information about the economic conditions inside the winning coalition. Moreover, perceived economic situation has been cited as an important factor for supporting or not supporting the incumbent in the upcoming elections (For a review see Soroka, Stecula, and Wlezien 2015; Also, Babunashvili 2017 for the Georgian case). Therefore, in addition to a real indicator of economic performance, GDP growth, we also include a dummy assessing if the country faced economic crisis from the NELDA dataset,

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[7] This is the variable NELDA11, which addresses "Before elections, are there significant concerns that elections will not be free?" All cases, where there was a concern that elections would not be free and fair as are coded as 1, and other cases as 0.

which indicates perceived economic crisis as reported in the relevant country's media (Hyde and Marinov 2015).[8]

Another dimension of economic conditions is resource dependence: the political elite in countries with rich natural resources can invest disproportionately into reproducing their power, and thus keep elected office longer compared to countries poor in natural resources. Exclusive access to resources gives confidence even to undisputed autocrats to hold elections and legitimize political power through a competition (Polese, Ó Beacháin, and Horák 2017). As elections are tolerated, incumbents in resource-rich countries normally use natural resources to build an excessive repressive apparatus, restrict political competition, and buy voters' loyalty before elections (Ross 2015; Dresden and Howard 2016). To control for this factor, we include a variable from World Development Indicators, which is total natural resources as a share of GDP (World Bank 2016a).

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for all variables included in the model. We run several types of logistic regression models to see the impact of state capacity on the incumbent's electoral success or failure. Since all model types show comparable results, and the simple logistic regression provides the most straightforward interpretation, in the subsequent section, the article focuses on reporting the results of the logistic regression. The results of the other models are available in the online appendix.[9]

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[8] Variable NELDA18: "Is country said to be in an economic crisis?"

[9] We run a simple logistic regression with cluster-level robust standard errors as well as fixed and random effects models. The fixed effects model helps to observe the effect of the independent variable over time for each country. A random effects model, however, is preferred if there is a reason to believe that differences across countries have an impact on the outcome variable. The choice between the fixed and random effects approaches depends on the assumptions that a researcher can reasonably make about the interactions among the variables and error terms in the model. Normally, the choice is informed by the Hausman test, which checks if there is a correlation between countries' error terms with the independent variables (Rabe-Hesketh and Skrondal 2008). In our case, the Hausman test suggests the use of random effects models, which show substantively identical results to the first logistic model. These results are available in the appendix 3.

**Table 1. Summary statistics**

| Variable | Obs. | Mean | Std. | Min | Max |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Incumbent lost elections | 1,093 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Relative Political Extraction (lagged) | 1,195 | 0.90 | 0.34 | 0.09 | 3.14 |
| Relative Political Extraction (std.dev.) | 1,145 | 0.08 | 0.09 | 0.00 | 1.21 |
| Relative Political Extraction (growth) | 1,145 | 0.01 | 0.08 | -0.55 | 0.51 |
| Natural resources, % of GDP (lagged) | 1,201 | 0.08 | 0.12 | 0.00 | 0.86 |
| Annual GDP growth (lagged) | 1,206 | 0.04 | 0.06 | -0.62 | 0.63 |
| Economic crisis | 1,235 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Free - Freedom House (lagged) | 1,229 | 0.47 | 0.50 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Partly free - Freedom House (lagged) | 1,229 | 0.38 | 0.48 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Not free - Freedom House (lagged) | 1,229 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Electoral fraud | 1,225 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 0.00 | 1.00 |
| Polity IV score (lagged) | 1,203 | 4.45 | 5.98 | -10.00 | 10.00 |
| Opposition vote share | 1,244 | 0.25 | 0.23 | 0.00 | 0.94 |

## Results: A self-defeating game

The models confirm our expectation that state capacity growth positively influences the incumbent's chances of winning elections. Graph 1 shows predicted probabilities of each covariate in model 1 and model 2, while holding other covariates at their means. The only difference between the two models is that model 1 controls for the influence of regime type and model 2 addresses the impact of election quality. In model 1, if state capacity increases by one percent during the four years prior to elections, the incumbent's chance of winning elections increases by 41%. In contrast, while holding state capacity growth at the mean, a one standard deviation increase in the state capacity indicator decreases the predicted chance of the incumbent party winning elections by 54%.

Graph 1. Did the incumbent's party lose elections?
Marginal effects with 95% and 90% CIs
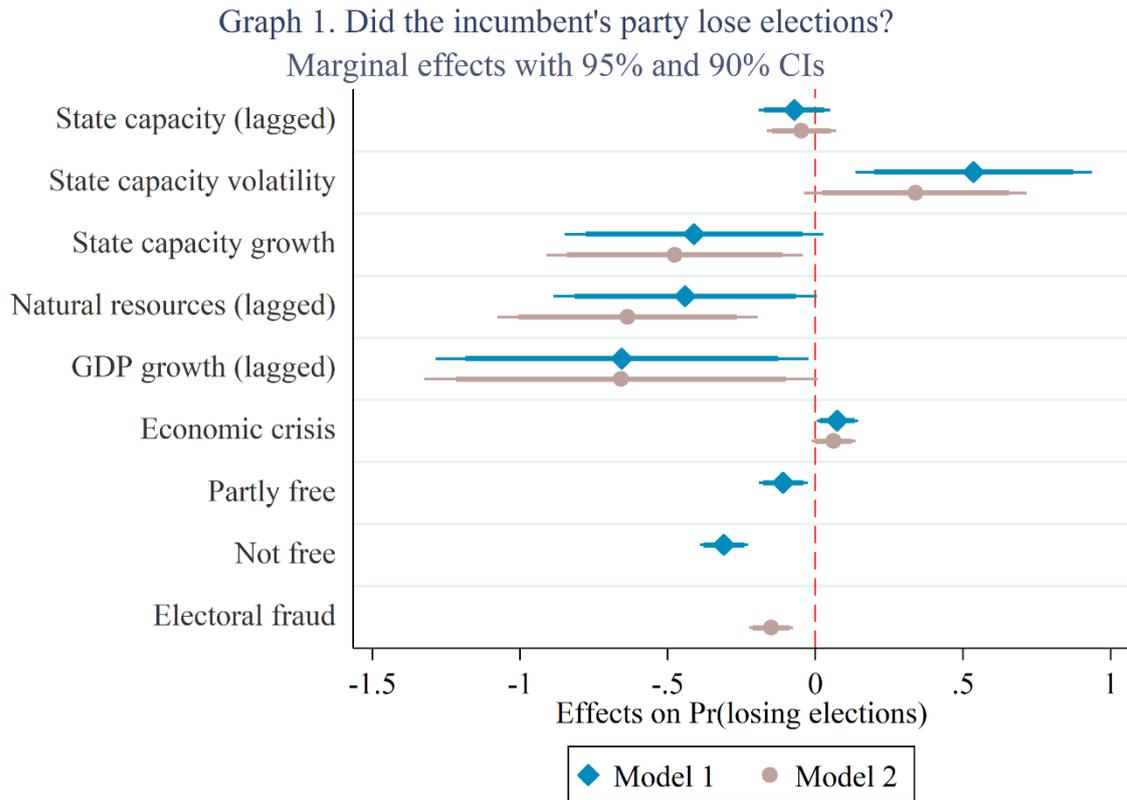


It is noteworthy that the impact of both key variables (the growth and standard deviation of the state capacity indicator) have sizable standard errors. Thus, following Gross's (2015) suggestion we look at the substantive impact taking into consideration the magnitude of standard errors. Taking this approach, the impact of state capacity volatility remains substantial: the impact of a one standard deviation change of state capacity decreases the party's chance of winning by at least 14% and at most by 94% with 95% confidence (model 1). The impact of state capacity growth in model 1 has an equally wide range: from a 0% to 85% increase in the probability of winning elections with 95% confidence (model 1). Model 2 broadly confirms the findings of model one with a slightly higher positive impact of growth and slightly lower negative impact of volatility.

Looking at the marginal effects of state capacity growth and volatility at different values also confirms our expectations: growth of state capacity four years before elections dramatically decreases the probability of the incumbent party's electoral defeat, reaching almost zero at 100% growth. A comparable decline of state capacity makes ousting from office almost certain (Graph 2, left). Similarly, the likelihood of losing elections increases steeply as state capacity volatility increases (Graph 2, right).

While state capacity growth and state capacity volatility have opposite impacts on the incumbent's electoral success, it is important to examine how the impact of these two measures are related. Graph 3 shows the marginal effects of state capacity volatility as a function of state capacity growth. Here state capacity volatility has the highest impact when growth is negative. Volatility continues to be an obstacle to political survival when state capacity grows by approximately 40% or less. However, if state capacity increases by more than 40% four years before elections, volatility has no impact on electoral success. The implication of this observation is straightforward: to overcome the negative impact of volatility, the incumbent should invest enough in state capacity to make it grow by more than 40% during her tenure.

As expected, dependence on natural resources is also a significant predictor of electoral success by the chief executive's party. Increased resource dependence is advantageous for the incumbent: the higher the resource dependence in the year prior to elections, the higher the chances are that the chief executive's party wins. Importantly, the impact of natural resource dependence is comparable to the impact of state capacity indicators in terms of point estimates and large confidence intervals.[1]

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[1] Graph 5 in the appendix shows marginal effects of state capacity indicators as a function of resource dependence. As expected, the impact of state capacity indicators is decreasing as the share of natural resources in GDP increases, reaching approximately 50%.

Graph 2. Marginal effects of state capacity indicators
95% Confidence Intervals
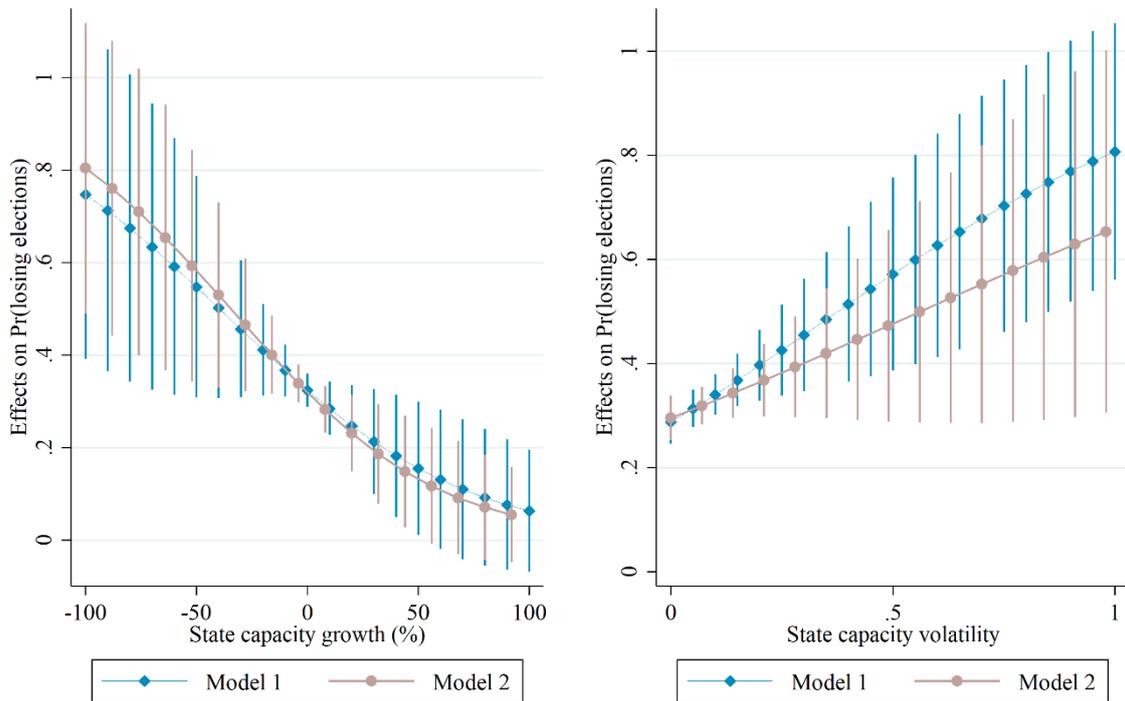


Graph 3. State capacity volatility as a function of growth
95% Confidence Intervals
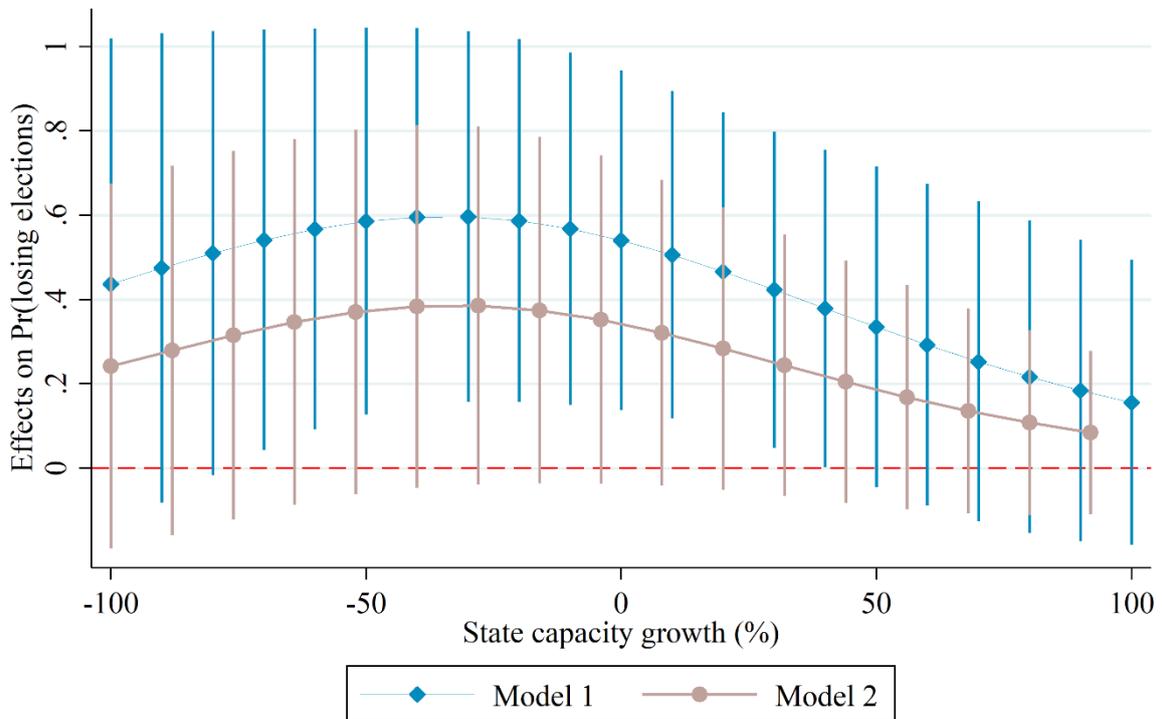
GDP growth has a significant, positive impact: economic growth before the election year increases the incumbent's chances of winning by 66%. GDP growth also has the widest confidence intervals of all covariates in the model, suggesting substantial positive impact but with high uncertainty around the estimate.[2] As for the impact of perceived economic crisis, its impact is small, and decreases the chances of the incumbent winning the elections.

Lastly, regime type and quality of elections significantly influence the incumbent's chance of winning elections. As expected, the less democratic the regime, the less likely the incumbent's party is to lose elections. Incumbents in countries Freedom House labels "not free" are most likely to retain office (model 1). Likewise, significant concerns about fairness of elections (potential fraud) help the incumbent to secure electoral victory (model 2). Still, the state capacity indicators maintain significance in all regime types as well as in good and bad elections. Interacting state capacity growth and volatility with regime type and election quality variables, we observe no statistical significance of any interaction terms, whereas the state capacity indicators stay significant and retain comparable effect sizes.[3] Moreover, the marginal effects of state capacity indicators are essentially the same for free and partly free regimes, whereas in the not free regimes they are smaller. Likewise, the marginal effects of the state capacity variables do not change dramatically per quality of elections. Yet, where electoral fraud is expected, effects are larger with wider confidence intervals compared to countries with no such expectations (Graph 4).[4]

We explain the impact of state capacity indicators through the prism of the selectorate theory: state capacity growth and volatility is relevant for the amount of goods the leader can provide to the winning coalition, and hence, influences the incumbent's political survival. All else equal, the incumbent can keep the winning coalition together under two scenarios: first, by increasing state capacity fast enough so that the impact of volatility dis- appears, and second, by increasing state capacity slowly and steadily, so that volatility stays low and does not

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[2] Graph 6 in the appendix shows marginal effects of state capacity indicators as a function of GDP growth. It suggests that GDP should grow at unrealistic rate, at 40%−50%, to push the impact of state capacity indicators down to a trivial level.

[3] See Tables in the appendix 3a.

[4] Graph 7 in the appendix shows marginal effects of state capacity indicators as a function of alternative measures of democracy: opposition vote share in the legislature and polity IV scores. The impact of state capacity indicators increases as polity IV scores increase, whereas it does not change with the increase of opposition vote share.

mediate the positive impact of state capacity growth. Without any or a low level of state capacity growth, however, the incumbent can stay in office, so long as they prevent the emergence of a credible challenger.

Looking at the first scenario in greater depth, quick growth is only possible by radically reforming the state's extractive capacities, which is likely to generate more losers than winners, at least in the short term, since a large number of winning coalition members are likely to be affected. To maintain the winning coalition the incumbent reformer needs to increase state capacity very quickly or slow down to prevent unseating through volatility. While going ahead with leaps seems to be an unbeatable strategy for the incumbent, our data set shows that fast growth is not widespread: the maximum average growth rate four years prior to elections is around 50%. However, together with growth, standard deviation also increases and state capacity should grow faster than 40% during the ruler's term to offset the negative impact of state capacity volatility. An alternative survival strategy of an incremental, but steady increase of state capacity creates low volatility and gives advantage to the incumbent.

Graph 4. State capacity as a function of regime type and electoral fraud
95% Confidence Intervals
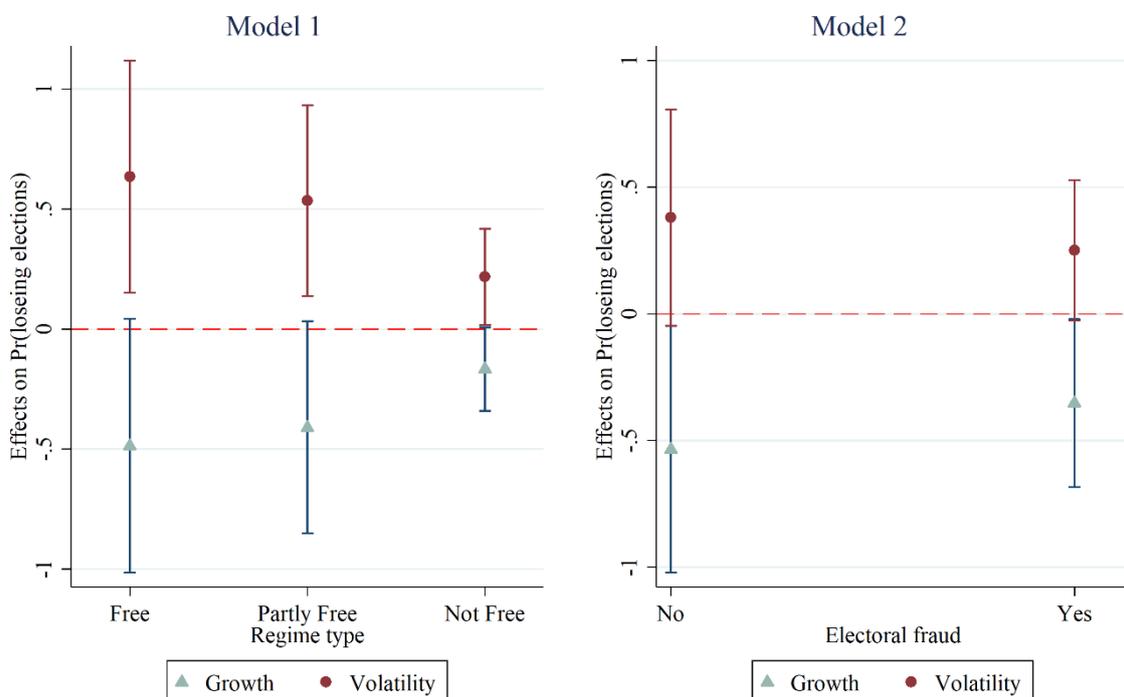


While the two winning strategies above are just that, winning, fast growth has the potential to push the incumbent into a self-defeating game for a reformer that we call the reformer's dilemma. Reformers have a short time horizon, because they face elections in four

or at most six years. Moreover, this time horizon is constantly declining as elections approach. Thus, if reforms do not result in sufficient increases in state capacity quickly enough to enable the incumbent to maintain a winning coalition, a reformer faces a dilemma: either lose office or use less than savory strategies to retain it. These means include coercion and/or co-optation through the provision of private goods to stay in office. However, since both strategies divert resources from other state activities, they are likely to lead to volatility in state capacity, a losing strategy. If the reformer after gaining additional time through re-election returns to the path of reform, state capacity is likely to increase. However, this again leads to volatility. Thus, in the run up to elections, they will again dedicate private goods to co-optation or engage in coercion. This instability in the delivery of public and private goods as well as the use of coercion over time will create uncertainty over future status in the winning coalition, and thus incentivize members of the winning coalition to support a challenger. Hence, reformers enter a self-defeating game. Two country case studies below describe the political consequences of the self-defeating game in Georgia and incremental growth of state capacity in Armenia. The two countries followed comparable paths of economic and political development in the 1990s whereas the paths diverged after the Rose Revolution of 2003 in Georgia (Fumagalli and Turmanidze 2017). Both countries have held competitive elections of executives and legislatures, while quality of Armenian elections have been relatively more problematic compared to elections in Georgia (Gilbreath and Balasanyan 2017). Still, voters in both countries respond to government policies when deciding whether to support the incumbent (Babunashvili 2017; Fumagalli and Turmanidze 2017; Turmanidze 2017). Hence, similarities in political and economic developments, competitiveness of elections and relevance of policies to voting make Armenia and Georgia appropriate case studies.

## The reformers' dilemma in Georgia, and slow and steady growth in Armenia

In both Armenia and Georgia the state collapsed in 1990 and then slowly began to recover from the mid-1990s. While in Armenia, state capacity developed at a slow and steady pace over the course of independence, in Georgia state capacity developed in fits, jumps, and starts particularly in the period following the Rose Revolution. RPE data reflect these trends, with state capacity growing 29% in 2004, and 85% in total over the course of UNM's rule. Considering the UNM was in office for approximately nine years, this comes to an average growth rate of over 9% annually. In Armenia by contrast, the largest change in RPE was 12%

in 2007, with a total growth of 53% during the Republican Party's time in office. For the 16 years of Republican Party rule which data is available for, this comes to an average growth rate of about 3.3%. Clearly, volatility was also higher in Georgia, which is reflected in the standard deviation of state capacity being 45% higher in Georgia than Armenia for the years of each party's rule 0.19 compared to 0.13). Clearly, the UNM was able to generate a great deal of state capacity growth, while in Armenia state capacity growth was slow and steady overall. As such, it is unsurprising that the UNM's time in office demonstrates the workings of the reformer's dilemma, which the UNM government entered shortly following taking office. They used both coercion and co-optation strategies to attempt to get themselves out of it, albeit to no avail. In contrast, the incumbent in Armenia successfully avoided large scale reforms and resorted to co-optation strategies more efficiently than in Georgia (Shubladze and Khundadze 2017).

## Entering the game

The UNM came to office in late 2003, promising to bring the country from a failed state to a renewed golden age (Maisuradze 2009). To do so, the country required radical reform, which the UNM delivered on. From firing corrupt traffic police to creating new mechanisms of efficient service delivery, few would contest that the country transformed from a failed state to one of the more effective states in the region. In line with this, the state began to effectively extract and spend resources. Yet, reform generated a large number of instantaneous losers. The traffic police who were summarily fired is one large group that lost from the changes. Arguably, a large part of the former state apparatus, which previously was able to accept bribes, lost out from the reforms. However, law and order policy likely best demonstrates the double edged nature of the radical reforms the UNM implemented. On February 14, 2006 President Saakashvili announced the start of a zero-tolerance policy towards crime during his annual address to Parliament (Civil Georgia 2006). While organized crime ("thieves in law") and corrupt officials were targets of the zero tolerance policy, the rounding up of criminals affected all levels of society. The judiciary fully con- trolled by the government rubber stamped all of the prosecution's motions. The already low acquittal rate plummeted to 0.1% (Gabedava 2010). This, together with police reform and the imprisonment of organized crime, arguably made Georgia a very safe country, much to the delight of both the population and prospective investors (MoJ 2010). However, incarceration rates skyrocketed, increasing nearly threefold between 2004 and 2010, giving Georgia one of the highest incarceration rates in the world (World Prison Brief 2017).

The government not only used law and order policy for physical coercion, but also for extraction. Newly introduced plea bargain agreements speeded up trials and pro- vided a chance for defendants to receive a lighter sentence (Transparency International Georgia 2010). The agreements most often involved little or no jail time, instead imposing hefty fines. Effectively, freedom from Georgian jails was bought officially. Resentment towards the government was natural for the affected, and with many victims of the zero-tolerance policy, the dissatisfied were many. Adding insult to injury, party activists, police, and prosecutors allegedly demanded the convicted, along with their families, vote for the UNM (Transparency International Georgia 2008).

Besides generating numerous losers, reform became inconsistent over time. Changes in the business environment exemplify this. During the UNM's governance, Georgia transformed from a poor performer on the World Bank's Doing Business Index to one of the top performers globally (World Bank 2017). Regulation was slashed in favor of business, and opening one took a day. At the same time, the government regularly went after businesses for minor legal infractions, forced business owners to sell their businesses, and sought "contributions" to their electoral campaigns and public works (Rimple 2012; Timm 2013). Businesses that refused were often shut down or forced out of business. Clearly, reform, at least for business, was volatile at best and coercive at worst.

## Failed exit strategies

After the revolution, the government began to deliver a large number of public goods, which it could not in the past, and increased state capacity. However, reform generated a vast number of losers over time, alienating large swaths of voters from the government. With elections continually approaching, the government had a choice: attempt to increase state capacity further, thus being able to deliver ever more goods to the winning coalition or turn to coercion and cooptation in order to maintain power. This is to say, the government faced the reformer's dilemma.

One of the first signs that the government had entered this self-defeating game was in November 2007, when a crackdown on a large anti-government demonstration led to snap presidential elections. In this case, the government attempted co-optation. As a CRRC (2015) analysis shows, the month prior to elections, the government increased social spending nearly four-fold compared to the average for that year. Election day was followed with accusations of

fraud, which statistical analyses support (Gilbreath and Balasanyan 2017). These efforts enabled the UNM to retain office, with Saakashvili awarded 53% of the vote.

Over the coming years, reform slowed. This likely reflects the fact that the government had already taken the lowest hanging fruit which would increase state capacity and produce public good. Therefore, it was likely impossible to increase state capacity at the previous rates. To retain office, the government turned to both coercion and cooptation throughout its remaining tenure. The prison population continued to bloat. Torture remained common in the prison system as was political imprisonment. The government regularly increased fines two months prior to elections, followed by increases in social spending the month before the election (CRRC 2015a). In 2012, the government even created a paid community service program for youth prior to elections. Business was coerced to provide money to election campaigns.

The use of cooptation and coercion ultimately failed, however. The emergence of a credible challenger, Bidzina Ivanishvili, was the beginning of the end for the UNM. Ivanishvili, a billionaire, was a credible challenger, in part, because he was a billionaire. When defecting from the winning coalition, a member considers the value of future membership in the current winning coalition against the one-time payment for membership in the unseating winning coalition as well as a discounted due to uncertainty value of membership in the future coalition. Ivanishvili could credibly offer a high one-time payment. Moreover, given that he was a billionaire, many believed that he would be competent when it came to the economy, the main issue in Georgia according to numerous public opinion polls (Babunashvili 2017). This suggested that the value of being in the future winning coalition would likely be high. Saakashvili's erratic policy implementation and behavior more generally also likely made winning coalition members uncertain of the future value of membership in the winning coalition. Saakashvili's extensive coercion also likely increased uncertainty over membership in the future winning coalition and decreased affinities for him among the general public. Ultimately, the reformer exited the game, losing office following parliamentary elections in October, 2012.

## Slow and steady wins the race

Policy making has been quite different in Armenia, with government implementing reforms slowly and partially. To illustrate this, rather than providing an overview of policy change in Armenia during the Republican Party's tenure, we use pension system reform as an example

of the general pattern of policy change. The Law on Funded Pensions, which Parliament passed in December, 2010, required taxpayers to pay 5%–10% of their salary to the pension fund (CBA 2010). The government justified the law noting that in 2009 the state budget spent half as much on education and a third as much on health- care as on pensions, and hence could only increase spending in these domains with greater resources. Hence, if people contributed to the pension fund, the government would shift its expenditure to comparable levels as health and education. At the same time, the reformed pension system would offer better retirement conditions to citizens (Government of Armenia 2010).

Citizens' trust in government institutions has been very low in Armenia. According to the Caucasus Barometer, 26% trusted the government, whereas 44% distrusted (CRRC 2015a). Hence, as one might expect, taxpayers were skeptical about future benefits, whereas the costs were obvious. As a result, citizens launched a civic movement "I am against" [Dem.am] that lobbied against the new pension law (Tert.am 2013). To support the civic movement, three opposition parties in parliament formed a coalition called "Troika", which included the Prosperous Armenia Party (PAP), the Armenian Revolutionary Federation Party (ARF), and the National Congress of Armenia (NCA). The "Troika" supported the movement in taking the case to the Constitutional Court (Aravot.am 2013). The court temporarily suspended some articles of the law, but not the mandatory payments by employees article, which was the main subject of dispute (Mkrtchyan 2015). Nevertheless, the government made significant concessions and implemented the law only partially. The mandatory payment became a requirement for public sector employees, whereas private sector employees had the opportunity to write an application and refuse to pay the tax (Government of Armenia 2017). The government planned to pass the obligatory pension system on July 1, 2017, but at the time of writing, there is no set date for when it will become mandatory for everyone. While the reform has only partially been implemented, the government nonetheless has increased its revenues from state employees. Hence, its extraction, a sign of state capacity, has increased, albeit moderately when compared with the extraction that could have been implemented had resources been taken from the public as a whole.

The two cases illustrate two different strategies for state capacity growth: while government in Georgia invested heavily in state capacity, the UNM entered a self-defeating game. It tried to escape the game through coercion and cooptation, but ultimately lost in 2012 after the emergence of a credible challenger, Bidzina Ivanishvili. In contrast in Armenia, government has slowly, but steadily increased state capacity, never entering the self-defeating game or losing its winning coalition. While state capacity growth and volatility surely played

a role in the outcomes for both governments, we do not claim that state capacity alone is sufficient to explain why the UNM lost elections in Georgia in 2012, whereas the Republican Party of Armenia still rules the country. However, we suggest that the two approaches, if repeated many times, can lead to differential outcomes for the incumbent: investing in state capacity can lead to volatility, leading to defections from the winning coalition to a credible challenger. In contrast, a slow pace of capacity increase can help the incumbent to keep the winning coalition together, taking advantage of the loyalty norm.

## Conclusion

As the above analysis shows, increases in state capacity are likely to help an incumbent stay in office while decreases are likely to lead to an incumbent losing the election. Volatility is likely to reduce an incumbent's chances of staying in office. Placing these findings in the selectorate theory framework suggests that increases in state capacity increase the incumbent's ability to provide goods and thus maintain their winning coalition, while decreases likely make a challenger's offer of goods more credible. Volatility likely leads to uncertainty over both the value of future returns as well as an individual selector's membership in the winning coalition. This analysis has wide ranging implications, both academic and pragmatic.

Selectorate theory has already suggested that the competence of the individual at the helm of the state is likely to lead to the delivery of more with less, thus increasing their chances of political survival. This article adds another nuance to the theory showing that the competence of the state, the power of which the incumbent wields, is also significant for their political survival. While increases in state capacity increase an incumbent's chance of staying in office, volatility in capacity increases an incumbent's chance of losing. This suggests a number of winning and losing strategies for incumbents. Incumbents would be wise to increase their state capacity at a slow and steady pace as the Republican Party of Armenia has, if they wish to keep their jobs. A second winning strategy is to increase state capacity rapidly as Saakashvili's government did between 2004 and 2007. However, without maintaining growth, it will lead to volatility. The statistical analysis suggests that if the incumbent can increase state capacity to a sufficient degree quickly enough, it could obviate the need for the provision of private goods and the use of coercion. In practice, this phenomenon is relatively rare, however. As noted above, the largest gain in state capacity observed in the dataset was around 50%. Given that reformers often aim for low hanging fruit – corruption in the Georgian case – the most viable paths towards state capacity increase and thus remaining in office are likely not to be on the

table for a would be reformer trying to exit the self-defeating game. Two losing strategies include slow decline and repeated cycles of reform and backslide without incremental gains.

Notably, even though various scholars argue that authoritarian regimes should be studied independently of democratic ones (e.g. Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009), the results of this article suggest that in some ways, democracies and hybrid regimes behave similarly, at least when it comes to the effects of state capacity on political survival. Importantly, the democracy variables in the models presented above showed little effect. Given that the effects are largely consistent across regime types, we also suggest that public policy and its implementation, which flows from state capacity, and voters, who in hybrid regimes are at least often members of the selectorate, matter.

Practically speaking, this research suggests that practitioners working on development issues targeted towards increasing state capacity, as the authors of this article are, should consider their steps carefully. In practice, radical increases in state capacity are usually beyond reach. Rather, only slow and steady growth is possible. While this is likely an outcome of the strategies the incumbent pursues in many cases, it also should give such professionals cause to consider whether the increases in benefits provided to the public as a result of increases in state capacity are worth the entrenchment of less than democratic incumbents. While the incumbent's loss does not ensure regime transition, it is one event which can precede and nudge it on.

While this article attempts to make a number of contributions to the literatures on political survival, state capacity, and the study of the South Caucasus, it also suggests a number of paths for future research. First, besides radical reform resulting in rapid growth in state capacity, are there other paths out of the reformer's dilemma? In this regard, future research should consider in depth case studies of apparent escapes from the self-defeating game. Such research could uncover more savory strategies that incumbents could follow in order to avoid the human costs that result from the reformer's dilemma. Second, the results call for more research into the relation between development aid which specifically supports state capacity, regime stability, and political survival. Such research could specifically explore under which circumstances aid may support or hinder democratization. Third, the article has identified a number of causal pathways through which state capacity volatility plausibly leads to incumbents losing office; however, none of the pathways are definitive. Hence, greater theoretical work is called for when it comes to the precise and most common pathways through which state capacity leads to defection.

# Concluding remarks

This dissertation looked at how party-voter linkages shaped short and long-term political outcomes in the competitive authoritarian regimes of the South Caucasus. It highlighted two counterintuitive findings for hybrid regimes, where democratic institutions and authoritarian politics often coexist: (1) While the electoral playing field was uneven and people's trust in political institutions was very low, parties still took their electorates seriously and established linkages with them on the interpersonal, programmatic, and policy levels; (2) Most importantly, party-voter linkages, shaped by subtle interventions (also known as nudges) were consequential for political outcomes: face-to-face interactions between parties and voters before elections increased the level of partisanship, a proxy for party support. Party programs also mattered for party support, albeit in an odd way: the more abstract the party's promise, the higher support the party could expect. Policy too mattered: voters tended to punish the ruling party if it initiated radical reforms to increase state capacity, thus increasing the goods provision to the selectorate and strengthening its chances of political survival.

These findings, documented through observational, experimental, and quasi-experimental research designs in Armenia and Georgia are also relevant for political stability in hybrid regimes, where trust in political parties and electoral processes are quite low. As a result of this low trust, parties have fewer actual supporters than necessary to win elections credibly. Surely, when elections are free, but not entirely fair, the incumbent's actions are a combination of two strategies: subtle electoral manipulation and democratic-looking actions to gain voter support. Focusing on the democratic-looking strategies, parties invest in face-to-face interactions with voters before elections to garner more votes. However, this increases party support only in the short-term. To build a more solid voter base, parties need to employ additional tactics, such as promising and implementing policies that matter more for voters. Yet, such policies can create at least two channels of political instability: parties with a limited voter base have incentives to promise broad, if not vague, programs to reach out to voters of different needs and preferences. Yet, such abstract promises, when endorsed by voters, create a type of party-voter linkage that leads to an accountability trap: the electorate cannot hold the winner accountable for its performance, since nothing tangible was promised. Such a trap decreases voters' trust in and engagement in politics even further.

To exit the accountability trap, once in hold of political power, the party can rely on co-optation through private goods or coercion. However, a more savory way is to expand its base

of support through increasing state capacity to keep the winning coalition together. Increased state capacity helps the ruling party to implement policies to please the selectorate and persuade them to keep casting votes for the incumbent. However, increasing state capacity means extracting more resources from the selectorate, producing more losers than winner in the short-term. Hence, the party enters a self-defeating game: it needs to slow down with extracting additional resources and / or use some resources to quell discontent and coopt the dissatisfied group of the selectorate through provision of private goods. Such moves create volatility in state capacity and leads to electoral defeat of the incumbent.

Political instability stemming from a combination of party support, the accountability trap and the party's self-defeating game aptly described the situation in Georgia after the 2003 Rose Revolution. Armenia has followed a different path of political stability for the past two decades. Yet, wrapping up of this dissertation took so long that Armenia also saw a major political change, sometimes referred to as the "Velvet Revolution" of 2018 (Demytrie 2018). Incidentally, this event provided an opportunity to check how party-voter linkages worked in regards to the political change in Armenia.

The peaceful ouster of the Republican party, which ruled the country for two decades, and Serzh Sargsyan was truly no small feat in Armenia. Sargsyan, upon the conclusion of his second Presidential term, walked back on his 2014 promise to leave office by being elected as Prime Minister after supporting the 2015 Constitutional amendment making the Prime Minister the strongest political office (Grigorian 2015). Despite the initial resistance to public pressure, he was forced to step down from the Prime Ministerial position only a week into the job after persistent and large-scale demonstrations against. Nikol Pashinyan, the leader of the protests and a member of Parliament from a newly formed political party called Civil Contact, was then swiftly elected to the post by the Parliament, including by some of the members of the ruling Republican party itself, that continued to maintain a strong majority (Roth 2018).

The main popular draw of Pashinyan has been his marked difference from the previous ruling elites. He adopted the Western politician mode of interaction with the public, showed himself as one of the crowd, including by dressing in T-shirts and baseball caps during rallies. While the general frustration with the old elites drew massive support for the Revolution and Pashinyan, engagement of some politically distant groups has been a notable feature of the Revolution. The enthusiasm of young people in particular has been clearly visible. This, in no small part, has been attributed to youth activists who mobilized the generally politically passive and disengaged youth.

In fall 2018, Pashinyan maintained a rigorous grassroots campaign presence for the Parliamentary elections throughout the country, keeping his friendly and approachable tone that is certainly a novelty for an Armenian politician with such power. This was in sharp contrast with the style of the old ruling elite. As a leader of the Republican Party admitted after its electoral defeat in December 2018, when the party runs the government for such a long time, "You lose contact with your grassroots. They become echoes rather than voices" (Edwards, 2018b).

Aside from building personal linkages with the electorate, Pashinyan also proved savvy with a practical electoral strategy. As shown in this dissertation, vague promises shaped party-voter linkages to the advantage of the party. Indeed, the promises and the platform of My Step, Pashinyan's political movement, have revolved around cleaning up the corrupt system in politics and business and just application of law to all. Political analysts note that such abstract, if not vague, promises were selected deliberately: "A positive program would have divided people, whereas nobody is consciously for nepotism or corruption" (Edwards 2018a.).

It is too early to tell whether the vague promises will drive Armenia's new ruling party into an accountability trap. Ironically, the same vague promises may push the party into a self-defeating game. Pashinyan's anti-corruption drive will necessarily need policies to tame private interests and extract resources from the selectorate to increase state capacity. Pashinyan is widely seen as targeting former associates of the Republican Party in his anti-corruption drive and engaging personally in this, while his government is at least for now shying away from probing into the business and electoral activities of the richest man of Armenia, who is incidentally also a Member of Parliament with his own political party well represented in newly elected legislature (Atanesian et al 2018). The claims of political persecution of the old guard do not look too far-fetched already. However, the much-critiqued lack of vision for thorough reform beyond the crowd-pleasing measures of bringing to account former political opponents is said to be the prime reason for the underwhelming economic performance since the Revolution and the cautiousness of foreign investors (Mejlumyan 2018). Yet, if and when Pashinyan embarks upon a journey to usher in significant reform to extract resources from selectorate in order to increase state capacity, he is likely to face the threats of self-defeating game: he will have to increase state capacity quickly to create more winners than losers before the next elections or coerce and/or co-opt discontented private interests. Expanding state capacity too quickly will likely put him in clashes with powerful private interests, thus, creating a large share of losers and politically powerful ones at that. Yet, choosing less than savory means of coercion or cooptation will take resources away from investing in state capacity, and

hence, the ability to deliver public goods. Fluctuations in the delivery of goods to elites and the general public is likely to make each group uncertain about the future prospects of such delivery, creating uncertainty about Pashinyan's political survival.

## Practical implications

The findings of this dissertation have several implications for practitioners working to promote state capacity, accountability, and political stability. On a general level, aid organizations working on development issues targeted towards increasing state capacity should consider their steps carefully: radical increases in state capacity are usually beyond reach, while slow and steady growth are both possible and advantageous to the incumbent. While in many cases this is likely an outcome of the strategies the incumbent pursues, aid initiatives should consider whether the increases in benefits provided to the public as a result of the increases in state capacity are worth the entrenchment of less than democratic incumbents.

While party-voter interactions increase partisanship, the effect is not lasting. Since increased partisanship is likely to contribute to institutionalization of the party system, and hence, more predictability in politics and policies, practitioners should consider legislative options to encourage direct contact between parties and voters. One possible option towards this end could be imposing restrictions on political advertising on TV channels, which can encourage parties to invest more in party-voter linkages at the micro-level. Such restrictions work in several advanced democracies, including the United Kingdom and Denmark (The Election Commission n.d.).[53] This could potentially be justified further as a substantial portion of TV advertisements in Georgia convey hostile messages towards opposing parties rather than promoting positive electoral programs (Turmanidze 2018).

Where party loyalty remains low, party systems are underdeveloped and trust in elected representatives leaves much to be desired, parties will rationally put forward abstract promises to attract voters with weaker policy preferences and also reach out to potential supporters of rival parties. The most significant implication of this process could be a potential accountability trap: voters will select a party with ambiguous promises and fail to hold them accountable for subsequent policy outcomes. When repeated multiple times, this can lead to even more

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[53] There is a debate whether banning political advertising on TV violates freedom of expression. Different courts approach the matter differently: in Australia the High Court declared the ban invalid (Miskin and Grant 2004). However, the European Court backed the advertisement ban in the United Kingdom, stating that it did not violate free speech (BBC News 2013).

disillusionment among the electorate with already weak democratic institutions, which makes the political system vulnerable to the influence of anti-establishment, potentially even undemocratic actors. Hence, practitioners should focus on strengthening accountability mechanisms through supporting civil society organizations and diversity of the media.

## Future research

While this dissertation makes a number of contributions to the literature on party-voter linkages, state capacity, political stability, and more generally, to the study of the South Caucasus, it also suggests a number of paths for future research. In terms of research methods, the dissertation used the best available methods of causal inference: matching and an instrumental variable approaches to address the limitations of observational data and random assignment of information treatments to deal with the factors interfering between treatment conditions and the outcome. Nevertheless, additional research tools, including qualitative methods, could have strengthened the findings and contributions of this dissertation.

The analysis of party-voter linkages at the micro level show a credible link between party contact and partisanship. Nonetheless, there are several important questions to be studied further. For example, in-depth study of the content of linkages is necessary to better understand whether parties communicate programs and ideas with the voters or simply promise private benefits. Moreover, whether parties engage in demonstrating their advantage in relation to the opponents or are primarily busy with negative campaigning against the competitors remains to be seen. Most importantly, additional research is needed to find out what type of campaign (programmatic, clientelistic, negative) works best for the party. Lastly, the best practices of grassroots party organizations should be studied to draw lessons on how to enhance party-voter interactions before and between elections to achieve the lasting effect of linkages on partisanship.

The study of electoral promises also raises follow-up research questions: how would the results change if the experiment was repeated using the names of real parties instead of a hypothetical one? Also, would we really see the theoretically possible accountability trap if the experiment was dynamic, i.e. "voters" and "parties" interact in multiple rounds in a lab experiment? Addressing these questions using more diverse data and research methods than this dissertation applies would significantly improve our understanding of party-voter linkages in the South Caucasus and beyond the region.

At the macro-level, more in-depth analysis is needed to identify causal pathways through which state capacity volatility plausibly leads to incumbents losing office. This can be achieved through a combination of two additional tools: first, finding a reliable instrument for measuring state capacity volatility and by doing so, addressing the issue of a common cause for the key independent variable and the outcome. Secondly, case studies of specific political regimes and electoral cycles will add valuable nuances to the connections between state capacity volatility and political outcomes. Moreover, future research should consider in-depth analysis of positive strategies to avoid the self-defeating game. Finally, the results call for more research into the relationship between development aid, which specifically supports state capacity, regime stability, and political survival. Such research could specifically explore the circumstances under which aid may support or hinder democratization.

# Appendix 1a. Tables - Talk to Her

## Table 1a.1. Descriptive statistics (panel data)

|  | N | Mean | Std. | N | Mean | Std. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted by a party |  |  |  | 1,207 | 0.50 | 0.50 |
| Household conditions improved | 1,215 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 1,216 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Country's direction is right | 1,216 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 1,213 | 0.33 | 0.47 |
| Government approval | 1,210 | 0.44 | 0.50 | 1,216 | 0.48 | 0.50 |
| EU membership approval | 1,207 | 0.52 | 0.50 | 1,210 | 0.52 | 0.50 |
| Low household expenditure | 1,216 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,217 | 0.24 | 0.43 |
| Possession of durable goods | 1,217 | 4.54 | 2.22 | 1,217 | 4.62 | 2.23 |
| Employed | 1,211 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 1,216 | 0.31 | 0.46 |
| Tertiary education | 1,217 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 1,217 | 0.32 | 0.47 |
| Someone else attended the interview | 1,216 | 0.44 | 0.50 | 1,217 | 0.43 | 0.50 |
| Positive partisanship | 1,217 | 0.67 | 0.47 | 1,215 | 0.71 | 0.46 |
| Positive partisanship - No party | 1,217 | 0.33 | 0.47 | 1,215 | 0.29 | 0.46 |
| Positive partisanship - Georgian Dream | 1,217 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,215 | 0.43 | 0.50 |
| Positive partisanship - United National Movement | 1,217 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 1,215 | 0.13 | 0.34 |
| Positive partisanship - Other party | 1,217 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 1,215 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Reported turnout - future | 1,217 | 0.77 | 0.42 |  |  |  |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reported turnout - past | | | | 1,217 | 0.776 | 0.417 |
| Know who is MP from the district | | | | 1,207 | 0.605 | 0.489 |
| Negative partisanship | 1,215 | 0.60 | 0.49 | | | |
| Negative partisanship - No party | 1,215 | 0.40 | 0.49 | | | |
| Negative partisanship - Georgian Dream | 1,215 | 0.19 | 0.39 | | | |
| Negative partisanship - United National Movement | 1,215 | 0.24 | 0.43 | | | |
| Negative partisanship - Other party | 1,215 | 0.18 | 0.38 | | | |
| Age 18 to 37 | 1,217 | 0.26 | 0.44 | | | |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1,217 | 0.34 | 0.47 | | | |
| Age 58 and older | 1,217 | 0.40 | 0.49 | | | |
| Capital | 1,217 | 0.29 | 0.45 | | | |
| Urban settlement | 1,217 | 0.27 | 0.44 | | | |
| Rural settlement | 1,217 | 0.29 | 0.45 | | | |
| Minority settlement | 1,217 | 0.16 | 0.37 | | | |
| Female | 1,217 | 0.69 | 0.46 | | | |

**Table 1a.2. Descriptive statistics of matched data (2012)**

| | Pre-matched data | | | Matched data (Nearest Neighbor) | | | Matched data (Mahalanobis) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | Std. | N | Mean | Std. | N | Mean | Std. |
| *Variables used for matching* | | | | | | | | | |
| Stratum: Capital | 1,947 | 0.20 | 0.40 | 1,430 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 918 | 0.22 | 0.42 |
| Stratum: East rural | 1,947 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,430 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 918 | 0.25 | 0.43 |
| Stratum: East urban | 1,947 | 0.13 | 0.34 | 1,430 | 0.08 | 0.27 | 918 | 0.10 | 0.30 |
| Stratum: West rural | 1,947 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 1,430 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 918 | 0.23 | 0.42 |
| Stratum: West urban | 1,947 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 1,430 | 0.21 | 0.41 | 918 | 0.20 | 0.40 |
| Age 18 to 27 | 1,947 | 0.14 | 0.35 | 1,430 | 0.13 | 0.33 | 918 | 0.13 | 0.34 |
| Age 28 to 37 | 1,947 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 1,430 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 918 | 0.17 | 0.37 |
| Age 38 to 47 | 1,947 | 0.17 | 0.37 | 1,430 | 0.17 | 0.38 | 918 | 0.16 | 0.37 |
| Age 48 to 57 | 1,947 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 1,430 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 918 | 0.19 | 0.40 |
| Age 58 to 67 | 1,947 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 1,430 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 918 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Age 68 and older | 1,947 | 0.21 | 0.41 | 1,430 | 0.19 | 0.40 | 918 | 0.19 | 0.39 |
| Female | 1,947 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 1,430 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 918 | 0.65 | 0.48 |
| Married | 1,946 | 0.60 | 0.49 | 1,430 | 0.61 | 0.49 | 918 | 0.61 | 0.49 |
| Secondary or lower education | 1,945 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 1,430 | 0.40 | 0.49 | 918 | 0.42 | 0.49 |
| Technical education | 1,945 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 1,430 | 0.29 | 0.45 | 918 | 0.27 | 0.44 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tertiary education | 1,945 | 0.30 | 0.46 | 1,430 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 918 | 0.31 | 0.46 |
| Unemployed | 1,927 | 0.29 | 0.46 | 1,430 | 0.31 | 0.46 | 918 | 0.29 | 0.46 |
| Employed | 1,927 | 0.30 | 0.46 | 1,430 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 918 | 0.31 | 0.46 |
| Outside of labor force | 1,927 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 1,430 | 0.38 | 0.48 | 918 | 0.40 | 0.49 |
| Government employee | 1,940 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 1,430 | 0.12 | 0.33 | 918 | 0.12 | 0.32 |
| Recipient of state pension | 1,927 | 0.00 | 0.05 | 1,430 | 0.00 | 0.05 | 918 | 0.00 | 0.05 |
| Recipient of state insurance | 1,940 | 0.37 | 0.48 | 1,430 | 0.36 | 0.48 | 918 | 0.35 | 0.48 |
| Recipient of state voucher | 1,937 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 1,430 | 0.26 | 0.44 | 918 | 0.24 | 0.43 |
| Registered at current place of residence | 1,944 | 0.81 | 0.40 | 1,430 | 0.82 | 0.39 | 918 | 0.83 | 0.38 |
| Household expenditure: Not disclosed | 1,943 | 0.27 | 0.44 | 1,430 | 0.22 | 0.42 | 918 | 0.27 | 0.44 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 0-140 | 1,943 | 0.12 | 0.32 | 1,430 | 0.11 | 0.32 | 918 | 0.11 | 0.32 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 141-270 | 1,943 | 0.19 | 0.40 | 1,430 | 0.20 | 0.40 | 918 | 0.18 | 0.39 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 271-400 | 1,943 | 0.17 | 0.38 | 1,430 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 918 | 0.18 | 0.39 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 401-700 | 1,943 | 0.14 | 0.35 | 1,430 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 918 | 0.14 | 0.34 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 701 and more | 1,943 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 1,430 | 0.13 | 0.33 | 918 | 0.12 | 0.32 |
| Attend relig. services: rarely/never | 1,930 | 0.42 | 0.49 | 1,430 | 0.40 | 0.49 | 918 | 0.41 | 0.49 |
| Attend relig. services: less than once a week | 1,930 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 1,430 | 0.44 | 0.50 | 918 | 0.44 | 0.50 |
| Attend relig. services: at least once a week | 1,930 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 1,430 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 918 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Access to TV channels: Antenna | 1,907 | 0.58 | 0.49 | 1,430 | 0.58 | 0.50 | 918 | 0.58 | 0.49 |
| Access to TV channels: Satellite dish | 1,905 | 0.28 | 0.45 | 1,430 | 0.27 | 0.45 | 918 | 0.26 | 0.44 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access to TV channels: Cable | 1,903 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,430 | 0.26 | 0.44 | 918 | 0.24 | 0.43 |
| Number of adults in household | 1,947 | 2.74 | 1.25 | 1,430 | 2.79 | 1.27 | 918 | 2.74 | 1.23 |
| Someone else attended the interview | 1,942 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 1,430 | 0.21 | 0.41 | 918 | 0.22 | 0.42 |
| *Variables used for models* | | | | | | | | | |
| Contacted by a party | 1,874 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 1,430 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 918 | 0.50 | 0.50 |
| Partisanship (positive) | 1,943 | 0.76 | 0.43 | 1,428 | 0.78 | 0.41 | 916 | 0.78 | 0.42 |
| Partisanship - No party | 1,943 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,428 | 0.22 | 0.41 | 916 | 0.22 | 0.42 |
| Partisanship - Georgian Dream | 1,943 | 0.61 | 0.49 | 1,428 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 916 | 0.64 | 0.48 |
| Partisanship - United National Movement | 1,943 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 1,428 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 916 | 0.14 | 0.35 |
| Household conditions improved | 1,933 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 1,423 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 915 | 0.17 | 0.37 |
| Country's direction is right | 1,926 | 0.58 | 0.50 | 1,419 | 0.60 | 0.49 | 912 | 0.58 | 0.49 |
| Government approval | 1,925 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 1,416 | 0.66 | 0.48 | 912 | 0.63 | 0.48 |
| EU membership approval | 1,946 | 0.74 | 0.44 | 1,429 | 0.76 | 0.43 | 918 | 0.75 | 0.43 |
| Know who is MP from the district | 1,929 | 0.68 | 0.47 | 1,421 | 0.69 | 0.46 | 910 | 0.68 | 0.47 |
| Reported turnout - future | 1,946 | 0.86 | 0.35 | 1,429 | 0.86 | 0.35 | 917 | 0.87 | 0.34 |

**Table 1a.3. Descriptive statistics of matched data (2016)**

| | Pre-matched data | | | Matched data (Nearest Neighbor) | | | Matched data (Mahalanobis) | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | Std. | N | Mean | Std. | N | Mean | Std. |
| *Variables used for matching* | | | | | | | | | |
| Stratum: Capital | 3,141 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 2,668 | 0.21 | 0.41 | 1,566 | 0.21 | 0.41 |
| Stratum: Kutaisi | 3,141 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 2,668 | 0.10 | 0.30 | 1,566 | 0.11 | 0.31 |
| Stratum: Batumi | 3,141 | 0.09 | 0.28 | 2,668 | 0.06 | 0.25 | 1,566 | 0.07 | 0.26 |
| Stratum: Akhaltsikhe | 3,141 | 0.06 | 0.23 | 2,668 | 0.06 | 0.24 | 1,566 | 0.06 | 0.23 |
| Stratum: Zugdidi | 3,141 | 0.08 | 0.27 | 2,668 | 0.07 | 0.26 | 1,566 | 0.07 | 0.26 |
| Stratum: Urban | 3,141 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 2,668 | 0.17 | 0.38 | 1,566 | 0.17 | 0.37 |
| Stratum: Rural | 3,141 | 0.17 | 0.37 | 2,668 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 1,566 | 0.18 | 0.39 |
| Stratum: Minority | 3,141 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 2,668 | 0.13 | 0.34 | 1,566 | 0.14 | 0.34 |
| Female | 3,141 | 0.66 | 0.48 | 2,668 | 0.65 | 0.48 | 1,566 | 0.67 | 0.47 |
| Married | 3,123 | 0.62 | 0.49 | 2,668 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 1,566 | 0.63 | 0.48 |
| Age 18 to 27 | 3,141 | 0.11 | 0.32 | 2,668 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 1,566 | 0.11 | 0.31 |
| Age 28 to 37 | 3,141 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 2,668 | 0.15 | 0.35 | 1,566 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Age 38 to 47 | 3,141 | 0.15 | 0.36 | 2,668 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 1,566 | 0.15 | 0.36 |
| Age 48 to 57 | 3,141 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 2,668 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 1,566 | 0.20 | 0.40 |
| Age 58 to 67 | 3,141 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 2,668 | 0.21 | 0.40 | 1,566 | 0.20 | 0.40 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 68 and older | 3,141 | 0.21 | 0.41 | 2,668 | 0.19 | 0.39 | 1,566 | 0.19 | 0.39 |
| Secondary or lower education | 3,137 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 2,668 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 1,566 | 0.42 | 0.49 |
| Technical education | 3,137 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 2,668 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 1,566 | 0.25 | 0.43 |
| Tertiary education | 3,137 | 0.32 | 0.47 | 2,668 | 0.34 | 0.47 | 1,566 | 0.33 | 0.47 |
| Unemployed | 3,118 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 2,668 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,566 | 0.24 | 0.43 |
| Employed | 3,118 | 0.31 | 0.46 | 2,668 | 0.31 | 0.46 | 1,566 | 0.30 | 0.46 |
| Outside of labor force | 3,118 | 0.46 | 0.50 | 2,668 | 0.46 | 0.50 | 1,566 | 0.46 | 0.50 |
| Mother employed during respondent's childhood | 3,066 | 0.54 | 0.50 | 2,668 | 0.55 | 0.50 | 1,566 | 0.56 | 0.50 |
| Household expenditure: Not disclosed | 3,137 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 2,668 | 0.14 | 0.34 | 1,566 | 0.16 | 0.36 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 0-150 | 3,137 | 0.04 | 0.20 | 2,668 | 0.05 | 0.21 | 1,566 | 0.05 | 0.21 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 151-260 | 3,137 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 2,668 | 0.18 | 0.38 | 1,566 | 0.18 | 0.38 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 261-400 | 3,137 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 2,668 | 0.25 | 0.43 | 1,566 | 0.24 | 0.43 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 401-800 | 3,137 | 0.23 | 0.42 | 2,668 | 0.24 | 0.43 | 1,566 | 0.23 | 0.42 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 801-1200 | 3,137 | 0.09 | 0.28 | 2,668 | 0.09 | 0.29 | 1,566 | 0.10 | 0.30 |
| Household expenditure: GEL 1201 and more | 3,137 | 0.05 | 0.22 | 2,668 | 0.06 | 0.23 | 1,566 | 0.05 | 0.22 |
| Possession of durable goods | 3,141 | 4.75 | 2.28 | 2,668 | 4.74 | 2.25 | 1,566 | 4.72 | 2.24 |
| Internet user at least once a week | 3,130 | 0.47 | 0.50 | 2,668 | 0.47 | 0.50 | 1,566 | 0.46 | 0.50 |
| Number of adults in household | 3,141 | 2.59 | 1.24 | 2,668 | 2.61 | 1.23 | 1,566 | 2.58 | 1.20 |
| Someone else attended the interview | 3,136 | 0.40 | 0.49 | 2,668 | 0.39 | 0.49 | 1,566 | 0.40 | 0.49 |

*Variables used for models*

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted by a party | 3,078 | 0.45 | 0.50 | 2,668 | 0.50 | 0.50 | 1,566 | 0.50 | 0.50 |
| Partisanship (positive) | 3,134 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 2,666 | 0.66 | 0.48 | 1,565 | 0.66 | 0.47 |
| Partisanship - No party | 3,134 | 0.37 | 0.48 | 2,666 | 0.34 | 0.48 | 1,565 | 0.34 | 0.47 |
| Partisanship - Georgian Dream | 3,134 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 2,666 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 1,565 | 0.42 | 0.49 |
| Partisanship - United National Movement | 3,134 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 2,666 | 0.11 | 0.31 | 1,565 | 0.11 | 0.31 |
| Partisanship - Other parties | 3,134 | 0.11 | 0.32 | 2,666 | 0.12 | 0.33 | 1,565 | 0.13 | 0.34 |
| Household conditions improved | 3,138 | 0.16 | 0.37 | 2,666 | 0.16 | 0.36 | 1,564 | 0.16 | 0.37 |
| Country's direction is right | 3,130 | 0.30 | 0.46 | 2,662 | 0.31 | 0.46 | 1,562 | 0.30 | 0.46 |
| Government approval | 3,135 | 0.46 | 0.50 | 2,664 | 0.47 | 0.50 | 1,564 | 0.45 | 0.50 |
| EU membership approval | 3,115 | 0.49 | 0.50 | 2,647 | 0.51 | 0.50 | 1,557 | 0.51 | 0.50 |
| Know who is MP from the district | 3,078 | 0.55 | 0.50 | 2,635 | 0.59 | 0.49 | 1,543 | 0.58 | 0.49 |
| Reported turnout - future | 3,141 | 0.75 | 0.44 | 2,668 | 0.76 | 0.43 | 1,566 | 0.75 | 0.44 |

**Table 1a.4. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of panel data (pre-election covariates, odds ratios)**

|  | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.22*** | 2.18*** |
|  | (0.34) | (0.33) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 3.28*** |  |
|  | (0.59) |  |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) |  | 1.79*** |
|  |  | (0.28) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.73 | 1.77 |
|  | (0.56) | (0.53) |
| Country's direction right | 1.96** | 2.10** |
|  | (0.46) | (0.48) |
| Government approval | 1.30 | 1.35 |
|  | (0.22) | (0.23) |
| EU membership approval | 1.43* | 1.39* |
|  | (0.22) | (0.21) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.35 | 1.63** |
|  | (0.24) | (0.27) |
| Tertiary education | 0.90 | 0.83 |
|  | (0.15) | (0.14) |
| Employed | 1.18 | 1.18 |
|  | (0.22) | (0.22) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.03 | 1.01 |
|  | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.19 | 1.17 |
|  | (0.25) | (0.24) |
| Not alone at the interview | 0.84 | 0.89 |
|  | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.16 | 1.18 |
|  | (0.24) | (0.23) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.51*** | 2.53*** |
|  | (0.50) | (0.50) |
| Female | 0.86 | 0.87 |
|  | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Capital | 0.87 | 0.87 |
|  | (0.23) | (0.22) |
| Rural | 1.08 | 1.07 |
|  | (0.30) | (0.31) |
| Minority | 1.16 | 1.17 |
|  | (0.43) | (0.40) |
| *N* | 1180 | 1178 |
| ll | -598.77 | -623.82 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.5. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of panel data (post-election covariates, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.17*** | 2.13*** |
| | (0.35) | (0.34) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 3.50*** | |
| | (0.64) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 1.81*** |
| | | (0.29) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.67*** | 2.82*** |
| | (0.77) | (0.84) |
| Country's direction right | 2.96*** | 3.15*** |
| | (0.62) | (0.64) |
| Government approval | 1.25 | 1.29 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| EU membership approval | 1.28 | 1.30 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Political knowledge | 1.45* | 1.35 |
| | (0.26) | (0.23) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.34 | 1.63** |
| | (0.25) | (0.28) |
| Tertiary education | 0.77 | 0.76 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Employed | 1.63** | 1.57** |
| | (0.27) | (0.28) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.01 | 0.99 |
| | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.02 | 1.03 |
| | (0.21) | (0.20) |
| Not alone at the interview | 1.18 | 1.26 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.14 | 1.18 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.57*** | 2.65*** |
| | (0.53) | (0.53) |
| Female | 0.93 | 0.92 |
| | (0.17) | (0.16) |
| Capital | 0.92 | 0.88 |
| | (0.25) | (0.23) |
| Rural | 1.15 | 1.16 |
| | (0.33) | (0.32) |
| Minority | 1.13 | 1.13 |
| | (0.41) | (0.38) |
| *N* | 1182 | 1180 |
| ll | -563.38 | -589.42 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.6. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of**

**panel data (pre-election covariates, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.56*** | 2.53*** |
| | (0.44) | (0.43) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 2.69*** | |
| | (0.55) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 1.41 |
| | | (0.27) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.27* | 2.32** |
| | (0.75) | (0.73) |
| Country's direction right | 2.83*** | 3.02*** |
| | (0.68) | (0.72) |
| Government approval | 1.96*** | 2.02*** |
| | (0.36) | (0.37) |
| EU membership approval | 1.19 | 1.16 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.39 | 1.66** |
| | (0.28) | (0.32) |
| Tertiary education | 0.81 | 0.75 |
| | (0.16) | (0.15) |
| Employed | 1.45 | 1.46 |
| | (0.28) | (0.29) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.03 | 1.02 |
| | (0.05) | (0.04) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.27 | 1.26 |
| | (0.28) | (0.27) |
| Not alone at the interview | 0.73 | 0.77 |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.13 | 1.14 |
| | (0.25) | (0.24) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.53*** | 2.54*** |
| | (0.58) | (0.57) |
| Female | 0.95 | 0.95 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| Capital | 0.85 | 0.86 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Rural | 1.02 | 1.03 |
| | (0.30) | (0.30) |
| Minority | 1.53 | 1.48 |
| | (0.61) | (0.57) |
| **United National Movement** | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.53*** | 2.50*** |
| | (0.54) | (0.56) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 5.04*** | |
| | (1.33) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 2.58*** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | (0.60) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.32 | 0.34 |
| | (0.20) | (0.19) |
| Country's direction right | 0.31** | 0.28** |
| | (0.14) | (0.13) |
| Government approval | 0.62 | 0.67 |
| | (0.17) | (0.18) |
| EU membership approval | 2.92*** | 2.70*** |
| | (0.59) | (0.52) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.67 | 2.10** |
| | (0.47) | (0.55) |
| Tertiary education | 0.97 | 0.87 |
| | (0.22) | (0.20) |
| Employed | 0.66 | 0.65 |
| | (0.18) | (0.17) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.08 | 1.04 |
| | (0.07) | (0.06) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.05 | 1.03 |
| | (0.29) | (0.29) |
| Not alone at the interview | 0.76 | 0.83 |
| | (0.18) | (0.20) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.08 | 1.14 |
| | (0.34) | (0.34) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.52*** | 2.51** |
| | (0.69) | (0.71) |
| Female | 1.06 | 1.13 |
| | (0.26) | (0.27) |
| Capital | 0.58 | 0.54 |
| | (0.21) | (0.20) |
| Rural | 1.25 | 1.20 |
| | (0.45) | (0.42) |
| Minority | 1.33 | 1.44 |
| | (0.60) | (0.59) |
| **Other parties** | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.53* | 1.48* |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 3.41*** | |
| | (0.78) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 2.08** |
| | | (0.47) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.32 | 1.34 |
| | (0.55) | (0.50) |
| Country's direction right | 1.34 | 1.43 |
| | (0.39) | (0.40) |
| Government approval | 0.92 | 0.97 |
| | (0.20) | (0.21) |
| EU membership approval | 1.13 | 1.10 |
| | (0.25) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.11 | 1.32 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | (0.27) | (0.30) |
| Tertiary education | 1.03 | 0.93 |
| | (0.22) | (0.21) |
| Employed | 1.20 | 1.21 |
| | (0.29) | (0.30) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.00 | 0.98 |
| | (0.06) | (0.06) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.13 | 1.13 |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| Not alone at the interview | 1.29 | 1.35 |
| | (0.28) | (0.29) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.34 | 1.36 |
| | (0.40) | (0.39) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.34*** | 2.37*** |
| | (0.60) | (0.62) |
| Female | 0.59* | 0.60* |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Capital | 1.22 | 1.21 |
| | (0.39) | (0.39) |
| Rural | 1.05 | 1.06 |
| | (0.39) | (0.41) |
| Minority | 0.37 | 0.40 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| N | 1180 | 1178 |
| ll | -1240.86 | -1260.42 |

$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

### Table 1a.7. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of panel data (post-election covariates, odds ratios)

| | Model 1 | Model 2 |
|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.39*** | 2.37*** |
| | (0.44) | (0.44) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 3.12*** | |
| | (0.65) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 1.52* |
| | | (0.28) |
| Improved HH conditions | 3.67*** | 3.86*** |
| | (1.16) | (1.26) |
| Country's direction right | 5.00*** | 5.31*** |
| | (1.11) | (1.15) |
| Government approval | 1.69* | 1.75** |
| | (0.35) | (0.36) |
| EU membership approval | 0.99 | 1.02 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| Political knowledge | 1.68* | 1.58* |
| | (0.36) | (0.32) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Turnout (future) | 1.19 | 1.45 |
| | (0.26) | (0.29) |
| Tertiary education | 0.73 | 0.72 |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Employed | 1.91*** | 1.87** |
| | (0.36) | (0.36) |
| Possession of durable goods | 0.99 | 0.98 |
| | (0.05) | (0.05) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.02 | 1.04 |
| | (0.24) | (0.23) |
| Not alone at the interview | 1.00 | 1.08 |
| | (0.19) | (0.20) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.24 | 1.26 |
| | (0.30) | (0.29) |
| Age 58 and older | 3.14*** | 3.21*** |
| | (0.80) | (0.78) |
| Female | 1.05 | 1.03 |
| | (0.22) | (0.21) |
| Capital | 0.93 | 0.91 |
| | (0.26) | (0.25) |
| Rural | 1.14 | 1.15 |
| | (0.33) | (0.33) |
| Minority | 1.37 | 1.32 |
| | (0.59) | (0.56) |
| **United National Movement** | | |
| | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.52*** | 2.49*** |
| | (0.54) | (0.55) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 4.54*** | |
| | (1.26) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 2.30*** |
| | | (0.52) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.22 | 1.38 |
| | (0.54) | (0.61) |
| Country's direction right | 0.67 | 0.74 |
| | (0.24) | (0.26) |
| Government approval | 0.69 | 0.70 |
| | (0.19) | (0.19) |
| EU membership approval | 3.19*** | 3.10*** |
| | (0.75) | (0.71) |
| Political knowledge | 1.15 | 1.05 |
| | (0.27) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.86* | 2.36*** |
| | (0.51) | (0.61) |
| Tertiary education | 0.77 | 0.77 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Employed | 1.12 | 1.05 |
| | (0.30) | (0.29) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.02 | 0.99 |
| | (0.06) | (0.06) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Low HH expenditure | 0.89 | 0.86 |
| | (0.24) | (0.22) |
| Not alone at the interview | 1.15 | 1.21 |
| | (0.24) | (0.25) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.85 | 0.92 |
| | (0.27) | (0.28) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.92* | 2.04** |
| | (0.51) | (0.55) |
| Female | 1.17 | 1.20 |
| | (0.30) | (0.29) |
| Capital | 0.58 | 0.54 |
| | (0.22) | (0.20) |
| Rural | 1.12 | 1.13 |
| | (0.43) | (0.41) |
| Minority | 1.51 | 1.56 |
| | (0.64) | (0.60) |

**Other parties**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.64* | 1.56* |
| | (0.31) | (0.30) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 3.71*** | |
| | (0.88) | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | 2.14** |
| | | (0.51) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.65 | 1.79 |
| | (0.63) | (0.67) |
| Country's direction right | 1.31 | 1.40 |
| | (0.35) | (0.36) |
| Government approval | 1.15 | 1.21 |
| | (0.26) | (0.27) |
| EU membership approval | 0.92 | 0.93 |
| | (0.19) | (0.19) |
| Political knowledge | 1.31 | 1.21 |
| | (0.30) | (0.26) |
| Turnout (future) | 1.20 | 1.44 |
| | (0.30) | (0.34) |
| Tertiary education | 0.82 | 0.80 |
| | (0.20) | (0.19) |
| Employed | 1.65* | 1.63* |
| | (0.37) | (0.38) |
| Possession of durable goods | 1.03 | 1.01 |
| | (0.07) | (0.07) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.18 | 1.22 |
| | (0.33) | (0.33) |
| Not alone at the interview | 1.62* | 1.75** |
| | (0.34) | (0.37) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.26 | 1.31 |
| | (0.37) | (0.37) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.31*** | 2.40*** |
| | (0.58) | (0.59) |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Female | 0.64* | 0.64* |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Capital | 1.21 | 1.16 |
| | (0.40) | (0.38) |
| Rural | 1.11 | 1.13 |
| | (0.43) | (0.44) |
| Minority | 0.37 | 0.39 |
| | (0.23) | (0.22) |
| N | 1182 | 1180 |
| ll | -1203.79 | -1226.24 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

## Table 1a.8. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Bivariate probit estimates of panel data (2016)

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Post-election partisanship | Lagged partisanship (positive) | Post-election partisanship | Lagged partisanship (negative) |
| Contacted during campaign | 0.45*** | | 0.43*** | |
| | (0.09) | | (0.09) | |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | 1.19*** | | | |
| | (0.30) | | | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | | 0.98*** | |
| | | | (0.23) | |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.55*** | | 0.54*** | |
| | (0.16) | | (0.16) | |
| Country's direction right | 0.60*** | | 0.61*** | |
| | (0.11) | | (0.12) | |
| Government approval | 0.12 | | 0.14 | |
| | (0.10) | | (0.10) | |
| EU membership approval | 0.14 | | 0.14 | |
| | (0.09) | | (0.08) | |
| Political knowledge | 0.20 | | 0.16 | |
| | (0.11) | | (0.10) | |
| Turnout (future) | 0.16 | | 0.26** | |
| | (0.11) | | (0.10) | |
| Low HH expenditure | 0.00 | | -0.00 | |
| | (0.12) | | (0.11) | |
| Possession of durable goods | 0.00 | | -0.01 | |
| | (0.03) | | (0.02) | |
| Employed | 0.28** | | 0.24* | |
| | (0.09) | | (0.09) | |
| Tertiary education | -0.18 | | -0.21* | |
| | (0.10) | | (0.10) | |
| Female | -0.03 | | -0.04 | |
| | (0.10) | | (0.10) | |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.08 | | 0.11 | |
| | (0.12) | | (0.11) | |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Age 58 and older | 0.56*** | | 0.59*** | |
| | (0.12) | | (0.11) | |
| Capital | -0.04 | | -0.05 | |
| | (0.15) | | (0.15) | |
| Rural | 0.07 | | 0.08 | |
| | (0.16) | | (0.15) | |
| Minority | 0.08 | | 0.11 | |
| | (0.21) | | (0.19) | |
| Not alone at the interview | 0.07 | | 0.09 | |
| | (0.09) | | (0.09) | |
| Respondent's sophistication | | 0.32*** | | 0.44*** |
| | | (0.05) | | (0.05) |
| Constant | -1.29*** | 0.45*** | -1.13*** | 0.30*** |
| | (0.28) | (0.05) | (0.24) | (0.06) |
| N | 1,182 | 1,182 | 1,180 | 1,180 |
| ll | -1277 | -1277 | -1310 | -1310 |
| rho | -0.29 | -0.29 | -0.43 | -0.43 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

## Table 1a.9. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Two Stage Least Square Estimates of panel data (2016)

| | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | First stage | Second stage | First stage | Second stage |
| Contacted during campaign | 0.04 | 0.11*** | 0.06* | 0.11*** |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Lagged partisanship (positive) | | 0.44** | | |
| | | (0.14) | | |
| Lagged partisanship (negative) | | | | 0.38** |
| | | | | (0.13) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.08* | 0.07* | 0.00 | 0.10*** |
| | (0.04) | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.03) |
| Country's direction right | 0.05 | 0.14*** | -0.01 | 0.17*** |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.03) |
| Government approval | 0.02 | 0.04 | -0.02 | 0.05 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| EU membership approval | 0.03 | 0.04 | 0.05 | 0.03 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Political knowledge | -0.03 | 0.07* | -0.00 | 0.05 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Turnout (future) | 0.20*** | 0.01 | 0.07* | 0.07 |
| | (0.03) | (0.05) | (0.03) | (0.04) |
| Low HH expenditure | 0.02 | -0.00 | 0.02 | -0.00 |
| | (0.04) | (0.03) | (0.04) | (0.03) |
| Possession of durable goods | -0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 | -0.01 |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Employed | -0.03 | 0.08** | -0.01 | 0.07* |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tertiary education | -0.01 | -0.05 | 0.06 | -0.08* |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Female | -0.04 | -0.00 | -0.05 | 0.00 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.03 | 0.03 | -0.01 | 0.04 |
| | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.09** | 0.14*** | 0.06 | 0.16*** |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.04) |
| Capital | 0.02 | -0.02 | 0.07 | -0.04 |
| | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.05) |
| Rural | 0.02 | 0.01 | 0.03 | 0.00 |
| | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.05) |
| Minority | -0.05 | 0.05 | -0.20** | 0.10 |
| | (0.06) | (0.06) | (0.07) | (0.08) |
| Not alone at the interview | 0.04 | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.02 |
| | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) | (0.03) |
| Respondent's sophistication | 0.10*** | | 0.12*** | |
| | (0.02) | | (0.02) | |
| Constant | 0.48*** | 0.13 | 0.45*** | 0.17 |
| | (0.07) | (0.09) | (0.07) | (0.09) |
| N | 1,182 | 1,182 | 1,180 | 1,180 |
| R-sq. | 0.13 | 0.18 | 0.18 | 0.10 |

*$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.10. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of pre-matched and matched data (odds ratios)**

| | 2012 | | | 2016 | | |
| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
| | Pre-matched | Nearest Neighbor | Mahalanobis | Pre-matched | Nearest Neighbor | Mahalanobis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.75*** | 1.75*** | 2.14*** | 1.91*** | 1.85*** | 1.93*** |
| | (0.26) | (0.28) | (0.39) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.24) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.78 | 0.69 | 0.56* | 1.88*** | 1.95*** | 2.30*** |
| | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.14) | (0.31) | (0.35) | (0.54) |
| Country's direction right | 1.34* | 1.57** | 1.55* | 2.70*** | 2.84*** | 3.03*** |
| | (0.19) | (0.27) | (0.34) | (0.32) | (0.38) | (0.52) |
| Government approval | 2.34*** | 2.48*** | 1.54 | 1.27* | 1.27* | 1.20 |
| | (0.40) | (0.47) | (0.35) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.16) |
| EU membership approval | 1.52* | 1.38 | 1.18 | 1.27** | 1.36** | 1.38** |
| | (0.25) | (0.27) | (0.26) | (0.11) | (0.13) | (0.17) |
| Political knowledge | 1.53** | 1.52* | 1.64* | 1.53*** | 1.47** | 1.56** |
| | (0.21) | (0.25) | (0.32) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.50* | 1.34 | 1.82* | 1.84*** | 1.90*** | 1.72*** |
| | (0.28) | (0.29) | (0.46) | (0.21) | (0.23) | (0.25) |
| Tertiary education | 0.68** | 0.62** | 0.63* | 0.83 | 0.82 | 0.89 |
| | (0.09) | (0.10) | (0.12) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.12) |
| Employed | 0.82 | 0.84 | 0.76 | 1.28* | 1.21 | 1.24 |
| | (0.12) | (0.14) | (0.16) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.18) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.66*** | 1.82*** | 1.87** | 1.22 | 1.08 | 1.15 |
| | (0.24) | (0.31) | (0.39) | (0.14) | (0.13) | (0.19) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.85 | 0.77 | 0.75 | 1.09 | 1.12 | 1.09 |
| | (0.12) | (0.14) | (0.16) | (0.11) | (0.12) | (0.16) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.88 | 2.10*** | 2.05*** | 2.14*** |
| | (0.16) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.25) | (0.27) | (0.35) |
| Female | 1.14 | 1.11 | 1.04 | 0.99 | 0.94 | 0.95 |

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|  | (0.14) | (0.16) | (0.20) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.13) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 1.49 | 1.43 | 1.56 | 1.37$^*$ | 1.36 | 1.32 |
|  | (0.32) | (0.33) | (0.40) | (0.22) | (0.23) | (0.28) |
| Rural | 1.09 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.14 | 1.08 | 1.02 |
|  | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.28) | (0.22) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Minority |  |  |  | 1.28 | 1.33 | 1.44 |
|  |  |  |  | (0.25) | (0.28) | (0.34) |
| $N$ | 1791 | 1389 | 894 | 2979 | 2601 | 1527 |
| ll | -873.73 | -643.91 | -420.21 | -1668.54 | -1433.70 | -837.70 |

$p < 0.05,$ $^{**}$ $p < 0.01,$ $^{***}$ $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)

**Table 1a.11. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of Nearest Neighbor matched data (2012, odds ratios)**

|  | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.87$^{***}$ | 1.78$^*$ | 2.11$^{**}$ | 3.28$^{**}$ | 1.86$^*$ | 1.79 |
|  | (0.35) | (0.42) | (0.52) | (1.22) | (0.55) | (0.69) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.82 | 0.69 | 0.69 | 0.67 | 0.69 | 0.69 |
|  | (0.25) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Country's direction right | 1.57$^{**}$ | 1.59 | 1.57$^{**}$ | 1.59$^{**}$ | 1.57$^{**}$ | 1.57$^{**}$ |
|  | (0.27) | (0.38) | (0.27) | (0.28) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Government approval | 2.48$^{***}$ | 2.48$^{***}$ | 2.87$^{***}$ | 2.45$^{***}$ | 2.49$^{***}$ | 2.48$^{***}$ |
|  | (0.47) | (0.47) | (0.74) | (0.46) | (0.47) | (0.47) |
| EU membership approval | 1.36 | 1.38 | 1.36 | 1.87$^*$ | 1.38 | 1.38 |
|  | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.26) | (0.46) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Political knowledge | 1.52$^*$ | 1.51$^*$ | 1.54$^*$ | 1.54$^*$ | 1.57$^*$ | 1.51$^*$ |
|  | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.27) | (0.32) | (0.25) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.33 | 1.34 | 1.33 | 1.33 | 1.33 | 1.35 |
|  | (0.28) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.36) |
| Tertiary education | 0.62$^{**}$ | 0.62$^{**}$ | 0.62$^{**}$ | 0.61$^{**}$ | 0.62$^{**}$ | 0.62$^{**}$ |
|  | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.09) | (0.10) | (0.10) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employed | 0.84 | 0.84 | 0.85 | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.84 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.82*** | 1.82*** | 1.84*** | 1.83*** | 1.82*** | 1.82*** |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.78 | 0.77 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.77 | 0.77 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.99 | 0.99 | 1.00 | 1.01 | 0.99 | 0.99 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Female | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.10 | 1.13 | 1.11 | 1.11 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Capital | 1.43 | 1.43 | 1.45 | 1.44 | 1.43 | 1.43 |
| | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.34) | (0.33) | (0.33) |
| Rural | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.01 | 1.03 | 1.02 | 1.02 |
| | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.26) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.70 | | | | | |
| | (0.28) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 0.97 | | | | |
| | | (0.31) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 0.70 | | | |
| | | | (0.23) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.43* | | |
| | | | | (0.18) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.91 | |
| | | | | | (0.30) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.97 |
| | | | | | | (0.40) |
| N | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 |
| ll | -643.43 | -643.90 | -643.13 | -640.73 | -643.86 | -643.91 |

*$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.12. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of Mahalanobis matched data (2012, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.19*** | 2.09** | 1.85* | 3.87** | 2.44** | 3.05* |
| | (0.45) | (0.58) | (0.53) | (1.71) | (0.81) | (1.45) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.59 | 0.56* | 0.56* | 0.54* | 0.56* | 0.56* |
| | (0.21) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.13) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Country's direction right | 1.55* | 1.52 | 1.55* | 1.57* | 1.54* | 1.55* |
| | (0.34) | (0.45) | (0.33) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) |
| Government approval | 1.54 | 1.54 | 1.39 | 1.54 | 1.55 | 1.54 |
| | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.42) | (0.34) | (0.35) | (0.35) |
| EU membership approval | 1.17 | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.51 | 1.18 | 1.17 |
| | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.43) | (0.26) | (0.26) |
| Political knowledge | 1.64* | 1.64* | 1.63* | 1.67* | 1.76* | 1.64* |
| | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.34) | (0.46) | (0.32) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.82* | 1.82* | 1.82* | 1.81* | 1.82* | 2.14* |
| | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.67) |
| Tertiary education | 0.62* | 0.63* | 0.63* | 0.62* | 0.62* | 0.63* |
| | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.12) |
| Employed | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.77 | 0.77 | 0.76 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.87** | 1.87** | 1.86** | 1.85** | 1.86** | 1.87** |
| | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.39) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.90 | 0.89 | 0.89 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.21) |
| Female | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.05 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.04 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Capital | 1.56 | 1.57 | 1.56 | 1.55 | 1.55 | 1.55 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) |
| Rural | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.01 | 1.03 | 1.01 | 1.00 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.91 | | | | | |
| | (0.42) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.05 | | | | |
| | | (0.43) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.31 | | | |
| | | | (0.49) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.46 | | |
| | | | | (0.23) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.82 | |
| | | | | | (0.32) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.65 |
| | | | | | | (0.32) |
| N | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 |
| ll | -420.19 | -420.20 | -419.93 | -418.61 | -420.07 | -419.82 |

$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)

113

**Table 1a.13. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of Nearest Neighbor matched data (2016, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.82*** | 1.79*** | 1.69*** | 1.90*** | 1.70*** | 1.82** |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.27) | (0.25) | (0.34) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.80** | 1.94*** | 1.94*** | 1.95*** | 1.95*** | 1.95*** |
| | (0.39) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.35) |
| Country's direction right | 2.84*** | 2.64*** | 2.85*** | 2.85*** | 2.84*** | 2.84*** |
| | (0.38) | (0.44) | (0.38) | (0.38) | (0.38) | (0.38) |
| Government approval | 1.27* | 1.27* | 1.14 | 1.27* | 1.27* | 1.27* |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.16) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| EU membership approval | 1.36** | 1.36** | 1.36** | 1.39* | 1.36** | 1.36** |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.18) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Political knowledge | 1.47** | 1.47** | 1.47** | 1.47** | 1.37* | 1.47** |
| | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.20) | (0.18) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.90*** | 1.89*** | 1.90*** | 1.90*** | 1.90*** | 1.88*** |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.24) | (0.29) |
| Tertiary education | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.82 |
| | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) | (0.09) |
| Employed | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.22 | 1.21 |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.09 | 1.08 |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.12 |
| | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.05*** | 2.05*** | 2.06*** | 2.06*** | 2.05*** | 2.05*** |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.26) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Female | 0.94 | 0.94 | 0.94 | 0.94 | 0.94 | 0.94 |
| | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) |

CEU eTD Collection

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 1.36 | 1.36 | 1.35 | 1.36 | 1.37 | 1.36 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Rural | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Minority | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.34 | 1.33 | 1.33 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 1.20 | | | | | |
| | (0.41) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.19 | | | | |
| | | (0.27) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.27 | | | |
| | | | (0.25) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.95 | | |
| | | | | (0.19) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.17 | |
| | | | | | (0.24) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 1.02 |
| | | | | | | (0.23) |
| $N$ | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 |
| ll | -1433.52 | -1433.42 | -1432.91 | -1433.66 | -1433.33 | -1433.69 |

*$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.14. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Logit estimates of Mahalanobis matched data (2016, odds ratios)**

|  | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.00*** | 1.83*** | 1.86*** | 2.00*** | 1.70** | 2.54*** |
|  | (0.27) | (0.25) | (0.28) | (0.36) | (0.31) | (0.63) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.71*** | 2.29*** | 2.29*** | 2.31*** | 2.29*** | 2.33*** |
|  | (0.80) | (0.54) | (0.54) | (0.54) | (0.54) | (0.55) |
| Country's direction right | 3.04*** | 2.69*** | 3.03*** | 3.03*** | 3.02*** | 3.06*** |
|  | (0.53) | (0.55) | (0.53) | (0.52) | (0.52) | (0.53) |
| Government approval | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.15 | 1.19 | 1.20 | 1.19 |
|  | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.20) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| EU membership approval | 1.39** | 1.38** | 1.38** | 1.43* | 1.38** | 1.39** |
|  | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.24) | (0.17) | (0.17) |
| Political knowledge | 1.56** | 1.56** | 1.56** | 1.56** | 1.41 | 1.56** |
|  | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.25) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.72*** | 1.71*** | 1.72*** | 1.72*** | 1.72*** | 2.02*** |
|  | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.38) |
| Tertiary education | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.89 | 0.90 |
|  | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Employed | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 |
|  | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.15 | 1.15 | 1.15 | 1.16 | 1.15 | 1.17 |
|  | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.09 | 1.09 | 1.09 | 1.09 | 1.09 | 1.09 |
|  | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.15*** | 2.15*** | 2.15*** | 2.15*** | 2.13*** | 2.14*** |
|  | (0.36) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.36) | (0.35) | (0.35) |
| Female | 0.95 | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.95 |
|  | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 1.33 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1.32 | 1.32 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) |
| Rural | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Minority | 1.44 | 1.45 | 1.45 | 1.45 | 1.44 | 1.48 |
| | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.35) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.68 | | | | | |
| | (0.29) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.34 | | | | |
| | | (0.38) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.10 | | | |
| | | | (0.27) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.93 | | |
| | | | | (0.22) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.26 | |
| | | | | | (0.31) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.68 |
| | | | | | | (0.19) |
| $N$ | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 |
| ll | -837.26 | -837.28 | -837.63 | -837.65 | -837.25 | -836.66 |

$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

117

**Table 1a.15. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates (2012, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Pre-matched | Nearest Neighbor | Mahalanobis |
| **Georgian Dream** | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.88*** | 1.88*** | 2.25*** |
| | (0.30) | (0.32) | (0.41) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.62* | 0.57* | 0.47** |
| | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.12) |
| Country's direction right | 1.34 | 1.60* | 1.56* |
| | (0.21) | (0.30) | (0.35) |
| Government approval | 2.84*** | 3.01*** | 1.88** |
| | (0.51) | (0.59) | (0.44) |
| EU membership approval | 1.44* | 1.31 | 1.14 |
| | (0.24) | (0.27) | (0.25) |
| Political knowledge | 1.66*** | 1.64** | 1.65* |
| | (0.24) | (0.28) | (0.33) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.59* | 1.46 | 2.11** |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.55) |
| Tertiary education | 0.72* | 0.66** | 0.68 |
| | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.14) |
| Employed | 0.89 | 0.91 | 0.78 |
| | (0.13) | (0.16) | (0.17) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.62** | 1.77** | 1.84** |
| | (0.25) | (0.32) | (0.40) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.85 | 0.75 | 0.75 |
| | (0.12) | (0.14) | (0.17) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.96 | 0.97 | 0.83 |
| | (0.16) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Female | 1.05 | 1.05 | 1.01 |
| | (0.13) | (0.15) | (0.20) |
| Capital | 1.49 | 1.45 | 1.61 |
| | (0.34) | (0.36) | (0.44) |
| Rural | 1.15 | 1.08 | 1.11 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.31) |
| **United National Movement** | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.33 | 1.34 | 1.78* |
| | (0.24) | (0.26) | (0.42) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.51 | 1.22 | 1.01 |
| | (0.37) | (0.34) | (0.33) |
| Country's direction right | 1.31 | 1.43 | 1.47 |
| | (0.23) | (0.29) | (0.39) |
| Government approval | 1.19 | 1.26 | 0.73 |
| | (0.25) | (0.29) | (0.21) |
| EU membership approval | 1.82** | 1.65* | 1.29 |

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| Political knowledge | 1.17 | 1.16 | 1.60 |
| | (0.23) | (0.27) | (0.45) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.32 | 1.11 | 1.18 |
| | (0.35) | (0.32) | (0.40) |
| Tertiary education | 0.53** | 0.49** | 0.42** |
| | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.13) |
| Employed | 0.61* | 0.60* | 0.71 |
| | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.20) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.78** | 1.96** | 1.99* |
| | (0.34) | (0.44) | (0.56) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.93 | 0.86 | 0.74 |
| | (0.20) | (0.21) | (0.23) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.08 | 1.04 | 1.11 |
| | (0.25) | (0.28) | (0.34) |
| Female | 1.57** | 1.38 | 1.20 |
| | (0.27) | (0.25) | (0.31) |
| Capital | 1.47 | 1.37 | 1.46 |
| | (0.39) | (0.37) | (0.46) |
| Rural | 0.92 | 0.84 | 0.75 |
| | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.27) |
| $N$ | 1791 | 1389 | 894 |
| ll | -1499.07 | -1134.09 | -725.17 |

$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)

**Table 1a.16. Covariates of post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates (2016, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Pre-matched | Nearest Neighbor | Mahalanobis |
| **Georgian Dream** | | | |
| | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.89*** | 1.82*** | 1.71*** |
| | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.25) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.35*** | 2.36*** | 2.94*** |
| | (0.41) | (0.44) | (0.72) |
| Country's direction right | 4.04*** | 4.31*** | 4.81*** |
| | (0.51) | (0.60) | (0.88) |
| Government approval | 1.88*** | 1.88*** | 1.73*** |
| | (0.22) | (0.23) | (0.27) |
| EU membership approval | 0.96 | 1.05 | 1.01 |
| | (0.11) | (0.12) | (0.15) |
| Political knowledge | 1.85*** | 1.77*** | 2.00*** |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.35) |
| Turnout (past) | 2.65*** | 2.68*** | 2.49*** |
| | (0.39) | (0.43) | (0.47) |
| Tertiary education | 0.78* | 0.75* | 0.83 |
| | (0.09) | (0.10) | (0.13) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Employed | 1.40** | 1.32* | 1.44* |
| | (0.16) | (0.17) | (0.24) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.32* | 1.17 | 1.36 |
| | (0.17) | (0.16) | (0.26) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.06 | 1.13 | 1.10 |
| | (0.13) | (0.15) | (0.20) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.90*** | 1.94*** | 2.04*** |
| | (0.26) | (0.29) | (0.41) |
| Female | 1.01 | 0.96 | 1.02 |
| | (0.11) | (0.12) | (0.16) |
| Capital | 1.33 | 1.31 | 1.19 |
| | (0.22) | (0.23) | (0.27) |
| Rural | 1.03 | 0.99 | 0.91 |
| | (0.21) | (0.22) | (0.22) |
| Minority | 1.64* | 1.67* | 1.86* |
| | (0.37) | (0.41) | (0.51) |

**United National Movement**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.17*** | 2.26*** | 2.99*** |
| | (0.31) | (0.33) | (0.57) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.94 | 1.02 | 0.79 |
| | (0.26) | (0.33) | (0.36) |
| Country's direction right | 0.80 | 0.74 | 0.63 |
| | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.21) |
| Government approval | 0.57** | 0.57** | 0.60* |
| | (0.10) | (0.11) | (0.15) |
| EU membership approval | 2.71*** | 3.18*** | 2.92*** |
| | (0.36) | (0.47) | (0.55) |
| Political knowledge | 1.12 | 1.14 | 1.22 |
| | (0.17) | (0.18) | (0.25) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.23 | 1.36* | 1.16 |
| | (0.18) | (0.21) | (0.23) |
| Tertiary education | 0.81 | 0.85 | 0.82 |
| | (0.14) | (0.15) | (0.19) |
| Employed | 1.05 | 0.96 | 0.99 |
| | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.24) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.08 | 0.96 | 1.11 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.27) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.97 | 0.99 | 0.94 |
| | (0.16) | (0.18) | (0.21) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.35*** | 2.12*** | 1.80* |
| | (0.41) | (0.40) | (0.43) |
| Female | 1.19 | 1.12 | 1.07 |
| | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.24) |
| Capital | 0.83 | 0.93 | 1.01 |
| | (0.19) | (0.22) | (0.27) |
| Rural | 1.27 | 1.30 | 1.21 |
| | (0.29) | (0.33) | (0.37) |
| Minority | 1.27 | 1.61 | 1.35 |
| | (0.34) | (0.45) | (0.52) |

**Other parties**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.71*** | 1.60*** | 1.65** |
| | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.30) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.44 | 1.63* | 2.09* |
| | (0.33) | (0.40) | (0.64) |
| Country's direction right | 1.20 | 1.32 | 1.46 |
| | (0.21) | (0.25) | (0.34) |
| Government approval | 0.95 | 0.96 | 0.90 |
| | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.18) |
| EU membership approval | 1.11 | 1.08 | 1.33 |
| | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.25) |
| Political knowledge | 1.29 | 1.22 | 1.20 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.35 | 1.37 | 1.29 |
| | (0.23) | (0.25) | (0.29) |
| Tertiary education | 0.98 | 0.96 | 1.07 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.21) |
| Employed | 1.27 | 1.25 | 1.15 |
| | (0.20) | (0.21) | (0.24) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.17 | 1.04 | 0.88 |
| | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.20) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.32 | 1.24 | 1.25 |
| | (0.23) | (0.22) | (0.31) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.41*** | 2.24*** | 2.77*** |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.63) |
| Female | 0.81 | 0.78 | 0.73 |
| | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.13) |
| Capital | 2.15*** | 1.95** | 1.99** |
| | (0.44) | (0.42) | (0.52) |
| Rural | 1.22 | 1.08 | 1.06 |
| | (0.35) | (0.32) | (0.30) |
| Minority | 0.38** | 0.32** | 0.49 |
| | (0.14) | (0.12) | (0.23) |
| *N* | 2979 | 2601 | 1527 |
| ll | -3072.80 | -2688.82 | -1577.09 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.17. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of Nearest Neighbor matched data (2012, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.97*** | 1.97** | 2.18** | 3.45** | 2.03* | 1.85 |
| | (0.38) | (0.49) | (0.58) | (1.32) | (0.63) | (0.75) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.64 | 0.57* | 0.57* | 0.55** | 0.57* | 0.57* |
| | (0.20) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Country's direction right | 1.61* | 1.67* | 1.61* | 1.62** | 1.60* | 1.60* |
| | (0.30) | (0.42) | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) |
| Government approval | 3.01*** | 3.01*** | 3.41*** | 2.98*** | 3.03*** | 3.01*** |
| | (0.59) | (0.59) | (0.92) | (0.58) | (0.59) | (0.59) |
| EU membership approval | 1.30 | 1.31 | 1.30 | 1.76* | 1.31 | 1.31 |
| | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.26) | (0.45) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Political knowledge | 1.64** | 1.64** | 1.66** | 1.67** | 1.72* | 1.64** |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.38) | (0.28) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.45 | 1.44 |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.41) |
| Tertiary education | 0.66** | 0.66** | 0.66** | 0.65** | 0.66** | 0.66** |
| | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| Employed | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0.90 | 0.92 | 0.91 |
| | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.77** | 1.77** | 1.78** | 1.78** | 1.76** | 1.77** |
| | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.76 | 0.75 | 0.76 | 0.76 | 0.75 | 0.75 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 1.00 | 0.97 | 0.97 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Female | 1.05 | 1.05 | 1.05 | 1.07 | 1.05 | 1.05 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.16) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.15) |
| Capital | 1.45 | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.45 | 1.45 | 1.45 |
| | (0.36) | (0.36) | (0.36) | (0.37) | (0.36) | (0.36) |
| Rural | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.09 | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.79 | | | | | |
| | (0.33) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 0.92 | | | | |
| | | (0.30) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 0.73 | | | |
| | | | (0.26) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.44 | | |
| | | | | (0.19) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.89 | |
| | | | | | (0.31) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 1.01 |
| | | | | | | (0.44) |

**United National Movement**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.50 | 1.26 | 1.91* | 2.73* | 1.43 | 1.62 |
| | (0.33) | (0.36) | (0.55) | (1.18) | (0.49) | (0.73) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.57 | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.18 | 1.22 | 1.22 |
| | (0.55) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) |
| Country's direction right | 1.44 | 1.37 | 1.43 | 1.45 | 1.43 | 1.43 |
| | (0.29) | (0.39) | (0.29) | (0.30) | (0.29) | (0.29) |
| Government approval | 1.25 | 1.26 | 1.70 | 1.24 | 1.26 | 1.26 |
| | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.53) | (0.29) | (0.30) | (0.29) |
| EU membership approval | 1.62 | 1.65* | 1.60* | 2.30** | 1.65* | 1.65* |
| | (0.40) | (0.41) | (0.39) | (0.72) | (0.41) | (0.41) |
| Political knowledge | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.20 | 1.15 |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.28) | (0.31) | (0.27) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.10 | 1.11 | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.10 | 1.23 |

CEU eTD Collection

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.43) |
| Tertiary education | 0.49** | 0.49** | 0.49** | 0.48** | 0.49** | 0.50** |
| | (0.12) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.12) |
| Employed | 0.60* | 0.60* | 0.61* | 0.60* | 0.61* | 0.61* |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.14) | (0.13) | (0.14) | (0.13) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.97** | 1.96** | 2.00** | 1.99** | 1.96** | 1.96** |
| | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.45) | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.44) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.88 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.87 | 0.87 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.05 | 1.04 | 1.06 | 1.07 | 1.04 | 1.04 |
| | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.28) | (0.29) | (0.28) | (0.28) |
| Female | 1.38 | 1.39 | 1.37 | 1.41 | 1.38 | 1.38 |
| | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.25) |
| Capital | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.40 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.36 |
| | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.39) | (0.38) | (0.37) | (0.37) |
| Rural | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.84 | 0.83 |
| | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.25) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.60 | | | | | |
| | (0.29) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.10 | | | | |
| | | (0.44) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 0.50 | | | |
| | | | (0.21) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.39 | | |
| | | | | (0.19) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.90 | |
| | | | | | (0.35) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.80 |
| | | | | | | (0.40) |
| N | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 | 1389 |
| ll | -1133.48 | -1133.92 | -1132.39 | -1130.88 | -1134.01 | -1133.93 |

*p < 0.05,* **p < 0.01,* ***p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.18. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of Mahalanobis matched data (2012, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.21*** | 2.23** | 1.82 | 4.12** | 2.63** | 3.00* |
| | (0.46) | (0.64) | (0.56) | (1.81) | (0.91) | (1.50) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.42* | 0.47** | 0.47** | 0.45** | 0.47** | 0.47** |
| | (0.16) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.11) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Country's direction right | 1.56 | 1.55 | 1.56* | 1.58* | 1.55 | 1.56* |
| | (0.35) | (0.47) | (0.35) | (0.36) | (0.35) | (0.35) |
| Government approval | 1.89** | 1.88** | 1.62 | 1.88** | 1.90** | 1.89** |
| | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.51) | (0.43) | (0.44) | (0.44) |
| EU membership approval | 1.15 | 1.14 | 1.15 | 1.48 | 1.15 | 1.14 |
| | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.44) | (0.26) | (0.25) |
| Political knowledge | 1.65* | 1.65* | 1.63* | 1.68* | 1.80* | 1.65* |
| | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.35) | (0.50) | (0.33) |
| Turnout (past) | 2.12** | 2.11** | 2.11** | 2.10** | 2.11** | 2.38** |
| | (0.55) | (0.55) | (0.55) | (0.55) | (0.55) | (0.80) |
| Tertiary education | 0.68 | 0.68 | 0.69 | 0.67* | 0.68 | 0.69 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.13) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Employed | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.77 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.77 |
| | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.16) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.84** | 1.84** | 1.83** | 1.82** | 1.83** | 1.84** |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.76 | 0.76 |
| | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) |
| Age 58 and older | 0.82 | 0.83 | 0.82 | 0.84 | 0.83 | 0.83 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Female | 1.01 | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.04 | 1.02 | 1.01 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.19) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 1.61 | 1.61 | 1.59 | 1.58 | 1.60 | 1.59 |
| | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) |
| Rural | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.10 | 1.12 | 1.10 | 1.09 |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 1.19 | | | | | |
| | (0.56) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.02 | | | | |
| | | (0.43) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.42 | | | |
| | | | (0.57) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.45 | | |
| | | | | (0.22) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.78 | |
| | | | | | (0.33) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.70 |
| | | | | | | (0.37) |

**United National Movement**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 2.11** | 1.65 | 1.89* | 3.09 | 1.89 | 3.04 |
| | (0.59) | (0.59) | (0.61) | (1.83) | (0.83) | (1.74) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.44 | 1.01 | 1.01 | 0.97 | 1.01 | 1.00 |
| | (0.60) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.31) | (0.33) | (0.32) |
| Country's direction right | 1.45 | 1.38 | 1.46 | 1.48 | 1.46 | 1.47 |
| | (0.39) | (0.48) | (0.39) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) |
| Government approval | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.81 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.29) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| EU membership approval | 1.24 | 1.29 | 1.28 | 1.62 | 1.30 | 1.29 |
| | (0.37) | (0.39) | (0.38) | (0.62) | (0.39) | (0.38) |
| Political knowledge | 1.60 | 1.61 | 1.60 | 1.63 | 1.64 | 1.59 |
| | (0.45) | (0.46) | (0.44) | (0.46) | (0.57) | (0.45) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.16 | 1.18 | 1.19 | 1.18 | 1.18 | 1.56 |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.41) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.68) |

CEU eTD Collection

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tertiary education | 0.41** | 0.42** | 0.42** | 0.42** | 0.42** | 0.43** |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.12) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Employed | 0.72 | 0.71 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.72 | 0.70 |
| | (0.21) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Low HH expenditure | 2.02* | 1.98* | 1.99* | 1.97* | 1.98* | 1.99* |
| | (0.57) | (0.55) | (0.56) | (0.56) | (0.56) | (0.56) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.75 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.11 | 1.13 | 1.11 | 1.13 |
| | (0.33) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) |
| Female | 1.19 | 1.20 | 1.19 | 1.22 | 1.20 | 1.19 |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.32) | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| Capital | 1.48 | 1.47 | 1.48 | 1.45 | 1.46 | 1.44 |
| | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.47) | (0.46) | (0.46) | (0.45) |
| Rural | 0.73 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.76 | 0.75 | 0.73 |
| | (0.26) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.26) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.50 | | | | | |
| | (0.31) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.15 | | | | |
| | | (0.60) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 0.86 | | | |
| | | | (0.41) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.49 | | |
| | | | | (0.33) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.90 | |
| | | | | | (0.46) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.52 |
| | | | | | | (0.32) |
| *N* | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 | 894 |
| ll | -723.70 | -725.12 | -724.21 | -723.54 | -724.96 | -724.60 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

127

**Table 1a.19. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of Nearest Neighbor matched data (2016, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.75*** | 1.66*** | 1.61** | 1.69** | 1.76** | 1.99** |
| | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.25) | (0.29) | (0.32) | (0.51) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.04** | 2.35*** | 2.34*** | 2.36*** | 2.35*** | 2.36*** |
| | (0.48) | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.44) | (0.44) |
| Country's direction right | 4.31*** | 3.74*** | 4.33*** | 4.30*** | 4.30*** | 4.32*** |
| | (0.60) | (0.67) | (0.61) | (0.60) | (0.60) | (0.61) |
| Government approval | 1.87*** | 1.88*** | 1.65** | 1.88*** | 1.88*** | 1.88*** |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.26) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| EU membership approval | 1.05 | 1.05 | 1.05 | 0.96 | 1.05 | 1.05 |
| | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.15) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Political knowledge | 1.77*** | 1.78*** | 1.77*** | 1.77*** | 1.72** | 1.77*** |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.30) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (past) | 2.67*** | 2.65*** | 2.68*** | 2.68*** | 2.68*** | 2.82*** |
| | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.63) |
| Tertiary education | 0.75* | 0.75* | 0.75* | 0.75* | 0.75* | 0.75* |
| | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) | (0.10) |
| Employed | 1.31* | 1.32* | 1.32* | 1.33* | 1.32* | 1.32* |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.16) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.17 | 1.17 | 1.16 | 1.17 | 1.17 | 1.17 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.12 | 1.12 | 1.13 | 1.13 | 1.13 | 1.13 |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.93*** | 1.93*** | 1.94*** | 1.94*** | 1.94*** | 1.94*** |
| | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) |
| Female | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.97 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 |
| | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) |

CEU eTD Collection

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Capital | 1.31 | 1.30 | 1.30 | 1.31 | 1.31 | 1.31 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Rural | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.99 |
| | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.21) | (0.22) | (0.21) | (0.22) |
| 3.settype | 1.67* | 1.69* | 1.67* | 1.66* | 1.67* | 1.68* |
| | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.42) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 1.33 | | | | | |
| | (0.50) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.34 | | | | |
| | | (0.33) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.33 | | | |
| | | | (0.29) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 1.17 | | |
| | | | | (0.25) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.08 | |
| | | | | | (0.26) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.91 |
| | | | | | | (0.27) |
| **United National Movement** | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 2.21*** | 2.27*** | 2.21*** | 2.63*** | 1.84*** | 2.33** |
| | (0.33) | (0.35) | (0.38) | (0.62) | (0.34) | (0.63) |
| Improved HH conditions | 0.86 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.01 | 1.02 |
| | (0.40) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) |
| Country's direction right | 0.74 | 0.82 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 | 0.74 |
| | (0.19) | (0.27) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.19) |
| Government approval | 0.57** | 0.57** | 0.59* | 0.57** | 0.57** | 0.57** |
| | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.15) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) |
| EU membership approval | 3.18*** | 3.18*** | 3.18*** | 3.61*** | 3.17*** | 3.18*** |
| | (0.47) | (0.47) | (0.47) | (0.82) | (0.47) | (0.47) |
| Political knowledge | 1.14 | 1.14 | 1.14 | 1.14 | 0.92 | 1.14 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.19) | (0.18) |

CEU eTD Collection

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Turnout (past) | 1.36* | 1.36* | 1.36* | 1.36* | 1.37* | 1.40 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.30) |
| Tertiary education | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.85 | 0.84 | 0.85 |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Employed | 0.96 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.95 | 0.96 | 0.96 |
| | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) | (0.17) |
| Low HH expenditure | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.99 | 1.00 | 0.99 | 0.99 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.12*** | 2.12*** | 2.11*** | 2.12*** | 2.11*** | 2.11*** |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.40) |
| Female | 1.12 | 1.11 | 1.12 | 1.11 | 1.12 | 1.12 |
| | (0.20) | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Capital | 0.93 | 0.93 | 0.93 | 0.93 | 0.93 | 0.93 |
| | (0.21) | (0.22) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Rural | 1.30 | 1.30 | 1.30 | 1.30 | 1.29 | 1.30 |
| | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.33) | (0.32) | (0.33) |
| Minority | 1.61 | 1.60 | 1.61 | 1.62 | 1.59 | 1.61 |
| | (0.45) | (0.45) | (0.45) | (0.45) | (0.44) | (0.45) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 1.40 | | | | | |
| | (0.90) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 0.89 | | | | |
| | | (0.40) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.00 | | | |
| | | | (0.34) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.79 | | |
| | | | | (0.25) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.49 | |
| | | | | | (0.41) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.96 |
| | | | | | | (0.31) |

**Other parties**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.67*** | 1.65** | 1.38 | 2.02*** | 1.45 | 1.27 |
| | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.24) | (0.39) | (0.32) | (0.33) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.95* | 1.63* | 1.61* | 1.62* | 1.63* | 1.62* |
| | (0.59) | (0.40) | (0.39) | (0.39) | (0.40) | (0.39) |
| Country's direction right | 1.32 | 1.45 | 1.32 | 1.33 | 1.32 | 1.30 |
| | (0.25) | (0.36) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) |
| Government approval | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.79 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.19) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| EU membership approval | 1.08 | 1.09 | 1.08 | 1.37 | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.27) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Political knowledge | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.13 | 1.23 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.22) | (0.20) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.37 | 1.18 |
| | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.26) |
| Tertiary education | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.96 | 0.95 |
| | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) | (0.14) |
| Employed | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.24 | 1.25 | 1.25 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.03 | 1.04 | 1.04 | 1.04 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.19) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.24 | 1.25 | 1.24 | 1.24 |
| | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.23) | (0.22) | (0.23) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.24*** | 2.24*** | 2.24*** | 2.24*** | 2.23*** | 2.24*** |
| | (0.40) | (0.40) | (0.39) | (0.40) | (0.39) | (0.40) |
| Female | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.78 | 0.77 | 0.78 | 0.78 |
| | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) | (0.11) |
| Capital | 1.96** | 1.96** | 1.93** | 1.96** | 1.96** | 1.96** |
| | (0.43) | (0.42) | (0.42) | (0.42) | (0.42) | (0.42) |
| Rural | 1.09 | 1.08 | 1.07 | 1.08 | 1.08 | 1.08 |
| | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) | (0.32) |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Minority | 0.32** | 0.32** | 0.32** | 0.32** | 0.32** | 0.31** |
| | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.12) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.73 | | | | | |
| | (0.33) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 0.87 | | | | |
| | | (0.31) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.52 | | | |
| | | | (0.50) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.63 | | |
| | | | | (0.18) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.21 | |
| | | | | | (0.36) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 1.37 |
| | | | | | | (0.42) |
| N | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 | 2601 |
| ll | -2687.38 | -2687.29 | -2687.23 | -2685.90 | -2687.80 | -2687.99 |

$p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 1a.20. Interaction effects of contacts on post-election partisanship. Multinomial logit estimates of Mahalanobis matched data, (2016, odds ratios)**

| | Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 | Model 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Georgian Dream** | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 1.73*** | 1.52** | 1.56* | 1.56* | 1.37 | 2.09* |
| | (0.28) | (0.24) | (0.30) | (0.33) | (0.28) | (0.66) |
| Improved HH conditions | 3.22*** | 2.91*** | 2.92*** | 2.94*** | 2.93*** | 2.97*** |
| | (1.09) | (0.71) | (0.72) | (0.72) | (0.72) | (0.73) |
| Country's direction right | 4.82*** | 3.92*** | 4.82*** | 4.78*** | 4.80*** | 4.84*** |
| | (0.89) | (0.90) | (0.89) | (0.88) | (0.88) | (0.89) |
| Government approval | 1.73*** | 1.73*** | 1.57* | 1.73*** | 1.72*** | 1.72*** |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.32) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| EU membership approval | 1.01 | 1.00 | 1.01 | 0.90 | 1.01 | 1.01 |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.19) | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| Political knowledge | 2.00*** | 2.00*** | 2.00*** | 2.00*** | 1.71* | 2.00*** |
| | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.35) | (0.36) | (0.35) |
| Turnout (past) | 2.50*** | 2.46*** | 2.50*** | 2.51*** | 2.51*** | 2.77*** |
| | (0.47) | (0.46) | (0.47) | (0.48) | (0.47) | (0.69) |
| Tertiary education | 0.82 | 0.83 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.83 | 0.83 |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Employed | 1.44* | 1.44* | 1.44* | 1.46* | 1.45* | 1.44* |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.36 | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1.37 |
| | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.26) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.26) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.10 | 1.09 | 1.10 | 1.09 | 1.10 | 1.09 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.04*** | 2.05*** | 2.05*** | 2.05*** | 2.02*** | 2.04*** |
| | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) | (0.41) |
| Female | 1.01 | 1.02 | 1.02 | 1.01 | 1.01 | 1.01 |

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| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) | (0.16) |
| Capital | 1.19 | 1.19 | 1.18 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.19 |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Rural | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.91 | 0.92 | 0.91 | 0.92 |
| | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.22) | (0.22) |
| Minority | 1.86[*] | 1.88[*] | 1.87[*] | 1.85[*] | 1.86[*] | 1.89[*] |
| | (0.51) | (0.51) | (0.51) | (0.51) | (0.51) | (0.52) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.78 | | | | | |
| | (0.38) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.60 | | | | |
| | | (0.50) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.24 | | | |
| | | | (0.35) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 1.21 | | |
| | | | | (0.34) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.45 | |
| | | | | | (0.40) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.76 |
| | | | | | | (0.27) |
| **United National Movement** | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| Contacted during campaign | 3.08[***] | 2.80[***] | 3.01[***] | 4.02[***] | 3.00[***] | 4.45[***] |
| | (0.59) | (0.54) | (0.67) | (1.38) | (0.76) | (1.56) |
| Improved HH conditions | 1.01 | 0.78 | 0.79 | 0.80 | 0.79 | 0.80 |
| | (0.65) | (0.36) | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.36) | (0.37) |
| Country's direction right | 0.63 | 0.41 | 0.63 | 0.64 | 0.63 | 0.63 |
| | (0.21) | (0.24) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Government approval | 0.60[*] | 0.60[*] | 0.65 | 0.59[*] | 0.59[*] | 0.59[*] |
| | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.23) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.15) |
| EU membership approval | 2.93[***] | 2.89[***] | 2.91[***] | 3.84[***] | 2.92[***] | 2.93[***] |
| | (0.55) | (0.54) | (0.55) | (1.24) | (0.55) | (0.55) |
| Political knowledge | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.22 | 1.27 | 1.21 |

134

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.37) | (0.25) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.17 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.59 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.49) |
| Tertiary education | 0.82 | 0.83 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.82 | 0.83 |
| | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) | (0.19) |
| Employed | 0.99 | 0.99 | 0.98 | 0.97 | 0.98 | 0.98 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Low HH expenditure | 1.11 | 1.10 | 1.11 | 1.12 | 1.11 | 1.13 |
| | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) | (0.27) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 0.94 | 0.95 | 0.94 | 0.95 | 0.94 | 0.93 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Age 58 and older | 1.80$^*$ | 1.80$^*$ | 1.79$^*$ | 1.82$^*$ | 1.79$^*$ | 1.78$^*$ |
| | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.43) | (0.44) | (0.43) | (0.43) |
| Female | 1.06 | 1.07 | 1.07 | 1.06 | 1.07 | 1.06 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| Capital | 1.01 | 1.00 | 1.01 | 1.00 | 1.01 | 1.00 |
| | (0.28) | (0.27) | (0.28) | (0.27) | (0.28) | (0.27) |
| Rural | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.21 | 1.22 |
| | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.37) | (0.38) |
| Minority | 1.34 | 1.35 | 1.35 | 1.36 | 1.35 | 1.40 |
| | (0.52) | (0.52) | (0.53) | (0.53) | (0.52) | (0.54) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.61 | | | | | |
| | (0.51) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 2.06 | | | | |
| | | (1.45) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 0.91 | | | |
| | | | (0.42) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.64 | | |
| | | | | (0.27) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 0.99 | |
| | | | | | (0.37) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.56 |

| | | | | | | (0.24) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**Other parties**

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Contacted during campaign | 1.78** | 1.68* | 1.49 | 2.26** | 1.38 | 1.86 |
| | (0.35) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.57) | (0.39) | (0.61) |
| Improved HH conditions | 2.84** | 2.09* | 2.07* | 2.11* | 2.07* | 2.10* |
| | (1.07) | (0.64) | (0.63) | (0.65) | (0.63) | (0.64) |
| Country's direction right | 1.47 | 1.50 | 1.47 | 1.49 | 1.46 | 1.47 |
| | (0.34) | (0.44) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) | (0.34) |
| Government approval | 0.91 | 0.90 | 0.78 | 0.90 | 0.90 | 0.90 |
| | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.24) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) |
| EU membership approval | 1.34 | 1.33 | 1.33 | 1.77* | 1.33 | 1.33 |
| | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.25) | (0.44) | (0.25) | (0.25) |
| Political knowledge | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.20 | 1.19 | 1.03 | 1.20 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.26) | (0.24) |
| Turnout (past) | 1.30 | 1.30 | 1.29 | 1.29 | 1.30 | 1.38 |
| | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.29) | (0.38) |
| Tertiary education | 1.07 | 1.07 | 1.07 | 1.07 | 1.08 | 1.07 |
| | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) | (0.21) |
| Employed | 1.15 | 1.15 | 1.15 | 1.13 | 1.15 | 1.15 |
| | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) | (0.24) |
| Low HH expenditure | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.88 | 0.89 | 0.87 | 0.89 |
| | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) | (0.20) |
| Age 38 to 57 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.25 | 1.26 | 1.25 | 1.25 |
| | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| Age 58 and older | 2.78*** | 2.78*** | 2.78*** | 2.80*** | 2.74*** | 2.76*** |
| | (0.63) | (0.63) | (0.63) | (0.64) | (0.63) | (0.63) |
| Female | 0.72 | 0.73 | 0.74 | 0.73 | 0.73 | 0.73 |
| | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Capital | 2.00** | 1.99** | 1.97** | 1.96** | 1.99** | 1.98** |
| | (0.53) | (0.52) | (0.51) | (0.51) | (0.52) | (0.52) |
| Rural | 1.07 | 1.06 | 1.05 | 1.05 | 1.06 | 1.07 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) | (0.30) |
| Minority | 0.48 | 0.48 | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.49 | 0.49 |
| | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) | (0.23) |
| Contacted * Improved HH conditions | 0.51 | | | | | |
| | (0.28) | | | | | |
| Contacted * Country's direction right | | 1.04 | | | | |
| | | (0.46) | | | | |
| Contacted * Government approval | | | 1.35 | | | |
| | | | (0.54) | | | |
| Contacted * EU membership approval | | | | 0.57 | | |
| | | | | (0.20) | | |
| Contacted * Political knowledge | | | | | 1.41 | |
| | | | | | (0.54) | |
| Contacted * Turnout (past) | | | | | | 0.83 |
| | | | | | | (0.32) |
| N | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 | 1527 |
| ll | -1576.29 | -1575.62 | -1576.51 | -1574.12 | -1576.00 | -1575.95 |

*p < 0.05, ** p < 0.01, *** p < 0.001 (Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

137

# Appendix 1b. Data Coding – Talk to Her

| Name | Label | Question | Coding* | Survey wave |
|------|-------|----------|---------|-------------|
| cn | Contacted by a party | Were you contacted in any of the following ways by the candidate or representatives of candidate/political party before the [date, year] parliamentary elections? [I was not contacted at all; Someone coming to your home; Someone coming to your workplace; Someone coming to your neighborhood; Phone call/text message; Fliers, door hangers; Mail; Email/Social media; Public meeting/rallies.] | 1=Contacted at home / workplace / neighborhood / public meeting and a party is recalled; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| | | If contacted, on behalf of which party/candidate was this contact made? [List of parties.] | | |
| pid_a1 | Positive partisanship (post-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 1=Any party named; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| pid_c1 | Positive partisanship (post-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 0=Nonpartisan; 1=GD; 2=UNM; 3=Other. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| pid_24a | Positive partisanship (pre-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 1=Any party named; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |

| pid_24c | Positive partisanship (pre-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 0=Nonpartisan; 1=GD; 2=UNM; 3=Other. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
|---------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|
| pid_25a | Positive partisanship (post-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 1=Any party named; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| pid_25c | Positive partisanship (post-election) | Which party is closest to you? [List of parties.] | 0=Nonpartisan; 1=GD; 2=UNM; 3=Other. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| turn_pre | Reported turnout (pre-election) | If parliamentary elections were held tomorrow, would you vote? [1=Absolutely will not vote; 10=Absolutely will vote.] | 1=Absolutely will vote; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| turn_post | Reported turnout (post-election) | Did you vote in last parliamentary elections? [1=Yes; 0=No.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| knowmp | Know which MP is elected from the district | Please tell me who is your majoritarian member in the Parliament of Georgia? [Open ended question.] | 1=Correct answer; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| voten_24a | Negative partisanship | Which party you would never vote for? [List of parties.] | 1=Any party named; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| voten_24c | Negative partisanship - No party | Which party you would never vote for? [List of parties.] | 0=No party; 1=GD; 2=UNM; 3=Other. | Jun-2016 |

| dire | Country's direction is right | There are different opinions regarding the direction in which Georgia as a country is going. Using this card, please, rate your answer. [Definitely going in the wrong direction; Mainly going in the wrong direction; Is not changing at all; Going mainly in the right direction; Definitely going in the right direction.] | 1=Right or Definitely right direction; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| gchange | Government approval | How much do you agree or disagree that the current government is making the changes that matter to you? [Completely disagree; Somewhat disagree; Somewhat agree; Completely agree.] | 1=Completely agree or somewhat agree; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| euappr | EU membership approval | Please tell me which of the following statements you agree with? Statement 1: Georgia will benefit more from Euro-Atlantic integration (joining EU and NATO). Statement 2: Georgia will benefit more from abandoning Euro-Atlantic integration in favor of better relations with Russia. [Agree very strongly with Statement 1; Agree with Statement 1; Agree with Statement 2; Agree very strongly with Statement 2; Agree with neither.] | 1=Agree or strongly agree with statement 1; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| hhcond | Household's conditions | Generally, taking everything into account, since [last parliamentary elections] you and your household are… [Worse off; The same; Better off.] | 1=Better off; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| expend2 | Household's expenditure | Using the same card, please tell me your household's spending last month? [More than GEL 1600; GEL 1201-1600; GEL 801-1200; GEL 401-800; GEL 261-400; GEL 151-260; Up to GEL 150; None.] | 1=Below GEL800; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |

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| poss | Possession of durable goods | Now, I will read you a series of household items. Please note that we are only interested in items that your household owns and that are in normal working order. Please tell me whether or not your household owns …? [Refrigerator; Color TV; Smartphone; Tablet computer; Car; Air conditioner; Automatic washing machine; Personal computer, including laptop; Hot water; Central heating.] | Index of possessions=sum of all items (1=Yes; 0=Otherwise on each item). | Jun-2016; Nov-2016 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| empl2 | Employed | Do you consider yourself to be employed? This employment may be part-time or full-time, you may be officially employed, informally employed, or self-employed, but it brings you monetary income [Yes; No.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| momwork | Employment of respondent's mother | When you were a child, what was your mother's occupation for the most of your childhood? [My mother was mostly employed full time; My mother was mostly employed part-time; My mother was not employed/housewife; Other; NA.] | 1=Mostly employed full time or part time; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2016 |
| edu2 | Tertiary education | What is the highest level of education you have achieved to date? [Did not obtain a nine year diploma; Nine year diploma; High school diploma; Vocational/technical degree; Bachelor's degree / five years diploma; Any degree above bachelor's.] | 1=BA / five years diploma or any degree above BA / five years diploma; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| agegr | Respondent's age group | Respondent's age | 0=18-37; 1=38-57; 3=58 and older. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| settype | Settlement type | Settlement type [Capital; Urban, Rural; Ethnic minority.] | 0=Urban; 1=Capital; 2=Rural; 3=Ethnic minority. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |

| female | Respondent's gender | Respondent's gender | 0=Male; 1=Female. | Nov-2012 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| relatt3 | Attend religious services | Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you attend religious services? [Every day; More than once a week; Once a week; At least once a month; Only on special holidays; Less often; Never.] | 1=Every day or at least once a week; 2=At least once a month or only on special occasions; 3=Less often or never. | Nov-2012 |
| inter2 | Internet use | How often do you use the Internet? [Every day; At least one a week; At least once a month; Less often; Never.] | 1=Every day or one a week; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2016 |
| antena | Access to TV channels | How do you receive TV signal? Via antenna? | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| satel | Access to TV channels | How do you receive TV signal? Via satellite dish? | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| cable | Access to TV channels | How do you receive TV signal? Via cable? | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| married | Respondent's marital status | What is your current marital status? [Single never married; Married; Widow/Widower; Cohabitating without marriage; Divorced/Separated.] | 1=Married or cohabitating without marriage; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| govpens | Recipient of state pension | Do you personally receive any of the following assistance from the government? [Pension.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| govins | Recipient of state insurance | Do you personally receive any of the following assistance from the government? [Insurance.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| govvou | Recipient of state voucher | Do you personally receive any of the following assistance from the government? [Voucher.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| registr | Registered where live | Do you currently live where you are legally registered? [Yes; No.] | 1=Yes; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012 |
| adultn | Number of adults in household | Tell me please, according to the definition provided, how many adult members (18 or older), including you, are there in your household? | Number without recoding. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| attint | Someone else attended the interview | Write down the number of people attending the interview, including the respondent and yourself [Number.] | 1=More than two; 0=Otherwise. | Nov-2012; Nov-2016 |
| respass | Political sophistication | Instrumental variable: index of the seven questions below: | Index of sophistication=sum of seven dummies (see below) | Jun-2016 |
| | | How often was the respondent distracted during the interview? [Never; Just for a few questions (fewer than ten); For some questions, but not that many (approximately between 10 and 20); For a substantial number of questions, but less than half the interview; Throughout most of the interview, or through the entire interview.] | 1=Never; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| | | How often did you feel that the respondent lacked knowledge about the questions you asked? [Never; Just for a few questions (fewer than ten); For some questions, but not that many (approximately between 10 and 20); For a substantial number of questions, but less than half the interview; Throughout most of the interview, or through the entire interview.] | 1=Never; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| How often did you feel the respondent was reluctant to answer the questions? [Never; Just for a few questions (fewer than ten); For some questions, but not that many (approximately between 10 and 20); For a substantial number of questions, but less than half the interview; Throughout most of the interview, or through the entire interview.] | 1=Never; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| How often did you feel the respondent was reluctant to use the show cards (read them carefully him/herself)? [Never, the respondent was always using the show cards; Just for a few show cards (less than ten); For some show cards, but not that many (approximately 25% of the show cards); For a substantial number of show cards, but less than half them; Throughout most of the interview, or through the entire interview.] | 1=Never; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| On a scale of 1 to 5, how would you rate the respondent's level of intelligence? [Not at all intelligent; Not very intelligent; Average; Intelligent; Very intelligent.] | 1=Very intelligent of intelligent; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| How would you evaluate sincerity of respondent's answers? [0=Not at all sincere; 10=Completely sincere.] | 1=Completely sincere; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |
| How tired was the respondent in the end of the interview? [0=Very tired; 10=Not al all tired.] | 1=Not al all tired; 0=Otherwise. | Jun-2016 |

*\* All questions include "don't know" and "refuse to answer" options. All refusals are declared as missing values.*

# Appendix 1c. Survey Methodology – Talk to Her

## Objective

Surveys are conducted by the Caucasus Research Resource Center - Georgia (CRRC-Georgia) on behalf of National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) with the objective to gather information on citizens' political and policy preferences, attitudes and opinions.

## Coverage

Surveys are representative of adult population of Georgia, including the Capital, other urban and rural areas and excluding the occupied territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

## Overall sampling approach

Surveys use a combination of stratification and clustering. In each wave, stratification is different depending on the survey objectives (see Table 1 for details). Necessary sample sizes are calculated independently for each stratum, so that the conclusions could be drawn for the whole country, independently for any given stratum.

Sampling consists of three stages. In the first stage, voting precincts, i.e. primary sampling units (PSUs) are randomly selected in each stratum, taking into consideration settlement type (rural/urban) and with probability proportional to the population size.

In the second stage, fieldwork supervisors then assign selected precincts to interviewers who travel to the polling station used in the precinct's most recent election and proceed randomly therefrom. The interviewers attempt to interview every n[th] house according to assigned step sizes (i.e., if the step size is 7 then she should attempt an interview in every 7th house) and a randomly selected starting household number between 1 and the step size. For instance, if the step size is 7 and the starting household number is 4 then she should attempt an interview in the 4th household, in the 11th, household, in the 18th household, etc.

In the third stage, interviewers, while interviewing the household selected on the basis of preceding stage, use Kish table to randomly select prospective interviewees from the list, prepared age wise in descending order, of all adult males and females of household.[54] In case

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[54] Kish (1949). For more accessible description of this method please see: http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/the-sage-encyclopedia-of-social-science-research-methods/n464.xml

interviewers fail to make contact with the household or, eventually, with the selected members of the household, they are instructed to make a second, and, if necessary, third contact attempt before classifying the interview attempt as a non-response.

In the November 2016 survey waves, the sample included 1,773 panel respondents recruited in the previous survey wave. In practice, 1,369 panel interviews are completed.

## Table 1. Sample distribution and response rates

| Stratum | No of sampled PSUs | Targeted interview per PSU | Step size | Attempted interviews | Completed interviews | Response rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **2012 November** | | | | | | |
| Capital | 34 | 24 | 7 | 816 | 383 | 47% |
| East Urban | 24 | 12 | 7 | 320 | 288 | 90% |
| West Urban | 34 | 12 | 6-7 | 408 | 363 | 89% |
| East Rural | 25 | 20 | 6-8 | 500 | 460 | 92% |
| West Rural | 27 | 20 | 6-9 | 540 | 483 | 89% |
| Total | 144 | | | 2,552 | 1,947 | 76% |
| **2016 July** | | | | | | |
| Tbilisi | 49 | 30 | 7 | 1,469 | 635 | 43% |
| Mtatsminda | 31 | 30 | 7 | 922 | 385 | 42% |
| Kutaisi | 18 | 30 | 7 | 540 | 352 | 65% |
| Zugdidi | 21 | 30 | 7 | 630 | 349 | 55% |
| Senaki | 12 | 30 | 7 | 360 | 280 | 78% |
| Tskaltubo | 11 | 30 | 6-7 | 330 | 256 | 78% |
| Sachkhere | 11 | 30 | 6-7 | 330 | 250 | 76% |
| Other urban | 23 | 30 | 7 | 690 | 465 | 67% |
| Other rural | 22 | 30 | 5-7 | 661 | 515 | 78% |
| Ethnic minorities | 26 | 30 | 6-7 | 755 | 626 | 83% |
| Total | 224 | | | 6687 | 4113 | 62% |
| **2016 November** | | | | | | |
| Tbilisi | 49 | 24 | 7 | 1,175 | 590 | 50% |
| Urban | 33 | 20 | 7 | 660 | 492 | 75% |
| Rural | 33 | 20 | 7 | 660 | 528 | 80% |
| Kutaisi | 24 | 20 | 7 | 480 | 340 | 71% |
| Batumi | 27 | 20 | 7 | 540 | 271 | 50% |
| Zugdidi | 22 | 20 | 7 | 440 | 257 | 58% |
| Akhaltsikhe | 13 | 20 | 7 | 260 | 175 | 67% |
| Ethnic minorities | 31 | 20 | 3, 4 or 7 | 617 | 488 | 79% |
| Total | 232 | | | 4832 | 3141 | 65% |

## Fieldwork

Overall managerial and technical oversight is exercised by CRRC's office: two staff members are in daily contact with the field workers, receiving updates on the process and giving appropriate instructions, if and when necessary. Though every field worker and interviewer is trained by CRRC staff, it is the field work supervisor who provides guidance and quality control for the interviewers in the assigned region.

Training sessions are held in Tbilisi and as well as in regional centers. During the trainings, interviewers practice the questionnaire, sampling instructions and discuss possible problems or challenges pertaining to the fieldwork. Training topics cover the whole spectrum ranging over: sampling instructions, including random walk protocol, step size and household selection; respondent selection using the Kish table; overview of the questionnaire with special attention to problematic questions; overview of the show cards; conducting test interviews and follow up feedback.

In order to increase response rate, interviews are conducted preferably during post-working hours and weekends and different timings are chosen when visiting the same household for the second or third time in order to accommodate to the availability of members of the household.

**Table 2. Fieldwork timeline**

| Survey wave | Start date | End date | No of interviewers |
|---|---|---|---|
| November 2012 | November 14 | November 25 | 118 |
| June 2016 | June 8 | July 6 | 110 |
| November 2016 | November 4 | December 4 | 112 |

## Weighting

Sampling weights account for the fact that different members of the population have different probabilities of being selected for interview, representing different numbers of people in the overall population. They are necessary when estimating the proportion of the population that would choose a particular response if interviewed. Sampling weights are then adjusted for non-response; for example, if 20% of the interview attempts in a voting precinct resulted in interviews, then the weight of those 80% who did respond would be adjusted upwards by a factor of 1.25. Finally, the respondents are binned into gender and age categories (ages 18-34, 35-54, and 55+), and weights are adjusted so that the weighted age and gender ratios of the sample matched that of the population.

## Data Entry

The November 2012 survey wave was carried out using the Paper and Pencil Interviewing mode (PAPI), while both the survey waves in 2016 were implemented using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) mode.

For the Paper and Pencil survey, the data entry is implemented in Census and Survey PROcessing (CSPro) system software between November 20 and 30, 2012. When designing the data entry platform, special controls are assigned for each question to avoid entry of illegal values. The program also allows checks for illogical values, for example, to ensure that later contact dates and times were made after earlier contacts, etc.

The process of data entry is managed by data entry supervisor. The operators are trained to clarify all issues that arise during the data entry process. By the end of each day, the data files are backed up by the supervisor in order to avoid an accidental loss of raw data set.

The data is entered twice using a blind data entry process, meaning that each questionnaire is processed twice by different data entry operators. After all questionnaires are entered, the two sets are compared using the same software as CSPro allows putting together the data on case-by-case basis and thus reveals the discrepancies between two versions of data. After the differences are identified, the data entry manager checks the actual questionnaire and corrects values in the database using STATA do-file.

In Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), android-based tablet computers (Samsung Galaxy Tab2 and Tab3) are used to collect data. The hardware has integrated sim-cards, which permits uploading completed interviews instantly via mobile internet.

Questionnaire is programmed in an open-source software ODK (Open Data Kit).[55] This allows to assign skip patterns automatically and eliminates illegal values during data collection. Additionally, as the responses are submitted from time to time, the data management team is able to check data and address any error prior to the finishing of fieldwork.

The XML-based forms is built in Microsoft Excel and are converted into corresponding format using a special ODK software. Forms are uploaded on a special web-server. The server is used for storing, distributing forms as well as aggregating and downloading collected data.

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[55] See http://opendatakit.org/about

## Data cleaning

Data cleaning is carried out to identify and, where possible, correct inconsistencies. A series of logical checks are run on the data set, and flags were generated anywhere that illogical series of data are found. The data cleaning specialist generates summaries of the flags and looks at the questionnaires in order to determine the source of the illogical values. In addition, open-ended questions with textual responses are recoded so that these answers matched numeric codes.

## Response rate

Response rates are determined based on AAPOR standard:[56] an interview in which at least 50% of the questions has valid answers is counted as a full response. Table 3 shows the distribution of responses across the three interview attempts.

**Table 3. Completed interviews by visit**

| Survey wave | First contact | Second contact | Third contact |
|---|---|---|---|
| November 2012 | 83 | 15 | 2 |
| June 2016 | 79 | 18 | 3 |
| November 2016 | 81 | 17 | 2 |

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[56] AAPOR response definitions are available at http://www.quantitativeskills.com/sisa/calculations/resprhlp.htm
Please see also: http://www.aapor.org/Standard_Definitions2.htm#.UoYIROJ5uuJ

# Appendix 2a. Tables - Promises, Lies and the Accountability Trap

## Table 2a.1. Summary statistics

| | Tbilisi | | | | | Yerevan | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **N** | **Mean** | **Std.** | **Min.** | **Max.** | **N** | **Mean** | **Std.** | **Min.** | **Max.** |
| Reported turnout | 793 | 0.78 | 0.42 | 0 | 1 | 890 | 0.63 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Party support | 580 | 0.36 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 | 798 | 0.44 | 0.50 | 0 | 1 |
| Respondent's gender | 906 | 0.68 | 0.47 | 0 | 1 | 954 | 0.65 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Age group 1 (18-37) | 906 | 0.29 | 0.46 | 0 | 1 | 953 | 0.36 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Age group 2 (38-57) | 906 | 0.41 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 | 953 | 0.37 | 0.48 | 0 | 1 |
| Age group 3 (58 and older) | 906 | 0.30 | 0.46 | 0 | 1 | 953 | 0.28 | 0.45 | 0 | 1 |
| Respondent's education | 906 | 0.55 | 0.50 | 0 | 1 | 954 | 0.40 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 |
| Economic conditions | 893 | 2.79 | 0.80 | 1 | 5 | 936 | 2.89 | 0.85 | 1 | 5 |
| Salience of unemployment | 901 | 0.43 | 0.50 | 0 | 1 | 950 | 0.58 | 0.49 | 0 | 1 |
| Salience of taxes | 902 | 0.51 | 0.50 | 0 | 1 | 874 | 0.33 | 0.47 | 0 | 1 |
| State intervention | 906 | 1.28 | 0.98 | 0 | 4 | 954 | 1.77 | 0.98 | 0 | 4 |
| Political knowledge | 906 | 1.87 | 1.50 | 0 | 4 | 954 | 2.27 | 1.13 | 0 | 4 |
| Political efficacy | 906 | 1.04 | 1.00 | 0 | 4 | 954 | 1.22 | 1.00 | 0 | 4 |
| Overall risk taking | 906 | 2.61 | 0.90 | 1 | 5 | 952 | 2.68 | 1.11 | 1 | 5 |

**Table 2a.2. Logit Estimates of the treatment effect on turnout and party support (odds ratios)**

| | Tbilisi | | | | Yerevan | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **(1)** **Turnout** | **(2)** **Turnout** | **(3)** **Support** | **(4)** **Support** | **(5)** **Turnout** | **(6)** **Turnout** | **(7)** **Support** | **(8)** **Support** |
| State-driven | 0.80 (0.19) | 0.87 (0.22) | 0.34*** (0.10) | 0.32*** (0.10) | 0.62** (0.12) | 0.52*** (0.11) | 0.59*** (0.12) | 0.50*** (0.11) |
| Market-driven | 0.64** (0.14) | 0.67* (0.15) | 0.60** (0.12) | 0.56*** (0.12) | 0.98 (0.16) | 0.95 (0.16) | 0.97 (0.20) | 0.90 (0.19) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | 0.64** (0.13) | 0.63** (0.13) | 0.64* (0.15) | 0.57** (0.14) | 0.81 (0.13) | 0.80 (0.15) | 0.72* (0.14) | 0.74 (0.15) |
| Female | | 1.59** (0.30) | | 1.29 (0.29) | | 1.08 (0.15) | | 1.14 (0.19) |
| Age group (18 to 38) | | 0.52*** (0.12) | | 0.63* (0.16) | | 1.01 (0.15) | | 1.29 (0.26) |
| Age group (39 to 59) | | 0.60* (0.17) | | 0.73 (0.19) | | 1.21 (0.21) | | 1.09 (0.24) |
| Tertiary education | | 0.87 (0.19) | | 0.68** (0.12) | | 1.14 (0.20) | | 0.84 (0.15) |
| Economic conditions | | 1.34** (0.16) | | 1.04 (0.11) | | 1.17 (0.12) | | 1.09 (0.12) |
| Salience of unemployment | | 1.34 (0.25) | | 1.45* (0.31) | | 1.23 (0.18) | | 1.24 (0.23) |
| Salience of taxes | | 0.96 (0.20) | | 0.71* (0.13) | | 0.97 (0.18) | | 0.99 (0.17) |
| State intervention | | 0.92 (0.10) | | 1.06 (0.11) | | 1.22*** (0.09) | | 1.24** (0.11) |
| Political knowledge | | 1.38*** (0.12) | | 0.94 (0.08) | | 1.11 (0.09) | | 0.96 (0.07) |
| Political efficacy | | 1.23* (0.14) | | 1.52*** (0.13) | | 1.16* (0.11) | | 1.06 (0.10) |

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risk taking | | 0.84 | | 1.09 | | 0.98 | | 0.93 | | |
| | | (0.12) | | (0.13) | | (0.06) | | (0.06) | | |
| N | 793 | 775 | 580 | 568 | 890 | 804 | 798 | 727 | | |
| Log likelihood | -419.98 | -374.70 | -370.40 | -347.22 | -583.48 | -508.84 | -543.10 | -487.75 | | |

*Note:* the row layout for Risk taking / N / Log likelihood spans the earlier table columns.

$^{*}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

### Table 2a.3. Logit Estimates of the treatment effect on turnout (interactions, odds ratios, Tbilisi)

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State-driven | 0.47 | 0.53$^{*}$ | 0.65 | 0.14$^{*}$ | 0.93 | 0.96 | 0.54 | 0.74 | 0.57$^{*}$ | 1.02 |
| | (0.22) | (0.20) | (0.22) | (0.15) | (0.30) | (0.34) | (0.20) | (0.29) | (0.19) | (0.89) |
| Market-driven | 0.53 | 0.72 | 0.75 | 0.38 | 0.52$^{**}$ | 0.68 | 0.96 | 0.73 | 0.83 | 0.53 |
| | (0.24) | (0.30) | (0.28) | (0.37) | (0.13) | (0.20) | (0.30) | (0.25) | (0.24) | (0.40) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | 0.52 | 0.89 | 0.67 | 0.28 | 0.59$^{**}$ | 0.66 | 0.58$^{*}$ | 0.78 | 0.73 | 0.71 |
| | (0.24) | (0.39) | (0.23) | (0.25) | (0.14) | (0.22) | (0.18) | (0.31) | (0.20) | (0.47) |
| Female | 0.96 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.44) | | | | | | | | | |
| State x Female | 2.14 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (1.27) | | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Female | 1.36 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.77) | | | | | | | | | |
| Inconsistent x Female | 1.37 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.81) | | | | | | | | | |
| Age 18 to 38 | | 0.42$^{**}$ | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.17) | | | | | | | | |
| Age 39 to 59 | | 0.72 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.39) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 18 to 38 | | 2.26 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (1.24) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 39 to 59 | | 1.35 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.78) | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Market x Age 18 to 38 | 0.77 | | |
| | (0.49) | | |
| Market x Age 39 to 59 | 1.23 | | |
| | (0.81) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 18 to 38 | 1.12 | | |
| | (0.64) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 39 to 59 | 0.40 | | |
| | (0.28) | | |
| Tertiary education | | 1.43 | |
| | | (0.54) | |
| State x Education | | 1.54 | |
| | | (0.74) | |
| Market x Education | | 0.77 | |
| | | (0.40) | |
| Inconsistent x Education | | 0.95 | |
| | | (0.42) | |
| Economic conditions | | | 1.03 |
| | | | (0.27) |
| State x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.92 |
| | | | (0.76) |
| Market x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.20 |
| | | | (0.43) |
| Inconsistent x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.36 |
| | | | (0.46) |
| Salience of unemployment | | | 1.01 |
| | | | (0.39) |
| State x Unemployment | | | 0.76 |
| | | | (0.38) |
| Market x Unemployment | | | 1.54 |
| | | | (0.78) |
| Inconsistent x Unemployment | | | 1.12 |
| | | | (0.58) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Salience of taxes | 1.27 | | |
| | (0.47) | | |
| State x Taxes | 0.69 | | |
| | (0.33) | | |
| Market x Taxes | 0.84 | | |
| | (0.43) | | |
| Inconsistent x Taxes | 0.94 | | |
| | (0.47) | | |
| State intervention | | 0.97 | |
| | | (0.15) | |
| State x Intervention | | 1.36 | |
| | | (0.31) | |
| Market x Intervention | | 0.73 | |
| | | (0.15) | |
| Inconsistent x Intervention | | 1.08 | |
| | | (0.22) | |
| Political knowledge | | | 1.45** |
| | | | (0.22) |
| State x Knowledge | | | 1.07 |
| | | | (0.20) |
| Market x Knowledge | | | 0.98 |
| | | | (0.17) |
| Inconsistent x Knowledge | | | 0.89 |
| | | | (0.18) |
| Political efficacy | | | 1.15 |
| | | | (0.18) |
| State x Efficacy | | | 1.07 |
| | | | (0.25) |
| Market x Efficacy | | | 1.14 |
| | | | (0.23) |
| Inconsistent x Efficacy | | | 1.11 |
| | | | (0.21) |

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| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risk taking | | | | | | | | | | 0.81 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.17) |
| State x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.91 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.28) |
| Market x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 1.07 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.32) |
| Inconsistent x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.97 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.23) |
| $N$ | 793 | 793 | 793 | 784 | 788 | 789 | 793 | 793 | 890 | 793 |
| ll | -417.56 | -408.84 | -416.60 | -407.97 | -412.01 | -414.68 | -416.62 | -402.66 | -578.57 | -417.11 |

$^{*}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

## Table 2a.4. Logit Estimates of the treatment effect on party support (interactions, odds ratios, Tbilisi)

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State-driven | 0.19$^{***}$ | 0.23$^{***}$ | 0.33$^{***}$ | 0.10$^{**}$ | 0.37$^{***}$ | 0.47$^{**}$ | 0.17$^{***}$ | 0.60 | 0.37$^{**}$ | 0.44 |
| | (0.09) | (0.12) | (0.12) | (0.10) | (0.13) | (0.17) | (0.09) | (0.27) | (0.16) | (0.45) |
| Market-driven | 0.37$^{***}$ | 0.46$^{**}$ | 0.50$^{*}$ | 0.29 | 0.57$^{**}$ | 0.78 | 0.39$^{**}$ | 0.67 | 0.68 | 0.46 |
| | (0.14) | (0.17) | (0.18) | (0.26) | (0.16) | (0.28) | (0.17) | (0.24) | (0.25) | (0.37) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | 0.38$^{**}$ | 0.62 | 0.52$^{*}$ | 0.30 | 0.69 | 1.00 | 0.25$^{***}$ | 1.10 | 0.93 | 1.48 |
| | (0.17) | (0.28) | (0.19) | (0.22) | (0.21) | (0.34) | (0.10) | (0.42) | (0.36) | (1.06) |
| Female | 0.69 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.25) | | | | | | | | | |
| State x Female | 2.25 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (1.29) | | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Female | 2.14$^{*}$ | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.98) | | | | | | | | | |
| Inconsistent x Female | 2.17 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (1.08) | | | | | | | | | |
| Age 18 to 38 | | | 0.62 | | | | | | | |
| | | | (0.28) | | | | | | | |

155

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age 39 to 59 | 0.58 | | |
| | (0.24) | | |
| State x Age 18 to 38 | 1.63 | | |
| | (1.11) | | |
| State x Age 39 to 59 | 2.07 | | |
| | (1.43) | | |
| Market x Age 18 to 38 | 1.04 | | |
| | (0.65) | | |
| Market x Age 39 to 59 | 2.26 | | |
| | (1.41) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 18 to 38 | 1.09 | | |
| | (0.63) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 39 to 59 | 1.06 | | |
| | (0.76) | | |
| Tertiary education | | 0.66 | |
| | | (0.22) | |
| State x Education | | 1.02 | |
| | | (0.51) | |
| Market x Education | | 1.32 | |
| | | (0.67) | |
| Inconsistent x Education | | 1.41 | |
| | | (0.63) | |
| Economic conditions | | | 0.82 |
| | | | (0.17) |
| State x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.54 |
| | | | (0.53) |
| Market x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.30 |
| | | | (0.41) |
| Inconsistent x Ec. Conditions | | | 1.33 |
| | | | (0.38) |
| Salience of unemployment | | | 1.35 |
| | | | (0.48) |

156

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| State x Unemployment | 0.79 | | |
| | (0.41) | | |
| Market x Unemployment | 1.05 | | |
| | (0.45) | | |
| Inconsistent x Unemployment | 0.83 | | |
| | (0.38) | | |
| Salience of taxes | 1.32 | | |
| | (0.44) | | |
| State x Taxes | 0.46 | | |
| | (0.26) | | |
| Market x Taxes | 0.59 | | |
| | (0.32) | | |
| Inconsistent x Taxes | 0.41$^*$ | | |
| | (0.19) | | |
| State intervention | | 0.76 | |
| | | (0.15) | |
| State x Intervention | | 1.63 | |
| | | (0.51) | |
| Market x Intervention | | 1.38 | |
| | | (0.38) | |
| Inconsistent x Intervention | | 1.94$^{***}$ | |
| | | (0.46) | |
| Political knowledge | | | 1.11 |
| | | | (0.12) |
| State x Knowledge | | | 0.74$^*$ |
| | | | (0.13) |
| Market x Knowledge | | | 0.95 |
| | | | (0.13) |
| Inconsistent x Knowledge | | | 0.76$^*$ |
| | | | (0.12) |
| Political efficacy | | | 1.62$^{***}$ |
| | | | (0.28) |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State x Efficacy | | | | | | | | | | 0.92 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.25) |
| Market x Efficacy | | | | | | | | | | 0.92 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.20) |
| Inconsistent x Efficacy | | | | | | | | | | 0.71 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.17) |
| Risk taking | | | | | | | | | | 1.20 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.30) |
| State x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.89 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.32) |
| Market x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 1.10 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.33) |
| Inconsistent x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.72 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.20) |
| *N* | 580 | 580 | 580 | 575 | 577 | 576 | 580 | 580 | 580 | 580 |
| ll | -368.21 | -367.21 | -369.01 | -366.82 | -367.48 | -365.33 | -366.06 | -367.68 | -361.26 | -368.69 |

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 2a.5. Logit Estimates of the treatment effect on turnout (interactions, odds ratios, Yerevan)**

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State-driven | 0.42** | 0.50* | 0.65 | 0.69 | 0.90 | 0.59** | 0.48* | 0.72 | 0.57* | 0.47 |
| | (0.15) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.47) | (0.24) | (0.14) | (0.19) | (0.33) | (0.19) | (0.24) |
| Market-driven | 1.31 | 0.80 | 0.82 | 0.76 | 1.40 | 1.01 | 0.62 | 0.52 | 0.83 | 1.08 |
| | (0.42) | (0.25) | (0.18) | (0.58) | (0.40) | (0.25) | (0.22) | (0.21) | (0.24) | (0.57) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | 0.58* | 0.71 | 0.57** | 1.21 | 0.85 | 0.78 | 0.82 | 0.63 | 0.73 | 0.59 |
| | (0.19) | (0.23) | (0.13) | (0.78) | (0.21) | (0.17) | (0.32) | (0.26) | (0.20) | (0.30) |
| Female | 0.75 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.20) | | | | | | | | | |
| State x Female | 1.78 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.68) | | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Female | 0.68 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.28) | | | | | | | | | |
| Inconsistent x Female | 1.72 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.76) | | | | | | | | | |
| Age 18 to 38 | | 0.87 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.27) | | | | | | | | |
| Age 39 to 59 | | 1.01 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.34) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 18 to 38 | | 1.66 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.83) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 39 to 59 | | 1.10 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.56) | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Age 18 to 38 | | 1.32 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.64) | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Age 39 to 59 | | 1.46 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.70) | | | | | | | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 18 to 38 | | 1.14 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.46) | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Inconsistent x Age 39 to 59 | 1.28 | | |
| | (0.67) | | |
| Tertiary education | 0.95 | | |
| | (0.33) | | |
| State x Education | 0.87 | | |
| | (0.42) | | |
| Market x Education | 1.60 | | |
| | (0.58) | | |
| Inconsistent x Education | 2.36[*] | | |
| | (1.12) | | |
| Economic conditions | | 1.24 | |
| | | (0.20) | |
| State x Ec. Conditions | | 0.95 | |
| | | (0.21) | |
| Market x Ec. Conditions | | 1.08 | |
| | | (0.28) | |
| Inconsistent x Ec. Conditions | | 0.86 | |
| | | (0.19) | |
| Salience of unemployment | | | 1.79[*] |
| | | | (0.59) |
| State x Unemployment | | | 0.52 |
| | | | (0.23) |
| Market x Unemployment | | | 0.51 |
| | | | (0.23) |
| Inconsistent x Unemployment | | | 0.90 |
| | | | (0.37) |
| Salience of taxes | | | 1.00 |
| | | | (0.34) |
| State x Taxes | | | 0.89 |
| | | | (0.34) |
| Market x Taxes | | | 1.01 |
| | | | (0.48) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Inconsistent x Taxes | 1.30 | | |
| | (0.58) | | |
| State intervention | 1.17 | | |
| | (0.19) | | |
| State x Intervention | 1.14 | | |
| | (0.25) | | |
| Market x Intervention | 1.30 | | |
| | (0.24) | | |
| Inconsistent x Intervention | 0.99 | | |
| | (0.21) | | |
| Political knowledge | | 1.08 | |
| | | (0.14) | |
| State x Knowledge | | 0.93 | |
| | | (0.19) | |
| Market x Knowledge | | 1.34[*] | |
| | | (0.22) | |
| Inconsistent x Knowledge | | 1.11 | |
| | | (0.20) | |
| Political efficacy | | | 1.15 |
| | | | (0.18) |
| State x Efficacy | | | 1.07 |
| | | | (0.25) |
| Market x Efficacy | | | 1.14 |
| | | | (0.23) |
| Inconsistent x Efficacy | | | 1.11 |
| | | | (0.21) |
| Risk taking | | | 1.06 |
| | | | (0.14) |
| State x Risk | | | 1.11 |
| | | | (0.20) |
| Market x Risk | | | 0.96 |
| | | | (0.18) |

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Inconsistent x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 1.11 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.18) |
| N | 890 | 890 | 890 | 878 | 886 | 818 | 890 | 890 | 890 | 888 |
| ll | -579.75 | -581.74 | -578.00 | -573.30 | -576.69 | -529.89 | -575.69 | -577.85 | -578.57 | -580.43 |

$^*$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 2a.6. Logit Estimates of the treatment effect on party support (interactions, odds ratios, Yerevan)**

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) | (9) | (10) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| State-driven | 0.49$^*$ | 0.58 | 0.63$^*$ | 1.10 | 0.54$^*$ | 0.61$^*$ | 0.36$^{**}$ | 0.41$^{**}$ | 0.33$^{***}$ | 0.39$^*$ |
| | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.15) | (0.83) | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.18) | (0.12) | (0.20) |
| Market-driven | 1.29 | 1.09 | 0.71 | 2.63 | 0.80 | 0.79 | 0.55 | 0.63 | 0.55$^{**}$ | 1.47 |
| | (0.49) | (0.36) | (0.21) | (1.97) | (0.25) | (0.21) | (0.23) | (0.28) | (0.15) | (0.62) |
| Ambiguous B (Inconsistent) | 0.59 | 0.80 | 0.53$^{***}$ | 1.87 | 0.66 | 0.70 | 0.72 | 0.38$^{**}$ | 0.47$^{**}$ | 0.84 |
| | (0.21) | (0.25) | (0.11) | (1.33) | (0.18) | (0.19) | (0.34) | (0.15) | (0.15) | (0.38) |
| Female | 1.07 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.30) | | | | | | | | | |
| State x Female | 1.29 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.54) | | | | | | | | | |
| Market x Female | 0.64 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.29) | | | | | | | | | |
| Inconsistent x Female | 1.35 | | | | | | | | | |
| | (0.60) | | | | | | | | | |
| Age 18 to 38 | | 1.52 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.50) | | | | | | | | |
| Age 39 to 59 | | 1.15 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.35) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 18 to 38 | | 1.04 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.51) | | | | | | | | |
| State x Age 39 to 59 | | 0.96 | | | | | | | | |
| | | (0.48) | | | | | | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Market x Age 18 to 38 | 0.76 | | |
| | (0.36) | | |
| Market x Age 39 to 59 | 0.94 | | |
| | (0.46) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 18 to 38 | 0.84 | | |
| | (0.42) | | |
| Inconsistent x Age 39 to 59 | 0.89 | | |
| | (0.42) | | |
| Tertiary education | | 0.57$^*$ | |
| | | (0.17) | |
| State x Education | | 0.86 | |
| | | (0.37) | |
| Market x Education | | 2.45$^*$ | |
| | | (1.13) | |
| Inconsistent x Education | | 2.34$^{**}$ | |
| | | (0.86) | |
| Economic conditions | | | 1.34$^*$ |
| | | | (0.23) |
| State x Ec. Conditions | | | 0.80 |
| | | | (0.20) |
| Market x Ec. Conditions | | | 0.69 |
| | | | (0.16) |
| Inconsistent x Ec. Conditions | | | 0.71 |
| | | | (0.17) |
| Salience of unemployment | | | 1.09 |
| | | | (0.31) |
| State x Unemployment | | | 1.16 |
| | | | (0.56) |
| Market x Unemployment | | | 1.39 |
| | | | (0.56) |
| Inconsistent x Unemployment | | | 1.14 |
| | | | (0.45) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Salience of taxes | 0.98 | | |
| | (0.33) | | |
| State x Taxes | 0.62 | | |
| | (0.34) | | |
| Market x Taxes | 1.58 | | |
| | (0.75) | | |
| Inconsistent x Taxes | 1.24 | | |
| | (0.57) | | |
| State intervention | | 1.11 | |
| | | (0.17) | |
| State x Intervention | | 1.28 | |
| | | (0.30) | |
| Market x Intervention | | 1.34 | |
| | | (0.27) | |
| Inconsistent x Intervention | | 1.00 | |
| | | (0.22) | |
| Political knowledge | | 0.79** | |
| | | (0.09) | |
| State x Knowledge | | 1.18 | |
| | | (0.21) | |
| Market x Knowledge | | 1.22 | |
| | | (0.20) | |
| Inconsistent x Knowledge | | 1.33* | |
| | | (0.23) | |
| Political efficacy | | | 0.79 |
| | | | (0.12) |
| State x Efficacy | | | 1.56** |
| | | | (0.35) |
| Market x Efficacy | | | 1.57** |
| | | | (0.29) |
| Inconsistent x Efficacy | | | 1.44* |
| | | | (0.27) |

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Risk taking | | | | | | | | | | 1.08 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.12) |
| State x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 1.16 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.21) |
| Market x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.86 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.13) |
| Inconsistent x Risk | | | | | | | | | | 0.94 |
| | | | | | | | | | | (0.15) |
| *N* | 798 | 798 | 798 | 788 | 794 | 739 | 798 | 798 | 798 | 797 |
| ll | -541.06 | -540.86 | -537.50 | -534.70 | -539.20 | -501.05 | -535.96 | -541.21 | -539.25 | -540.42 |

$^{*}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

# Appendix 2b. Data Coding – The Accountability Trap

| Name | Label | Question | Coding* |
|---|---|---|---|
| turnout | Reported turnout | How likely would you say you are to participate in elections? Do you think that you will participate, you will not participate or it is hard to tell? | 1=Will participate; 0=Will not participate. |
| psupp | Party support | And, how likely is it that you will vote for this party? Do you think that you will vote for this party, you will not vote for this party or it is hard to tell? | 1=Will vote; 0=Will not vote. |
| female | Gender | Respondent's gender | 1=Female; 0=Male. |
| age20 | Age group | Respondent's age | 1=18-37; 2=38-57; 3=58 and older. |
| edur | Respondent's education | Using this card, please tell me what the highest level of education you have completed is … [No primary education; Primary education; Incomplete secondary education; Secondary education; Secondary technical education; Higher education – Bachelor, Master or specialist diploma; Post-graduate degree.] | 1= Higher education or post-graduate degree; 0=Otherwise. |
| relcond | Economic conditions | And, how would you rate the economic situation of your family compared to the majority of families living around you? [Very good; Good; Same; Poor; Very poor] | Not recoded. |
| unemp | Salience of unemployment | A combination of two items below: | 1=Unemployment concerns and discusses unemployment; 0=Otherwise. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | How much does unemployment concern you personally? [Significantly concerns you; Somewhat concerns you; Somewhat doesn't concern you; Doesn't concern you at all.] | 1=Significantly or somewhat concerns; 0=Somewhat does not concern or does not concern at all. |
| | | How often do you discuss unemployment with people close to you (friends, neighbors or colleagues)? [Always; Often; Sometimes; Rarely; Never.] | 1=Always or often; 0=Sometime, rarely or never; |
| tax | Salience of taxes | A combination of two items below: | 1=The amount of taxes concerns and discusses the amount of taxes; 0=Otherwise. |
| | | How much does the amount of tax in [country] concern you personally? [Significantly concerns you; Somewhat concerns you; Somewhat doesn't concern you; Doesn't concern you at all.] | 1=Significantly or somewhat concerns; 0=Somewhat does not concern or does not concern at all. |
| | | How often do you discuss the amount of tax with people close to you (friends, neighbors or colleagues)? [Always; Often; Sometimes; Rarely; Never.] | 1=Always or often; 0=Sometime, rarely or never; |
| state | State intervention | An index of four items below: | Sum of recoded items below: |
| | | Some people think that the state shouldn't interfere with economy, and that only entrepreneurs should decide what to produce and how to price the product. Do you agree with this statement, disagree with this statement or you have not thought enough about it? | 1=Agree; 0=Disagree. |
| | | Some people think that the economy can only develop when the government tells the business what to produce and how to price the product depending on people's needs. Do you agree with this | 1=Disagree; 0=Agree. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | statement, disagree with this statement or you have not thought enough about it? | |
| | | There is an opinion that the state should establish new enterprises to create new jobs even if this requires increasing taxes. | 1=Disagree; 0=Agree. |
| | | There is an opinion that that the state should decrease taxes as much as possible and let people use the money saved on taxes to establish new enterprises or expand the existing ones to create new jobs. | 1=Agree; 0=Disagree. |
| know | Political knowledge | An index of four questions below: | Sum of recoded items below: |
| | | According to the Constitution of [country], which position is the most politically powerful in [country]? (The correct answer is Prime Minister. Please indicate whether the respondent answered correctly or not) | 1=Correct answer; 0=Otherwise. |
| | | [For Georgia] Could you name any party in the GD Coalition besides the GD Party? (Correct answer(s): Republican Party, National Forum, Conservative party, and Industry will save Georgia) | |
| | | [For Armenia] Which party has majority in the parliament? (Correct answer: Republican Party) | 1=Correct answer; 0=Otherwise. |
| | | According to the Constitution of [country], who is the supreme commander of the army? (Correct answer: President) | 1=Correct answer; 0=Otherwise. |
| | | According to the legislation, who must approve the state budget in [country]? (Correct answer: Parliament) | 1=Correct answer; 0=Otherwise. |

| peff | Political efficacy | An index of four items below: | Sum of recoded items below: |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that you are well qualified to participate in politics than most people in [country]. [Completely Agree; Somewhat agree; Somewhat disagree; Completely disagree.] | 1=Completely or somewhat agree; 0=Completely or somewhat disagree. |
| | | Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that you are better informed about politics than most people in [country]. [Completely Agree; Somewhat agree; Somewhat disagree; Completely disagree.] | 1=Completely or somewhat agree; 0=Completely or somewhat disagree. |
| | | Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that politicians do not care much about what people like you think. [Completely Agree; Somewhat agree; Somewhat disagree; Completely disagree.] | 1=Completely or somewhat agree; 0=Completely or somewhat disagree. |
| | | Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that people like you don't have any say in what the government does. [Completely Agree; Somewhat agree; Somewhat disagree; Completely disagree.] | 1=Completely or somewhat agree; 0=Completely or somewhat disagree. |

| risk | Risk taking | Index of three questions below: | Sum of original scores. |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | How ready are you to take risks? [Always; Often; Sometimes; Rarely; Never.] | Not recoded. |
| | | With regards to your finances, would you say that the decisions you take are… [Always risky; Often risky; Sometimes risky; Rarely risky; Never risky.] | Not recoded. |
| | | With regards to your health, would you say that the decisions you take are … [Always risky; Often risky; Sometimes risky; Rarely risky; Never risky.] | Not recoded. |

*\* All questions include "don't know" and "refuse to answer" options. All refusals are declared as missing values.*

CEU eTD Collection

# Appendix 2c. Questionnaire - The Accountability Trap

(Source Questionnaire, updated on 4 February, 2016)
[Randomize directions of answer options per questionnaire]

## Social networks

1.      **[Show Card 1] Let us start with a question about the people in your neighborhood. How much do you trust or distrust the majority of the people in your neighborhood?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Fully Trust | 4 |
| Somewhat trust | 3 |
| Somewhat distrust | 2 |
| Fully distrust | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

2.      **[Show Card 2] And now, please tell me, how often do you discuss politics when you gather with people close to you (friends, neighbors or colleagues)?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Always | 5 |
| Often | 4 |
| Sometimes | 3 |
| Rarely | 2 |
| Never | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Issue salience

Let us now speak about policy issues. I am interested in how much these issues concern you personally and how often do you discuss them with people close to you.

3.      **[Show Card 3] How much does unemployment concern you personally?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Significantly concerns you | 4 |
| Somewhat concerns you | 3 |
| Somewhat doesn't concern you | 2 |
| Doesn't concern you at all | 1 |

(Don't know)        -1

(Refuse to answer)        -2

4.        **[Show Card 4] How often do you discuss unemployment with people close to you (friends, neighbors or colleagues)?**

Always        5

Often        4

Sometimes        3

Rarely        2

Never        1

(Don't know)        -1

(Refuse to answer)        -2

5.        **[Show Card 5] How much does the amount of tax in [country] concern you personally?**

Significantly concerns you        4

Somewhat concerns you        3

Somewhat doesn't concern you        2

Doesn't concern you at all        1

(Don't know)        -1

(Refuse to answer)        -2

6.        **[Show Card 6] How often do you discuss the amount of tax with people close to you (friends, neighbors or colleagues)?**

Always        5

Often        4

Sometimes        3

Rarely        2

Never        1

(Don't know)        -1

(Refuse to answer)        -2

172

## Policy preferences

Let's speak about different ways of addressing important policy issues in [country]. Please, tell me what you think.

**7. Some people think that the state shouldn't interfere with economy, and that only entrepreneurs should decide what to produce and how to price the product. Do you agree with this statement, disagree with this statement or you have not thought enough about it?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | 2 | GO TO 8 |
| Disagree | 1 | |
| Have not thought enough about it | -1 | |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | GO TO 8 |

**7A. Thinking about this question now, are you more likely to agree or disagree with it?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to agree | 2 |
| More likely to disagree | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**8. Some people think that the economy can only develop when the government tells the business what to produce and how to price the product depending on people's needs. Do you agree with this statement, disagree with this statement or you have not thought enough about it?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | 2 | GO TO 9 |
| Disagree | 1 | |
| Have not thought enough about it | -1 | |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | GO TO 9 |

**8A. Thinking about this question now, are you more likely to agree or disagree with it?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to agree | 2 |
| More likely to disagree | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**11. There is an opinion that the state should establish new enterprises to create new jobs even if this requires increasing taxes.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | 2 | GO TO 10 |
| Disagree | 1 | |
| Have not thought enough about it | -1 | |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | GO TO 10 |

**11A. Thinking about this question now, are you more likely to agree or disagree with it?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to agree | 2 |
| More likely to disagree | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**12.      There is an opinion that that the state should decrease taxes as much as possible and let people use the money saved on taxes to establish new enterprises or expand the existing ones to create new jobs.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Agree | 2 | GO TO 13 |
| Disagree | 1 | |
| Have not thought enough about it | -1 | |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | GO TO 13 |

**12A. Thinking about this question now, are you more likely to agree or disagree with it?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to agree | 2 |
| More likely to disagree | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Risk preferences

Let me ask a few questions about risks. Some people are prepared to take risks all the time, others – never do; while some have not thought enough about it.

**13. How ready are you to take risks? [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Always | 5 |
| Often | 4 |
| Sometimes | 3 |
| Rarely | 2 |
| Or never? | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**14.      With regards to your finances, would you say that the decisions you take are… [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Always risky | 5 |
| Often risky | 4 |

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Sometimes risky | 3 |
| Rarely risky | 2 |
| Or never risky? | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**15.      With regards to your health, would you say that the decisions you take are … [Read out]**

|              |    |
|--------------|----|
| Always risky | 5 |
| Often risky | 4 |
| Sometimes risky | 3 |
| Rarely risky | 2 |
| Or never risky? | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Information treatment (Randomized)

### Treatments

E1. [name] lives in a town in [country]. He does irregular jobs from time to time to support his family. Before the parliamentary elections a new party organizes a political campaign in [name]'s town aiming at job creation. The party promises to significantly improve the economic situation in the country.

E2. [name] lives in a town in [country]. He does irregular jobs from time to time to support his family. Before the parliamentary elections a new party organizes a political campaign in [name]'s town aiming at job creation. The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will increase taxes by 25% and spend all additional revenue from increased taxes to establish new enterprises.

E3. [name] lives in a town in [country]. He does irregular jobs from time to time to support his family. Before the parliamentary elections a new party organizes a political campaign in [name]'s town aiming at job creation. The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will decrease taxes by 25%. As a result, people will be able to spend the money saved on taxes to establish new enterprises.

E4. [name] lives in a town in [country]. He does irregular jobs from time to time to support his family. Before the Parliamentary elections a new party organizes a political campaign in [name]'s town aiming at job creation. The party promises that if it wins elections, the government will decrease taxes by 25% and spend a large amount of money to establish new enterprises.

**Follow up questions for all**

**16.     Suppose free and fair elections are held in the country. In your opinion, how likely is it that [name] participates in elections? Do you think that he will participate, he will not participate or it is hard to tell?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Will participate | 1 | **GO TO 17** |
| will not participate | 2 | |
| Hard to tell | 3 | |
| (Don't know) | -1 | **GO TO 17** |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**16A. But still, what do you think is the more likely outcome, that [name] participates in elections or not? Is he more likely to participate, less likely to participate or equally likely to participate and not participate?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to participate | 1 |
| Less likely to participate | 2 |
| Equally likely to participate and not participate | 3 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**17.     Suppose free and fair elections are held in the country. In your opinion, how likely is it that [name] votes for this party? Do you think that he will vote for this party, he will not vote for this party or it is hard to tell?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Will vote | 1 | **GO TO 18** |
| Will not vote | 2 | |
| Hard to tell | 3 | |
| (Don't know) | -1 | **GO TO 18** |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**17A. But still, what do you think is the more likely outcome, that [name] votes for this party or not? Is he more likely to vote for this party, less likely to vote for this party or equally likely to vote and not vote?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to vote | 1 |
| Less likely to vote | 2 |
| Equally likely to vote and not vote | 3 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**18.     How likely would you say you are to participate in elections? Do you think that you will participate, you will not participate or it is hard to tell?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Will participate | 1 | **GO TO 19** |
| Will not participate | 2 | |
| Hard to tell | 3 | |
| | | |
| (Don't  know) | -1 | **GO TO 19** |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**18A. But still, what do you think is the more likely outcome, that you participate in elections or not? Are you more likely to participate, less likely to participate or equally likely to participate and not participate?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to participate | 1 |
| Less likely to participate | 2 |
| Equally likely to vote and not participate | 3 |
| (Don't  know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**19.     And, how likely is it that you will vote for this party?  Do you think that you will vote for this party, you will not vote for this party or it is hard to tell?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Will vote | 1 | **GO TO 20** |
| Will not vote | 2 | |
| Hard to tell | 3 | |
| (Don't  know) | -1 | **GO TO 20** |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**19A. But still, what do you think is the more likely outcome, that you vote for this party or not? Are you more likely to vote for this party, less likely to vote for this party or equally likely to vote and not vote?**

| | |
|---|---|
| More likely to vote | 1 |
| Less likely to vote | 2 |
| Equally likely to vote and not vote | 3 |
| (Don't  know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**20.     Considering the current situation in [country], what percent of vote will this party get in the upcoming elections? Please give your best estimate.**

|__|__| Percent

|                      |      |
|----------------------|------|
| (Don't know)         | -1   |
| (Refuse to answer)   | -2   |

## Motivations for voting

People have different voting motivations. Some have already formed opinions, some have not thought enough about it.

**21.     Thinking about the last elections, how important or unimportant was your trust or distrust towards specific party members when deciding who to vote for? [Read out]**

|                                                                       |     |                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|--------------------|
| Very important                                                        | 4   |                    |
| Quite important                                                       | 3   |                    |
| Quite unimportant                                                     | 2   |                    |
| Or not important at all?                                              | 1   |                    |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it)             | -1  |                    |
| (Refuse to answer)                                                    | -2  |                    |
| **[Do not Read out!]** *(Have never participated in elections)*       | -5  | Go to question 23  |

**22.     And how important or unimportant were the party promises when deciding who to vote for?  [Read out]**

|                                                             |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Very important                                              | 4   |
| Quite important                                             | 3   |
| Quite unimportant                                           | 2   |
| Or not important at all?                                    | 1   |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it)   | -1  |
| (Refuse to answer)                                          | -2  |

**23.** **To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement: "Political Parties in [country] keep promises they make during the election campaigns"? [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Completely Agree | 4 |
| Somewhat agree | 3 |
| Somewhat disagree | 2 |
| Or completely disagree? | 1 |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Political efficacy

Now I will Read out you several opinions. Some people agree to each of these opinions, others disagree while some have not given them much thought. Please, tell me what you think.

**24.** **Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that you are well qualified to participate in politics than most of people in [country] [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Completely Agree | 4 |
| Somewhat agree | 3 |
| Somewhat disagree | 2 |
| Or completely disagree? | 1 |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**25.** **Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that you are better informed about politics than most of people in [country]. [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Completely Agree | 4 |
| Somewhat agree | 3 |
| Somewhat disagree | 2 |
| Or completely disagree? | 1 |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**26.** **Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that politicians do not care much about what people like you think. [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Completely Agree | 4 |

|  |  |
|---|---|
| Somewhat agree | 3 |
| Somewhat disagree | 2 |
| Or completely disagree? | 1 |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**27. Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the opinion that people like you don't have any say in what the government does. [Read out]**

|  |  |
|---|---|
| Completely Agree | 4 |
| Somewhat agree | 3 |
| Somewhat disagree | 2 |
| Or completely disagree? | 1 |
| **[Do not Read out!]** (Have not thought enough about it) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Political knowledge

**28.     According to the Constitution of [country], which position is the most politically powerful in [country]?** (The correct answer is Prime Minister. Please indicate whether the respondent answered correctly or not)

|  |  |
|---|---|
| *Correct answer* | 1 |
| *Incorrect answer* | 0 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**29.     Could you name any party in the GD Coalition besides the GD Party?** (The correct answers are: Republican Party, National Forum, Conservative party, and Industry will save the [country]. Please indicate whether the respondent answered correctly or not)

|  |  |
|---|---|
| *Correct answer* | 1 |
| *Incorrect answer* | 0 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**30.     According to the Constitution of [country], who is the supreme commander of the army?**
(The correct answer is the President.  Please indicate whether respondent answered correctly or not)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Correct answer* | 1 |
| *Incorrect answer* | 0 |
| (Don't  know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**31. According to the legislation, who must approve the state budget in [country]?**
(The correct answer is the Parliament.  Please indicate whether the respondent answered correctly or not)

| | |
|---|---|
| *Correct answer* | 1 |
| *Incorrect answer* | 0 |
| (Don't  know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

## Social and economic status

**32.     [Show card 32] Using this card, please tell me what the highest level of education you have completed is.**

| | |
|---|---|
| No primary education | 1 |
| Primary education | 2 |
| Incomplete secondary education | 3 |
| Secondary education | 4 |
| Secondary technical education | 5 |
| Higher education – Bachelor, Master or specialist diploma | 6 |
| Post-graduate degree | 7 |
| (Don't  know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**33.** **[Show card 32] Using this card, please tell me what the highest level of education your father has completed is.**

| | |
|---|---|
| No primary education | 1 |
| Primary education | 2 |
| Incomplete secondary education | 3 |
| Secondary education | 4 |
| Secondary technical education | 5 |
| Higher education – Bachelor, Master or specialist diploma | 6 |
| Post-graduate degree | 7 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**34.** **[Show card 32] Using this card, please tell me what the highest level of education your mother has completed is.**

| | |
|---|---|
| No primary education | 1 |
| Primary education | 2 |
| Incomplete secondary education | 3 |
| Secondary education | 4 |
| Secondary technical education | 5 |
| Higher education – Bachelor, Master or specialist diploma | 6 |
| Post-graduate degree | 7 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**35.** **Using this card, please tell me which one of these levels best describes your ability in…?**
**[Read out]**

| | | No basic knowledge | Beginner | Intermediate | Advanced | (Don't know) | (Refuse to answer) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Russian | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -1 | -2 |
| 2 | English | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -1 | -2 |
| 3 | Any other language except Russian and English | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | -1 | -2 |

**36.** **Do you consider yourself to be employed? This employment could be any activity, including self-employment that brings you monetary income.**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | Go to question 39 |
| No | 0 | |
| (Don't know) | -1 | Go to question 39 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**37.** **Are you currently interested in a job, or not?**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Yes | 1 | |
| No | 0 | Go to question 39 |
| (Don't know) | -1 | |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 | |

**38.** **If a suitable job was available, would you be able to start working within the next 14 days?**

| | |
|---|---|
| Yes | 1 |
| No | 0 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**39. Approximately, how many square meters is the living space you own?** *[Please, writhe the number]*

|__|__| Square meter

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| (Don't know)        | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer)  | -2 |

**40. Now, I will Read out you a series of household items. Please note that we are only interested in items that your household owns and that are in normal working order. Please tell me whether or not your household owns a/an …**

|   |                              | Yes | No | (Don't know) | (Refuse to answer) |
|---|------------------------------|-----|----|--------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Air conditioner              | 1   | 0  | -1           | -2                 |
| 2 | Car / Truck                  | 1   | 0  | -1           | -2                 |
| 3 | Automatic washing machine    | 1   | 0  | -1           | -2                 |
| 4 | Smartphone                   | 1   | 0  | -1           | -2                 |
| 5 | Computer (including laptop)  | 1   | 0  | -1           | -2                 |

**41. [name]'s family spent 720 GEL last month. Please, tell me: how would you rate the economic situation of [name]'s family compared to the majority of families living around you? [Read out]**

|                     |    |
|---------------------|----|
| Very good           | 5  |
| Good                | 4  |
| Same                | 3  |
| Poor                | 2  |
| O very poor?        | 1  |
| (Don't know)        | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer)  | -2 |

184

**42.    And, how would you rate the economic situation of your family compared to the majority of families living around you? [Read out]**

| | |
|---|---|
| Very good | 5 |
| Good | 4 |
| Same | 3 |
| Poor | 2 |
| Or very poor? | 1 |
| (Don't know) | -1 |
| (Refuse to answer) | -2 |

**43.    There are some things many people cannot afford even if they would like them. Please, tell me, if you wanted to, could you …?**

| | | Yes | No | (Don't know) | (Refuse to answer) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Pay for a week's annual holiday? | 1 | 0 | -1 | -2 |
| 2 | Keep your home adequately warm? | 1 | 0 | -1 | -2 |
| 3 | Eating meat or fish every other day? | 1 | 0 | -1 | -2 |
| 4 | Invite friends of family for a dinner at least once a month? | 1 | 0 | -1 | -2 |

Thank you very much!

# Appendix 3a. Tables - The Self-defeating Game

## Table 3a.1. Countries and elections

| # | Country | Number of elections | # | Country | Number of elections |
|---|---------|---------------------|---|---------|---------------------|
| 1 | Afghanistan | 1 | 72 | Kazakhstan | 7 |
| 2 | Albania | 4 | 73 | Kenya | 4 |
| 3 | Algeria | 8 | 74 | Korea, Rep. | 14 |
| 4 | Angola | 3 | 75 | Kuwait | 1 |
| 5 | Argentina | 14 | 76 | Kyrgyz Republic | 4 |
| 6 | Armenia | 6 | 77 | Latvia | 6 |
| 7 | Australia | 12 | 78 | Lebanon | 4 |
| 8 | Austria | 14 | 79 | Lesotho | 5 |
| 9 | Azerbaijan | 10 | 80 | Liberia | 2 |
| 10 | Bahrain | 2 | 81 | Lithuania | 8 |
| 11 | Bangladesh | 7 | 82 | Macedonia, FYR | 7 |
| 12 | Belarus | 9 | 83 | Madagascar | 8 |
| 13 | Belgium | 5 | 84 | Malawi | 4 |
| 14 | Benin | 3 | 85 | Malaysia | 7 |
| 15 | Bolivia | 8 | 86 | Mali | 4 |
| 16 | Botswana | 6 | 87 | Mauritania | 6 |
| 17 | Brazil | 7 | 88 | Mauritius | 7 |
| 18 | Bulgaria | 6 | 89 | Mexico | 12 |
| 19 | Burkina Faso | 8 | 90 | Moldova | 6 |
| 20 | Burundi | 1 | 91 | Mongolia | 10 |
| 21 | Cabo Verde | 1 | 92 | Morocco | 5 |
| 22 | Cambodia | 2 | 93 | Mozambique | 4 |
| 23 | Cameroon | 5 | 94 | Myanmar | 1 |
| 24 | Canada | 11 | 95 | Namibia | 4 |
| 25 | Central African Rep. | 6 | 96 | Nepal | 3 |
| 26 | Chad | 5 | 97 | Netherlands | 12 |
| 27 | Chile | 9 | 98 | New Zealand | 10 |
| 28 | Colombia | 7 | 99 | Nicaragua | 5 |
| 29 | Comoros | 4 | 100 | Niger | 5 |
| 30 | Congo, Dem. Rep. | 7 | 101 | Nigeria | 4 |
| 31 | Congo, Rep. | 1 | 102 | Norway | 9 |
| 32 | Costa Rica | 8 | 103 | Pakistan | 3 |
| 33 | Cote d'Ivoire | 4 | 104 | Panama | 7 |
| 34 | Croatia | 10 | 105 | Papua New Guinea | 7 |

| 35 | Cyprus | 10 | 106 | Paraguay | 8 |
|----|--------|-----|-----|----------|---|
| 36 | Czech Republic | 9 | 107 | Peru | 8 |
| 37 | Denmark | 12 | 108 | Philippines | 9 |
| 38 | Djibouti | 5 | 109 | Poland | 9 |
| 39 | Dominican Republic | 13 | 110 | Portugal | 6 |
| 40 | Ecuador | 8 | 111 | Romania | 6 |
| 41 | Egypt, Arab Rep. | 9 | 112 | Russian Federation | 8 |
| 42 | El Salvador | 22 | 113 | Rwanda | 1 |
| 43 | Equatorial Guinea | 7 | 114 | Senegal | 9 |
| 44 | Estonia | 4 | 115 | Sierra Leone | 3 |
| 45 | Ethiopia | 5 | 116 | Singapore | 8 |
| 46 | Fiji | 8 | 117 | Slovak Republic | 8 |
| 47 | Finland | 15 | 118 | Solomon Islands | 1 |
| 48 | France | 6 | 119 | South Africa | 9 |
| 49 | Gabon | 8 | 120 | Spain | 11 |
| 50 | Gambia, The | 11 | 121 | Sri Lanka | 10 |
| 51 | Georgia | 6 | 122 | Sudan | 2 |
| 52 | Germany | 9 | 123 | Suriname | 1 |
| 53 | Ghana | 6 | 124 | Sweden | 10 |
| 54 | Greece | 11 | 125 | Switzerland | 7 |
| 55 | Guatemala | 4 | 126 | Syrian Arab Republic | 2 |
| 56 | Guinea | 5 | 127 | Tajikistan | 4 |
| 57 | Guinea-Bissau | 5 | 128 | Tanzania | 4 |
| 58 | Guyana | 7 | 129 | Thailand | 11 |
| 59 | Haiti | 4 | 130 | Togo | 8 |
| 60 | Honduras | 7 | 131 | Trinidad and Tobago | 9 |
| 61 | Hungary | 5 | 132 | Tunisia | 6 |
| 62 | India | 8 | 133 | Turkey | 7 |
| 63 | Indonesia | 8 | 134 | Uganda | 2 |
| 64 | Iran, Islamic Rep. | 10 | 135 | Ukraine | 9 |
| 65 | Iraq | 3 | 136 | United Kingdom | 8 |
| 66 | Ireland | 10 | 137 | United States | 18 |
| 67 | Israel | 3 | 138 | Uruguay | 5 |
| 68 | Italy | 9 | 139 | Venezuela, RB | 10 |
| 69 | Jamaica | 9 | 140 | Yemen, Rep. | 4 |
| 70 | Japan | 21 | 141 | Zambia | 5 |
| 71 | Jordan | 5 | 142 | Zimbabwe | 9 |

**Table 3a.2. Logit Estimates of the effect of state capacity on losing elections (Base models)**

| | (1) | (2) | (3) | (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State capacity (lagged) | -0.36 | -0.23 | -0.38 | -0.26 |
| | (0.31) | (0.30) | (0.31) | (0.30) |
| State capacity volatility | 2.70$^{**}$ | 1.68$^{*}$ | 4.36$^{*}$ | 2.25$^{*}$ |
| | (1.05) | (0.96) | (2.23) | (1.26) |
| State capacity growth | -2.07$^{*}$ | -2.37$^{**}$ | -4.70$^{**}$ | -2.29$^{*}$ |
| | (1.15) | (1.11) | (2.36) | (1.36) |
| Natural Resources (lagged) | -2.22$^{*}$ | -3.16$^{***}$ | -2.23$^{*}$ | -3.19$^{***}$ |
| | (1.17) | (1.15) | (1.19) | (1.16) |
| GDP growth (lagged) | -3.30$^{**}$ | -3.26$^{*}$ | -3.42$^{**}$ | -3.31$^{*}$ |
| | (1.67) | (1.72) | (1.70) | (1.70) |
| Economic crisis | 0.38$^{**}$ | 0.30 | 0.36$^{**}$ | 0.31 |
| | (0.18) | (0.19) | (0.18) | (0.19) |
| Partly free | -0.50$^{**}$ | | -0.40 | |
| | (0.20) | | (0.25) | |
| Not free | -1.95$^{***}$ | | -1.88$^{***}$ | |
| | (0.44) | | (0.57) | |
| Year | 0.01$^{*}$ | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Potential fraud | | -0.78$^{***}$ | | -0.61$^{**}$ |
| | | (0.22) | | (0.28) |
| State capacity volatility * Partly free | | | -2.01 | |
| | | | (2.35) | |
| State capacity volatility * Not free | | | -1.33 | |
| | | | (3.02) | |
| State capacity growth * Partly free | | | 2.89 | |
| | | | (2.67) | |
| State capacity growth * Not free | | | 4.12 | |
| | | | (3.63) | |
| State capacity volatility * Potential fraud | | | | -2.06 |
| | | | | (2.25) |
| State capacity growth * Potential fraud | | | | -0.82 |
| | | | | (2.60) |
| Constant | -27.36$^{*}$ | -20.33 | -26.72 | -21.01 |
| | (16.62) | (16.67) | (16.91) | (16.71) |
| *N* | 973 | 969 | 973 | 969 |
| Log likelihood | -562.32 | -569.23 | -561.38 | -568.71 |

$^{*}$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 3a.3. Logit Estimates of the effect of state capacity on losing elections (Base models with random effects)**

|  | **(1)** | **(2)** | **(3)** | **(4)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State capacity (lagged) | -0.32 | -0.16 | -0.33 | -0.19 |
|  | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) |
| State capacity volatility | 3.18*** | 2.27** | 4.38* | 2.81** |
|  | (1.14) | (1.13) | (2.27) | (1.36) |
| State capacity growth | -2.09* | -2.31* | -4.18 | -1.89 |
|  | (1.16) | (1.19) | (2.77) | (1.57) |
| Natural Resources (lagged) | -2.45** | -3.62*** | -2.44** | -3.64*** |
|  | (1.09) | (1.08) | (1.09) | (1.08) |
| GDP growth (lagged) | -4.00** | -3.99** | -4.00** | -4.04** |
|  | (1.80) | (1.78) | (1.82) | (1.79) |
| Economic crisis | 0.41** | 0.33* | 0.40** | 0.34* |
|  | (0.20) | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.19) |
| Partly free | -0.56*** |  | -0.48* |  |
|  | (0.20) |  | (0.26) |  |
| Not free | -2.11*** |  | -2.07*** |  |
|  | (0.38) |  | (0.53) |  |
| Year | 0.02* | 0.01 | 0.02* | 0.01* |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Potential fraud |  | -0.78*** |  | -0.60** |
|  |  | (0.20) |  | (0.28) |
| State capacity volatility * Partly free |  |  | -1.48 |  |
|  |  |  | (2.54) |  |
| State capacity volatility * Not free |  |  | -0.88 |  |
|  |  |  | (3.65) |  |
| State capacity growth * Partly free |  |  | 2.36 |  |
|  |  |  | (3.10) |  |
| State capacity growth * Not free |  |  | 2.95 |  |
|  |  |  | (3.81) |  |
| State capacity volatility * Potential fraud |  |  |  | -2.08 |
|  |  |  |  | (2.28) |
| State capacity growth * Potential fraud |  |  |  | -1.50 |
|  |  |  |  | (2.51) |
| Constant | -31.01* | -26.59 | -30.75* | -27.31* |
|  | (16.10) | (16.31) | (16.14) | (16.34) |
| lnsig2u | -0.69* | -0.59* | -0.71* | -0.58 |
|  | (0.37) | (0.35) | (0.38) | (0.36) |
| Sigma_u | 0.71 | 0.75 | 0.70 | 0.75 |
|  | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Rho | 0.13 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.15 |
|  | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) | (0.04) |
| *N* | 973 | 969 | 973 | 969 |
| Log likelihood | -553.43 | -558.85 | -553.00 | -558.30 |

* $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 3a.4. Logit Estimates of the effect of state capacity on losing elections (Additional models)**

| | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State capacity (lagged) | -0.23 | -0.29 | -0.23 | -0.33 |
| | (0.30) | (0.34) | (0.30) | (0.34) |
| State capacity volatility | 1.90** | 2.90*** | 1.11 | 1.90* |
| | (0.94) | (1.04) | (1.22) | (1.06) |
| State capacity growth | -1.92* | -2.31** | -0.50 | -3.67*** |
| | (1.06) | (1.05) | (1.30) | (1.17) |
| Natural Resources (lagged) | -3.45*** | -2.50** | -3.59*** | -2.64** |
| | (1.21) | (1.12) | (1.22) | (1.15) |
| GDP growth (lagged) | -3.40** | -2.86 | -3.63** | -2.92 |
| | (1.71) | (1.83) | (1.69) | (1.82) |
| Economic crisis | 0.32 | 0.37* | 0.34* | 0.35* |
| | (0.20) | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.19) |
| Opposition vote share | 1.16*** | | 0.00 | |
| | (0.41) | | (.) | |
| Year | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
| | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Polity IV score | | 0.12*** | | 0.00 |
| | | (0.02) | | (.) |
| State capacity volatility * Opposition vote share | | | 4.84 | |
| | | | (4.39) | |
| State capacity growth * Opposition vote share | | | -8.96* | |
| | | | (5.09) | |
| State capacity volatility * Polity IV score | | | | 0.25 |
| | | | | (0.16) |
| State capacity growth * Polity IV score | | | | 0.27 |
| | | | | (0.18) |
| Constant | -19.59 | -10.10 | -18.65 | -11.79 |
| | (17.16) | (17.74) | (17.05) | (17.87) |
| *N* | 981 | 967 | 981 | 967 |
| Log likelihood | -582.05 | -549.84 | -580.03 | -548.30 |

\* $p < 0.10$, \*\* $p < 0.05$, \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

**Table 3a.5. Logit Estimates of the effect of state capacity on losing elections (Additional random effects models)**

|  | (5) | (6) | (7) | (8) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| State capacity (lagged) | -0.10 | -0.18 | -0.09 | -0.21 |
|  | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.31) | (0.32) |
| State capacity volatility | 2.50** | 3.12*** | 1.84 | 2.04 |
|  | (1.08) | (1.09) | (1.41) | (1.26) |
| State capacity growth | -1.99* | -2.55** | -0.48 | -4.00*** |
|  | (1.12) | (1.16) | (1.41) | (1.54) |
| Natural Resources (lagged) | -3.94*** | -2.97*** | -4.06*** | -3.08*** |
|  | (1.11) | (1.12) | (1.12) | (1.12) |
| GDP growth (lagged) | -4.25** | -3.85** | -4.42** | -3.77** |
|  | (1.79) | (1.85) | (1.79) | (1.85) |
| Economic crisis | 0.35* | 0.41** | 0.37* | 0.40** |
|  | (0.19) | (0.20) | (0.19) | (0.20) |
| Opposition vote share | 1.14*** |  | 0.00 |  |
|  | (0.39) |  | (.) |  |
| Year | 0.01 | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 |
|  | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) | (0.01) |
| Polity IV score |  | 0.13*** |  | 0.00 |
|  |  | (0.02) |  | (.) |
| State capacity volatility * Opposition vote share |  |  | 3.97 |  |
|  |  |  | (5.09) |  |
| State capacity growth * Opposition vote share |  |  | -9.34* |  |
|  |  |  | (5.51) |  |
| State capacity volatility * Polity IV score |  |  |  | 0.22 |
|  |  |  |  | (0.17) |
| State capacity growth * Polity IV score |  |  |  | 0.33 |
|  |  |  |  | (0.25) |
| Constant | -25.88 | -9.56 | -25.33 | -11.35 |
|  | (16.36) | (16.53) | (16.36) | (16.60) |
| lnsig2u | -0.46 | -0.76** | -0.47 | -0.77** |
|  | (0.34) | (0.38) | (0.34) | (0.39) |
| Sigma_u | 0.80 | 0.68 | 0.79 | 0.68 |
|  | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) | (0.13) |
| Rho | 0.16 | 0.12 | 0.16 | 0.13 |
|  | (0.05) | (0.04) | (0.05) | (0.04) |
| *N* | 981 | 967 | 981 | 967 |
| Log likelihood | -569.69 | -541.68 | -568.05 | -540.40 |

$^*$ $p < 0.10$, $^{**}$ $p < 0.05$, $^{***}$ $p < 0.01$ *(Robust clustered standard errors in parentheses)*

## Graph 5. State capacity as a function of natural resources
## Marginal effects at 95% CIs
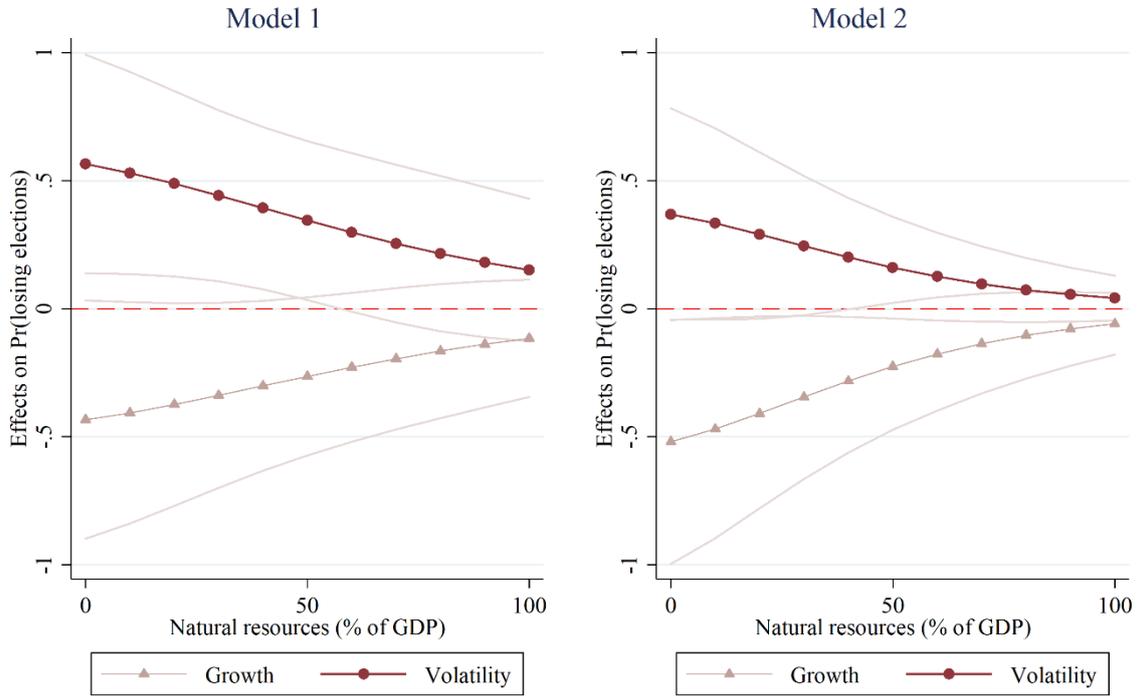


## Graph 6. State capacity as a function of GDP growth
## Marginal effects at 95% CIs
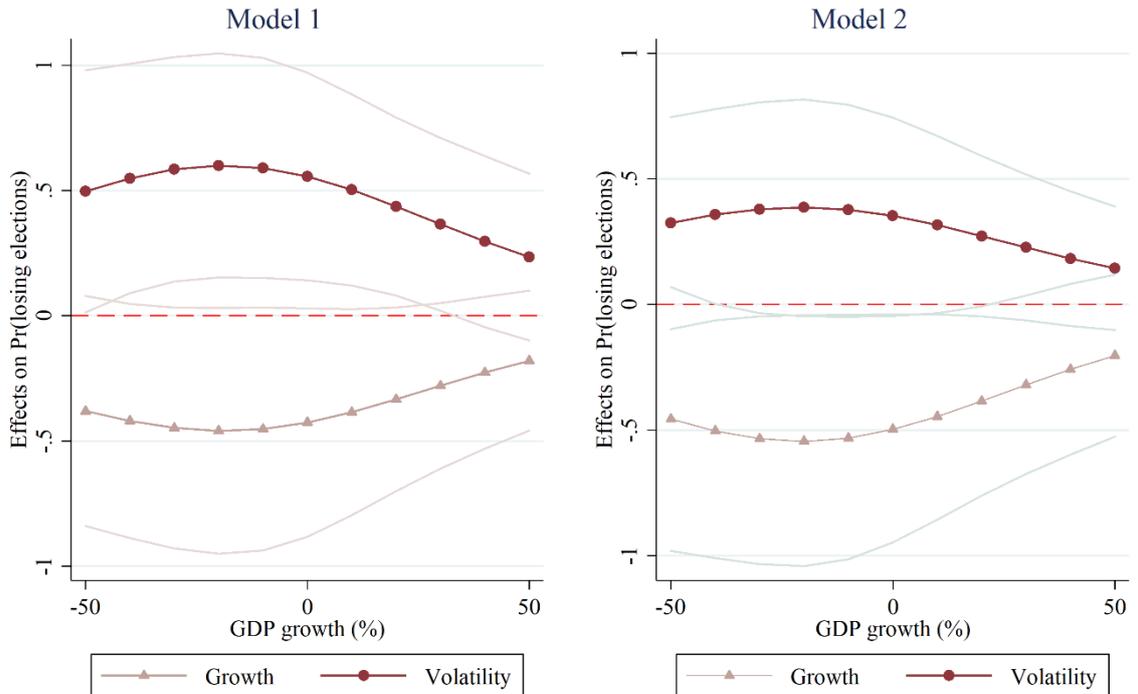
Graph 7. State capacity as a function of democracy indicators
Marginal effects at 95% CIs
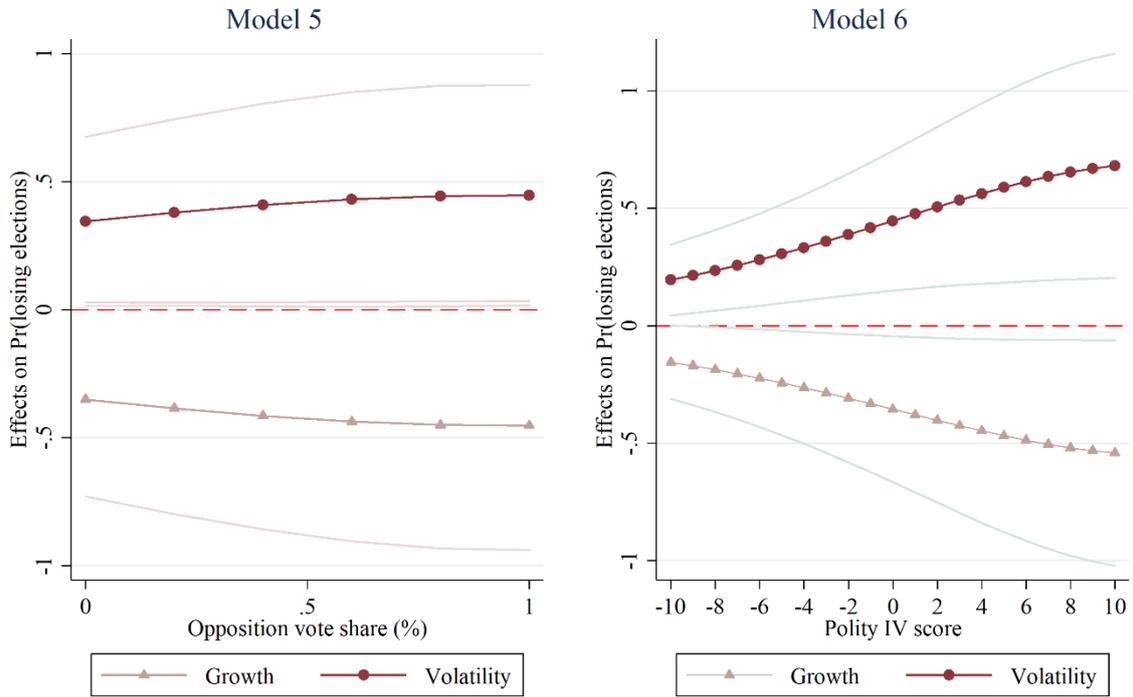
# Appendix 3b. Co-authorship Statement – The Self-defeating Game

Declaration of co-authorship regarding the following publication: Gilbreath, D., and K. Turmanidze. 2017. "The self-defeating game: how state capacity and policy choice affect political survival." *Caucasus Survey* 5(3): 216-237, reprinted with permission of Taylor & Francis as a part of Koba Turmanidze's dissertation.

The degree of Koba Turmanidze's contribution to the publication based on the following scale:

A: has contributed to collaboration (0-33%)

B: has contributed substantially (34-66%)

C: has to a high degree carried out the work independently (67-100%)

| # | Type of contribution | Scale |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Formulating research idea and research question | B |
| 2. | Design of the methods and planning of analysis | B |
| 3. | Data analysis | C |
| 4. | Presentation, interpretation and discussion of results | B |
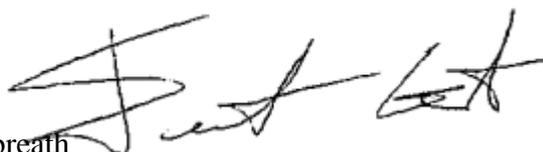
Dustin R. Gilbreath

Co-author

December 22, 2017

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205

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